

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE



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**CONSULTATION DRAFT
February 2021**



**Placemaking Guidance for
Residential Developments:
*Places to Live***

Preface

This **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)** provides information, guidance and practical examples to complement the Council's adopted **Swansea Local Development Plan (LDP)**, including the following key LDP policies:

- **PS 2: PLACEMAKING AND PLACE MANAGEMENT**
- **SD 2: MASTERPLANNING PRINCIPLES**

The draft SPG will be subject to a minimum 6 week consultation process. **Any interested individual or organization is invited to submit comments on this consultation draft version of the SPG during the public consultation period.** Further details regarding the consultation, including information on key dates and how comments can be submitted, are available on the Council's website at www.swansea.gov.uk/spg

NB: Words shown in *italics* within the document are defined in the Glossary (Appendix 1)



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1.0 Introduction

Aims and Purpose

- 1.1. The aim of this document is to set out clear and consistent guidance on matters relating to **Placemaking and Design for all types of residential and mixed use development to create places to live.**
- 1.2. The document (hereafter referred to as 'The Guidance') provides Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in support of planning policies in the adopted Swansea Local Development Plan (LDP). The Guidance will be an **important material consideration in the determination of planning proposals submitted to the Local Planning Authority**, including at pre-application and planning application stages.
- 1.3. The overarching purpose of the Guidance is to facilitate the Council's placemaking aspirations and achieve its key objective of significantly raising standards of design across the County. The Guidance provides a framework to ensure that decision making on any development proposal that includes new homes is guided by relevant placemaking and design principles, and that developers are fully aware of the approach required to ensure their proposals accord with the requirements of national and local policy.



New residential development with open space as a focal point which helps to create a sense of place. (Portishead, Bristol)

- 1.4. This Guidance sets out the Council's expectations for all those involved in the process of planning, building and maintaining new residential and mixed use developments that create places to live. This includes architects, designers, landowners, developers, house builders, housing associations, and the many public and private agencies whose actions and operations influence the way places look and function.

- 1.5. The Guidance can be applied in urban, suburban and rural areas. The main focus of the guidance is on schemes of ten or more dwellings or proposals on sites of 0.5 ha or more, however it is relevant as a material consideration for all proposals for new residential development.
- 1.6. As well as setting out the key placemaking, heritage and design matters that proposals must comply with, the Guidance also confirms the information required when submitting a planning application. Following the Guidance will therefore help avoid unnecessary delays when seeking planning permission, and provide more objectivity, certainty and consistency in decision making.

What is Placemaking and Why is it so Important?

- 1.7. Placemaking principles are **at the heart of the Council's strategic planning agenda, and similarly, are a fundamental facet of its approach to development management**. In its simplest form, placemaking is a 'people centred' approach to the planning, design and management of places and spaces. It seeks to create buildings and areas within which people would desire to live, work and spend recreational time. The importance of *Placemaking* has been embraced as a cornerstone of the national planning agenda in Wales and the sustainable development objectives which underpin it. This is emphasised by the 2020 Placemaking Charter



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- 1.8. All new development can contribute in some form to the making of places, and influence how that place will be experienced and enjoyed, which will stand as a legacy for future generations of occupants and visitors. This Guidance, and the LDP policies that it augments, promotes that a holistic *Placemaking* and Place Management approach should be applied in all areas and at a range of scales, in order to create a genuine sustainable legacy in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG Act). Crucially, creating successful places, or achieving positive changes in existing places, requires a holistic approach that brings together different disciplines

- 1.9. An integral part of *Placemaking* and holistic planning is to create and manage places that seek to ensure social inclusion, equality of opportunity and access for all. This includes all aspects of development including the physical environment, land uses and transportation. New places should be accessible by all travel modes especially active travel and public transport, plus the streets within these places should be place-led and not overly engineered.
- 1.10 Ensuring proposals exhibit high quality sustainable design credentials that respond to local context, will be consistently pursued to achieve well-being, desirability and distinctiveness. In this context, “good design” is more than the physical appearance of buildings, and a focus on details alone will not create a successful place. The mixture of uses alongside residential development, and the way in which buildings relate to one another, surrounding streets and greenspaces, are also key elements of creating safe and attractive places.
- 1.11 The Council requires developers to adhere to the Guidance in order to ensure delivery of the Swansea LDP Vision of creating sustainable, distinct communities, supported by good quality built and natural infrastructure, community facilities and opportunities for recreation. This will enable a response to inequities in terms of the distribution of, and accessibility to, a range of good quality social, environmental and community facilities and infrastructure. Addressing this issue is essential to creating vibrant communities and to address variations in social deprivation across the County.
- 1.12 The Guidance seeks to safeguard the County’s unique historic, natural and cultural heritage and the role that this plays in defining the sense of place across Swansea’s communities. It also sets out the principles that will deliver the Green Infrastructure network which, as well as being important for its amenity value, promotes biodiversity, provides enhanced opportunities for Active Travel and promotes improved health and well-being. Ensuring connectivity for all forms of movement, but especially by Active Travel and sustainable modes, is key to achieving the creation of successful places. The Guidance explains how the design and function of streets must be treated as an integral aspect of Placemaking and must not be considered in isolation.
- 1.13 The Council is committed to integrating placemaking principles and good design into development schemes at all levels. Poor design can not only detract from the character and appearance of an area, it can adversely affect people’s well-being and quality of life. Considerations of visual impact, loss of light, overlooking, privacy, disturbance, traffic impact and environmental effects are all key in this regard. Furthermore, poor designs will often fail to provide the multi-functional benefits that schemes are required to deliver in order to accord with policy requirements. It is for these reasons that decision making will require that proposals must have full regard to this Guidance and the overarching policy framework that it augments.

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2.0 National and Local Planning Framework

This section sets out the relevant policy requirements and drivers for change at both national and local level that apply to the creation of new places.

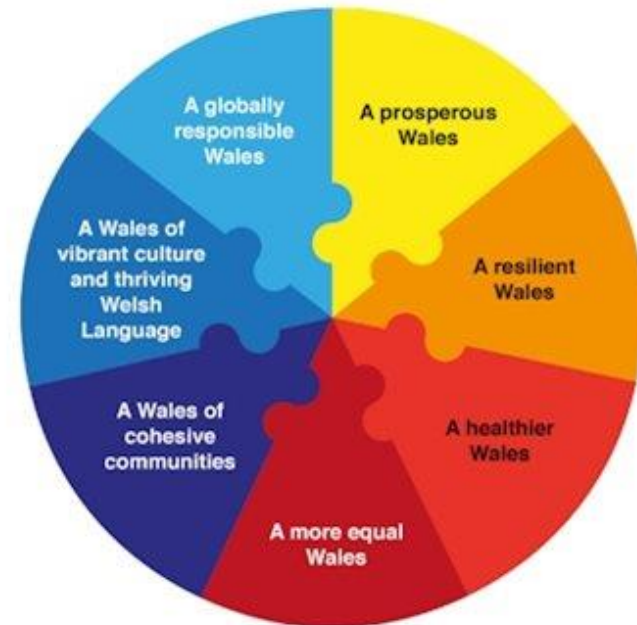
National Legislation and Policy

- 2.1 There is an overwhelming requirement embedded into Wales' national legislation, policy, guidance and government strategy documents for placemaking to be at the heart of planning decision making. The following paragraphs provide an overview of this national context, however it is not intended to be an exhaustive or definitive list, and all these documents should be consulted directly as to their relevance depending on the nature of a proposed residential scheme.
- 2.2 In recent years, a number of key Acts of Parliament have become established that have a direct bearing on the placemaking, design and heritage requirements for residential development. These include: 'The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) (2010),); Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and associated guidance; and the Well Being of Future Generations Act (2015).

Well Being of Future Generations Act

- 2.3 This Act, introduced in 2015, requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. The emphasis is on working together with a joined up longer term horizon focussing on seven goals as set out in Figure 2.1:

Figure 2.1 – The Seven Goals of the WBFGA



2.4 Placemaking is considered to be the fundamental planning process to deliver the seven goals of the Well Being of Future Generations Act and is underpinned by the five ways of working:

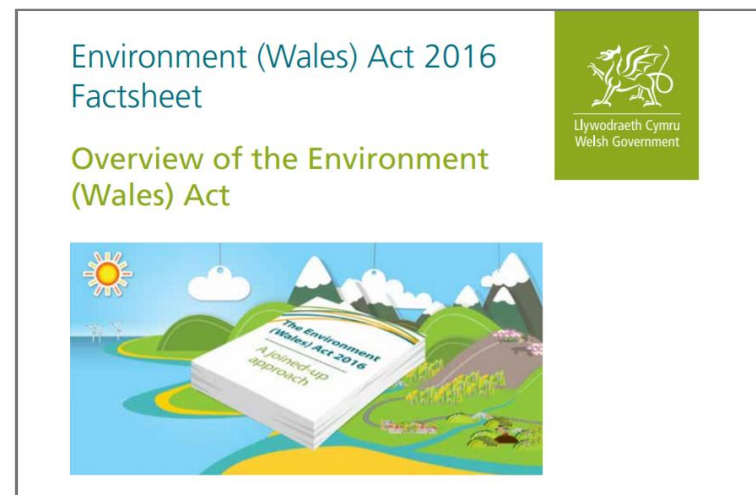
- Prevention such as managing surface water in new developments
- Integration across services such as health benefits resulting from well-designed places
- Involvement such as engaging communities and stakeholders
- Collaboration such as working across disciplines to shape places
- Long Term such as focussing on the legacy of well-designed places

2.8 This context provides a strong high level framework for new places. The section at the end of this Chapter sets out how the main themes of the Guidance address the seven goals.

Environment (Wales) Act 2016

2.9 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets out the requirement for the sustainable management of natural resources. The Act places a duty on the Council (under Part 1, Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. To maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.

2.10 In exercising this duty Swansea Council “must take account of the resilience of ecosystems, Planning Policy Wales (PPW) recognises that delivering the Council’s S6 duty is a key influence on planning decision making in Wales, with the potential to provide multiple environmental, cultural and economic benefits for both people and wildlife¹.



2.11 Integration of biodiverse and resilient ecosystems within the design of development at an early stage is therefore a key element of delivering the Council’s placemaking objectives. It requires consideration of biodiversity at all scales, and consideration of the constraints and opportunities presented by all natural features, both within and outside the site, and of species habitats identified for legislative protection, but also all features which are part of the wider ecosystem resilience. A key principle of in implementing the section 6 duty through the planning system is therefore to ensure firstly that there is no net loss of

biodiversity, but also to promote ecosystem resilience by considering ecological connectivity and resilience. To achieve this the council will follow the stepwise process promoted by PPW and will seek to ensure that development delivers ecological enhancements wherever possible. The Biodiversity and Development SPG provides further detail on how the Council ensure development within Swansea maintains and enhances the County's biodiversity and delivers long term ecosystem resilience.

Flood and Water Management Act; Env. Act 2010

2.12 This Act places a requirement of all developments of more than 100m² to incorporate drainage that meets the six mandatory Surface water drainage systems (SUDS) standards:

1. Runoff destination – where does surface water discharge
2. Hydraulic control – rate of discharge
3. Water quality – improve and filter
4. Amenity – multifunctional green spaces
5. Biodiversity – deliver a net gain in biodiversity and support ecosystem resilience
6. Construction/ operation/maintenance – safe and effective operation

2.13 SUD are subject to a separate consenting process with the Sustainable Drainage Approval Board (SAB). The SAB has a duty to adopt compliant systems so long as it is built and functions in accordance with the approved designs. SUDs must be designed in parallel with the planning and engineering layout and positively designed and integrated into the new 'place'.

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, 2018)



2.14 PPW sets out the Welsh Governments approach to achieving well-being and sustainable development via placemaking. It emphasises the legacy of development for people and the environment.

“Good placemaking is ...essential to the delivery of sustainable development and achieving improvements in the well-being of communities”. (2.10)

“Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surroundings area”.

(3.3 – Placemaking in Action)

“Placemaking” is a holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces, focused on positive outcomes. It draws upon an area’s potential to create high quality development and public spaces that promote people’s prosperity, health, happiness, and well being in the widest sense. Placemaking considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings. This will be true for major developments creating new places as well as small developments created within a wider place. Placemaking should not add additional cost to a development, but will require smart, multi-dimensional and innovative thinking to implement and should be considered at the earliest possible stage. Placemaking adds social, economic, environmental and cultural value to development proposals resulting in benefits which go beyond a physical development boundary and embed wider resilience into planning decisions”.

(Planning Policy Wales p16)

“Good design is about avoiding the creation of car-based developments. It contributes to minimising the need to travel and reliance on the car, whilst maximising opportunities for people to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys”.

(3.12)

“Planning authorities should through a process of negotiation seek to improve poor or average developments which are not well designed, do not take account of their context and consider their place, or do not meet the objectives of good design”.

(3.16)

“Green infrastructure can be an effective means of enhancing health and well-being, through linking dwellings, workplaces and community facilities and providing high quality, accessible green spaces”.

(3.23)

Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2016)

2.15 This document contains specific guidance regarding housing design and layout. It spells out the principles of good design based on an understanding of what makes existing places attractive, successful and sustainable places in which to live.

“Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on the existing communities”

(TAN 12, 2009, paragraph 2.6)

2.16 TAN 12 identifies that the overriding principles in the design of residential environments should be to establish a sense of place and community. More specifically (paragraph 5.11.2) housing design should aim to:

- create places with the needs of people in mind, which are distinctive and respect local character;
- promote layouts and design features which encourage community safety and accessibility;
- focus on the quality of the places and living environments for pedestrians rather than the movement and parking of vehicles;
- avoid inflexible planning standards and encourage layouts which manage vehicle speeds through the geometry of the roads and building;
- promote environmental sustainability features such as energy efficiency in new housing and make clear specific commitments to carbon reductions and/ or sustainable building standards;
- secure the most efficient use of land including appropriate densities; and,
- consider and balance potential conflicts between these criteria.

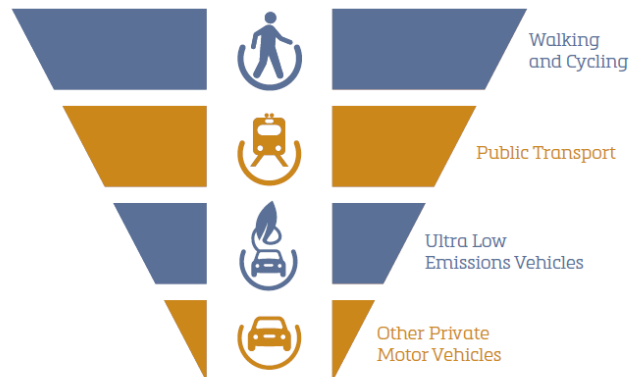
Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (2007)

2.17 TAN 18 clearly sets out the place-led requirements for street design linking to Manual for Streets. This is reinforced by more recent quotes in Planning Policy Wales:

“The design and layout of streets must give a high priority to their role as public spaces and meeting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, reflecting the principles of the sustainable transport hierarchy. To create streets that are social places, the public realm needs to be safe and attractive and the street designed for low speeds”.

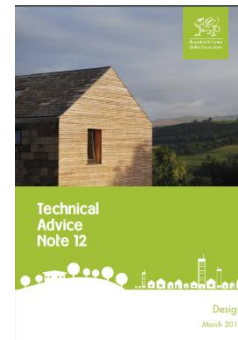
(PPW 4.1.19)

Figure 8: The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning



The Welsh Government policy, Manual for Streets and its companion guide Manual for Streets 2, requires that street design should not follow the conventional engineering-led approach. The design of new or enhanced streets should respond to urban design principles, including those in Manual for Streets and the Active Travel Design Guidance, and not adhere to ridged standards. Design Bulletin 32: Residential Roads and Footpaths has been superseded by Manual for Streets.

(PPW 4.1.21)



Government Climate Change Strategy

2.18 The Welsh Government declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019 with the objective of moving towards net zero carbon by 2050. This objective is supported by 'Low Carbon Wales' published in June 2019 focussing on different sectors setting out pathways to reduce emissions:

Buildings

- Residential buildings contribute 7.5% of national CO2 emissions
- Objectives include conservation of energy, innovative construction, use of low carbon energy, use of smart systems

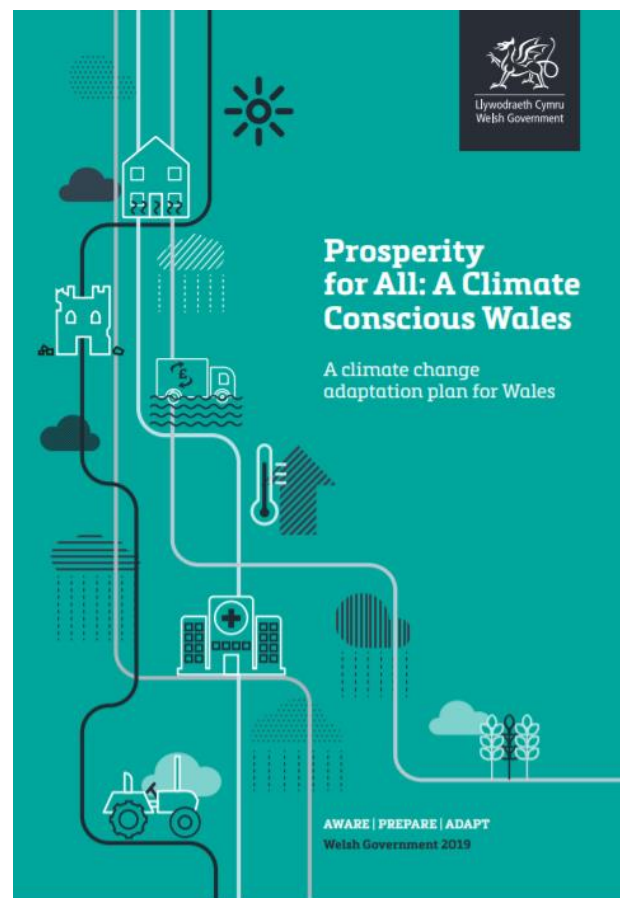
Transport

- Cars contribute 7.7% of national CO2 emissions
- Objectives include supporting active travel, increasing use of public transport, develop Ultra Low Emission vehicle network

Land use

- Increase tree cover as carbon sink and recognition of well being
- Maintain and enhance habitat connectivity

2.19 These clearly have implication for new and existing places Wales and will also be addressed in parallel by for example changes to Building Regulations in Wales Part L: Conservation of Fuel and Power



Design Commission for Wales and Housing Audits

2.20 Assessments of residential developments by the Design Commission for Wales (DCfW) in 2005 warned that the general standard of house building in Wales is mediocre and a decade later this was still an issue:



“The majority of residential developments in Wales provide little to celebrate. Placeless developments with mono uses, focused on car movements and lacking any connection to the qualities of the site or indeed to the existing settlement, are all too common.”

(Places for Life publication, 2016, DCfW)

2.21 The 2020 ‘Living with Beauty’ publication by the Building Better, Building Beauty Commission highlights that this is still an issue citing an independent study¹ which concluded, *“three quarters of new housing development in England are either mediocre or poor”* (page 9). There is no reason to believe that the situation is any different in Wales and that the issues from 15 years ago still pervade. The Building Better, Building Beautiful commission clearly articulates the challenge:

¹ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2020/jan/new-housing-design-england-overwhelmingly-mediocre-or-poor>

“We need to develop more homes within mixed-use real places at ‘gentle density’, thereby creating streets, squares and blocks with clear backs and fronts. In many ways this is the most challenging of our tasks, which is to change the model of development from ‘building units’ to ‘making places’”
(Living with Beauty, Page 4)

2.22 The Building for Life 12 standard (2014), which is endorsed by the Home Builders Federation identified ‘eight problems that plague new developments’:

1. Homes that all look the same
2. Bin blight
3. Houses all facing different directions
4. Roads that encourage speeding
5. Streets that discourage walking and cycling
6. Neglected communal gardens
7. Inappropriate car parking
8. Soulless streets without trees or flower

2.23 The Building for Life assessment process on places in a structured manner in the same manner as this Residential Design Guide:

- Integration into the neighbourhood
- Creating a place
- Home and street



Placemaking Wales Charter

2.24 The Placemaking Wales Charter has been developed in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership, which is made up of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests. The Charter reflects the collective and individual commitment of these organisations to support the development of high-quality places across Wales for the benefit of communities.



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2.25 Signatories to the Wales Placemaking Charter include Home Builders Federation, Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation, Institute of Highway Engineers, Housing associations, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, RSAW, Welsh Government, WLGA various house builders. This clearly demonstrates that Placemaking is embraced and endorsed across the entire development industry. The working of the charter is set out in the following paragraphs.

Placemaking Wales Charter signatories agree to promote the following principles in the planning, design and management of new and existing places:

People and Community – The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

Location – Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Movement – Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network, and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Mix of Uses – Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Public Realm – Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Identity – The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location, including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes, are identified and responded to.

Creating Healthier Places and Spaces for Our Present and Future Generations

2.26 This 2018 Public Health Wales publication sets out robust evidence demonstrating that the built and natural environment can support physical and mental well-being. They highlight that having access to green open spaces, healthy food, opportunities for being active, clean air, well-designed buildings can promote well-being. Conversely as a health body they have proven that where these are missing or limited, for example lack of open green spaces, there is likely to be a negative impact on population health and well-being.

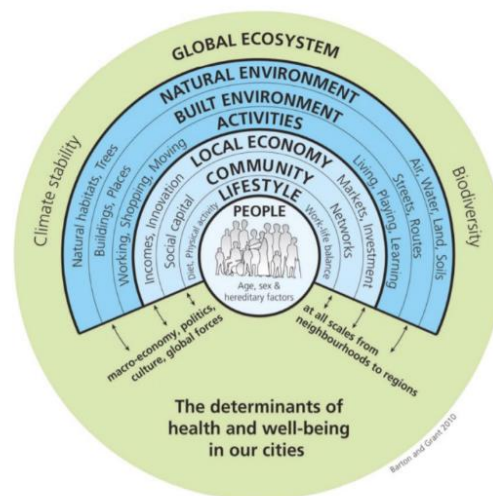
2.27 They cite a holistic approach to creating and managing places that joins up planning and health, setting out six priority areas where placemaking leads to evidence based health outcomes:

1. Inclusive infrastructure that prioritises walking and cycling, and improves road safety

Being physically active benefits individual and population health and reduces the risks of obesity/ chronic conditions.

2. Accessible and well-maintained green infrastructure, open green spaces and blue spaces

Access to, and engagement with natural environment is associated with positive health outcomes, including



improved physical and mental health, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions

3. Local food growing and retail environment that enhances access to healthy food choices

Access to food growing spaces within communities impacts positively on attitudes towards healthier foods, physical activity levels and social connectivity.

4. Community, health & social care services in local facilities

Health and community provision from well positioned and well-designed facilities can result in positive impacts on health and well-being

5. Low levels of air pollution

Evidence indicates that living in an area with clean air can lead to positive changes in people's health behaviours and is associated with increased physical activity.

6. Building design promotes health and well-being

Buildings in which we live and work can have a profound impact on health and well-being. Insulated, warm, naturally lit and well ventilated homes and buildings can help improve general health and well-being, reduce respiratory conditions, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities

Local Policy and Guidance

The Swansea LDP

2.30 The adopted Swansea LDP provides the statutory local policy framework against which all planning applications within the County must be determined. LDP Policies emphatically embed the principle of placemaking to create quality places and spaces. They emphasise that all new development, including residential development of all scales, has the potential to contribute in a positive and meaningful way to how a place will be experienced and enjoyed.



2.31 The LDP embeds placemaking at the local level as a cross cutting theme of the Plan. There are however specific policies that describe the key principles of what placemaking and successful development must encompass. The two overarching key policies are summarised below, with full text provided in the Appendices.

PS 2: Placemaking and Place Management

2.32 This policy recognises that placemaking should be the objective for new developments but that many developments occur in the context of existing places where integration is important. This policy is the broad hook for placemaking bringing together regeneration, neighbourhood planning, landscape, active travel, green infrastructure, street design, character and amenity.

2.33 LDP Policy *PS 2* requires that development creates quality places by encouraging an approach of understanding and responding to the context and character of the application site. It highlights that consideration must be given to not just the building but also the space around it. Policy *PS 2* provides the yardstick against which the effects of an application will be measured. It guides consideration of possible effects on cultural heritage, natural environment, public amenity, health and wellbeing, parking, landscaping, accessibility and transport. It specifically requires that:

“Development should enhance the quality of places and spaces and respond positively to aspects of local context and character that contribute to a sense of place”

SD 2: Masterplanning Principles

- 2.34 This policy sets the required placemaking approach for sites where there is capacity for 100 homes or more. It emphasises the need for walkable neighbourhoods, social infrastructure, effective densities, green infrastructure, character etc with an emphasis on masterplan process.
- 2.35 This SPG provides supporting guidance and information for a number of other LDP policies, which includes (but is not exclusive to) the following;

Figure 2.1: Key LDP Policies Augmented by this SPG

<i>Policy Ref</i>	<i>Name and Description</i>
<i>PS 1</i>	<i>Sustainable Places</i>
<i>SD 1</i>	<i>Strategic Development Areas</i>
<i>SD A - L</i>	<i>Strategic Site Allocations</i>
<i>RP 1</i>	<i>Safeguarding Public Health and Natural Resources</i>
<i>RP 3</i>	<i>Air and Light Pollution</i>
<i>RP 4</i>	<i>Water Pollution and the Protection of Water Resources</i>
<i>RP 10</i>	<i>Waste in new development</i>
<i>ER 1</i>	<i>Climate Change</i>
<i>ER 2</i>	<i>Green Infrastructure Network</i>
<i>ER 4</i>	<i>Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</i>
<i>ER 6</i>	<i>Designated Sites of Ecological Importance</i>
<i>ER 8</i>	<i>Habitats and Species</i>

<i>Policy Ref</i>	<i>Name and Description</i>
<i>ER 9</i>	<i>Ecological Networks and Features of Importance for Biodiversity</i>
<i>ER 11</i>	<i>Trees, Hedgerows and Development</i>
<i>SI 1</i>	<i>Health and Well-being</i>
<i>SI 6</i>	<i>Provision of New Open Space</i>
<i>SI 8</i>	<i>Community Safety</i>
<i>EU 2</i>	<i>Renewable energy in new development</i>

- 2.36 Other LDP policies not referenced in Figure 1 may also be relevant to some residential developments, depending on their location and the nature of development, and it is therefore important that the Guidance be read in conjunction with all the relevant policies of the Council's adopted Development Plan.
- 2.37 The holistic approach to Placemaking and Place Management promoted in the Swansea LDP aligns with National Planning Policy Guidance and Advice. At the national level, Planning Policy Wales (PPW, paras 2.1.1-2.1.2) sets out the overarching national principles relating to planning and placemaking. These principles underpin the formation of local planning policies and inform individual decisions on development proposals. PPW states that planning decisions must seek to promote sustainable development and support the well-being of people and communities across Wales. It requires that this be done by addressing seven well-being goals, one of which is to Foster Cohesive Communities, emphasising the importance of

appropriate combinations of land uses. PPW makes clear that placemaking and sustainable development principles are essential to development at all scales.

2.38 The Council has also prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which is a supporting evidence document to the LDP. Appendix 3 of the LDP also contains information on the key site requirements for allocated sites in the LDP. This should be reviewed at the outset to highlight what is required as part of the development.

Complementary Supplementary Planning Guidance

2.39 This Guidance forms part of a suite of SPGs that provide Placemaking, Heritage and Design Guidance for development in Swansea, which also covers:

- **Householder Development;**

- **Infill & Backland Development; and**
- **Development in the Gower AONB**

2.40 As well as the suite of SPG relating to Placemaking, Heritage and Design, the Swansea LDP is also supported by a range of other SPG that are material considerations for decision making on planning applications². This includes, but are not exclusive to, the following SPG (titles of documents forthcoming and may be subject to change):

- **The Protection of Trees;**
- **Green Infrastructure;**
- **Biodiversity and Development; and**
- **Parking Standards.**

2.41 When making an application you will need to demonstrate how your proposals meet the requirements of the full range of policy and guidance used by the Council.

² Swansea.gov.uk/spg

3.0 The Placemaking and Design Process

Pre-Application Process – Improve Speed & Quality

- 3.1 Pre-application discussions with the Council can assist in improving new places by identifying and addressing any key placemaking opportunities and issues at an early stage. This can speed up the determination of any subsequent planning application.
- 3.2 There is limited scope to make significant amendments to planning applications once they have been submitted and it is advised that pre-application advice is sought prior to submitting. Planning applications submitted without the benefit of pre-application negotiation will be determined based on the information submitted, with limited scope for negotiation/ amendments during the allocated determination period.
- 3.3 Given the complex placemaking considerations for larger and/or sensitive developments, pre-application dialogue is therefore strongly encouraged. It is suggested that the best way to do this is via a *Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)* which offers significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system through collaborative working and a schedule of meetings/ workshops.
- 3.4 There is a requirement for all major residential development schemes (10+ homes) to undertake statutory pre-application consultation (known as PAC) with the local community and relevant statutory consultees for a period of 28 days. It is recommended that pre-application advice is sought from the Council to ascertain key design points prior to this process.
- 3.5 In order to give meaningful pre-application advice, a sufficient amount of information should be submitted at the earliest opportunity. The amount and nature of information provided should be proportionate to the scale of the application, as well as providing clear explanation of how the proposals have been informed by the site and wider local context. The following information is desirable:
 - Site analysis such as topography, landscape and biodiversity features, existing structures, surrounding development, access points
 - Context analysis including local facilities, movement routes, densities and character
 - Initial Constraints and Opportunities/Design and Access Statement findings;
 - Precedents or examples of places that inform the proposal
 - Initial site layout;
 - Initial dwelling details such as elevations and streetscene views;
 - Initial drainage strategy/flood impact information.

The Need for Vision & Site Analysis

3.6 The Design Commission for Wales (DCfW) have prepared 'Site & Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the value of a site' which should be essential reading for all designers and developers of major planning applications. This document sets out a structured way of analysing places focussing on outcomes with the 'So What?' question.

"Site analysis is a critical part of the planning and design process. No development takes place in isolation - it will be influenced by the conditions of the site and will have an impact on its context. Good site and context analysis forms the foundation of good design. "

(Site & Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the value of a site)

3.7 Successful places are underpinned by a guiding vision for the place to be created. This could stem from an understanding of the site and context, or could be based on a commitment to innovation. The key drivers unpinning the vision should be informed by placemaking principles such as:

- a desire to positively integrate existing trees, habitat and landscape features and achieve a net gain in biodiversity
- maximising active travel and recreation;
- delivering a high quality contemporary design;
- working with the topography to maximise views;
- maximising solar gain;
- low energy and/or self-build;
- improving local connectivity

3.8 The following is an example of a vision for a mixed use settlement expansion:

"The proposed development will offer a range of residential, mixed use and business accommodation that reflects the needs and aspirations of local citizens and benefits the economy. Our aim is to avoid a wasteful sprawl, with the intent to provide a denser, more sustainable place with a variety of public spaces including streets, squares and gardens. The aspiration is to create a sustainable, walkable neighbourhood which retains and enhances the existing nature conservation area. It will bring together the traditional benefits of suburbia - house, garden, and privacy, quiet - and the shared benefits of higher densities that include public infrastructure and resources."

Mitchel Eley Gould

(Taken from Site & Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the value of the site, WG, 2016)



The 2019 winner of the Stirling Prize, Goldsmith Street in Norwich was driven by a clear vision

The Concept Plan

- 3.9 The vision should be supplemented by a diagrammatic concept plan which indicates the potential key features of the development. It might address how the development responds and connects to the wider area, main movement routes, and density of development, mixed uses, biodiversity, blue/green infrastructure and broad character/architectural principles. Providing as much information as possible to explain how the design approach has been developed will help both the pre-application and full application planning stages.
- 3.10 The vision and concept plan should communicate the attributed of the place that is to be created. This allows the developer and Council to discuss how proposals can be evolved from the context, guidance and policy. It provides more certainty for all involved in the placemaking process.
- 3.11 In creating the vision for a place, consultation with the local community and stakeholders at the PAC stage can help to ensure that proposals better reflect community aspirations and involve local people earlier and more meaningfully in the design process. The vision should therefore be considered as evolving through the LPA pre-application process as well as the PAC process and subsequent planning application stages.



Insert example of concept plan

Community Involvement

3.12 The Well-being of Future Generations Act sets **involvement** as a fundamental way of working for all involved and this needs to go beyond the current 'consultation approach'. Often this process is accessed by groups that are not wholly representative of the entire community. There is a greater need to engage children and young people who may become the future occupants of these new places. With the growth of computer generate images (CGI), virtual reality and social media it should be possible to make involvement a far more collaborative and engaging process that helps shape meaningful outcomes.



Design and Access Statements

3.13 **All planning applications for major residential development (10+ homes) as well as all proposals for new dwellings in conservation areas must be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (DAS).** The DAS should explain and justify the design elements of the proposals by:

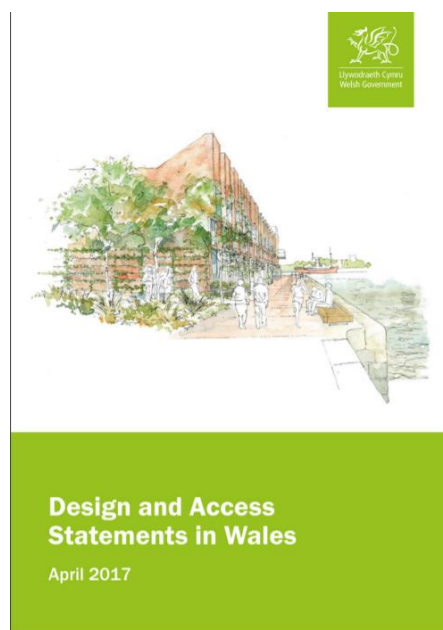
- Demonstrating the steps taken to appraise the context of the development;
- Providing a series of site constraints and opportunities which influence the design proposals (preferably on a plan/drawing);
- Explaining how the design of the development also takes the wider context, the current Development Plan and other relevant SPG documents such as this one into account.
- Highlighting how the design has been informed by other fundamental considerations such the SuDS and GI strategies for the site.
- Since the publication of DAS legislation there is a much greater emphasis on health and well-being so the DAS should also explain how the development addresses these cross cutting considerations.

3.14 The Welsh Government has prepared guidance on the content of *DAS (Design and Access Statements in Wales - April 2017)*. Whilst the amount of information provided should reflect the scale of the proposal and sensitivity of the context,

all DAS documents will need to 'tell the story' of the proposal from site/context analysis, identification of precedents, vision setting, option testing, design development, explanation of the final proposal. This can be done using illustrations, plans, photos, and sketches as appropriate. For larger schemes of 50 or more homes, it is expected that the DAS will include a section explaining how the proposal will create a healthy place.

[The DAS] “..... is a document that should address a key question: ‘why is it like that?’ by explaining how the design has responded to the site, context, brief, vision, relevant policy and objectives of good design. It is recommended that a DAS is concise and illustrated wherever possible to highlight the key information relating to design.”

(Design and Access Statements in Wales - April 2017, Welsh Government)



3.15 The DAS should explain the new place in a strategic manner and this can be done by responding to the principles 'key questions' set out at the end of each section of this guidance.

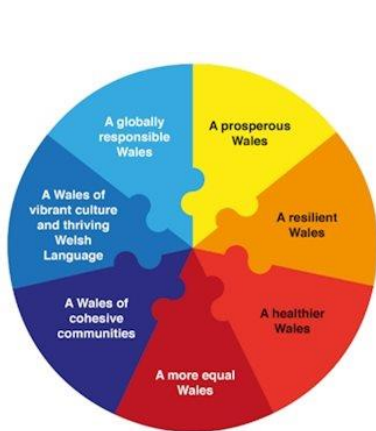
Transport, Active Travel and Placemaking

3.16 Movement to a place and movement within a place are essential components of placemaking. Therefore the Transport Statement or Transport Assessment process will need to prioritise active travel and demonstrate that the highway proposals are in support of the placemaking agendas such as:

- low speed place-led streets:
- emphasis on active travel and
- consideration of place issues resulting outside the site boundary (for example implications for off site highway improvements).

4.0 Overarching Principles for Places to Live

- 4.1 In accordance with the national legislation, local policy and range of publications set out in Chapter 2, the Council considers placemaking a fundamental requirement in order to ensure the delivery of distinctive, safe, healthy and sustainable places at all scales. It is important to note that placemaking is not a notion of subjective aesthetics. Rather, it is an overarching, robust approach to the process of planning, and is founded on sound, fully evidenced principles.
- 4.2 Drawing on the national and local placemaking context, including the 7 Well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), this Guidance requires proposals for places to live to be consistent with the following four key overarching principles:



Creu Lleoedd Cymru
Placemaking Wales

Places for People

4.3



Housing developments are places where we spend most of our time. Therefore decisions relating to the design, layout and location of proposals for residential development will have considerable impact on quality of life and sense of community. Ensuring places for people is imperative to providing resilient,

safe and cohesive neighbourhoods which promote physical and mental health and well-being. New homes and places must be able to respond to changing requirements such as climate change and home working.

Green Places

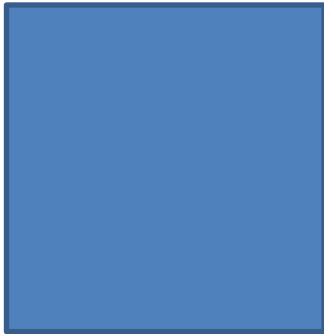
4.4



Every new place should be distinctive with a sense of place. This includes well designed buildings, spaces and streets which are not dominated by vehicles. Well-designed green spaces and green streets are critical to integrate green infrastructure at the neighbourhood and local level which has benefits for well-being, biodiversity and sustainability.

Sustainable Places

4.5



New residential developments should support more healthy, active and sustainable lifestyles against the backdrop of a declared climate emergency. This includes making the best and most sustainable use of land in appropriate locations, establishing mixed communities, creating places which are not

dependant on private car use and promotion of active travel, where walking and cycling are the preferred means of getting around for short trips. It also means providing safe, overlooked and multi-functional open spaces and green streets. Rather than a narrow emphasis on low carbon buildings the focus should be on low carbon neighbourhoods

Quality Places

4.6



This design guidance is underpinned by a holistic approach to 'Placemaking' which is enshrined in national planning policy (PPW) and provides for an opportunity to raise the bar on residential developments of all sizes in all locations. The new placed should create the conditions

to bring people together, in areas with a sense of place and well-being which are inclusive, sustainable, attractive, sociable, accessible, secure, ecologically resilient, healthy and prosperous for all.

4.7 The opposite below shows how the various chapters of this Residential Design Guide align with the 7 well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015):



5. Guidance Modules

Introduction

- 5.1 Chapter 4 highlights the overarching placemaking requirements that all places to live should adhere to, having regard to the National and Local policy framework that applies.
- 5.2 The following modules set out placemaking requirements for residential developments which work from strategic issues down to detailed issues. This reflects the sequence by which successful places are designed.
- 5.3 Each module (Chapter 5) sets out a brief overview of the issue, followed by guidance on how the consideration can be addressed to achieve high quality, sustainable, safe and inclusive places to live. They are not a set of rules but rather a set of principles which can be addressed in many different ways. These placemaking requirements should not be read in isolation as many overlap and should be considered in conjunction with one another. Each requirement, A-L, is highlighted in Figure 5.1
- 5.2 At the end of each placemaking requirements there are key questions to consider in preparing a scheme. These will be used by the council when assessing proposals. There is also an indication of the relevant Design and Access Statement (DAS) headings to help you explain your scheme.

Figure 5.1: Placemaking Requirements

USE	A. Neighbourhoods
	B. Density and mixed uses
STRUCTURE	C. Blue/ Green Infrastructure
	D. Making Connections
	E. Public Spaces
	F. Streets as places
	G. Inclusive places
FORM	H. Townscape
	I. Quality and Character
	J. Community safety
	K. Privacy and amenity
	L. Accommodating parking



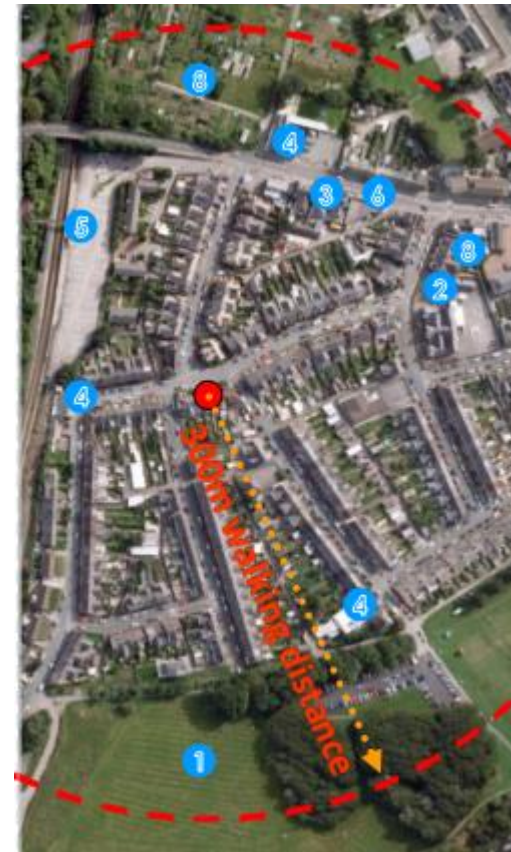
Section A: Neighbourhoods

Objective:

To create and reinforce cohesive and healthy communities through the planning of neighbourhoods that integrate with the local context, offer a choice of accommodation and promote active travel through the provision of good access by sustainable travel means to new and existing community facilities.

- A.1 New developments must integrate with existing neighbourhoods in order to create sustainable places and 'cohesive communities'. Cohesive communities are created and sustained by providing spaces for people to interact and undertake activities, this includes the provision of recreational spaces, access to work, play spaces and opportunities to connect with nature.
- A.2 Placemaking has a pivotal role to play through the planning and design process to ensure the creation and sustainability of cohesive communities. This is achieved by promoting accessible and well-connected places, mixed use development which provides spaces for people to interact and undertake activities, contributing to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generation Act.
- A.3 A good starting point is to examine the area within a 15 minute walk (or a distance of 800m on ground level) from the development site. The local shops, employment opportunities, community facilities, open spaces, schools, public transport networks and established walking/ cycling

routes should be identified. This will have implications for the form of a development and the potential for higher densities in the more accessible, well-served locations. The aim should be to create or reinforce a 15 minute neighbourhood where residents can meet all their daily needs on foot or cycle within 15 minutes of their home.



The Victorian suburb which was laid out before cars is a good model for a modern walkable neighbourhood.

Facilities:

1. Park
2. School
3. Local shops
4. Pub
5. Rail Station
6. Bus Stops
7. Surgery
8. Allotments

A.4 Sustainable placemaking is based around the concept of 'walkable neighbourhoods', where a range of facilities are within active travel distance, and the streets are safe and enjoyable to walk and cycle. The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 makes walking and cycling the preferred option for short journeys, in particular everyday journeys such as to and from a workplace or education establishment (see section D for further detail). In accordance with PPW, new developments must be fully accessible by walking and cycling, hereby reducing car-reliance and minimising the feeling of isolation. New developments should refer to the Council's 'Integrated Network Maps' to ensure developments are fully integrated with existing communities via active travel networks.

A.5 Walkable neighbourhoods are best achieved with a connected pattern of streets and spaces, where daily needs are within walking distance. People should be able to walk to a park, natural greenspace and newsagents within five minutes (400m). Most residents should have local shops, bus stop, health centre and perhaps a primary school within 10 minutes' walk (up to 800m on level ground). This has subsequent benefits for social cohesion, health and wellbeing. Victorian suburbs and traditional villages are often good examples of 'walkable neighbourhoods' and the challenge is to reinterpret the walkable scale of these whilst accommodating sufficient parking.

A.6 All sites can contribute towards the formation and reinforcement of walkable neighbourhoods through:

- Creation of new or more direct pedestrian links between existing communities and local facilities, facilitating 'cohesive communities';
- Appropriate orientation of new buildings to make existing and new routes feel safer and more attractive through good natural surveillance and creation of active frontage;
- Provision of new local facilities, such as a local shop or play area in a central accessible location.
- Retention or creation of natural accessible greenspaces



Example of a new development that provides new shops, post office and bus stop as part of a focal public space in a walkable central location.

A.7 Developers and applicants should engage with the Council at an early stage through the pre-application process, in order for discussions to be had on any spare capacity in existing facilities which the development can make use of, or identify community facilities which the development is expected to provide. If necessary, the Council will work with the developer to incorporate this provision into the scheme or to implement off site provision. Please see the separate Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations.

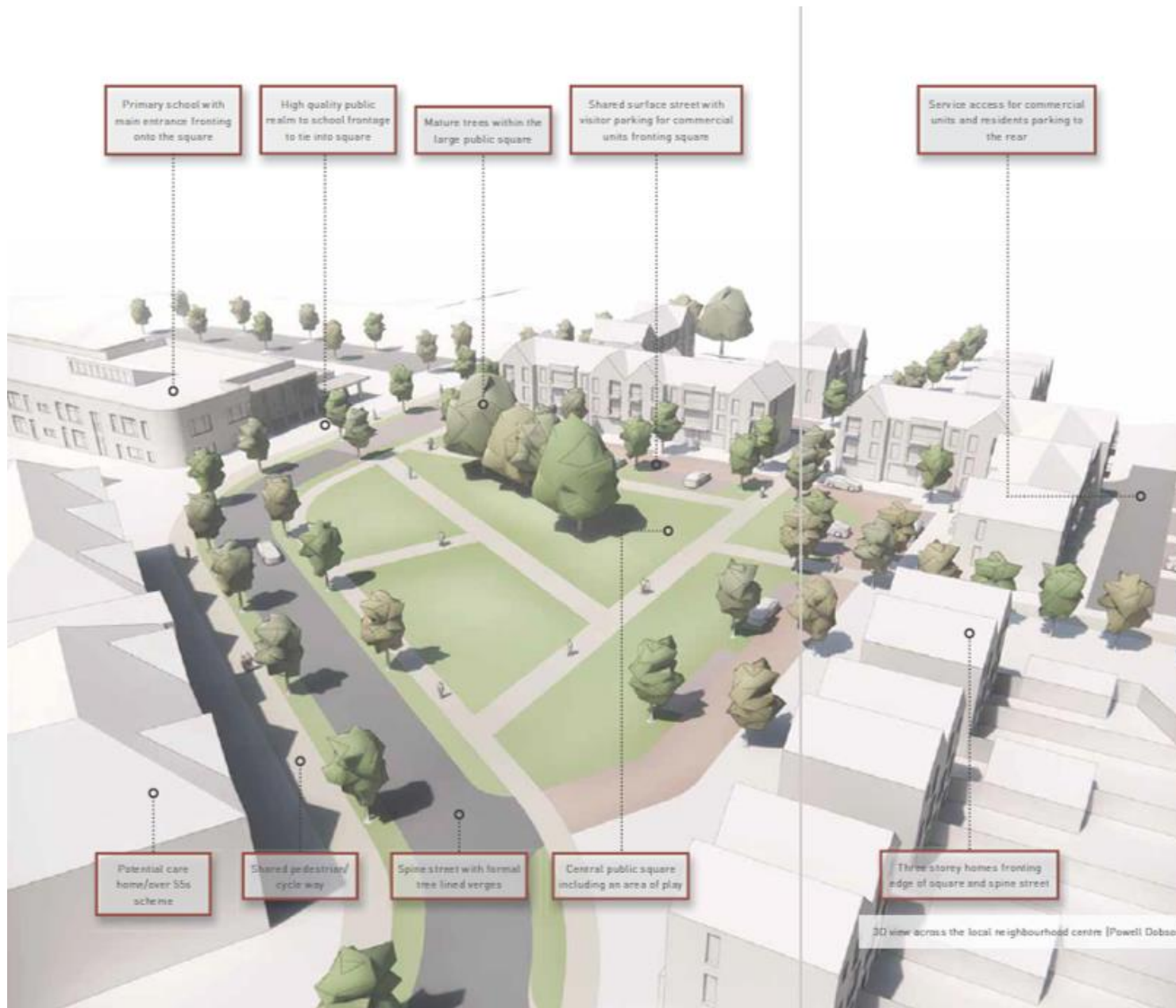
Principles

- Ensure that the existing community is informed and engaged early in the design process.
- Relate the site to its neighbourhood or character area in order to create cohesive communities and strengthen positive characteristics or activities.
- Address the needs of the entire community and create or reinforce neighbourhoods that offer choice of housing types and tenure at a range of densities, ensure good access to community facilities, open spaces and sustainable transport modes.
- Design for 15 minute neighbourhoods where residents can meet everyday needs by foot, cycle or public transport.
- Deliver or contribute towards new local facilities where appropriate.

- Ensure active travel routes are integral to the design to encourage walking and cycling within the development and through the site in order to promote a permeable, well-connected and sustainable community.
- Maintain and enhance ecological connectivity

Key Questions

- Is there information to show the scheme in its wider context?
- Does the scheme form an integral element of the existing community?
- Does the scheme promote active travel routes within and through the site?
- Does the development provide for, or have good access within 400m to parks, play areas, newsagents and within 800m to community facilities such as a school, shops, pubs or cafes?



Precedent images for the local centre



Indicative 3D visualisations of the potential appearance of the local neighbourhood centre (Powell Dobson)



Section B: Density and Mixed Uses

Objective:

To create vitality, with appropriate development densities supporting a range of services mixed use and public transport.

- B.1 In line with PPW, new development should make the most efficient use of land and increase densities in sustainable locations which are accessible to a wide range of people. Such locations should be close to public transport routes, local facilities, green spaces and community/ education facilities. Higher density development should be focused close to public transport corridors and close to urban centres, with lower densities provided elsewhere to deliver a good range of accommodation to meet needs.
- B.2 In line with the aspirations of PPW, an integrated plan-led approach must be taken to maximise the contribution to well-being, through the creation of well-designed places and cohesive communities, both urban and rural, which are sustainable and made up of appropriate density and uses.
- B.3 The predominant UK measure of density is dwellings per hectare (dph). Using this measure the overall target density for development in the City and County of Swansea is between 30-40 dwellings per hectare (gross density measure including streets and spaces but not strategic landscape/ infrastructure)

Policy SD 2 – Masterplanning Principles

- B.4 Policy SD2 requires for all sites where there is a capacity for 100 homes or more, that development must achieve **net** residential density across the site of at least 35 homes per hectare, with higher density residential and mixed uses located along public transport corridors and in focal areas, lower densities on rural/sensitive edges, and a range of densities elsewhere to meet different needs and create distinct character areas.
- B.5 Generally a density of circa 35 dwellings per hectare allow a good range of house types and sizes whilst making best use of land. However, it is important to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach and good placemaking depends on a variety of densities and building types to create and sustain a local balanced community.
- B.6 A dwellings per hectare measurement has limitations in that it does not indicate the potential number of people living in a place, because there is no distinction between large and small homes (e.g. between 4-bed houses and 1-bed flats) . Therefore a habitable rooms per hectare (HRPH) measurement and/or a bed spaces per hectare (BPH) measurement give a better impression of the potential size of a new community and these measures should be considered alongside the standard dwellings per hectare metric in order to provide a more robust understanding of living densities and housing variety for sites.

The Swansea LDP sets a general net target of 35 dwellings per hectare (dph) for 'suburban sites' (higher densities are expected in accessible locations). Given the requirements for Green Infrastructure, recreation space and Sustainable Urban Drainage, this may reduce the space available for development. Therefore to meet the 35 dph target without feeling cramped, this requires a good mix of dwelling sizes with apartments in central/ accessible areas and lower density, larger houses on landscape edges. This will result in higher densities in some areas and lower densities others with an overall average of 35 dwellings. This also ensures a mixed community, a legible place and avoids everywhere feeling the same. Developments of uniform 35 dwellings per hectare with uniform layouts of barely detached houses are unlikely to be supported.



The Gwynfaen development by Coastal and Pobl Housing Associations has a density of 35 dwellings per hectare with a range of house types including flats whilst also crating extensive areas of multi functional Green Infrastructure.

- B.7 The basic requirement should be for a range of housing type and tenure enabling real choice to meet individual needs and preferences over a reasonably lengthy period of time. Provision of a range of densities will allow for a variety of different responses to different locations whilst striking a balance between the efficient use of land and creating a pleasant place to live. Larger sites of 100+ homes will be expected to accommodate a range of densities to make use of accessible locations and to create individual character areas.



- B.8 Sites in accessible locations such as city, town and neighbourhood centres are expected to accommodate a higher density of development. Building at high densities creates a more intense and diverse urban environment. This typically demands higher standards of placemaking. Where higher densities are proposed, this must not be at the

expense of the character of an area or living conditions. When designing for higher density living standards of public neighbourhood space, internal housing space, private external space, potential noise disturbance, and general environment and design should all be considered.

- B.9 All sites should contribute to balanced communities both within the site and in conjunction with the wider area. This means that a mixture of dwelling tenures will be expected including social rented and shared ownership. In accordance with the Planning Obligations SPG, affordable homes should be seamlessly integrated into developments and not concentrated in one part of the site.

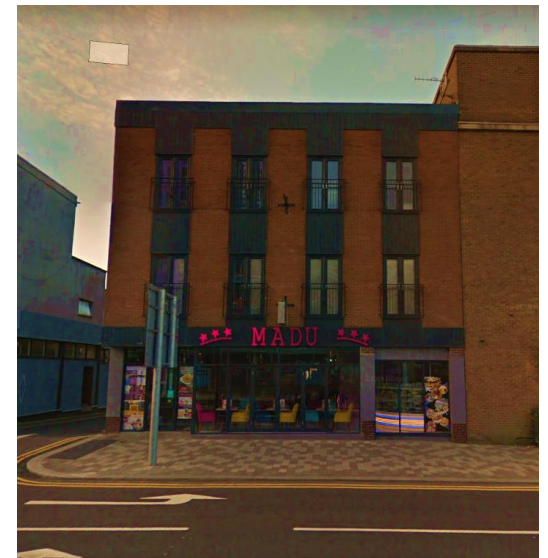


B.10 Some sites also have the potential to deliver mixed use schemes. Windfall sites proposed for residential development (not identified in the Development Plan) of 100 dwellings or more (see LDP policy SD 2: Masterplanning Principles) may be expected to include a mixture of appropriate non-residential uses such as offices or community facilities in order to create a vibrant distinctive place which potentially reduces the need to travel. Where non-residential uses are proposed, they should be in the most accessible location and positively integrate with adjacent properties/ buildings. New non-residential uses such as local shops, community facilities and schools should form focal points within developments.



B.11 Vacant and underused floors within the designated Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF) area, and other sustainable locations, can provide good quality homes and help repopulate and revitalise the city centre. The conversion of upper floors to residential use can encourage active use and feeds into the aspirations of the SCARF for additional 'city centre living'. Residential use above active ground floor uses requires safe and legible ground floor entrances. The effect of the continued commercial use of the ground floor such as servicing, refuse, ventilation etc should not impact on the amenity of upper floor living. Residential conversions of redundant commercial space often lack private external space to the detriment of well-being of occupants therefore external private space for units should be provided (see section 15.7).

B.12 Proposals for residential conversions must ensure that any new or converted residential use meets, or exceeds, the minimum space standards set out in the 'Privacy and Amenity' module of this document. Private amenity should also be addressed via balconies or Juliette balconies to maximise natural lighting.



B.13 The adopted Tall Buildings Strategy (2008) sets out a definition of tall buildings as a 'building that is more than twice the height of adjacent buildings'. The adopted strategy also identifies zones within Swansea City Centre where tall buildings are 'welcomed' and other areas where they may be 'considered', in order to increase the scale/ intensity of the post war city centre. Outside of these areas the general presumption is against tall buildings for visual and infrastructure reasons. The strategy also sets out guidelines for the design of tall buildings such as visual impact, wind and micro climate effects which should be considered in addition to this Residential Placemaking Guidance.

B.14 Proposals for purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) should be located within the Swansea Central Area to diversity uses and repopulate the city centre. An assessment of the availability and suitability of potential sites within this central location must be explored before any other sites are considered. Modern purpose built accommodation provides space and facilities suited to students needs with good access to services, facilities and public transport to University buildings, in accordance with city centre living aims. Please refer to the Council's 'Houses in Multiple Occupation and Purpose Built Student Accommodation' SPG (2019).



Principles

- Development in Swansea suburbs and the key towns should normally achieve a density of between 30-40 dwellings per hectare subject to all other criteria being met. Outside of these locations, the density should respond to the context with higher densities in Swansea city centre and lower densities in rural areas.
- Higher densities are encouraged in accessible locations, close to local centres, at important corners and around key open spaces.
- Where higher densities are proposed they should not result in a cramped living environment.
- Provide a mix of house types, form, densities, tenure and where appropriate mix of uses to suit the specific site characteristics, responding to accessibility to existing facilities, transport and local character. Development character may therefore vary within the site.
- Where affordable housing is provided it should be integrated into the overall development in small clusters, and should not be obviously segregated through location, layout or design.
- Where mixed uses are provided, the floor space and servicing requirements should be positively integrated for example by making use of upper floors for flats, or by treating car parking areas and 'public squares' with trees, planting and high quality surfaces.

- Vacant and underused upper floors within the city centre (and other relevant areas) should be considered to repopulate and revitalise these areas. All residential units must meet or exceed the minimum internal space standards.
- Purpose built student accommodation should be located within the Swansea Central Area with good access to services, facilities and public transport to encourage active travel options.

Key Questions

- Is the density of development appropriate for the accessibilities, facilities, character of the area and amenity of existing and potential occupants?
- Is there a mix of accommodation and tenure that reflects the local needs?
- Is a mix of uses provided?
- Where mixed uses are provided, are these positively integrated?

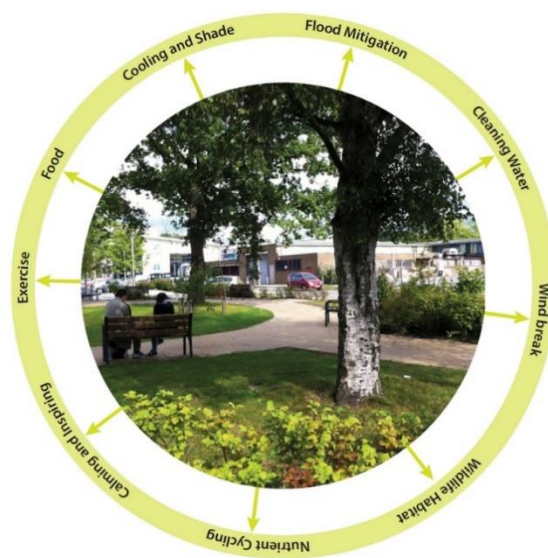
Section C: Blue/ Green Infrastructure

Objective:

To retain and enhance existing landscape, biodiversity and ecosystem features and maximise opportunities for green infrastructure led placemaking for people and nature.

C.1 Swansea's natural environment and its strategic green infrastructure network provide critical ecosystem services which the council has a statutory duty to maintain and enhance. Living with nature should be a key theme of all new developments through a green infrastructure led approach to placemaking.

C.2 Planning Policy Wales recognises that the development of green infrastructure is an important way for local authorities to deliver their Section 6 duty and to ensure resilient and healthy communities. PPW emphasises the importance of integrating Green Infrastructure at all scales (6.2.1) which can be positively addressed in a hierarchal approach as shown in figure 8.1 and should form part of the overall green infrastructure led approach to placemaking. Blue/ green Infrastructure is the logical integration of SUDs/ water and ecology/landscape.



- **Landscape Scale** – this includes retained habitats and landscape features plus undeveloped edges and maintaining and enhancing strategic habitat connectivity corridors
- **Neighbourhood Scale** – this includes green corridors within sites, new parks, wildlife areas allotments, play opportunities
- **Local scale** – this includes street trees, hedgerows, planted verges and Sustainable urban drainage corridors, wildflower meadows
- **Plot scale** – this includes hedge boundaries, rain gardens, biodiverse planting, green walls/ roofs



C.3 The starting point on every site should therefore be to work within the existing environmental constraints and opportunities. An understanding of the ecology, natural habitats and species, topography and soil quality on a site is essential and should be taken into account from the offset. The design of open spaces should incorporate existing features of value as well as provide opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement. Green spaces should be linked together by green corridors to create a quality sense of place, promote health and wellbeing and support diverse and resilient ecosystems. SuDs legislation requires that the design of Sustainable Drainage systems should maintain and enhance biodiversity and water quality, as well as amenity.

Planting choices (trees and other planting) should be carefully considered in order to deliver a range of ecosystem services as appropriate to the site constraints (e.g. opportunities to create micro climates, pollinator and bug habitats, food and cover for birds and small mammals, solar cooling and shading, wind breaks and noise and air pollution control). This holistic process will be critical to delivering good quality multifunctional, resilient green infrastructure which is a key element of creating places for people and for nature.

C.4 As set out in s6 of the Environment Wales Act the Council will require a net benefit for biodiversity enhancements that are fully integrated into development proposals. Full details of how the Council will apply this approach to the planning decision making process is set out in the Development and biodiversity SPG. A multidisciplinary approach is strongly advised and design teams should seek early engagement with relevant Council officers to ensure that the appropriate technical reports and surveys are commissioned in good time to avoid unnecessary delays to the project. In the case of ecological features, engagement with the Nature Conservation Team and undertaking of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is strongly recommended to identify any protected sites, habitats and or species present.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

C.5 The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA); Environment Act 2010 places a requirement of all developments of more than 100m² to incorporate drainage that meets the six mandatory Surface water drainage systems (SUDS) standards:

1. Runoff destination – point of discharge
2. Hydraulic control – rate of discharge
3. Water quality – improve and filter
4. Amenity – multifunctional green spaces
5. Biodiversity – deliver a net gain in biodiversity and support ecosystem resilience (see biodiversity SPG)
6. Construction/operation/maintenance – safe and effective operation

C.6 SUDS are subject to a separate consenting process with the Sustainable Drainage Approval Board (SAB). The SAB has a duty to adopt compliant systems so long as it is built and functions in accordance with the approved designs. This will require provision of commuted sums for maintenance over 60 or 120 years depending on the feature.

C.7 SUDS must be designed in parallel with the planning and engineering layout and positively integrated into the new 'place'. The drainage strategy should be explained in the Design and Access Statement. The SUDS approach links to the multi-functional GI approach at all scales, this includes attenuation basins at the landscape scale; swales at the neighbourhood scale; swales at the local street scale, rain gardens at the local plot scale.



C.8 There are a range of SUDS approaches and features which allows flexibility for designers to positively integrate drainage within green and distinctive places. These should be an integral part of the Blue/ Green Infrastructure Strategy. Often the location and alignment of SUDS features will form the starting point for GI-led placemaking. In some instances the conflicts between SUDS and GI will need to be creatively resolved such as incorporating street trees within or alongside the SUDS system.

C.9 Reduce hard surfaces – the purpose of a SUDS system is to reuse, convey and attenuate surface water from impermeable areas. The starting point should be to reduce the extent of hard surfaces to reduce the volume of surface water entering the system. For example private parking drives could incorporate permeable paving or a central grass strip.

C.10 Source control – this could include water butts, green roofs and green walls that are a feature of the new place. As these features are on plot they are not adopted by the SAB, but would be required to be retained and maintained in perpetuity in order to control the levels of surface water entering the SUDs system.

C.11 Soakaways – where ground conditions allow, it may be possible to discharge surface water into the ground. Where the ground is not suitable for soakaways, there needs to be a SUDs system to reuse surface water and convey it to a suitable controlled discharge point.

C.12 Raingarden/ bio-retention basin – this is typically a sunken planted attenuation area. Raingardens are typically on plot whilst bio retention can be larger features within the public realm often alongside the street with trees planted. For much of the year these will be dry and they fill up during rainfall to hold back surface water close to the source. The water can then be used to irrigate the planting with over flow into the next SUDs feature.

Figure 7 Rain gardens attenuate and clean surface water and provide valuable habitats in urban settings.



C.13 Swale – this is a shallow open channel (approximately 2m wide) that collects and conveys surface water across the site. Swales can run through open spaces or could follow streets as a ‘sunken verge’ to allow access for maintenance. Swales can be planted with low level water tolerant vegetation to be multi-functional for GI. This vegetation also helps improve water quality. Trees cannot be planted in swales because they will eventually block flows but can be planted at the top edges of swales in adjacent landscape areas. It is likely that street edge swales will become a key GI features of new residential developments and all residents will benefit from this GI at the local street level. The need to run Swales following drainage contours may influence the street location on a site and this should be balanced against movement routes. Swales can be bridged over very short sections for pedestrian crossings, parking/ drive access but should mainly be an open planted channel.



C.14 Attenuation basin – depending on the size of a site, there will typically need to be one or more attenuation basins at the lowest point(s). The purpose is to hold back surface water and discharge at an agreed ‘greenfield’ rate into a water course. Attenuation basins should be public GI features such as accessible wetland meadow areas or safe biodiverse ponds to walk around (the perimeter path is also needed for occasional maintenance vehicles). These basins should be positively integrated into the landscape and steeply banked artificial landforms are unlikely to be supported. Larger sites may need a series of attenuation basins as smaller landscape features rather than a single large one at end of system.

C.15 Permeable Paving – this is blockwork surfacing with gaps for surface water drainage to permeate through plus a water holding matrix below. This should be specified on a risk based approach on straight sections of carriageway or low traffic areas such as parking courts. Use of permeable paving in high traffic areas and/or areas subject to twisting such as corners is unlikely to be acceptable.



SUDs principles for residential developments:

- Design SUDS as an integral placemaking feature not added on later
- Incorporate raingardens to every property where possible to hold water closer to source
- Swales should generally follow the street network bringing Green Infrastructure close to every home
- Attenuation basins could be dry meadows or permanent ponds with extra capacity. These will be focal points in the open space areas
- All SUDS features must be multifunctional performing drainage functions whilst improving diversity and providing amenity for residents as well as meeting management/ adoption requirements

Green Infrastructure

C.17 Green Infrastructure (GI) can perform a wide range of ecosystem services. The integration of good quality, multifunctional green infrastructure into developments can therefore be an effective way to achieve net benefit for biodiversity and wider ecosystem resilience. Placemaking should be based upon a clear GI Strategy which expresses how the range of elements fundamental to the creation of distinctive, attractive, healthy and sustainable places to live will be achieved. Access to nature and green space are central to this approach and have proven benefits for both mental and physical wellbeing.



C.18 It is intended that no one should live more than a 5 minute walk (300m) from their nearest natural open space and that suitable access for all should be provided. However, there may be instances where natural spaces are best managed without public access.

C.19 At the street/ local scale it is expected that the GI will be publically or comprehensively managed. This is to ensure retention of GI features in perpetuity and appropriate maintenance regimes. It is not appropriate to assume that planting in private gardens can provide this function. Therefore it is expected that the GI requirements at the local level will primarily be provided by street trees that provide meaningful urban tree cover and complementary street planting within the public realm.

C.20 Section XX sets out how GI is required to be integrated into the street network such as planted verges and GI buildouts. As a basic rule of thumb it is expected that all homes will have a direct or oblique view of a tree in the public realm to ensure GI is fully integrated throughout a site and is not marginalised to the edges and within parks.

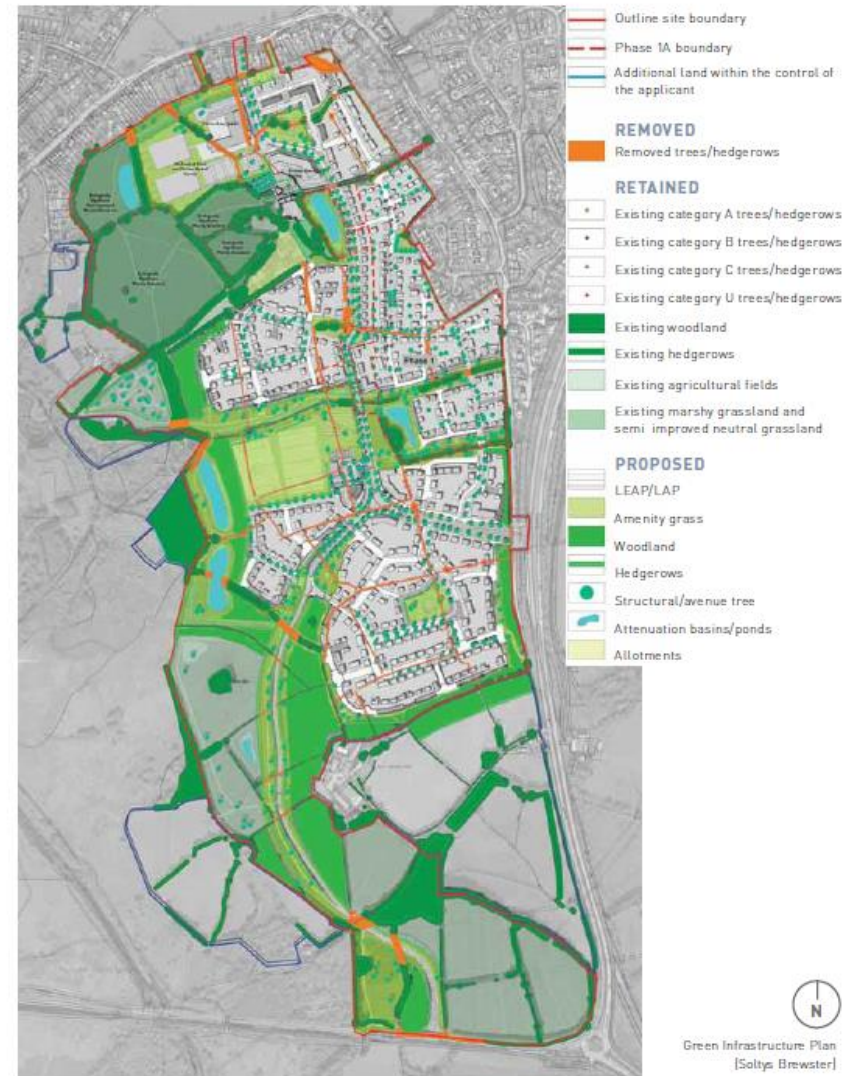
Add image of street trees

C.21 Green Infrastructure should be central to all new places guided by the following principles:

- Multi-functional
- Biodiverse
- Adapted for climate change
- Healthy
- Smart and sustainable

These should be considered by all who plan, design, build, vegetate and maintain green infrastructure. By following these principles, GI interventions maximise the number and intensity of benefits for both people and wildlife. It is expected that all development proposals will include a GI strategy and these 5 principles therefore form a useful framework to guide the appraisal of GI aspects. Further information on each principle is available in the forthcoming Green Infrastructure Strategy.

C.22 An example form of the content of a GI strategy is set out on the following page. The extent of detail required will be proportionate to the scale of the application. A simple presentation on a map, with a brief written statement may suffice for smaller developments, whilst more complex developments where there is a larger design team with a broader range of technical supporting documents may require a more comprehensive submission to communicate the justification for the design solutions proposed.



Example GI Strategy Framework

GI Constraints and Opportunities Plan

A map to communicate:

- understanding of *the intrinsic Green Infrastructure (GI) characteristics of the site and its and wider interconnectivity including topography, vegetation, watercourses, ecological movement corridors, etc.*
- ecosystem services currently provided by the site
- how these may be enhanced
- opportunities to connect to the GI network outside of the site boundary
- Provide signposting to key evidence documents

GI Proposals Plan and Written Statement

Map and Text to clearly communicate green infrastructure at all scales:

- how the site design responds to the opportunities and constraints identified
- how the proposals relate to key evidence documents
- how the proposal will maintain existing features and create new features which deliver against the 5 principles of GI.
- How the proposals will create connectivity through green corridors and integration of buildings and spaces within the site and the wider ecological connectivity context.

Written Statement.

To communicate:

- Functions of the GI proposed
- Relationship between findings of technical reports and survey and their influence on the GI proposed
- (e.g.. DAS/Ecological reports/environmental statement/landscape strategy/drainage strategy/arboricultural reports)
- Provide signposting to key documents

Principles

- Design for living with nature and balance maintaining and enhancing biodiversity against, sustainable use and places to live.
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience through the integration of both retained ecological and green infrastructure features and creation of new or enhanced features.
- Protect and promote the long-term conservation of protected habitats, species and designated sites.
- Comply with the Council's Section 6 duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity.
- Apply the ecosystem approach. Integrate management of land, water, air and living resources into development design and layout.
- Consider how development contributes to achievement of the "Resilient Wales" Well Being Goal in the Well Being of Future Generations Act.
- Maximise opportunities to maintain and enhance Swansea's strategic green infrastructure networks, by applying a multidisciplinary approach to design to ensure that benefits are provided by all aspects of green infrastructure provision.
- Assess the site at the earliest stage to deliver responsive design which follows the stepwise process, based on early engagement with council officers to establish the evidence required and ensure that delay and cost is reduced by carrying out at correct times.
- Ensure design responds to that robust site survey information – including
 - Arboricultural survey of all trees on and overhanging site to establish condition, canopy spread, and biodiversity value and ecosystem resilience.
 - Ecological assessment of the site at an early stage to identify important species and habitats. and ecological connectivity corridors Communicate results via an Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan.
 - Clearly Communicate the location of constraints and opportunities and resulting proposals through the following, as appropriate
 - Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan. - Where important species and habitats are identified
 - GI Strategy, to communicate the location and justification of GI proposed.

- Apply a holistic, placemaking approach to:
 - Design in new features to maintain and enhance biodiversity, for example by planting native trees and wildflowers or increasing the ecological value of a sustainable drainage system (SuDs).
 - Consider biodiversity gains and water quality when designing SuDs.
 - Ensure access for all to the natural environment without diminishing the value of the ecological resource.
 - Ensure all new homes have a direct or oblique view of a tree in the public realm, for well-being benefits and to achieve an integrated GI approach throughout the site.
 - Retain and enhance existing GI and biodiversity features of value which could add character to a development, be of value to wildlife and integrate development into surrounding areas.
 - Consider the location of SUDs features to ensure they are accessible for adoption and management.
 - Consider any ongoing management and /or monitoring requirements
 - Ensure that retained GI features are protected throughout the site clearance and construction process.
 - Consider how the interventions proposed deliver ecosystem services and benefits beyond their primary function (i.e. street trees provided primarily for visual amenity should also consider SuDS and solar cooling and shading functions).

Key Questions

- Has the retention and provision of ecological features been considered having full regard to the processes and guidance set out in the Biodiversity SPG
- Does the development make effective use of existing landscape, ecological or topographical features of the site?
- Has sufficient information been provided to evidence and justify the location of ecological and GI features proposed in response to the key evidence. (i.e. Has an Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan been prepared? (see Biodiversity SPG).
- Does the site propose a holistic GI strategy which responds positively to the site constraints and opportunities to provide a GI network within and outside the site which maximises multi-functionality. Does the development improve biodiversity and ecological connectivity through the provision of areas of natural open space, wildlife corridors and/or watercourses?
- Is there good public access to the natural environment?
- Are management and monitoring measures in place to maintain retained or created features in perpetuity (for the lifetime of the development)? (See Biodiversity & Development SPG)

Section D: Making Connections

Objective:

To create multifunctional, connected layouts that promote access to a range of services, facilities, onward transport connections, neighbours and nearby communities.

D.1 A key consideration for sustainable development is connecting communities and neighbourhoods. The layout of development is also a fundamental element of creating successful living environments, for both people and nature. TAN 18 emphasises that streets should create walkable neighbourhoods where walking is promoted as the main means of travel for shorter trips.

“The layout and detailed design of development can be critically important in providing genuine alternatives to car travel and achieving quality in the environment as a whole”

(TAN18, paragraph 5.4)

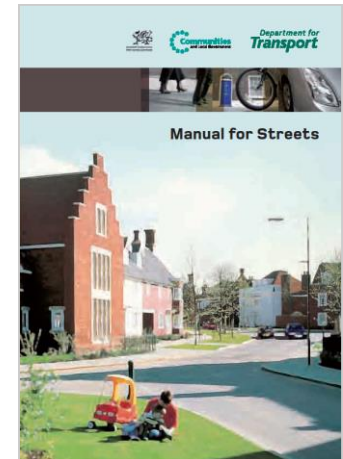
D.2 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 require that provisions are made to improve the well-being of our communities and promote permeability by a range of transport means.

“The Active Travel Act opens up opportunities for the development and trial of more innovative infrastructure for walking and cycling, which will be essential if Wales is to achieve a step change in the amount of active travel”

(Design Guidance: Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, paragraph 1.3.1).

D.3 Multifunctional and connected layouts are now the expected approach as indicated by national guidance. The benefits are mutually reinforcing:

- The choice of routes make it easy and interesting to move around.
- Direct coherent routes support active travel and legibility.
- Through routes support public transport
- They form a robust framework for the creation of linked places with character.
- The frequent junctions and changes of direction can naturally help reduce vehicle speeds making routes safer and more comfortable to navigate for active travel users.
- The presence of walking and cycling routes along streets provides natural surveillance improving actual and perceived safety as well as encouraging chance meetings which define communities.
- They help make better use of land through removal of the need for vehicle turning areas, and instead present opportunities to provide facilities such a cycle parking.
- The encouragement of more active methods of travel has benefits for health and community cohesion, and reduces the sense of isolation which can be an issue in new housing developments.
- The incorporation of green infrastructure (GI) to form ‘green/blue corridors’ allows people and nature to travel within and across developments.



Creating Connected Networks

D.4 The connected network which underpins the walkable neighbourhood concept should be created by:

- Optimising the number of access points and routes into, out of and through a site for pedestrians and cyclists to ensure that these balance the requirements of good access and community safety.
- Aligning key routes with green infrastructure features such as retained hedges.
- Integrating key routes with SUDs features and topography such as swales.
- Identifying, formalising and enhancing existing desire lines and providing direct, appropriately surfaced active travel and green routes through a site.
- Aligning key routes with views to features/ marker buildings on or off site.
- Developing new, and extending existing, walking and cycling routes alongside retained landscape features such as watercourses, hedges, tree groups, etc.
- Making allowance for future links to adjacent development and providing links to existing active travel networks.
- Achieving accessible routes and gradients which are integral to a well-designed public realm.



Consider how best the site can be connected with nearby main routes and transport facilities



A typical cul-de-sac response creates an inward looking development which fails to integrate into the existing built form



A more permeable and pedestrian friendly approach which integrates the site into the existing pattern of streets



This street pattern then forms the basis for perimeter blocks which ensure that the proposed buildings front onto the public realm and positively contribute to this

- Meeting the needs of all users by providing new controlled crossings where there are likely to be sufficient or increased pedestrian flows to justify these.
- Creating routes that are interesting and enhance the well-being of pedestrians. Long straight routes with little variation can become monotonous, whereas slight changes in direction and view can add interest and legibility. However overuse of variation can lead to confusion, loss of legibility and the perception of an unsafe environment.
- Providing routes which are safe, well overlooked and designed to minimise hiding spaces and concealed areas which may compromise pedestrian safety.
- Sub-dividing the main routes to create a hierarchy of streets with key movement routes identified between public destinations and an appropriate number of secondary routes coming off these to create a choice of pathways and form development blocks.

D.5 Once the network of routes have been set out and the importance of each route established, then the spaces along the route can be designed (see 'public spaces'), the streets should be designed as places, and a variety of development forms can be accommodated. The connections and interaction of a new development should be explained in your Design and Access Statement (DAS).



Add aerial photo of connected street network in new development

Creating Multifunctional Connections/Green Infrastructure

D.6 Connected street layouts should be multifunctional, providing access for nature as well as pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, by being designed to provide the widest possible range of ecosystem services, including being:

- **Biodiverse:** Acting as green / blue ecological corridors with rich native or pollinator friendly plants and trees/hedgerow to support native biodiversity and allow species to migrate.
- **Locally appropriate:** Located and designed to provide links between, surrounding and adjoining habitats / destinations.
- **Multifunctional:** Designed to simultaneously provide a range of benefits, creating ecological corridors, creating new or extending habitats, provide foraging routes, trim trails, summer shade, carbon sequestration, SuDs (improve water quality and capture surface water run-off), reduce air pollution etc.
- **Accessible, attractive and high quality:** Access to high quality green space has physical and mental health benefits. Connectivity should be designed to be suitable and accessible to relevant user groups to encourage and support physical activity.



Public Rights of Way

D.7 When considering the connectivity of sites, developers should assess whether development proposals affect wider community connections such as established Public Rights of Way (PRoW). These routes can be an important part of the local transport network as well as providing environmental and local recreational benefits to communities. The

importance of such routes is recognised in Planning Policy Wales (PPW—edition 5) which states that measures should be sought to protect and enhance the PROW network. Further support for enhancement of the network can be found in TAN 16 & 18.

- D.8 Where PROWs are to be incorporated into new residential schemes these routes should be legible and safe. Therefore, PROW routes should benefit from good levels of natural surveillance from nearby buildings, be direct, well lit, and convenient, have generous width, avoid sharp changes in direction and link logically with destinations.
- D.9 Where development is located in the vicinity of a PROW, developers should seek the advice of the Council’s Rights of Way Officer in order to ascertain whether there is a need to divert routes to accommodate new development proposals or where connections are most appropriate.

Further Guidance on Cul-De-Sacs

- D.10 The adopted Community Safety SPG acknowledges that permeability is an important consideration in residential developments. However, in some circumstances, the nature of a site and its crime context may result in there being no possibilities to connect to the wider movement network, and a cul-de-sac approach is more appropriate.

- D.11 The starting point should be firstly to achieve a ‘connected network’ of streets, with the use of cul-de-sacs limited to physically constrained areas of sites. However, where cul-de-sacs can be demonstrated to be the only option they should be short and straight to ensure high visibility to all dwellings. Cul-de-sacs should also provide active travel links through the provision of well-designed and overlooked pedestrian and cycle only links. Any turning areas should be sensitively designed as focal public areas which encourage community bonding through incorporating opportunities for play, outdoor seating, planting etc., rather than standardised engineering solutions. The turning movements for non-standard turning area designs should be assessed by a safety audit and tracking analysis.



Where cul-de-sacs are unavoidable, they should be designed as informal public spaces with clear, direct and well overlooked pedestrian connections.

Principles

- Maximise Active Travel options for people to make journeys to, from and within the development.
- Maximise connections for people and nature: use the GI to structure the new place.
- Improve the existing movement network where possible, for example by the provision of new routes through the site to community facilities (such as schools, parks, shops, etc) and employment opportunities on foot, cycle and/or public transport.
- Connect new developments into the existing streets and footpaths that provide further linkages to other neighbourhoods, town centres, bus routes etc.
- Provide layouts based on linked streets and spaces to maximise connections, provide choice and disperse traffic.
- Streets and connections should lead to somewhere, be simple and clear, safe, accessible and attractive, provide choice for residents and visitors whilst discouraging through traffic.
- Layout and development connectivity should be designed to be multifunctional, providing connectivity for people and nature, linking into existing GI / green spaces.
- Consider the requirements of public transport early in the design process. Bus stops should be well located, overlooked and provided with appropriate facilities.

- Consider the historical network of streets and spaces in an area. Positive existing qualities can be used as a basis to develop the new street network.
- Generally avoid cul-de-sacs, except as a limited part of a connected layout
- Where turning areas are required, they should be incorporated within distinct focal spaces and not simply follow rigid geometric standards.

Key Questions

- Does the scheme integrate well with existing streets, paths and surrounding development patterns?
- Does the scheme encourage 'active travel' through good quality, fully integrated and appropriately surfaced walking and cycling routes?
- Does the scheme maintain and/or enhance ecological connectivity?
- Is the development easy to move through with good access to local services and facilities, including public transport?
- Where turning heads are proposed, have these been designed as public spaces?

Section E: Public Spaces

Objective:

To provide a variety of attractive, usable and safe public spaces as part of new cohesive and healthy places.

- E.1 Public spaces are fundamental to successful places to live. They contribute to quality of life, support healthy lifestyles, encourage social cohesion, help respond to climate change, bring the environment closer to people, help create a sense of place, aid orientation and provide opportunities for play and relaxation. The positive integration of public space is a key element of placemaking. Public spaces should be designed as part of the 'Green Infrastructure' of a site in order to be multi-functional. They should be welcoming, comfortable, and situated at accessible locations throughout neighbourhoods. They should cater for all elements of the community from play areas to resting points for older people. There might be a variety of spaces on some sites, ranging from a more formal hard paved 'square' or landscaped green space, to less formal play/ amenity areas or allotments. As a general rule, all households should be within a 5 minute walk of an open space.
- E.2 The starting point on all sites should be the provision of open space and play provision on site in accordance with the nationally recognised Fields in Trust Guidance or equivalent

local Swansea standards and the Accessible Natural Green Space (ANGS) standard. Where significant public spaces exist immediately adjacent to a site, it may be possible to off-set part of the informal amenity space requirement to the existing area provided that the area is enhanced and the access is direct, safe and convenient.



- E.3 The integration of designated open spaces must be considered at the outset of the placemaking process. Public spaces and play areas should be focal points in the overall layout, part of the active travel network and recognisable places in their own right. Open spaces must not be leftover areas in the corner of a site, or hidden behind back fences or boundary walls. Dwellings and other buildings must front onto spaces to provide natural surveillance and create a quality backdrop.
- E.4 The retention of existing landscape features such as wildlife habitat, hedges and good quality trees provide starting points for landscape structure and open space design working with the character and history of a site. The design of open spaces should incorporate existing features of value as well as provide opportunities for habitat creation. New places can be structured by green corridors fronted by development incorporating landscape features to create a quality sense of place, promote health and wellbeing and support a diverse and stable ecosystem. Connected street networks also offer opportunities for focal and well used spaces at important junctions. The importance of these spaces could be reinforced through the form and density of development, surface treatment and planting. The areas around these accessible locations are logical places for non-residential uses, such as shops, schools, parks and community infrastructure.
- E.5 It is expected that sites will provide a range of open space types as part of a multi-functional green infrastructure approach. On large sites, it will be important to incorporate 'door step' spaces and street greening in addition to strategic spaces; this will ensure green infrastructure at the local level within development blocks not just around the edges. The provision of open space types should be based on an evidence led approach identifying site characteristics, area issues or unique opportunities. Open spaces will need to provide multiple functions including:
- Multi-generational play and exercise
 - Spaces for rest to enable access for all
 - Local food production and foraging routes
 - Formal and Informal recreation and events
 - Ecology and habitats
 - Sustainable drainage
 - Micro climate such as shading and/or wind sheltering
 - Appropriate lighting
 - Tackling pollution
 - Landscape setting
 - Retention of landscape features such as hedges and trees
 - Outdoor learning spaces
 - Outdoor office/meeting spaces

E6 The design of new open spaces and provision within these areas should where possible be informed by engaging the new community and stakeholders. Sustainable maintenance should be utilised; rather than frequent mowing, open spaces should be managed for habitat and biodiversity such as meadows with less frequent cutting and cut paths as necessary. Ecological areas may also be required where public access is restricted or managed.

E.7 A hierarchy of play opportunities should be integrated into the network of spaces to provide the opportunity for play for all ages and abilities. These play opportunities should be located in convenient, safe, accessible and attractive locations which are well overlooked and where they do not attract anti-social behaviour. Consideration should be given to the type of open spaces required for the development, as



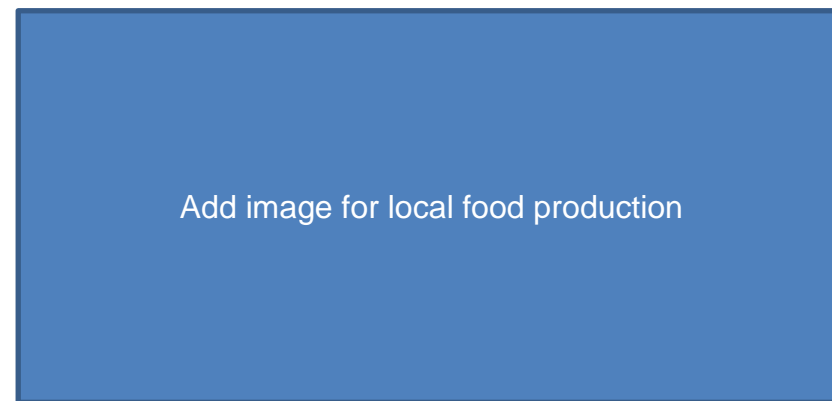
Examples of informal and natural play provision.

If we don't allow children to experience managed risk I have grave concerns about the future for workplace health and safety. If the next generation enter the workplace having been protected from all risk they will not be so much risk averse as risk naïve”¹

Judith Hackitt, Chair of the Health and Safety Executive

well as the wider community, whether these be informal nature spaces, ball game areas, areas for wheeled activities (e.g. BMX, skateboard) trim trails or equipped play spaces.

E.8 Approaches to play areas should not be solely restricted to the use of standardised play equipment for age categories and risk minimisation. Proposals for natural/ informal play and multi-generational play/ recreation should be incorporated in addition to formal play provision. Guidance for inclusion of such elements should be sought from the Council’s play officers. Where equipped play spaces are proposed, fencing may not be required (if the play area is included within a larger fenced park for example). There may be other more satisfactory ways of creating boundaries that add to the play value of the space and make it feel more pleasant to use. The exact criteria for play provision is set out in the separate Open Space SPG.



E.9 As part of a multi-functional green infrastructure approach, there is potential to integrate opportunities for local food production in the form of allotment provision, community

gardens, urban orchards and foraging trails. Local food production can help to create healthier cities in line with national and local aspirations and can help bring communities together. This can also provide choice for residents to supplement compact small gardens. Developers should therefore consider the incorporation of growing spaces in their proposals and should adopt community partnership approaches to managing these areas.

E.10 Open spaces will accommodate mandatory sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) which manages surface water runoff in the context of increased rainfall and more frequent storm events via integrated landscape features. The overall purpose is to reduce surface water before discharging into either a watercourse or sewer at pre-development rates. The drainage features can include swales, raingardens and inundation lagoons as part of the green infrastructure with other functions such as recreation/ ecology. SuDs should be seamlessly integrated into open spaces and in many cases can also provide Blue/Green Infrastructure such as focal areas and ecological habitats as well as other ecosystem services. These features will be adopted and maintained by the Council via the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB).

E.11 The SUDs requirements will create more open space throughout new developments, whilst reducing developable areas. For example, all streets are likely to incorporate swales to convey surface water which will create a much softer and wider street ratio. The incorporation of SuDs may require the remaining development to accommodate the

necessary densities without becoming cramped. Whilst the SAB approval process is separate from planning, the drainage features are a key element of placemaking and therefore SUDs should be considered at a very early stage in the design process to form a positive element of a development and cannot be retro fitted.

E.12 Open space and planting can also help integrate development into the landscape setting. It is never acceptable to try to 'hide' development with tree belts, rather a positive landscape relationship should be sought with outward facing edges of buildings, lower density edges and feathering planting to soften the transition between built form and countryside/ landscape. It is also highly important to choose planting species that will not 'escape' into the wider countryside and become invasive.

E.13 On larger sites (over 100 homes) it is important that the open space is implemented on a phased basis as the new homes are completed. Therefore, planning mechanisms such as Section 106 agreements will be required to set robust triggers for the master planning process to ensure that the open spaces are created as the community develops and not left to the end. All public spaces not offered for adoption should be subject to a maintenance regime to be secured through planning condition or established via Section 106 Agreement.

Principles

- Identify locations and features that are valued by the existing community and integrate these into new and improved public spaces.
- Maintain, enhance and create wildlife habitats within open spaces.
- Ensure that public spaces are designed using the multi-functional 'green infrastructure' approach and explain this in the Design and Access Statement.
- Locate key public spaces in accessible, highly visible locations where they can be co-located with community buildings.
- Connect open space networks with appropriately planted landscape elements (such as suitable trees, hedgerow and meadow mixes) providing green corridor links to other sites and the wider landscape.
- Ensure that public space is accessible to all and caters for all elements of the community from children to older people.
- Ensure that open space provision is within 5 minutes walking distance of the majority of homes (which generally equates to 400m). Strategic open spaces and recreation/ play opportunities should be accessible via secondary active travel networks.
- Create safe, sheltered green courtyards to provide mini oasis/meeting spaces as part of residential development in urban locations.
- Ensure that the design of spaces and relationship to surrounding buildings takes account of microclimatic factors, such as shading and wind tunnelling effects.
- Integrate community gardens and areas for community food production into new green spaces, which could include vertical gardens in urban locations.
- Ensure SUDs is positively integrated as multi-functional GI landscape features at an early stage to ensure the provision of attractive open spaces.
- Ensure that all open spaces are positively related to the surrounding buildings and well overlooked.
- Create focal points from existing or new landscape features or public art.
- Ensure that open spaces are provided on or adjacent to high density development sites in order to provide amenity space for all residents.
- Punctuate a site layout with smaller open spaces and street trees to create visual interest and localised focal points (don't just provide greening on the edges).
- All developments with family housing should make provision for (or have good access to) children's play opportunities. This is likely to be in the form of informal

play spaces/opportunities on site or by a developer contribution to existing formal playgrounds located offsite within a short walking distance. Formal play provision is also likely to be provided on site, as a starting point. Pre-application consultation will clarify the extent of local provision and need at the outset.

- Ensure that all elements of publicly accessible space are designed coherently to provide consistency and high quality. Coordination of street furniture including lighting, seating, bins, signage, railings, bollards, etc. will be essential to the success of a scheme.
- Ensure a clear definition between areas of public and private space.
- Ensure that public spaces are created as homes are built, on a phased basis, not left to the very end.
- Maintain, enhance and create wildlife habitats and ecosystem services within open spaces.
- Ensure that a long term maintenance scheme is put in place for non-adopted public spaces.

Key Questions

- Is public space integral to the development and does it have a purpose?
- Have the public spaces been designed as multi-functional green infrastructure?
- Is the open space well designed, robust and enhanced through the incorporation of seating, play equipment or public art?
- Is there greening throughout the site, not just the edges?
- Are open spaces accessible to all, overlooked and do they feel safe?
- Is there suitable children's play provision on site, or is there good access to an existing play area nearby?
- Are adequate transitions provided between public and private spaces through the use of hard and soft landscaping?
- Does the public space provide opportunities to maintain and enhance biodiversity?
- Are suitable management arrangements in place?

Section F: Streets as Places

Objective:

To create people-friendly green streets that allow for necessary vehicular access whilst prioritising people.

F.1 Well-designed, green, people orientated streets are fundamental to creating sustainable places and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport. Planning Policy Wales sets the requirement for new streets to be active and social spaces not just the sole preserve of vehicles.

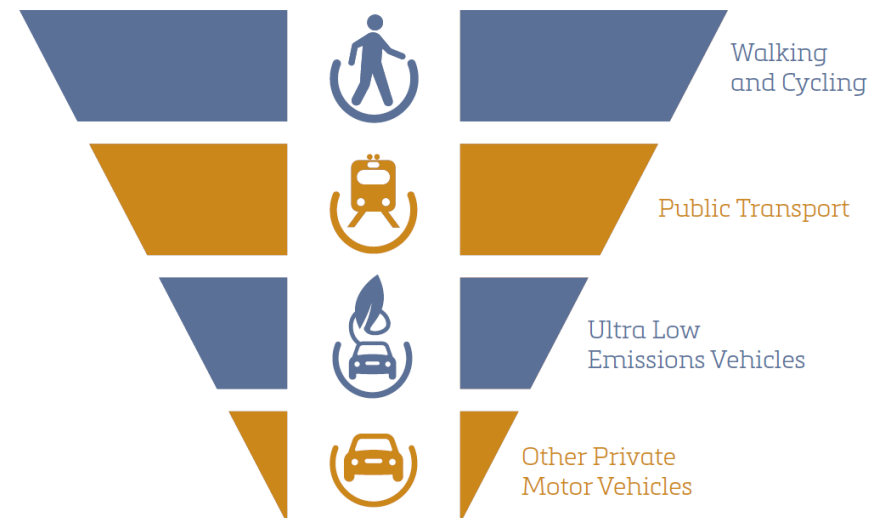
“For too long the focus has been on the movement function of residential streets. The result has often been places that are dominated by motor vehicles to the extent that they fail to make a positive contribution to the quality of life.”

(Manual for Streets, p7)



F.2 All schemes should be designed in accordance with the suite of Manual for Streets documents which emphasises that streets are places primarily for people. Social life is concentrated on streets – they are places for meeting, playing and relaxing. Therefore, streets should be designed as places within low speed neighbourhoods with active travel priority where vehicle movements do not dominate. Streets are also an important element of the green infrastructure strategy at the local level. Streets devoid of planting will not be acceptable.

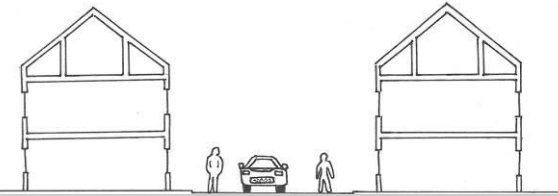
Figure 8: The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning



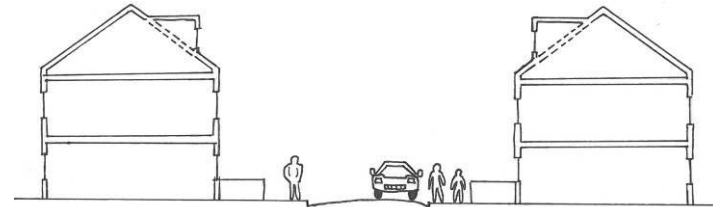
F.3 In order to achieve pedestrian orientated, green streets, the emphasis should be on the desired street/ place character rather than highway function. Given the scale of buildings and dominance of vehicles, meaningful greening of streets will typically be street trees supplemented by suitable low level planting. Grass verges will not be accepted as a green street feature.

F.4 It is expected that all streets will be part of a connected network and to ensure a hierarchy/ legibility the streets should be classified as follows:

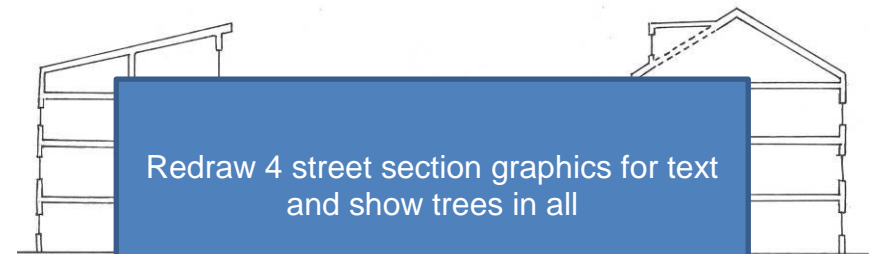
1. Avenues/Spine Streets providing the main movement framework, active travel and public transport provision. These should be made legible by a greater 'front-to-front' widths incorporating space for verges with trees on both sides and taller buildings to provide differentiation from general streets.
2. Primary streets-providing key local movement routes with a maximum design speed of 20mph including planted verges with street trees to both sides plus on street parking where appropriate.
3. Secondary streets with a design speed of 20mph or less including verges to one side with street trees plus on street parking where appropriate.
4. Mews/Lanes providing access only environments with a design speed of 10mph should include incidental greening such as GI buildouts with trees.



Lane/ Mews Typical Characteristics:
Smaller units with no frontage boundary, informal layout with low kerb upstand to allow walking in carriageway with incidental trees. Low traffic volume and speeds.



Tertiary Streets Typical Characteristics:
2 storey houses fronted by front gardens, standard footway and highway dimensions, residential access up to 20 mph with trees/ verges to one side.



Spine
Taller buildings with minimal or no frontage boundary, verges both sides with tree planting at regular intervals with on-street parking bays between, wider shared use active travel path, high traffic volumes up to 30mph.

F.5 Once a connected hierarchy of streets has been established and the main spaces identified, then the desired character of each street should be determined. Following this, any necessary highway requirements should then be incorporated without being dominant. As set out in PPW overly engineered schemes or layouts led by highway requirements will not be considered acceptable. The Council expects that most new streets will be adopted; this includes non-standard street designs which must be distinctive, safe, accessible and robust. To adopt non-standard streets this will require design team to undertake:

- Stage 1 road safety audit process
- Tracking analysis to ensure access for service vehicles
- Forward visibility checks based on design speed
- Quality audit' process as set out in Manual for Streets.

F.6 Examples of acceptable non-standard street design in Swansea includes green lanes with extensive GI and tree planting with no defined footway; or extensive on street residents parking softened by GI and tree planting. These approaches are distinctive and have been subject to the tests outlined in the paragraph above.

F.7 It is important that the subsequent S38 adoption process does not unravel the place-led streets agreed at the planning stage. The Council has prepared a Highway Design Guide which sets out acceptable street design standards as well as the process for testing and adopting non-standard place-led street designs.

Add photo of street trees

Add extract from Gwynfaen, Garden Village and Pantlasau to demonstrate acceptable adoptable non standard street designs.

- F.8 Connected streets will also need to accommodate Sustainable Drainage (SUDs) requirements such as swales to collect highway drainage. These SUDs features must not be overly engineered and are opportunities to integrate GI into the streetscene and provide character. Where drainage features such as swales are proposed alongside carriageways these should also address how/where pedestrians cross the street following desire lines.
- F.9 The requirement for Green Infrastructure (GI) at all scales and mandatory SUDs requirements, will lead to much greener streets with verges/ drainage features on one, or both sides, and tree planting without compromising visibility splays adding visual interest and seasonality, providing shade, and providing habitats. The ecological and psychological benefits of street trees and planting have been proven by a number of studies, and it is expected that appropriate planting is provided in order to capture these benefits and meet the requirements of national legislation (PPW & WCFG Act). . Even in mews and lanes, GI is expected in the form of planting/ tree buildouts to create localised carriageway narrowings that reinforce low speeds. Where 'avenue' tree planting is required along key movement routes, these trees must be specified to grow to stature. This may mean that smaller trees within swales and drainage areas are not acceptable along these key movement routes.

Add images of examples of approve alteratives to tarmac

- F.10 Junctions are key locations in the street network. They should be designed as spaces defined by buildings and/ or GI and not dominated by visibility splays or engineering requirements. This will require a collaborative approach between highway engineer, architect, landscape architect and other disciplines.
- F.11 Street design should also be contextual and emphasise pedestrian locations. To allow for differentiation in street finishes and increased quality, the Council has selected a range of adoptable alternatives to tarmac such as concrete blocks that balance the maintenance requirement and placemaking principles. This will require additional commuted sums for future maintenance which is set out in the Highway Design Guide. Where street furniture is proposed it should contribute to the place character and/or route functions of the street, minimise clutter and be easy to maintain.

F.12 The expectation is for a fully connected network to allow circulation by residents as well as service vehicles and delivery vehicles. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to provide a fully connected street layout resulting in the need for a turning head. However, these should not be designed as overly engineered road spaces but should instead be embraced as opportunities to improve Placemaking by providing integrated and pedestrian friendly spaces.



F.13 As advocated in Planning Policy Wales (ed10), in many new developments there will likely be opportunities for low speed shared space streets to integrate socialising, safe movement areas for vulnerable pedestrians, tree planting, appropriate play, slower movement of vehicles through reduced forward visibility and also car parking. All shared space areas will need to be drained, generally with a low upstand kerb and include a clear transition from the standard highway in order to highlight the different nature of the space. These transitions should take the form of 'gateways' which include features such as carriageway narrowings combined with Green Infrastructure, contrasting surfacing or signage to mark the entrance to the space.



Principles

- Develop a hierarchal network of spaces (avenues, streets, lanes and courtyards) from the outset and consider how movement relates to them.
- Design streets as accessible and social spaces for people and not in response to the rigid geometry of road design.
- Design streets as an integral part of the local level GI network
- Create safe, accessible, enjoyable places with priority for pedestrians and where vehicles are carefully managed.
- Encourage social interaction through the provision of places to meet, sit and play.
- Integrate new tree planting wherever possible.
- Discourage high levels of through traffic (except by public transport) in residential areas by careful design of a connected layout.
- Slow traffic on the residential network (maximum design speed is 20mph) through the arrangement of buildings and spaces (including where appropriate shared surfaces), positioning of trees and planting, bollards and other street furniture.

- Shared surfaces should include clear definition of the safe pedestrian area.
- Street surfaces should be from an approved palette of materials and commuted sums will be required to fund additional maintenance over and above tarmac.
- Street furniture should be agreed with the Council and clutter should be minimised.

Key Questions

- Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?
- Does the design of the development limit vehicles speeds so that streets are pedestrian and cycle friendly?
- Are streets designed as a coherent hierarchy?
- Is the street hierarchy designed contextually to give appropriate regard to the different needs of pedestrians, cycle users and vehicle drivers?
- Does the street design integrate GI and SUDs?
- Does the development comply with the principles of inclusive design?

Section G: Accessible Places

Objective:

To create inclusive residential environments and homes which maximise mobility and foster a sense of independence for all people.

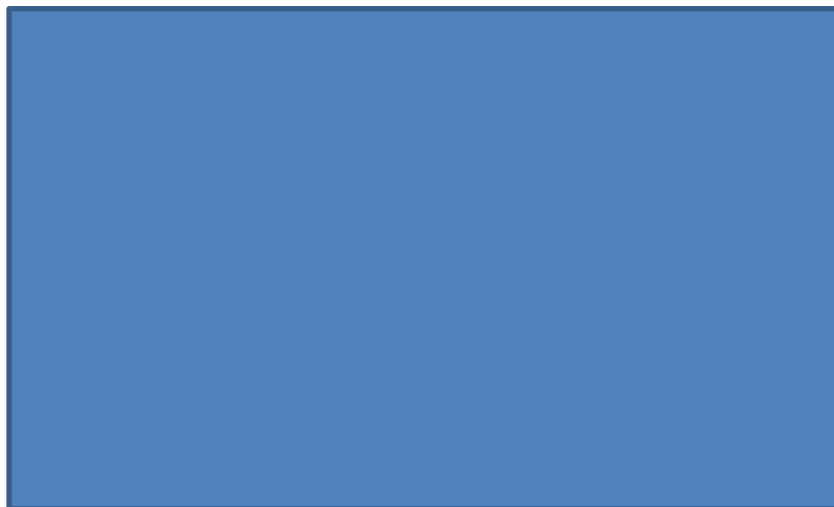
G.1 Inclusive environments should be easy for everyone to use. They should maximise everyone's ability to move freely, efficiently and safely around the environment, and encourage feelings of confidence when doing so. In order to create fully inclusive environments both houses and streets should be designed to address the needs of all. The placemaking process should break down barriers and exclusion in new places.

Streets and Public Spaces (Public Realm)

G.2 Inclusively designed streets and public spaces will accommodate the differing needs and expectations of all those who use them. They will enable people to feel comfortable and safe when moving around by giving them control over the pace at which they move, how they gather information, and how they interact with other users of the space.

- G.3 Inclusive design recognises the diversity of people and should not impose barriers. Legible design which makes it easier for people to work out where they are and where they are going is especially helpful. Not only does it minimise the length of journeys by avoiding wrong turns but for some it may also make journeys possible to accomplish in the first place.
- G.4 There are certain key components that are critical to the provision of inclusive, accessible streets and public spaces. These are:
- Priority for Pedestrians and cyclists
 - Appropriate Traffic Speed
 - Logical Layout and Reference Points
 - Clearly Defined, Obstacle Free, Pedestrian Routes
 - Pedestrian Crossings
 - Visual and Tactile Contrast
 - Good Quality Lighting
 - Maintenance and Management Procedures
- G.5 The kerbed separation of footway and carriageway can offer protection to pedestrians in finding their way around, but kerbs can also present barriers for some (e.g. blind or partially sighted people, wheelchair users, people who use

walking frames or those with small children in prams or pushchairs). At junctions and other key locations, such as school or community building entrances, there are benefits in considering bringing the carriageway up to footway level to allow people to cross on one level. Walking and crossing surfaces also need to be smooth and free from trip hazards. Irregular surfaces, such as cobbles, are a barrier to some pedestrians and are unlikely to be appropriate for large expanses of surfacing in residential areas.



G.6 If carefully incorporated into the design, street furniture may also be used to enhance delineation between preferred uses within the public realm, to provide protection and to influence the flow of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Street furniture is typically sited on footways and can be a hazard and obstruction for blind or partially-sighted people, wheelchair

users and people who use walking frames. Obstructions on the footway should be minimised to provide a clearly defined and convenient pedestrian route.

G.7 Footway widths can also be varied between different streets to take account of pedestrian volumes and composition. Streets where people walk in groups or near schools or shops, or where bike racks are provided for example, need wider footways. In areas of high pedestrian and/or cycle flows, the quality of the walking experience can deteriorate unless sufficient width is provided to accommodate these flows as well as any supporting street furniture. Furthermore, when walking together in conversation; Sign language users will require a wider distance for clear visual communication. The proper design of circulation and gathering spaces enable signers to move through space uninterrupted.

G.8 Seating is necessary to provide rest points for pedestrians, particularly those with mobility or visual impairments and older people, and extra seating should be considered where people congregate, such as squares, local shops and schools. Seating on key pedestrian routes should be considered every 100m to provide rest points and to encourage street activity and the concept of a 'lifetime neighbourhood'. Seating should include space for wheelchair users to rest alongside.

In and Around the Home

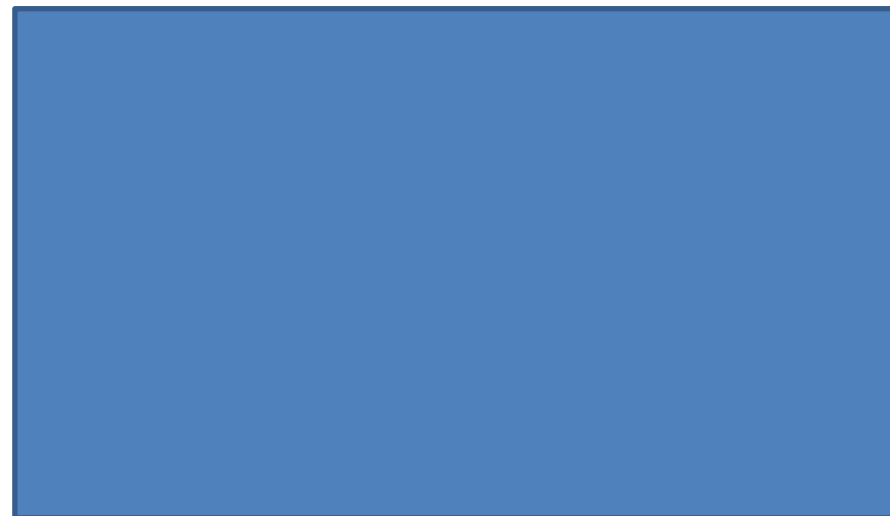
G.9 To enable more people to remain in their homes if they become disabled, new build housing should be built for adaptation for wheelchair users. It is appropriate that wheelchair adaptable housing is provided in larger schemes, close to public transport and community facilities. The requirement for providing accessible homes is set out in Part M of the current Building Regulations.

Homes for Blind and Partially Sighted People

G.10 As a basic rule, designers should ensure that there is adequate space to enable simple and direct circulation routes within all rooms. Simple, logical design of all external and internal layouts will assist orientation.

G.11 The design should aim to achieve consistency of form and placing of key items so that switches and sockets are at the same height and locations in rooms, door and window handles are consistently located and hot and cold taps are on the same sides etc. Providing bigger, bolder and brighter contrasts between adjacent surfaces, potential hazards and their background, and controls on appliances and their background is a general principle to be applied. Contrasts can be enhanced by creating differences in brightness or differences in colour/hue, or both. Similarly, large areas of highly polished reflective surfaces and finishes should be avoided whenever possible as they may become a source of glare. Finishes should generally be comfortable to the touch for people 'feeling' their way.

G.12 The use of different front door/gate colours, different brick shades for different blocks of housing, colour themes for different storeys in communal corridors can also assist in wayfinding or determining location.



Homes for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People

G.13 Designs should allow clear sightlines to maximise opportunities to communicate visually with family members as well as to extend sensory awareness.

G.14 Poor lighting conditions are major contributors to the causes of eye fatigue that can lead to a loss of concentration and even physical exhaustion. Dimmer switch lighting and architectural elements used to control daylight can be configured to provide a soft, diffused light which reduces eye strain.

G.15 The following aspects of the design can be applied to improve visual connections and daily living:

- An open floor plan and wide hallways that will facilitate sign language conversations – kitchens which visually accessible to adjacent rooms are particularly important;
- Use of partial walls;
- Wooden floors – so banging can be felt from other rooms;
- Use of building materials such as clouded glass instead of brick, concrete, or drywall, to create privacy and still feel open;
- Use curved corners instead of right-angled walls or sharp turns;
- Select colours on floors as not to confuse a d/Deaf person's wide vision range;
- The incorporation of visual communication features –
- These building will include a video door buzzer as well as visual fire and carbon monoxide alarms.

Principles

- Incorporate inclusive design from the outset—it is not an 'optional extra' or add on.
- Equal and convenient access should be provided for all.
- Design places to foster a culture of inclusion.
- Design in flexibility, so different people can use a development differently.

Key Questions

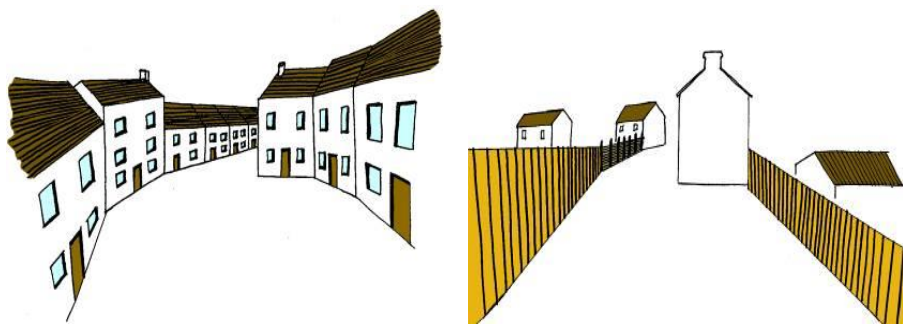
- Does the scheme create any barriers to inclusive design?
- Does the design provide legible routes clear from obstructions?
- Are footways of sufficient width?
- Are crossings at key junctions and locations accessible?
- Is sufficient seating provided to provide rest stops and foster interaction?
- Are adequate colour contrasts provided to provide legibility and highlight potential hazards etc?
- Are new homes adaptable for future wheelchair use?
- Is lighting sufficient and controllable to reduce eye strain?
- Does the design of dwelling maximise clear sightlines between different areas?
- Do dwellings meet the Lifetime Homes Standard?

Section H: Townscape

Objective:

To create buildings that are of human scale, which respond to the context and form a high quality townscape.

H.1 The manner in which buildings are positioned, grouped and respond to the valued elements of local character should emphasise the human scale, define public and private areas, create distinctiveness and interest, aid navigation and minimise the visual impact of parked cars. Taken together the buildings and spaces between them form a 'townscape' which can help to provide a sense of place and identity to a settlement. This approach is relevant in all urban, rural and sub-urban locations.



H.2 Whilst the planning process predominantly focuses on two dimensional plans, it is imperative to consider the actual experience of moving through a place and the views experienced (both direct and oblique), whether as a resident or as a visitor. Consideration of the character of the street and views from eye level should therefore be the starting point of designing at the human scale. As a part of this windows and doors should be designed facing the street (known as **active frontages**) to make a place feel lived in, overlooked and safe.

H.3 Successful and memorable places are generally made up of a sequence of spaces connected by streets. It is important that the streets are memorable, interesting and easy to navigate. If the buildings and streets lack variation and distinctiveness, journeys through it become more difficult to navigate, less enjoyable and appear longer. This has the effect of discouraging people from walking, and as part of the wider commitment to Active Travel it is important to ensure that walking/cycling routes are attractive to promote community cohesion and personal health and wellbeing. Therefore, consideration should be given to views along the street; continuity, variation and contrast; and corner locations

Key frontages

- H.4 New places will have key areas such as a main street frontage or prominent frontage overlooking an existing or new open space. These key frontages must be differentiated from the general or background buildings and must be designed as a composition to have placemaking emphasis. These key frontages are best designed in an iterative manner and assessed using composite streetscenes showing the entirety of the frontage. On larger sites of 50 or more homes, there is a further requirement is for key frontages to be uplifted. This could include enhanced architectural quality, enhanced boundary treatments, increased scale, unifying features such as repeating gables, linking materials such as weatherboarding. These are simply examples and a 'whole place' approach that is expected to underpin the creation of uplifted key frontages. Please see section 17.5 for more information regarding uplift treatments.



Scale

- H.5 In suburban residential developments the building scale range is expected to be 1-4 stories with the taller buildings in the more accessible locations with community facilities. Increased scale can also be used to emphasise and enclose key spaces such as a three storey frontage onto a parkland area. Relationships of scale also need to be considered with stepping up not jarring transitions.
- H.6 In urban situations such as town and city centre locations the expectation is for taller buildings of 3 stories upwards with a typical 'urban scale' of 6 stories expected in Swansea City Centre. To help integrate larger buildings in urban situations it often helps to inset the top floor and treat this with a different material to reduce the sense of massing.
- H.7 There is specific guidance on tall buildings in terms of welcome and consider zones plus criteria such as local streetscene, micro climate and wider skyline/ visual impact.



Views Along the Street

H.8 The view along a street is usually framed by the buildings to either side and this is known as a '**vista**'. In many situations this vista remains unbroken until the street ends at a junction or bend. In some instances buildings can close views, vegetation can also be used or views could continue linking the development to GI features in the wider landscape.



H.9 Views down residential streets must be carefully considered to ensure that the character and appearance of the development is maintained. Views down streets should not terminate at:

- the blank side elevations of dwellings;
- boundary treatments;
- or at driveways between the fronts (and/or sides) of adjacent dwellings.

Streetscene compositions

H.10 Residential streets compositions should generally be designed to introduce some rhythm and variation into the streetscene. There are many ways of doing this and it may reflect the wider established context such as:

- individual or reoccurring building details (such as a repeating projecting gable or bay);
- building of different function, height, design or materials;
- varying pavement widths on opposing sides of the street;
- inclusion of small scale space which widens out from the street (and possibly incorporates the highway with a reduced kerb and different surfacing);
- inclusion of street trees;
- slight change in direction of the street.

H.11 In some instances a well-designed consistent streetscene will be appropriate such as terraced housing. In all instances the streetscene composition should be presented as streetscene views not individual house type drawings. This should be an iterative process to refine the house type compositions. The principle of building variation should not however be used to justify inappropriate non-contextual designs or eclectic streetscenes with no coherence.



Corners

H.12 Corners at junctions and at transitions to open spaces are key parts of residential developments because they are prominent and passed by many people. However, the use of standard house types often results in a high number of housing developments which have blank or poorly designed side elevations in prominent locations. Corner plots differ from typical mid street plots in that they provide dual public frontages on two elevations and require equal treatment of both public facades.

H.13 Buildings located on corner plots should be designed to 'turn the corner' with well-designed frontages that includes habitable room windows to allow natural surveillance, plus architectural emphasis to both public elevations. Generally, the orientation of corner dwellings should respect the overall street hierarchy with the principal elevation fronting onto the primary street. Privacy boundary treatments on these plots should start at the rear building line and not overlap the active frontage side elevation.

H.14 It may also be appropriate to increase the height of the dwelling to emphasise the corner and 'bookend' the street. Conversely, an approach which seeks to provide smaller scale/height buildings on corners is unlikely to be supported as this provides an odd visual hierarchy at these prominent locations.



Principles

- Where the scale, massing, height and building line of existing buildings are strong local features, this should be reflected, especially on the edges of sites to link into the existing context.
- Use key frontages to emphasise key spaces and unify with repeating architectural features.
- Ensure that the massing and height of buildings gives due consideration to overshadowing and overlooking of adjacent properties and garden areas.
- Utilise an appropriate range of building forms such as terraces, semi-detached and detached houses as well as apartment blocks and courtyards (where appropriate) to create interest as part of an overall layout composition.
- Ensure a general continuity of the building line with appropriate variations in height, as well as street narrowings, set-backs and other appropriate townscape techniques utilised as justified, logical exceptions to add interest and variety.
- Ensure buildings, streets and places are of a human scale which encourage active travel choices and reinforce 20mph maximum design speeds.
- Use the layout, building form and front boundary treatments (where appropriate) to provide a sense of continuity and enclosure to streets and spaces. These public realm areas should be distinctive with a sense of

place/ local identity that aid easy navigation. These should reflect the hierarchical status of the street or space in the overall movement network. Thus, important routes such as avenues should be wider with taller buildings, public spaces and trees, whilst access only lanes may be narrow with low buildings (such as Mews type dwellings).

- The minimum front to front separation distance across the public realm and streets should be 10m. Where this minimum distance is applied to streets these should form part of the lowest of branch of the hierarchical highway movement network (e.g. mews streets).
- Ensure that the roofscape pays regard to overall composition, especially where highly visible (such as in skyline locations or where there are views down onto a site).
- Roofs in close proximity to one another and with the same orientation must have the same or complementary pitches. This can be ensured by locating buildings of similar depth adjacent to one another.
- Maximise active frontages with doors that are easy to find and habitable room windows facing the street and public areas. Avoid long stretches of blank walls.
- It is vital to enclose space at corners and create definition, as these are very important locations within the movement network. Corner buildings have at least two public elevations and could be minor landmarks emphasised by increased scale and/or detailed design.

- Alternatively, corner buildings could be set back in some instances to provide for pocket parks for SUDS and community recreation or small public spaces. Such spaces could possibly form the setting for small scale shops, coffee shops/cafes and community uses in the future to provide interest, vibrancy and resilience to the community.
- Orientate routes to focus on landmark buildings and important views. Where appropriate, deflected views can be used to create interest by creating a sense of anticipation of yet unseen views.
- Existing landmarks should be reinforced or new ones created to generate visual interest.
- New landmarks do not necessarily have to be taller. A change of design or material, or a different land use

(especially public uses) also make buildings stand out and help give character to an area.

- Design places as streetscenes not individual house types.

Key Questions

- Does the scale of buildings respond positively to the area?
- Does the massing of buildings reinforce the street hierarchy?
- Does the scheme have a human scale and well defined streets and spaces?
- Does the layout and townscape make the scheme memorable and easy to navigate?

Section I: Quality, Character & Identity

Objective:

To create high quality building design with a distinctive sense of place.

- I.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Wales (PPW), this guidance does not seek to arbitrarily impose a particular architectural style. A well-structured place can accommodate a variety of different architectural styles from traditional to contemporary, subject to these being both contextually responsive and of sufficiently high quality design. All schemes must achieve a sense of place, and distinctive identity, through an appropriate approach to placemaking in order to create quality living environments.
- I.2 Unfortunately, many developments in Swansea are still placeless, lack quality and could be anywhere in the UK. Furthermore, many larger sites have insufficient emphasis on key frontages and key spaces within the development, with the result being that all parts of new places look the same. Going forward, standardised 'anywhere developments' will not be acceptable.
- I.3 Generally, the requirement is either to take a contextual or contemporary approach. The starting point should be to take cues from the architectural traditions and environmental qualities of the locality, known as the 'design context'. The aim is to understand valued local character (both natural and

built) and use this to inform the design of a new place. In many cases, an appraisal of the local context will highlight distinctive patterns and elements of development or landscape where the intention will be to sustain these qualities of character. Precedent analysis is also a positive way to shape the appearance of new places provided the selection is relevant.



- I.4 There may be situations where there is no existing positive character which can be reflected within a site. This is not an excuse for mediocre design. Instead, this provides an opportunity to improve the character and quality of the area, possibly by establishing a new contemporary character through reinterpreting forms and materials, use of relevant precedents as well as including appropriate natural features.



- I.5 With a move towards lower energy lifestyles this will change the way homes look; this is an opportunity for contemporary design in neighbourhood locations utilising modern materials and innovative architecture.
- I.6 Where it is proposed to utilise standard house types and modern methods of construction (MMC) these should be responsive to the locality in terms of materials, details, façade composition etc. Proposals which result in placeless and generic ‘anywhere’ developments will not be considered acceptable.
- I.7 When undertaking an assessment of character this should understand the role of any special area designations (conservation areas, Gower AONB, tall building areas etc.). Where the site lies in a conservation area, there may be a published description that identifies the special architectural interest. For schemes in Gower, the adopted Gower Design Guide identifies the main elements of ‘Gower Vernacular’ and potential architectural responses ranging from traditional, to contemporary vernacular to boldly modern.
- I.8 It is recognised that larger scale new places will often be made up of standard house types but this must not preclude elevation enhancements and variations to emphasise key areas and ensure distinctiveness. It will not be acceptable to provide identical basic new houses that could be anywhere in Wales or the UK..

I.9 Sites comprising 50 or more homes, will create a structure and hierarchy of new streets and spaces. This hierarchy must be reinforced by uplifted bespoke elevations in areas such as key streets, corners, junctions and facing onto key public spaces. A minimum of 20% bespoke uplifted elevations are expected with more as necessary. Suitable uplift treatments will depend on the architectural approach and could, for example, include higher quality materials, additional architectural features such as gables, bay windows, entrance porches/canopies and quality boundaries. This will be in addition to the high standard of design required elsewhere in the development.



I.10 For sites of 100 or more homes, in addition to the uplifted elevations it is expected that character areas will also be defined to differentiate parts of the place. This character variation could encompass differing styles or use of different materials or details. It will be important to ensure logical distribution of character areas and to carefully address transitions between character areas to avoid any jarring or incongruous relationships.

I.11 In Swansea city centre and its immediate surroundings, some areas are designated as being suitable for tall buildings (see the Tall Buildings SPG). These more sustainable locations provide opportunities for more height in the city scape and

higher density accommodation; they also demand the highest quality architecture given the extensive visibility and prominence.

I.12 It is important to take an integrated placemaking approach to the detailed design of individual buildings, streetscenes and the public realm. Buildings must not be treated in isolation and street materials and landscaping must not be treated as an afterthought but considered holistically to create successful places and spaces.

I.13 Details are important; the use of a well-considered colour palette for front doors and garage doors can provide a desirable uplift to elevations and the wider streetscene. Conversely plastic meter cupboards and poorly designed bin storage can detract from the appearance of dwelling elevations and as such should be situated as to best minimise their harmful visual impact on facades.



Principles

- Identify local character through site and context appraisals, urban design analysis and review of published sources. Address issues such as landscape features, views, plot and street layouts, building lines, as well as the forms, height, massing, details and important frontages of buildings.
- Establish design opportunities that reflect and enhance positive aspects of local character. Explore beyond the immediate neighbourhood if necessary, to identify local distinctiveness.
- Where the local character does not portray overtly positive characteristics of detail, take the opportunity to add character and quality to the neighbourhood – perhaps by adopting a contemporary approach which references some broader overarching characteristics such as the height range of buildings, predominant roof forms etc.
- Provide well-articulated elevations – streetscenes should be used as an iterative tool with the emphasis being on well-designed streetscenes and spaces, rather than individual buildings.
- Ensure that the detailed design is equitable and allows access for all, whilst maintaining the overall character of the scheme.
- Encourage expression and variety in architectural style (where appropriate) allowing people to personalise and adapt their buildings where appropriate to the context and community demand. Possibilities to achieve this include providing for front garden areas for personalisation as well as providing for plot/garden sizes which allow for appropriate future extensions.
- Treat ancillary elements such as boundaries, garaging, cycle parking and recycling/ refuse storage as an integral part of the overall design. These should be robust and of a suitably high quality. Opportunities to increase ecosystem services on ancillary elements should not be overlooked (rain butts on garaging, ecologically permeable boundaries, green roofed cycle/refuse storage etc.)
- Select materials carefully to reflect the best aspects of local character whilst addressing robustness, fitness for purpose and weathering. Also consider the environmental impact of materials (see www.bregroup.com/greenguide).
- Carefully detail all aspects of the external elevations in particular openings, any changes in materials, soffits, weatherboards, chimneys, etc.
- Ensure that openings are well positioned and logically located when viewed from the public realm as well as the building interior.
- Ensure that water efficiency, low energy and micro generation features such as photo voltaic panels, solar thermal panels, battery storage, electric vehicle charging points, recycling storage, water butts and rain gardens etc. are positively integrated into the overall design as part of an integrated design approach.

Key Questions

- Does the character respond positively to, and enhance the character and quality of the local area, taking into account any relevant special area designations?
- Is the design approach to buildings and spaces specific to the scheme?
- Do buildings, spaces and streetscenes exhibit good architectural quality and improve the character and appearance of the area?
- Is the appearance and setting of any nearby historic buildings or features respected?
- Does the development feature a mix of building styles and/ or retain existing buildings of interest to provide a good quality townscape?
- Is the public realm central to the character and fully integrated into the overall scheme?
- Does the scheme feel like a quality place to live with a distinct sense of place and identity?

Section J: Community Safety

Objective:

To create safe and secure places with effective natural surveillance.

- J.1 Essential to sustainable placemaking is the creation of living environments which encompass good levels of both perceived and actual safety. This is typically underpinned by a connected network of street facing buildings which can generate good levels of passing natural surveillance ('eyes on street'). Providing dwelling frontages in a perimeter block approach results in both overlooking of the public realm as well as the enclosure of secure rear gardens.

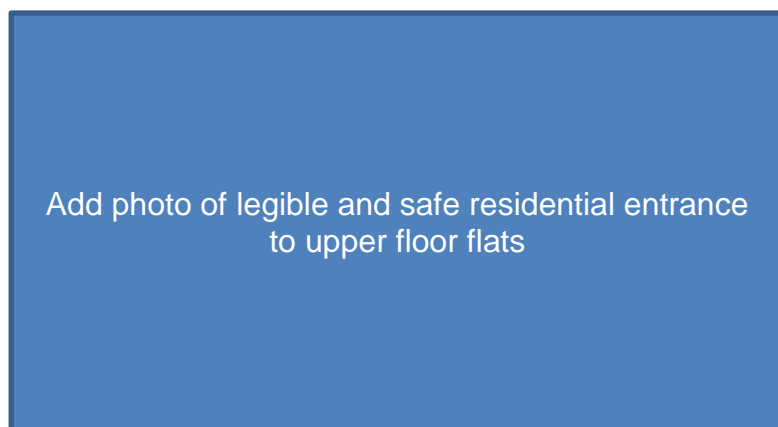


- J.2 New development should not have an adverse effect on crime and disorder in adjoining existing developments. An adequate level of security and safety should be applied to all developments and it is therefore recommended that all schemes apply for Secured by Design accreditation.
- J.3 The appropriate level of permeability in a new development will be informed by a variety of factors such as:
- relationship to facilities which generate or attract pedestrian movement (for example schools and shops);
 - site characteristics (such as topography and landscaping);
 - the overall design concept; and
 - the local crime context.
- J.4 The use of cul-de-sacs should be fully justified and if incorporated, must be short with good levels of natural surveillance. Gated communities will rarely be considered acceptable and will only be considered where these can be fully justified for safety and security reasons.
- J.5 Areas to the front of properties are semi-private by being visually accessible to the public. These should form a 'buffer' and transition between public streets and open spaces and private dwellings. It is important to provide a clear distinction between private and public areas. Blocks of residential development should generally enclose back-to-back private gardens. Communal areas around residential developments

should restrict access to residents only through the use of lockable doors or gates with intercom facilities. All private areas should be fully enclosed and access should be via lockable gates.

J.6 Windowless elevations or long lengths of blank walls adjacent to streets, publicly accessible space or parking courts should be avoided as these minimise overlooking and provide opportunities for crime (see paragraphs 12.14 to 12.16 for further details).

J.7 Where residential accommodation is located above other complementary uses (e.g. shops) as part of a mixed use development, the entrances to these residences must be legible, welcoming and safe. These will typically be required to be located as part of the front elevation (active frontage) treatment onto the street.



J.9 Fences, trees and other features should not obscure entrances, provide hiding places or easy climbing access to upper floor windows or over boundaries.

J.10 Landscaping can increase opportunities for crime by, for example, providing areas for hiding or climbing access to private areas. Conversely, the use of suitable species can act as barriers and deter such unwanted activities. The landscaping strategy for a site should therefore seek to improve the safety and robustness of developments in a suitable manner.

J.11 Where street furniture, structures or public/community buildings are proposed in the public realm, these elements should be suitably robust and located in well-overlooked and well-lit areas. Lighting schemes should be considered which enhance feelings of safety in all public areas of a development.

J.12 Further information can be found in the Community Safety SPG



Principles

- Design buildings to face onto streets to make the place feel safer. There should be 'eyes on the street' including at corners and gable ends.
- Provide a critical mass of frontages facing onto public spaces to maximise natural surveillance.
- Make the primary means of access for all dwellings from the streets, including flats. Entrances should be visible, accessible and frequent along the street to provide vibrancy, interest and activity.
- Avoid unnecessary rear access and ensure where provided, these are secure and robust.
- Provide a mix of uses, dwelling sizes and types to encourage activity throughout the day and evening thereby lengthening the period of natural surveillance.
- Avoid places of concealment throughout the development by considering landscaping and public lighting as well avoiding dark areas with limited activity and overlooking. Particular care needs to be taken at building entrances and along pedestrian routes.
- Avoid lengths of garages, blank walls and bin stores which deaden the street.
- Ensure that planting is compatible with community safety and seeks to improve this in a suitable manner. Landscaping must not reduce opportunities for a good level of surveillance to all public areas.

Key Questions

- Are public spaces and active travel routes well-integrated into the scheme, following the street network and benefitting from adequate natural surveillance, in order to encourage use and feel safe?
- Do buildings feature adequately robust and visually clear defensible space around them and do they turn the corner where necessary?
- Is back-to-back protection provided through the use of a logical perimeter block approach or similar techniques?

Section K: Privacy, Amenity and Comfort

Objective:

To provide a low energy home with well-designed private and semi-private space for all occupants.

- K.1 Whilst the starting point for the design and layout of residential developments should be the placemaking principles outlined earlier in this guide, due consideration must also be given to meeting low energy, privacy and amenity standards. If the homes of a new place lack good quality garden/amenity space and adequate privacy then the quality of life and well-being of residents will be diminished.
- K.2 Low energy, 'fabric first' homes are the expected approach by Building Regulations. Solar orientation is also important in terms of passive heating and avoiding overheating, as is natural ventilation for air quality, comfort and temperature. In order to address solar considerations rather than slavishly designing the place layout to control home comfort this can be addressed by utilising houses plans that can be varied in response to solar access (such as swapping kitchen space with living room).
- K.3 Single aspect flats can be problematic in terms of solar orientation (often solely north or south facing) and lack opportunities for natural cross ventilation. Therefore, single

aspect flats should be avoided unless there is an over-riding placemaking justification. Where single aspect flats are proposed, these should have large full height windows to maximise natural lighting and a daylighting assessment will be required to demonstrate that these are not gloomy.

- K.4 It is important to separate public from private space within residential neighbourhoods. Front gardens form a privacy buffer between the street and ground floor windows. Furthermore, they provide space for planting to 'soften' the



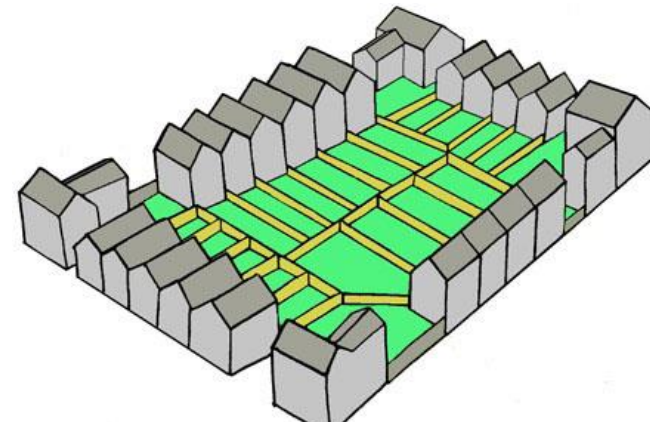
public realm whilst also allowing residents to express their individuality. Front boundary treatments to define these areas should accord with any visibility splay requirements relevant to the design speed of the street.

K.5 Depending on rear access arrangements, these frontage areas may also have to accommodate cycle and refuse/recycling storage. The size of front gardens will vary according to the existing/ desired character of an area or individual street. Front boundary treatments such as low walls or railings are an important element of integrating schemes into the existing streetscene, and hedges can provide further GI opportunities at the local level and add to the character of a place.



K.6 Rear gardens are private spaces but where they abut publicly accessible land, the security and privacy can be impaired. The need to enclose private rear gardens with

boundary walls and security features detracts from the appearance, vibrancy and security of public areas. Therefore, the best way to define, separate and secure private spaces is to use the buildings themselves. A **perimeter block approach** is therefore considered the most suitable approach to achieve this aim with building fronts facing each other across the public realm and secure private gardens to the rear. Alternative approaches will be considered where it can be demonstrated that these provide for a suitable level of security to private spaces. Private gardens should take into account orientation and the location of any existing trees which may pose problems as a result of overhang / overshadowing. North facing gardens should be longer to provide an adequate unshaded area of garden.



The site layout should clearly defined public spaces and secure private spaces. The perimeter block approach locates massing towards the edges of the blocks, with private space to the centre. This contributes positively to the legibility of the area and provides a clear distinction between public and private spaces.

K.7 In higher density urban locations with good access to open spaces, there may be scope to consider housing with reduced garden provision and instead make use of high quality communal areas. This approach has been applied in the Swansea Point and SA1 regeneration areas and could also be applied to more urban parts of strategic developments. Communal gardens should be clearly defined, private and secure, and accessible to all residents.



Add photos of communal gardens

Waste and Recycling

K.8 The Council operates an alternating fortnightly refuse and recycling collection, resulting in a need for external waste storage areas. Adequate refuse storage should be addressed at the planning stage in accordance with LDP Policy RP 10, ensuring adequate on-site waste, recycling, composting, separation and storage facilities. Reference should be made to the current requirements of Swansea Council. All refuse storage areas should form an integral part of the design, and where visible from the public realm, be well integrated into the streetscene.

K.9 This is of particular importance in the case of terraced housing where rear access may not be possible, or flats which utilise communal bin stores. For terraced housing it is expected that adequate refuse/ recycling storage could be built into frontage features such as entrance canopies or walls/ front garden areas. Where communal facilities for flats are proposed there should be sufficient space for recycling separation and residual waste, plus safe and convenient to use. All refuse storage should be within the plot or development footprint and not spill out onto the adopted highway.

Space Inside the Home

K.10 Studies have revealed that the UK has the smallest houses and smallest room sizes than all other European countries included within the study³. Therefore quality placemaking should be combined with quality internal living environments that support different lifestyle, occupant needs and well-being. This means that homes should have a convenient layout for everyday living with adequate storage and space to move about and work from home. Proposals for new homes and residential conversions of existing buildings will be assessed against the floor space table (fig X) which is based on the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) (2015). These evidence based space standards which are valid **for all developments** and not just for affordable homes. These standards supplement LDP policy PS2 (Placemaking and Place Management (and its expanded text)). **Where the NDSS standards have been updated and/or new Welsh Government standards published pertaining to all new homes, new developments will be required to meet the national standards as set out in the relevant publication.**

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

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

(from the 'Nationally Described Space Standard' NDSS (2015))

K.11 A minor relaxation of these standards may be permitted in the case of converting Listed Buildings for residential use, in order to protect the historical architectural fabric and layout of the building. However, all living accommodation must be fit for purpose and such proposals will be assessed on their individual merits.

³ 'One Hundred Years of Housing Space Standards – What now? (Julia Park – housingspacestandards.co.uk) (Jan 2017)

Gardens and private amenity space

- K.12 Many new residential developments often include poorly considered or inadequate outdoor amenity provision with many gardens not allowing for future domestic extensions/ alterations. Garden sizes should therefore be appropriate to the dwelling size and site specific considerations such as topography or shading.
- K.13 Given the need for privacy levels and adequate spacing between homes, garden sizes are often determined by separation distances (see below). It is expected that garden sizes will be at least the same size as the footprint of the house which they serve, provided that these also meet the below separation standards. Gardens should be usable shape (i.e. not awkward triangles etc. or arranged as fragmented parts).
- K.14 To future proof new places and allow scope for lifetime homes it is expected that for developments of 100 homes or more 25% of the homes will have gardens of sufficient size for a rear extensions and ancillary multi-functional garden rooms whilst leaving sufficient garden amenity space. This should be demonstrated through 'extension zones' on the layout plan. Where schemes are designed to minimum separation standards they are likely to have permitted development rights for extensions removed.
- K.15 There may be some cases where a relaxation of garden sizes will be considered acceptable, such as where the design proposes a high quality, innovative scheme or in some urban locations where it may be more appropriate to

substitute individual gardens for generous balconies/ private elevated terraces and high quality communal space etc. However, these departures will need to be fully justified and will be considered on their individual merits.

- K.16 In addition to providing adequate space, it is important to ensure that outdoor amenity provision is usable and able to accommodate a 3x3 metre patio for sitting and outdoor dining, as well as a small shed and rotary dryer, plus sufficient space for potential rear extensions or future conservatories. Gardens are also an important part of the GI strategy at the local level and should allow for carefully located new tree planting which can grow to maturity. Additionally the overshadowing impact of any existing mature trees located on garden boundaries should be considered also and may require the provision of a longer garden.
- K.17 Balconies are expected to be provided for new build and converted flats above ground floor level. These provide important amenity space and can also play an important role in adding visual interest and activity to street frontages.



Insert photos of balconies and juliettes.

Balconies must be of adequate size to allow the space to have a functional purpose. As a minimum, private balconies should be 3m² for 1 person or 2 person dwellings plus 1m² per additional person and should be organised to be a useable space for sitting around a table with a width of 1.0 - 1.5m. Ground floor flats should have direct access to a private garden/ terrace area of at least comparable size to the upper floor balconies. Where sufficient evidence is provided to justify why balconies cannot be provided on a particular scheme, for example amenity concerns, then Juliet balconies should be incorporated.

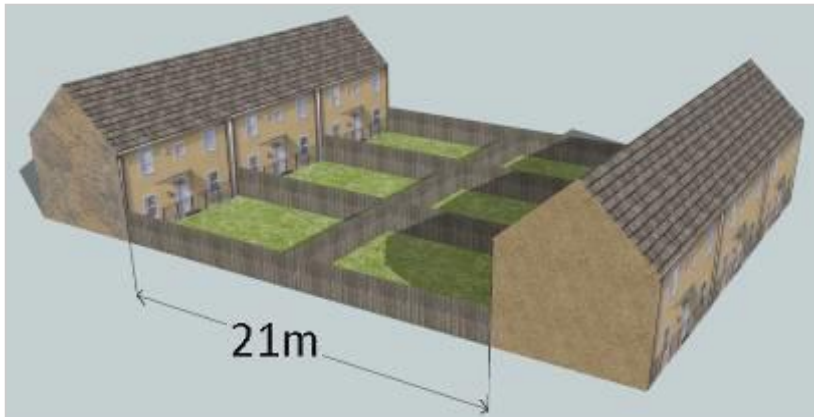
- K.18 All flats are expected to provide full height glazing to maximise natural lighting and outlook from the main living space. Where single aspect north facing flats are justified as a placemaking approach there should be a daylighting assessment to demonstrate that these are not gloomy.
- K.19 Where buildings utilise roofs to provide private outdoor space and other outdoor amenity space the proposal should take into consideration issues of design, overlooking (e.g. privacy screens) and crime prevention, as well as balancing the needs of other objectives such as renewable energy (e.g. solar panels) or biodiversity (e.g. green roofs) at an early stage in the design process.

Protection of Residential Amenity

- K.20 The design and layout of buildings must give consideration to residential amenity in terms of overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing forms of development. These factors have a strong bearing on the quality of life of residents which is a central premise of sustainable development.
- K.21 Adherence to separation distances will not on its own lead to good placemaking. These should be balanced against making best use of land and achieving good design solutions. The established standard for back-to-back privacy distances (21m) will be taken as the minimum for assessing relationships and will take into account factors such as site character, density and local character. Consideration should also be given to greater separation distances in locations across a site to allow for future domestic extensions.
- K.22 More detailed information on assessing an appropriate amenity relationship between dwellings can be found in the Infill & Backland Development Guide SPG. You are therefore encouraged to cross reference to this document in this regard.
- K.23 In some instances such as higher density developments, innovative schemes and designated heritage assets including conservation areas and listed buildings it may be possible to achieve appropriate privacy through design and screening rather than physical separation. However, this must be demonstrated, and is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Back to Back' Relationships

K.24 To protect privacy for residential developments and existing residential properties, there should be a minimum 21m 'back-to-back' separation distance between first floor habitable room windows for 2 storey dwellings in a typical suburban and rural layout. This distance should be increased where one, or both dwellings, is three storeys. For the purposes of the separation distances set out in this document, a 3 storey dwelling is defined as being of 3 full storeys in height and excludes 2 storey dwellings with rooms in the roof and dormers. These distances may be relaxed in denser urban locations where a design led solution to avoid detrimental amenity impacts can be achieved.



K.25 The relationship of dwellings across the public realm such as streets will be determined on a case by case basis with regard to the character of the locality. However, the absolute minimum building to building width in a typical mews type lane will be 10m.

'Back to Garden' Relationships

K.26 Elevations with windows of habitable rooms at first floor level and above should be set back by a minimum of 10.5m from the common boundary, or 13.75m in the case of three storey dwellings. This is to avoid overlooking of adjacent garden/amenity space and ensure sufficient space is provided for the level of accommodation provided.

Back to Side' Relationships

K.27 To avoid an overbearing impact on habitable rooms and gardens, a 15m minimum distance measured from the main elevation should be achieved in a side to rear relationships and any windows in the upper floor side elevation should be obscurely glazed. Conservatories and/or extensions are excluded from this measurement.



K.28 Where a design-led solution is utilised to avoid issues of overlooking, considerations of overbearing and overshadowing are still relevant. Therefore, regard should be given to the BRE standards which relate to rights to light. For more information please see the Building Research Establishment (BRE) document— 'Site and Layout Planning for Daylighting and Sunlight'.

Relationships at Different Levels

K.29 Where homes are at different slab levels or different storey height relationships (e.g. single storey to 2 storey) this can result in additional overlooking and a more overbearing impact on the lower home/garden space. Furthermore, the potential need for earthworks or retaining structures can limit



the useable garden areas of the lower home. Similarly where homes over two storeys in height are proposed, additional separation will be required.

K.30 Therefore as a starting point, the basic separation distances set out in preceding sections should be increased by 2m for every 1m difference in level. Where the distances are increased, this should include a longer garden for the lower home to compensate for any retaining structures. If the increased distances cannot be met then planting or another design solution may be required. The best way to assess the relationship is by means of a drawn section.

Principles

- Distinguish between private and public space through appropriate enclosures to front gardens which respect the character of the area.
- Where buildings are sited close to public or communal areas, a robust buffer strip (often referred to as defensible space) should be provided to separate habitable rooms and the public realm and to allow occupants to personalise the front and/or sides of their properties.
- Design the size and form of front gardens and front boundaries in response to the character of the area. Provide appropriate planting (including trees) to make a positive contribution to the public realm and GI.
- Provide adequate external amenity spaces in all new developments. The design concept for a scheme should determine the quality, form and level of private space provision.
- Gardens will be at least the same size as the footprint of the house which they serve (provided these meet required separation distances), and should be of a useable shape.. Where sites have access to safe accessible communal areas, then the extent of garden provision could be reduced.
- Communal space for flats needs to be safe and accessible only to residents for relaxation and clothes drying.
- Private space for flats must be provided for individual homes at each level, through individual balconies or terraces. The minimum sizes for these areas is set out in Module J. In exceptional circumstances, where sufficient justification is provided, flats will be required to have Juliette balconies and access to well designed external communal space.
- Provision for refuse and recycling storage, meter reading or other M&E cupboards should be positively integrated and visually unobtrusive. Such cupboards should be located as close as possible to the ground to minimise the visual impact of these.
- Avoid backs of buildings and rear gardens facing onto streets and public spaces. 'Backs' should be private and face each other to form secure private gardens.
- Where rear or side boundaries abut the public realm, they must be high quality and robust to form a feature.
- Ensure private gardens get sunshine wherever possible. North facing gardens typically require greater length to mitigate for overshadowing from houses.
- Allow for retention of existing trees and adequate provision of new larger growing trees in gardens, which will provide structure and setting to new development as well as a range of biodiversity benefits.
- For communal spaces and gardens ensure that there is a suitable management scheme in place.

- Ensure that garden and amenity areas have a suitable level of privacy and openness.
- Design homes to have a suitable and convenient internal layout, acceptable internal space for everyday living with adequate space for storage.
- Ensure that rooms have a reasonable sense of outlook. It is not acceptable to obscure glaze a habitable room in order to avoid overlooking issues.

Key Questions

- Does the proposal meet the floorspace requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) 2015 (or subsequent updates)?
- Is the amount and treatment of both public and private amenity space appropriate to the type of development and the location?
- Are private areas secure to provide privacy and stop uncontrolled entry?
- Are service areas sensitively located, well screened and visually acceptable?
- Are buildings orientated to provide active public fronts and secure private backs?
- Does the scheme provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity and avoid problems such as overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing impacts?

Section L: Accommodating Parking

Objective:

To provide sufficient parking in discreet and safe locations without dominating the street or place.

- L.1 Where and how cars are parked can have a significant impact on the quality of place in the residential environment. It is vital to balance the desire of residents to conveniently park close to their homes with the need to avoid parked vehicles dominating the public realm and causing highway safety issues.



- L.2 National advice on the design of residential streets and parking is set out in 'Manual for Streets' and 'Car Parking: What works where'. This document advocates a mixture of parking solutions which are well integrated and contribute to placemaking. Furthermore, the level of car parking required should be determined with reference to the Council's adopted car parking standards. This identifies potential reduction in parking standards based on location and accessibility (see web link at end of document). It also specifies the minimum car park space dimensions of 4.8m by 2.6m.

- L.3 The type of parking provision should respond to the context and the places within the development. The parking strategy should be explained in the DAS. The merits of the various forms of parking are



discussed on the following pages.

Parking on Plot

- L.4 On plot parking is well related to the dwellings served. However, forecourt parking requires buildings to be set back from the street which weakens the sense of enclosure, limits scope for frontage planting/ green infrastructure, impacts on the provisions of swales for the SUDs strategy and reduces natural surveillance of the public realm. Furthermore, the



streetscene becomes dominated by parked cars and hard surfacing and pedestrian access to front doors can be blocked. Therefore, layouts should be developed in a manner where on plot parking is generally located behind the building line. A typical solution is the 'side drive' between

semi-detached units. In this instance the side parking spaces which have walls to one or either side should be at least 3.2m wide to allow car doors to be opened (a width of 3.8m is required if the parking space is for use by a wheelchair user). If necessary, continuity of frontage can be maintained by linking over at first floor level, or through the use of gates between dwellings on the building line.

- L.5 Where forecourt/frontage parking is proposed, this should generally be to one side of the street only in order to maintain an adequate sense of enclosure. Frontage parking should not take up more than half of the plot width and should be combined with green infrastructure planting and/or front boundaries to soften the visual impact of the parked cars. This must include trees visible rising up between parked cars and trees should also be used to protect frontage planting from inappropriate parking.
- L.6 Where frontage parking and/or integral garages are provided, the planted GI softening garden areas will have Permitted Development Rights removed to control additional frontage parking which would be detrimental to the streetscene and protect the greening.

Add image of unacceptable frontage parking with a red cross

- L.7 Due to the high visual impact and dominance of frontage parking as well as the weakening of the sense of street enclosure that results, frontage parking will not be accepted along spine streets/ avenues and primary streets, as well as prominent frontages and focal locations. Where frontage parking is proposed in groups, rows of more than 4 spaces will require breaking up with tree planting or other appropriate solutions;

Integral Garages

- L.8 Dwellings with integral garages can detract from the character and quality of the streetscene. Therefore where integral garages are proposed, they should be part of a:
- mews type development which supplements the main street network;
 - two storey house which is wide enough to accommodate a front door and habitable room with window onto the street at ground floor level; or
 - three storey town house where the main living space is at first floor level facing the street.
- L.9 In all situations integral garages should be located on, or behind, the building line unless there is a strong justification to break from this approach. The minimum garage size to be counted as a parking space is 3m wide by 6m long. Permitted development rights will be removed to control the future conversion of integral garages to additional residential space to ensure that adequate car parking is being retained at all times.

Courtyard Parking

- L.10 Rear parking courtyards allow cars to be located away from the public realm, dwellings to be sited close to the street and strong continuous frontages to be created. However, if they are inconvenient and poorly overlooked then they will not be used and may attract crime and antisocial behaviour. It is essential that parking courts are designed as places; well overlooked, kept to a manageable size (accommodating no more than 10 parking spaces) and provide a safe accessible route must be provided between each dwelling unit and its parking space. These areas should also perform SuDS and ecological enhancement functions, as well as electric vehicle charging points (where appropriate) wherever possible.



L.11 The entrances to parking courtyards should have strong gateway treatments to discourage casual intrusion and minimise vehicular speeds. In rare instances, parking courtyards may need to be gated to form a secure area, however strong justification will need to be provided for this. Adjacent buildings should be located and designed to directly supervise the access point with windows of a sufficient size and serving habitable rooms overlooking the entrance.

Alternatively, if the proposed space is large enough then a 'gatekeeper' dwelling can be located within the space to overlook this, provided that this can be situated without resulting in an unacceptable amenity relationship with the surrounding dwellings. The courtyards should be separated from gardens by robust and attractive screen or green walls which should provide privacy and security for the private garden areas, without blocking supervision from upper floor windows. There may also be opportunities to incorporate communal shared space and/ or informal play provision.

Parking 'Squares'

L.12 Off street parking within the public realm is well related to dwellings served and well overlooked but must be designed in a quality manner as a public space. It is essential to break up the groups of parking spaces with planting that does not hinder natural surveillance. The use of suitable surfacing materials will also be welcomed and consideration will also need to be given to SuDS. This will allow each approach to be tailored to its specific location. Communal areas such as seats, play equipment etc. can be combined into some spaces.

Parking Structures

- L.13 Undercroft, basement or decked parking is an efficient way of accommodating parked cars within high density residential areas. In mixed use schemes, such parking could be shared between business users and residents.

Add photo of parking court showing good quality boundaries and overlooking

- L.14 It is essential that parking structures are secure and do not make street elevations 'dead' and lifeless. Often parking structures can be located behind single aspect offices or flats to provide a more appropriate frontage. Where wrapping parking area is not possible, the upstand of the basement parking area should be minimised or screened using planting. It is also essential that entrances, and pedestrian gates into such parking areas, be designed to be legible with adequate access controls to maintain security.

On-Street Parking



- L.15 Manual for Streets indicates that parking should be designed into streets. This has the benefits of creating activity and being well overlooked, as well as contributing to informal traffic calming. On street parking can meet the residential and visitor parking requirements.
- L.16 Parking on street should be designed to add to the character of the streetscene and should be integrated with GI tree planting. Sufficient width must be allowed for on street parking such as laybys or widened carriageways or right angle and pavement parking must be designed out. Pavement parking detracts from the streetscene and is a hazard to pedestrians. The scope for incidental on street car parking can also provide for fluctuations in car ownership during the changing lives of members of a household. Parking layouts which seek to utilise this approach should

clearly indicate these spaces on the site plan if these are not provided as dedicated bays. Where allocated on street parking spaces are provided for specific homes these cannot be adopted as part of the highway and must be clearly demarked and visually differentiated. Approaches which seek to provide on street parking should be combined with street trees to provide visual interest and traffic calming as well as biodiversity enhancement and green infrastructure connectivity. The maximum number of on street parking spaces is 6 before a GI feature preferably a tree is provided to break up the parked cars and soften the streetscene.

Cycle Parking

- L.17 Cycle parking should be safe, secure and convenient to encourage this sustainable mode of travel. Formal public spaces are ideal locations for visitor cycle parking because they are accessible, overlooked and well lit.
- L.18 Garages should be of sufficient size to accommodate cycle parking plus a family car. Where there are no garages, cycle storage could be provided in rear gardens where there is a safe and secure means of access. Alternatively, cycle provision could be built into the design of front elevations along with refuse and recycling storage – provided this does not detract from the attractiveness of the building or the street. In flatted development, secure, covered cycle storage should be provided. Secure covered cycle stands/storage should also be provided within the public realm in appropriate locations to encourage active travel for visitors.

Principles

- Provide car parking to suit the nature and location of the development. It may be appropriate to reduce car parking provision taking into account accessibility to facilities, availability of public transport and the potential impact on surrounding area.
- Provide convenient, covered and secure cycle parking. For private storage areas this should generally be related to individual homes, or in the cases of flats should be related to the entrances. There is scope to integrate GI opportunities into these structures.
- Ensure car parking is usable, safe and secure for both people and vehicles.
- Ensure parked cars do not visually or physically dominate any space especially where the development density is high. Use a variety of parking solutions and changes in levels, low walls and soft landscaping to break up, limit and soften the visual impact.
- Avoid large groups of cars that can be seen from a distance.
- Use permeable surfaces and planting as part of an integrated SuDS solution to reduce surface water runoff where ground conditions are suitable.

Key Questions

- Is car parking well integrated so it complements and forms an integral element of the street scene?
- Is the car parking well overlooked and related to the dwellings served?
- Is the cycle parking safe, secure and convenient?
- Is electric vehicle charging provided or could this be retro fitted in future?

Appendix A: Consultation statement

To be added