



Halton Borough Council  
**Design of new  
residential development**





# Design of new residential development

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# foreword

"Good design is crucial in Halton, not only to create new areas where people live and work but to breathe life back into places suffering from economic and social decline. By seeking good quality buildings and public spaces we can contribute to restoring community identity and civic pride; and attracting people, investors and visitors to the area."

Councillor Rob Pollhill  
Deputy Leader of Halton  
Borough Council

*Upton Rocks*



*Waterbridge Mews*



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# I purpose

## I.1 Purpose of the proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The purpose of the Design of New Residential Development SPD is to supplement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and to provide additional practical guidance and support for those involved in the planning and design of new development within Halton Borough. It will also be used by the Council in its assessment of applications for planning permission for schemes of residential development or mixed use schemes containing a residential element. Specifically this SPD will help to: -

- a. Design new residential and mixed use developments that understand their context and embrace the principles of good urban design;
- b. Seek the use of quality materials that respond to the character and identity of their surroundings and reduce environmental impact;
- c. Ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling size and type within new development to create mixed and inclusive communities which meet the Borough's housing needs;
- d. Create better, more sustainable places where people will want to live; and
- e. Secure "sustainable and environmentally friendly new housing developments, including affordable housing" (Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3): Housing);and
- f. provide provision for comprehensive and combined communication infrastructure.

**1.2** By stating this purpose, the Council will seek to encourage residential schemes of development that are appropriate to their context and take full advantage of the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. The Local Planning Authority will seek to improve any development proposal that does not provide for, or meet the principles encouraged and required by this SPD, the Halton Unitary Development Plan or as superseded by the Local Development Framework (LDF).

**1.3** When new residential schemes are shown to increase the burden on the infrastructure of the Borough, this will be expected to be mitigated through financial contributions or other forms of planning gain.

## 2 how to use this document

### 2.1 This design guidance should be used by all designers and developers

involved in the creation of new residential development or for alterations to existing buildings where the end use is residential.

**2.1.1** By making full use of this guidance and through pre application discussion undertaken before a planning application is submitted, this will result in a more complete planning application being submitted and reduce the possibility of amended plans being required and associated delays in the planning and development process.

**2.1.2** Council planning officers will use this guidance as a planning tool for the assessment of development proposals and in raising the quality of the built environment.

**2.1.3** The requirement for design consideration, reinforced through national and local policy, means that the Council can refuse planning permission on design grounds. This document aims to guide developers through the stages of assessing a development site and producing a scheme which responds to the site and to local needs.

**2.1.4** The Council does not wish to be overly prescriptive in guiding the details of development as this may restrain architectural creativity.

Whilst there is a move towards a more design based approach, certain standards must be achieved and maintained regardless of location and building style having particular regard to transport and access requirements and maintaining the privacy and amenity of existing residents at properties that adjoin the development site.

**2.1.5** During the design process it is anticipated that conflicts are likely to arise between design principles. It is recommended that in such cases early communication with the Council is established. In all cases the Council will welcome innovative and creative solutions to design and development issues, however, the emphasis of responsibility to demonstrate the benefits of the scheme and why it should be approved lies with the developer and not the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate otherwise.

**2.1.6** For further information on making a planning application, readers are directed to appendices on 'Making a Planning Application' and the Council's website on 'Validation Check Lists' which outline what is required upon submission of a planning application and accompanying documentation.

## 2.2 Character and Context

**2.2.1** New residential developments need to be designed to reflect and enhance the character of the surrounding built form, having regard to size and scale of buildings, building lines, roof height and pitch, window and door proportions, vertical and horizontal emphasis, architectural detailing, materials and any other notable features and views. In areas that have little existing distinctiveness, such as Greenfield sites, developers should aim to create a new sense of place drawing on elements from a wider context.

**2.2.2** Undertaking a character and context appraisal is therefore essential to informing any potential development ideas. All applicants for new residential schemes will need to demonstrate that the

scheme is robust and sufficiently detailed in terms of analysis and the key design principles outlined in this guide. This will be done through the preparation of a Design and Access Statement that will be submitted alongside the planning application and this document should also therefore be read in conjunction with the Council's prepared guidance on Producing Design and Access Statements. Detailed and helpful advice is also available through the CABE document 'Design and access statements: How to write, read and use them' available at [www.CABE.org.uk](http://www.CABE.org.uk).

**2.2.3** A design and access statement should demonstrate how the proposed scheme has taken account of the local context and how it will contribute to the area. The scheme should include clear proposals for the treatment of

landscape and the public realm. The main issues influencing the design should be explained in a clear, structured and visual way. This will help people who are consulted on the development to understand what is trying to be achieved, the constraints on the development and how the design has been applied to the individual context of the site. It should also include details of any existing landscape features, including trees, and those worthy of retention which should be designed into the scheme as an integral feature to enhance the scheme. A detailed assessment also helps planning officers to assess the proposals more quickly and potentially reduces the need for costly redesign resulting in delays.

**2.2.4** Undertaking a character and context appraisal is essential to informing any potential development ideas. The first section of the design and access statement should therefore be based on a process of observation, research and illustration. A well developed site analysis will assist in the proper integration of new development into its context including fully diagrammed site plans, photos and illustrations to demonstrate a clear understanding of the site and its constraints. As a minimum this should include analysis of:

- a. Existing and historic uses of







- b. the site and land uses;  
Constraints on development including any potential barriers and/ or conflicts and how these have been taken into account;
  - c. The character and nature of the surrounding environment and streetscape;
  - d. The location, status (i.e. Listed) of existing buildings within and surrounding the site;
  - e. The location of habitable rooms and frontages that face the site;
  - f. The size, shape, orientation, topography of the site;
  - g. Tree survey in accordance with British Standard 5837 and details of any planting and landscape features within/ adjoining the site;
  - h. Location and routes of relevant utilities and services;
  - i. Accessibility of the site including existing roads, footpaths, cycle ways, public transport routes;
  - j. Relevant microclimate considerations including prevailing wind direction, solar path and potential shadowing; and
  - k. Important view corridors and views into and from the site.
- Advice on carrying out detailed site appraisals is available through the Urban Design Compendium and CABE details for which are included as an Appendix to this document. Reference should also be made to the Council's advice note 'Trees on Development Sites' available through the Council's web site.



## 3 design principles

### 3.1 The Importance of Design

**3.1.1** The Government has expressly stated its commitment to good urban design through its policies, advice and ministerial statements. The principles of creating high quality sustainable places has been central to the vision and ideas set out in the Urban and Rural White Papers and through advice contained within PPS1. In December 2000 a ministerial statement confirmed that Government commitment to urban design was not a passing trend.

**3.1.2** As well as social and environmental benefits of better design, research published by CABI and the DETR also identified wider economic benefits and “more profitable and sustained regeneration activity” (The Planning Inspectorate- Guidance for Inspectors on Design 2007)

“Urban Design is the art of making places for people. It includes the way places work and matters such as community safety, as well as how they look. It concerns the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric, and the processes for ensuring successful villages, towns and cities.... Good design can help create lively places with distinctive character; streets

and public spaces that are safe, accessible, pleasant to use and human in scale; and places that inspire because of the imagination and sensitivity of their designers” (By Design- Urban Design in the planning system: towards better practice, DETR and CABI 2000).

**3.1.3** By Design summarises the objectives of urban design as:

- ▶ Character - A place with its own identity
- ▶ Continuity and enclosure - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- ▶ Quality of the public realm - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
- ▶ Ease of movement - A place that is easy to get to and move through
- ▶ Legibility - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
- ▶ Adaptability - A place that can change easily
- ▶ Diversity - A place with variety and choice

**3.1.4** According to The Planning Inspectorate – Guidance for Inspectors on Design, good urban design is not the same as good architectural design and not simply about visual quality. It is also about ensuring:

- ▶ efficient use of land and resources
- ▶ that they function properly in terms of, for example, access and linkages with other buildings and areas
- ▶ that they provide a safe and attractive environment, minimising risk and fear of crime and ensuring adequate levels of amenity including daylight and sunlight
- ▶ flexibility and adaptability in light of future changing needs.

The following sections of this chapter are considered to identify some of the key design considerations and principles contributing towards securing well designed residential developments.

### 3.2 Achieving Appropriate Density

**3.2.1** There has been a re-emerging emphasis on the concept of housing density resulting, in the main, from economics, a shifting government emphasis towards sustainable use of land and resources and satisfying housing need. Planning Policy Statement 3 seeks to re-affirm the long standing minimum standard of 30 dwellings per hectare (12 dwellings per acre) as the national indicative minimum to guide policy development which, attributed to the Housing Act of 1919 (‘Homes

for Heroes Act'), has remained largely unchanged. Guideline figures as indicated in the Halton UDP state that densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net should be avoided. Densities of 30-50 dwellings per hectare are encouraged.

**3.2.2** High-density development of greater than 50 dwellings per hectare net will be encouraged on sites in, or adjacent to, existing built up areas which provide for good levels of accessibility, well served by public transport and designed to fit with the existing character of the area. Responsibility will however rest with the developer to demonstrate that such high densities are appropriate to the specific site.

**3.2.3** Concepts of higher density are often associated with town cramming and poor quality partly resulting from mistakes of the 1960s. According to the Urban Design Compendium (2000) however "this misses the fundamental point. Density is only a measure. It is a product of design, not a determinant of it... The recommended approach is design-led, concentrating on sustainable urban quality. Market considerations influence many of the housing forms and this, together with the design-led approach, makes density a measure of the product, not a determinant of it."

**3.2.4** The approach to town centre and suburban sites can require a differing approach to secure appropriate densities of development. Modern suburbs are often associated with low-density estates based on the cul-de-sac layout. There are however many historical examples to suggest that such trends and perceptions need not continue. Indeed many of the classic Garden City suburbs, such as Hampstead and Letchworth, act as markers to how densities of approximately 30 dwellings to the hectare can be appropriately designed to provide more successful and popular housing developments in the long term.

**3.2.5** Varying approaches can be used to secure developments of similar density within any given site. It is not always necessary to automatically suggest high-rise apartments to secure developments of appropriate density. Well-considered and imaginative design solutions can be used to meet market demand and achieve a development appropriate to the individual character of the site and market.

**3.2.6** The character and design of residential schemes have, in recent times, largely come to be determined by highway design standards. Such developments often therefore fail to provide for any

## Achieving Appropriate Density

### Principles

*Make density a measure of the product not a determinant of it.*

*Provide density suited to the specific characteristics of the site and surrounding areas.*

*Increase densities in town centres and other areas with good facilities and services and around public transport centres.*

*Respond to the massing of buildings on adjoining plots by varying density across the development site.*

*Create varied streetscape by incorporating a range of building forms and heights with good relationship at street level.*

*Ensure that high density development is set within good quality landscaping and amenity space with good internal space standards.*

*A well designed neighbourhood should provide integrated servicing and waste recycling facilities;*

*Ensure that developments are well integrated into safe and attractive open space networks*

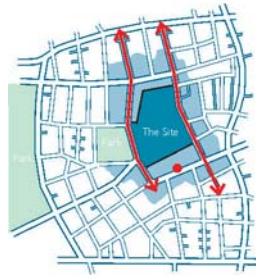
*Within Conservation Areas and other areas of particular character and adjoining Listed Buildings, particular attention should be paid to ensure massing and density of development are compatible with the area.*

distinctive identity, are wasteful of land and infrastructure and encourage car dependency. The Council will seek to apply such standards with greater degrees of flexibility and look favourably on innovative design solutions that seek to be more people oriented whilst satisfactorily accommodating the car. More detailed advice on how this can be achieved is provided by the Department for Transport document 'Manual for Streets'.

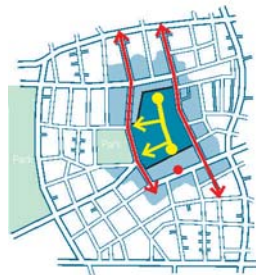
### 3.3 Connecting Places

**3.3.1** Creating attractive and viable residential areas is as much about the spaces and connections between the buildings as the buildings themselves. It is important when designing new residential developments to introduce good movement networks well integrated into the surrounding system. Where residential development is off the main road network, the highway system should be designed to offer priority to pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic calming should be integrated as an imaginative and attractive part of the design not bolted on as an after-thought.

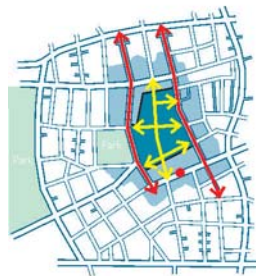
**3.3.2** Linkages should, as far as practicable, follow pedestrian desire lines and the most direct route, give flexibility in the choices of routes, be well lit and take advantage of



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



The typical cul-de-sac response creates an introverted layout, which fails to integrate with the surroundings



A more pedestrian-friendly approach that integrates with the surrounding community links existing and proposed streets, and provides direct links to bus stops



The street pattern then forms the basis for perimeter blocks, which ensure that buildings contribute positively to the public realm

**Key**  
 Principal routes  
 Internal street  
 Bus stop

natural surveillance from overlooking buildings and public spaces to promote community safety.

**3.3.3** Far greater emphasis is now being placed upon the needs of disabled people in the design of the street. It should also be noted that the needs and considerations vary according to varying disabilities and design should ensure, as far as possible, that any measures to accommodate a particular group are considered sympathetically and that do not cause further problems to others.

**3.3.4** Many sites are now being developed that have specific topographical problems requiring substantial engineering solutions and retaining walls. Attention needs to be given to this issue at the outset to avoid potential future conflicts with securing access for all. Restraining structures also need to be designed sympathetically with the scheme and not simply use the cheapest construction options.



*de Stryp Netherlands*

## Connecting Places

### Principles

*Design roads to reduce traffic speeds along new residential streets and create a pedestrian friendly environment. Traffic calming should be designed as an integral part of the scheme not bolted on.*

*Plan development to maximise links to existing or proposed public transport facilities and service centres.*

*Look at innovative design solutions to ensure emergency and service vehicles can be accommodated.*

*Promote cycling and walking by providing safe and attractive open space and networks.*

*Create links between the proposed and existing development appropriate to the existing street pattern particularly where cul-de-sacs are used.*

*Ensure ease of access and movement for all including the elderly and people with disabilities to allow freedom of choice.*

*Provide a hierarchy of routes and spaces suited to the development to enable residents and visitors to have ease and choice of movement.*

*Avoid creation of isolated routes with poor surveillance which could become unsafe and encourage anti-social behaviour.*

*Actively promote community safety by ensuring that development overlooks streets and pedestrian and cycle routes.*

*Ensure residents and visitors can easily find their way around the development through the arrangement of buildings, spaces, routes and landmark features.*



*Kingshill Lacuna Kent*



*Kingshill Lacuna Kent*



A bad street pattern which lacks permeability. New development should avoid cul-de-sac street layouts as this decreases the permeability of a site, resulting in less movement across the area.



A good well connected street pattern. Instead development should aim to use a block system of design in which the development is arranged into blocks that are surrounded by streets that service the site. Buildings of appropriate size, proportion and layout will help create well defined streets and spaces.

**3.3.5** Detailed guidance on how to respond to these issues is provided by the Department for Transport and communities and Local Government through the document 'Manual for Streets' (MfS). This document should be used in parallel with this guidance to achieve the most appropriate design solution for a scheme. The main principles in the approach to street design that MfS recommends are summarised in para. 1.6.1 (p.13).

**3.3.6** For highways which are to be adopted, the Council as Highway Authority is prepared to consider design solutions which introduce

new concepts of shared surface, layout or use of materials. Such proposals must be fit for purpose and incorporate materials appropriate to the situation and capable of being readily sourced to enable ease of future maintenance.

Consideration of such issues must be given at an early stage and proposals should include details of proposed surfacing materials. Early discussion on all these matters is recommended with the Councils Highways Network Team.

### 3.4 Amenity Space – Public and Private

The provision and treatment of outdoor space, whether public or private, is vital in achieving a successful and attractive environment and to quality of life and is as much a part of the design as buildings and roads. All new residential development must therefore provide a mix of public and private outdoor amenity space. The type and level of provision will vary depending on the characteristics of the development, the site and its context. Open space should be designed as an integral part of the development from the outset and shall, under no circumstances, be considered as an optional extra or the land left over once the houses and roads have been accommodated. In any case it is important that a clear distinction is made between public and private areas through the use of appropriate boundary treatments and landscaping to ensure the security of private areas and provide clear responsibility for maintenance.

#### 3.4.1 Private Amenity Space

**3.4.2** New housing must provide a landscaped garden space appropriate to the scale and function of the dwelling and the character of the development. The majority of that space should normally be located to the rear of the dwelling, be of a useable shape (long thin gardens or acute angles should be avoided) and should be designed to provide a reasonable degree of privacy and not be significantly overlooked. Measures to improve privacy such as the careful use of walling or fencing, or the positioning of dwellings, garages and outriggers should be considered. Consideration of how inside and outside spaces relate to one another is vital, as is the orientation of space to receive sunlight and act as an interface between dwellings.

**3.4.3** An area of between 50 – 100 square metres is considered sufficient for both sitting out and children's play for new houses. The size of the garden and residential plot should also be proportionate to the scale of the dwelling. As such the Council will apply the following minimum standards: -

##### For dwelling houses

- ▶ Houses having 1-2 bedrooms

shall have a minimum private garden space of 50sq. m per unit

- ▶ Houses having 3 bedrooms shall have a minimum private garden space of 70sq. m per unit
- ▶ Houses having 4 or more bedrooms shall have a minimum private garden space of 90sq.m per unit

In any case garden provision should relate to the character of the scheme being designed and to the area in which it is to be located. Calculation of the number of bedrooms will include any room allocated as, for example, a study or store but capable of being used as a bedroom. Please note that these figures relate to private rear garden area. Front gardens, driveways, garages, parking and servicing, and bin and cycle stores will not be considered to be part of this amenity area.

##### For flats/ apartments

- ▶ Minimum 50 square metres designated and laid out as communal garden with seating per development, and
- ▶ For developments of 6 or more flats/ apartments, an additional 10 square metres per flat/ apartment of private amenity space such as balcony, terrace or roof garden.

## Amenity Space – Public and Private

### Principles

*Design all outdoor private spaces to be safe and secure, and provide private gardens for family homes.*

*Developments including flats/ apartments should provide appropriate open space.*

*Where balconies are to form part of open space provision they should be large enough to accommodate a table and chairs, be oriented to maximise access to sunlight and be protected from noise, sources of air pollution and minimise overlooking issues.*

*Public and private spaces should be clearly defined through use of railings, hedges and other appropriate boundary treatments.*

*Retain existing walls, hedgerows and other features which can contribute to the character and biodiversity of a development.*

*Design and orientate properties to provide a positive relationship to the street. Blank elevations and high walls and fences facing public areas should be avoided.*

*Ensure that boundary treatments are well designed and integrated so as not to compromise long-term management and maintenance.*

Where it is not possible to provide this full additional amenity space as private space and the Local Planning Authority are in agreement, any deficit shall be added to area of communal gardens. This space should be designed to encourage use through providing seating and a focal point or landscaping features. Lighting, overlooking and the creation of small pockets of biodiversity help to create a useable pleasant environment.

Please note that Juliet balconies do not count towards private amenity space. Garages, parking, and servicing, and bin and cycle stores will not be considered to be part of this amenity area. In highly urban developments such as town centres, balconies (or terraces) may be counted towards the total private/ communal garden provision where the Local Planning Authority are in agreement regarding the appropriateness, the wider character and quality of the development.

**3.4.4** Where it can be demonstrated that the specific circumstances of development justify, a smaller garden or private amenity area may be allowed. This may occur, for example, where the area is characterised by small plot development including small infill plots and traditional terraced areas or for large scale developments

including a large number of flats/ apartments. Such requirements may also be relaxed for areas of the Borough where development is required to achieve wider regeneration objectives or the sites in question provide significant challenges in their own right. In any such case it will be for the developer to provide appropriate justification and conditions may be attached to restrict future extensions and/or outbuildings through permitted development rights.

**3.4.5** Such standards or particular site constraints should not however inhibit developers and architects from providing innovative solutions to amenity requirements. Roof gardens, for example, are considered an appropriate solution to the provision of private space, especially in town centre locations where space is at a premium. The use of both projected and recessed balconies should also be explored with the emphasis that this should be useable space not merely decorative. Balconies should be provided at a size and specification in keeping with the development and be able to accommodate chairs and a small table as a minimum.

## 3.5 Communal Amenity Space and the Public Realm

**3.5.1** The provision of communal amenity space as an integral part of new residential development can make a valuable contribution to the quality of the development and the character of the neighbourhood as well as potentially increasing the value of the properties themselves. Well-designed communal spaces can also encourage and increase the potential for interaction between residents. Such provision should be made in accordance with the Councils adopted SPD on the Provision of Open Space and, as such, for development for 50 persons or greater, it will be necessary to incorporate all, or as much as possible, of the open space on or adjacent to the site.

**3.5.2** Consideration of open space should be given from the outset as



*In this development at Barons Court, Hammersmith homes, landscape, routes and parking are blended together seamlessly.*

an integral part of the scheme and should be enhanced, where possible, through the retention of local features such as mature trees. Appropriate design, maintenance and security through natural surveillance can encourage use by a variety of groups and act as a more effective solution to potential problems of anti-social behaviour than more reactive solutions. Proposals should include provision for play, whether formal areas with

play equipment or informal landscaped areas. The public realm including streets and open-spaces are the most commonly accessible





environment for children's play and should be designed with this in mind. In any case, development will also be required to meet the requirements set down by the Councils adopted Supplementary Planning Document: Provision of Open Space (July 2006).

### 3.6 Privacy, Amenity, sun and daylight

**3.6.1** Privacy within the home and adequate levels of daylight and sunlight are important to enable residents to feel comfortable in their home and enjoy satisfactory levels of amenity. Care needs to be taken to ensure that areas intended to be private, whether internal or external, do not suffer significant overlooking and that the form of a development does not compromise

the outlook or quality of space provided within dwellings.

**3.6.2** Whilst the Council will not seek to stifle good and varied urban design and innovative design solutions to achieve good standards of privacy, amenity and outlook, maintaining such standards are considered to be particularly important in assessing the potential impact of proposals for new dwellings on the amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings which adjoin the site. It is also considered that greater potential exists through careful design, relative orientation and positioning of habitable rooms to achieve a relaxation of such standards between the front of dwellings across an intervening street whilst maintaining satisfactory levels of privacy and amenity.



## Communal Amenity Space and the Public Realm

### Principles

*Integrate communal amenity space into the design of developments from the outset. Developments including family housing should consider the requirements for children's play, either through on-site provision or through contributions to adjacent facilities in accordance with the Councils adopted UDP Policy H3 and SPD: Provision of Open Space.*

*Adequate mechanisms and resources must be put in place to ensure the satisfactory future management of all communal spaces.*

*Provide communal outdoor areas that offer a variety of facilities for residents and can be used in a multi-functional way.*

*Communal amenity areas, including play facilities, seating, bedding and lighting, should take account of the needs of users with disabilities and of all groups.*

*All amenity spaces must be designed with due regard for community safety requirements. Play areas should be sited in open, welcoming locations, overlooked by houses or from well used pedestrian routes, accessible by wide hard-surfaced footpaths, and well-served by services such as litter and dog bins.*

*Careful attention should be given to design and location of landscaping to ensure that future plant growth will not interfere with natural surveillance, but will provide a visual and noise buffer from private amenity areas and habitable rooms within dwellings.*

*Small, fragmented strips of land (e.g. over sewer lines, or incidental to parking areas) will not be considered as a contribution to open space requirements.*

*Provision should be made for young children to play safely, as well as for older children and teenagers. Children should be able to walk and cycle freely and safely.*

*Play equipment, signage and furniture should be of attractive design but robust and vandal resistant. The choice of play equipment should encourage active and creative play.*

## 3.7 Privacy

**3.7.1** Privacy is an important design consideration in ensuring that residents feel at ease within their home. To ensure this, general planning standards prescribe minimum separation distances between habitable rooms are required. Readers are referred to the previous chapter Continuity and Enclosure and also to the Councils House Extensions Guidance SPD and Designing for Community Safety SDP.

Careful design can help create privacy in a number of ways: -

- ▶ Varied building lines can create oblique views, allowing the fronts of dwellings to be brought closer together than where facing views are direct;
- ▶ It is generally acceptable for rooms such as living rooms and kitchens to face the street with bedrooms located towards more private parts of the home. Where buildings directly abut the street or other public areas, it is considered that a small landscaped strip as a minimum, with railings or other appropriate boundary treatment, can work to secure appropriate levels of privacy for future occupiers.

- ▶ Windows can be designed in relation to the function of the room: generous windows for living rooms overlooking the street or garden; frosted windows for bathrooms; and smaller windows for bedrooms. Bay windows provide oblique views down a street;

- ▶ Careful orientation of primary and secondary windows can enable dwellings to be drawn close together whilst still providing surveillance of the public realm;

- ▶ Screening and landscaping can limit overlooking between windows. The provision of obscure/fixed glazing, mature tree planting and positioning of ancillary outbuildings as means of mitigating intrusive, direct overlooking is acceptable in some case. Each situation will be considered on its own merits.

**3.7.2** Proposals will normally be required to satisfy minimum standards for separation between properties set down in fig X of the document. This will seek to ensure that all dwellings within and adjoining new developments achieve a reasonable degree of

privacy and amenity and enjoyment of daylight and sunlight. Whilst it is not possible to provide standards relating to all potential relationships between dwellings, the distances within these diagrams are intended to provide a basis for the minimum distances and principles which will be employed.

**3.7.3** In any case where it may be accepted that the development does not satisfy these minimum separation distances, the Council will utilise the following 25 degree assessment to ensure suitable daylight is maintained to any habitable rooms within and/ or adjoining developments. This approach applies where any potentially affected window will, as a result of the development, directly face another building, wall or other structure. It is considered that suitable daylight is achieved where a clear unobstructed view above a line of 25 degrees from the horizontal is maintained from the



*Kingshill Lacuna Kent*

# Privacy

## Principles

Explore innovative solutions that maintain privacy whilst creating well lit and well designed spaces. These could include: creating varied floor levels; staggered facing windows; using louvres, opaque glazing or reflective glass; roof lighting; glass brick walls; and high or low level and shaped windows.

Where the distance between facing habitable windows in new developments do not meet those set down within fig XXX of this document, it must be demonstrated how privacy has been incorporated into the design proposals for individual dwellings.

Where new development abuts existing residential development, maintain the existing expected levels of privacy and outlook and ensure that the distance between facing habitable room windows complies with the separation and privacy distances set down within fig XXX of this document.

Consider the position and orientation of habitable rooms and the location of their doors and windows to minimise overlooking and maintain privacy.

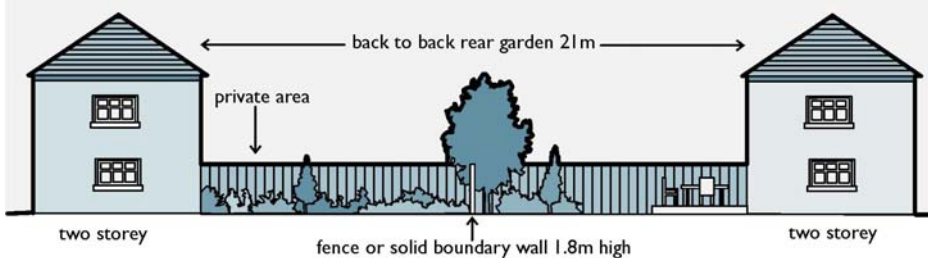
Give consideration to the location and orientation of habitable rooms in relation to possible sources of noise and potential sources odour or pollution such as primary traffic routes.

Orientate habitable rooms to maximise their outlook and view.

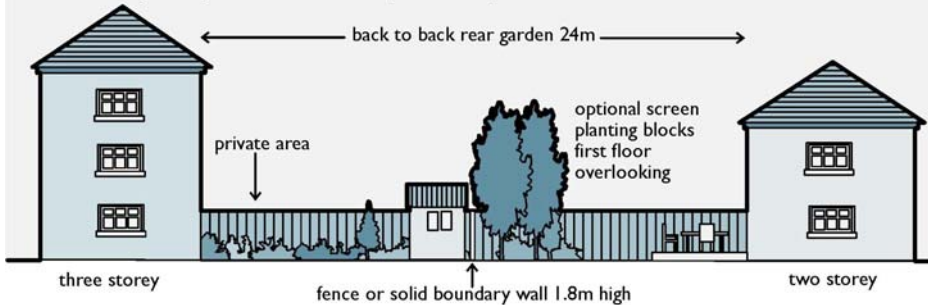
Use insulation, double/ triple/ acoustic glazing to minimise the impact of external sources of noise, or vibration transfer that could occur from traffic or conflicting uses.

Consider innovative ways of creating privacy in private external areas through the use of planting, canopies, the orientation of spaces and screening.

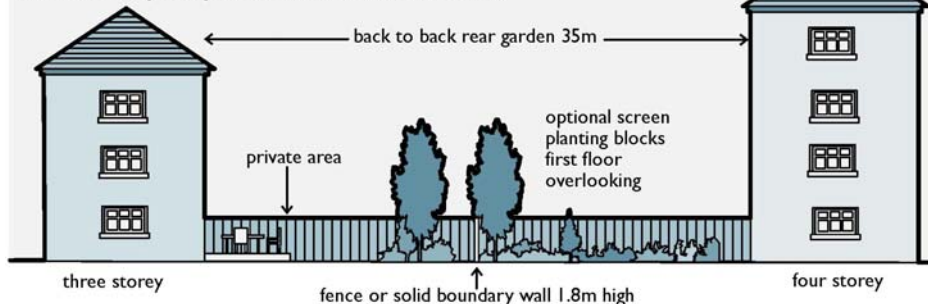
**Back to back privacy distances: two storey to two storey**



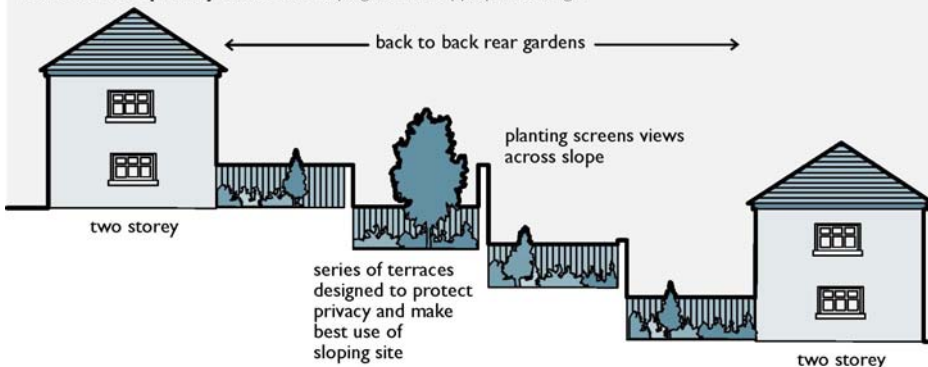
**Back to back privacy distances: three storey to two storey**

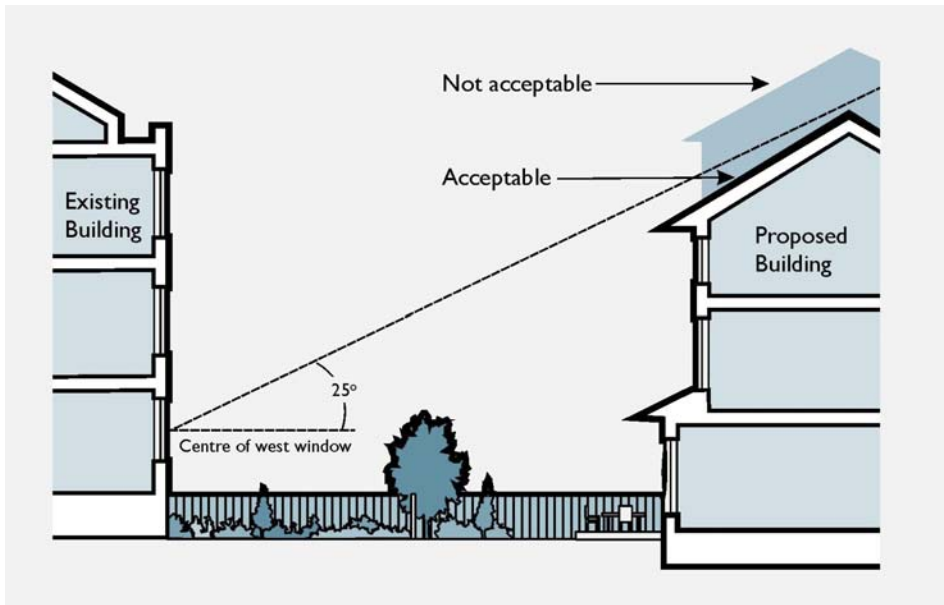


**Back to back privacy distances: three storey to four storey**



**Back to back privacy distances: sloping site with appropriate design**





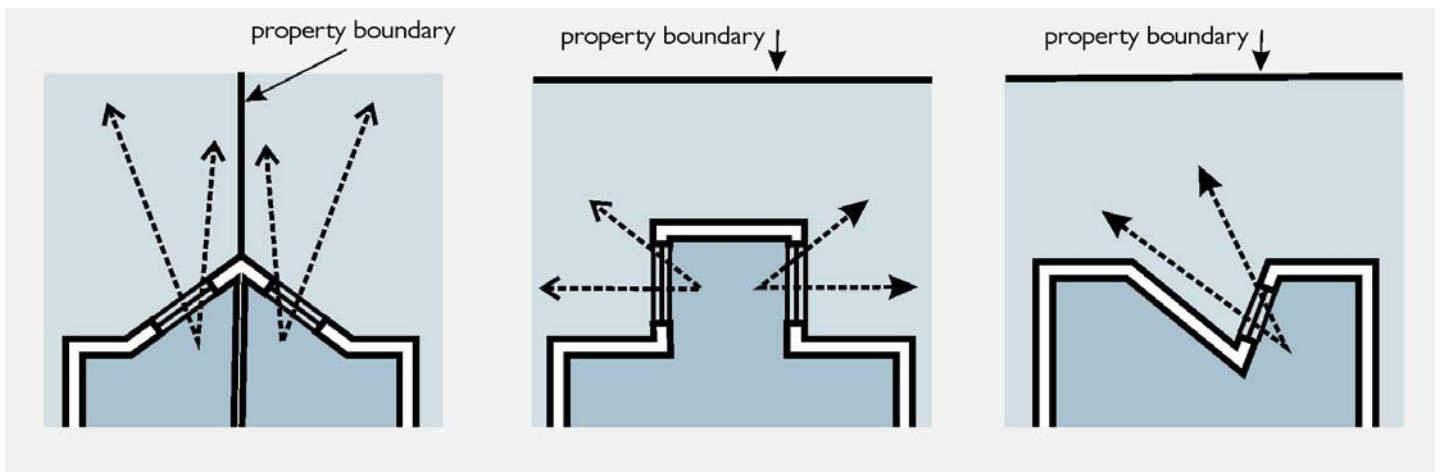
centre of the lowest level habitable room window as indicated in the diagram below. For the avoidance of doubt in such cases, a conservatory will be considered as a habitable room.

**3.7.4** The impact of the height, scale, and massing of a development should be considered in specific relation to an individual site and its surroundings. As stated throughout this document, such standards will be enforced more stringently to

protect the amenity and outlook of existing neighbours adjoining development sites. A much greater degree of flexibility will be allowed where the planning authority are satisfied that this can be justified through quality urban design and innovative approach. This is more likely to be the case within town centres provided the developer and architect can provide suitable justification.

**3.7.5** In any case where a proposed development fails such tests it will be the responsibility of the developer and architect/ designer to demonstrate that the merits of the scheme outweigh such perceived harm and/ or that adequate protection can be secured through innovative design solutions.

*Overlooking of adjacent properties or secluded private open space can often be avoided with careful arrangement of windows*







### 3.8 Parking and servicing

Access to parking for cars, cycles and service vehicles for bins and recycling collection is an integral part of any development. Providing creative, well designed and accessible means of parking and servicing within a development is important to its overall quality and the long term success of the street and local environment. Innovative and less conventional solutions that address the needs of residents and bring wider benefits to the development through cycle initiatives and green travel plans will be actively encouraged. There are many ways of incorporating these within a development and there is no one right solution. In any case it will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate and satisfy the Council that the proposed solution is appropriate to the development. Access to parking for



cars, cycles and service vehicles for bins and recycling collection is an integral part of any development. Providing creative, well designed and accessible means of parking and servicing within a development is important to its overall quality and the long term success of the street and local environment. Innovative and less conventional solutions that address the needs of residents and bring wider benefits to the development through cycle initiatives and green travel plans will be actively encouraged. There are many ways of incorporating these within a development and there is no one right solution. In any case it will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate and satisfy the Council that the proposed solution is appropriate to the development.

#### Car Parking

##### 3.8.1 The way in which car parking is



## Parking and Servicing

### Principles

*Integrate a mix of car parking layouts into a scheme from the outset that reflect the nature and location of a development.*

*Consider the provision of car parking within a development relative to its location, the availability of public transport and the standards set out in Draft RSS Parking Standards or any superseding document.*

*Incorporate disabled car parking into the development and ensure it is clearly marked and appropriately positioned. Where the scheme is mixed use, consider the needs for disabled parking in all elements of the scheme.*

*Design car parking to minimise its negative effect on the quality of the public realm and dominance of the streetscape, particularly in high-density developments. Consider the use of levels, planting, street furniture and lighting to integrate parking into the streetscape and minimise the impact.*

*Avoid large-scale car-parking courts. Design them as an integral part of the public realm.*

*Provide car parking spaces and cycle facilities that are overlooked, safe and secure and accessible.*



arranged can have a fundamental effect on the character and quality of a place. Cars should not be allowed to dominate the area or inconvenience pedestrians and cyclists.

**3.8.2** Where private parking is provided within the curtilage of a dwelling a number of options exist to reduce the impact of parked cars on the street scene whilst maintaining security. The most obvious of these is for parking, including driveway, garages and car ports to be located to the side or rear of the house behind the front building line or designed as an integral feature of the design. Basement and undercroft parking may also be considered. Parking within the front curtilage acts not only to dominate the street scene

but also to break up views and natural surveillance and is therefore unlikely to be acceptable.

**3.8.3** A certain amount of on-street parking can serve to have a beneficial traffic calming effect but the layout should be specifically designed to incorporate it. Such spaces should be broken up through landscape detail including tree planting to provide a more pedestrian environment and variety through the street.

**3.8.4** In accordance with RSS Interim Draft Parking Standards for the North West new development will be required to make adequate provision for car and cycle parking in line with the following standards:

Developers must also demonstrate



*Provide car parking in basement with limited ground floor area used just for access, allowing ground floor frontage to be maximised for active uses such as housing.*



*Use discreet and innovative solutions for parking, especially where high densities are required. Use levels and hard and soft landscaping to break up, limit, and soften its usual impact.*



shared private courtyard. In such cases, entrances should be between buildings or through feature archways which respect the street frontage to avoid excessively wide openings which can break and damage the continuity of the street. Shared communal parking, particularly for visitors, may also be satisfactorily incorporated within a landscaped area within the street but only if carefully designed as an integral feature. In all cases, such spaces should be designed, not simply as car parks, but as spaces where cars are parked. They should be properly overlooked by and be easily accessible from surrounding residential properties, should be small scale to avoid large expanses of car parking and broken up with landscaping and clear pedestrian routes. Basement and multi-storey parking can also be successfully

	No. of Beds	Car Parking	Cycle parking
Dwelling Houses	1 bedroom	1	1 allocated 1 communal
	2 to 3 bedrooms	2	2 allocated 1 communal
	4+ bedrooms	3	4 allocated 2 communal

that adequate provision is made throughout the scheme for visitor parking whether designed to be on street or within shared parking courts but as an integral part of the scheme.

can be satisfactorily accommodated behind groups of buildings as a

The above figures are set as maximums but any reduction in parking allocation must be agreed with the planning authority which may require a detailed accessibility audit.

**3.8.5** Shared communal parking does not need to be the remote, insecure parking courts often associated with residential schemes of the 1970's. Courtyard parking





## Parking and Servicing

### Principles

Explore innovative solutions to reduce and integrate car parking within a development such as home zones, cycle initiatives and travel plans.

Where underground car parks are incorporated into developments, include security measures such as CCTV and provide good lighting to create a safe environment. Consider the position of vents, grilles and access points to minimise negative impact on the public realm.

In mixed-use developments, servicing areas should be screened from residential areas through the orientation of buildings and the public realm, and use of planting, railings, gates and low-rise walls, so as to minimise the impact of service yard activity on the public realm.

A screened external area should be provided with sufficient space for storing segregated waste. In blocks of flats, provide communal recycling and composting facilities.

Internal storage areas should be designed into each unit of a new development to allow occupants to segregate their waste into refuse and recyclables, and store it temporarily, until it can be transferred to external bins.

integrated into residential schemes but this must be done sensitively and care must be taken to integrate them into the urban fabric by surrounding them with single aspect flats or appropriate landscaping and/or orientation and elevation treatments.

other perceived issues. Consideration of alternatives should however be given whether storing cycles on a wall rack within private areas or, better still, a private secure ground floor space which can also be used for a pram, buggy or electric mobility scooter.

**3.8.6** Consideration should be given from the outset to include suitable provision for cycle storage within all developments. Commonly this has been included as a segregated shared cycle store with security and

### Servicing and Waste

**3.8.7** Careful consideration needs to be given to access for waste collection, disposal and recycling.

	Width / Depth / Height lid up (all in mm)	
1100L bins	1375 / 990 / 2370	commercial waste container for a business or less
240L bins	580 / 740 / 1750	normal domestic waste container for a household
140L	480 / 550 / 1700	recycling paper waste container for a household



**3.8.8** For houses, the council is seeking to roll out a three bin collection service incorporating multi-material collection for recyclables, green waste collection and residual waste not suitable for recycling. All new residential schemes should include a designated area within the curtilage of each property for the required storage of bins for waste and recyclables which is readily accessible. These storage areas should be carefully located and designed to discourage unscreened storage of bins within front gardens





which can become unsightly and detract from the character of the area. These should be sited behind the building line and/ or include an appropriate bin store or screen.

Consideration should be given to the width between new builds and perimeter fencing to accommodate the following as appropriate:

**3.8.9** Waste storage within flatted or courtyard schemes should have designated external storage areas that are sensitively designed and located. As waste collection vehicles will not normally enter unadopted areas due to concerns over the capacity of such areas to accommodate the weight of such vehicles without damage, careful consideration will need to be given to ensure that storage areas are sited to allow ease of access for residents and proximity and

accessibility to an highway to allow collections without causing highway obstruction. Extra attention will also be needed to provide appropriate enclosure and screening to such areas to prevent such potentially unsightly and utilitarian functions detracting from the development. In such shared facilities, adequate provision also needs to be made to enable the segregation of multi-material and green recycling and residual waste. Where there are separate areas for general refuse and recycling, the recycling area should be easiest to access by residents to encourage use as far as possible. Where waste disposal chutes are proposed for residents on upper floors of multi-storey development provision must also be made for waste segregation.

**3.8.10** For all new dwellings, whether flats or houses, the developer will be required to supply them with

appropriate bins including recycling facilities prior to occupation. All new houses will be required to be supplied with a composting bin within the rear garden area of each dwelling to actively encourage residents to compost kitchen and garden waste. Developers will also be required through their Design and Access Statements to identify alternative schemes for flatted developments such as provision of communal composting facilities (subject to appropriate maintenance through management company) and/ or wormeries to further reduce the burden of waste. All new developments to accommodate 50 persons or more will be required to include provision for shared underground recycling collection points as an integral part of a well designed residential layout in line with a design approved by the Council. Such schemes can be secured through conditions attached to any planning permission.

**3.8.11** Further advice on the current requirements, size and suitable location of refuse storage and collection requirements are contained as an appendix to this document. Please note however that these may be subject to change and early consultation with the Waste Collection Authority is advised on detailed proposals prior to submission for planning approval.

## 3.9 A Safer Place to Live

**3.9.1** The streets and public spaces between buildings should feel safe and pleasant to be in. The principle access to houses should be from overlooked and safe areas and not hidden within dark alleyways and courtyards. Buildings should therefore be positioned and oriented to contribute to a feeling of a safe and secure environment maximising the scope for natural surveillance.

**3.9.2** By providing windows, doors and balconies that front onto the street and public spaces at regular intervals to create active frontages, the opportunity for communities to police their own environment is maximised. This also acts as a natural deterrent to crime and



## A Safer Place to Live

### Principles

*Design buildings to front onto the street to create a safe and active environment.*

*Consider the number of dwellings required and the positioning of windows and doors to create an active front on to the street.*

*Avoid building backs such as rear boundary walls, service yards and garage courts facing onto the street that do little to create an active environment.*

*Position habitable rooms so they front on to the street. Privacy may be maintained through the use of raised ground floor uses, screening, orientation of windows and planting.*

*Provide access to all individual dwellings from the street to encourage activity, social interaction and safe access to properties.*

*Wherever possible, create a mix of dwelling types, uses and sizes to attract different users with varying patterns of activity throughout the day and night. This will help to lengthen the period of natural surveillance.*

*Design streets for community safety by following the principles of Secured by Design ([www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)).*

*Provide good lighting outside buildings and in car parks and clear, highly visible signage to ensure confidence or use at dusk and night time.*

*Follow the guidance of Safer Places, which lists seven attributes of sustainable communities that are particularly relevant to crime prevention (Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (Department for Communities and Local Government)).*

antisocial behaviour. Any development should therefore seek to maximise potential for security by design through natural surveillance with careful consideration given added measures such as lighting, boundary treatments and other security features as required.



## 3.10 Respecting the Environment

**3.10.1** The shift towards more sustainable forms of development will require a wider approach embracing global as well as local environmental concerns and a lifecycle approach to individual schemes.

**3.10.2** A general principle for sustainable buildings is that they should be designed to be long life, low maintenance, energy efficient, and adaptable to meet changing needs.

**3.10.3** There are a number of innovative approaches developers can take in achieving a higher sustainable homes rating. Many approaches are now familiar and becoming more and more common such as incorporating solar panels to heat water, having a shaped roof to collect rainwater for toilet flushing, or roof tiles that can be made from recycled materials.

**3.10.4** The fabric of the building can too be made from natural or renewable sources with features such as lime cement and wall insulation made from recycled newspaper all contributing to reducing the amount of energy required to build and heat a building and allowing the building to breathe providing a healthy atmosphere.



**3.10.5** With growing urbanisation, the increase in the proportions of hard landscaping, roads, driveways and roof areas has, coupled with climate issues, dramatically brought flooding to the forefront of current issues. Any development within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 and proposals for development of any site exceeding 1 Ha within Flood Risk Zone 1 will require a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) in accordance with PPS25

## Respecting the Environment

### Principles

*Ensure an energy efficient design of new homes. Appropriate design, orientation, layout and construction of buildings can avoid energy loss and minimise energy demand through natural lighting, heating and cooling.*

*Maximise opportunities for the use of renewable energy, such as solar power, combined heat and power systems and wind turbines.*

*Incorporate grey water recycling systems, minimise the use of treated water through use of dual flush toilets and provide opportunities to collect rainwater.*

*Surface water run-off should be managed on-site through inclusion of permeable surfaces, storage on site, green roofs, infiltration techniques and water butts.*

*Ensure that key landscape features, including trees, hedges and watercourses identified through detailed surveys, are protected, and that development is best sited to take advantage of and maintain landscape features and character.*

*Protect existing habitats and wildlife corridors by integrating them into the network of open spaces from the outset of development, and maximise biodiversity through the provision of native planting and creation of watercourses within a development.*

*Consider the external microclimate surrounding dwellings through provision of canopies and porches for shelter, by minimising over-shadowing and by orientation of buildings to avoid wind tunnels.*

*Any nearby building, trees or fences can potentially cast shadow and reduce solar gains. Careful layout can still maximise solar gain within the constraints of higher density developments.*

*Deciduous trees can be useful for providing shading from glare and overheating during the summer especially for properties with a southerly aspect, whilst the bare branches will allow solar access during the winter.*

(Development and Flood Risk). Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) attempt to replicate more closely natural drainage systems thereby minimising impacts on water courses and potential flooding. In designing such systems, detailed consideration must be given to long-term maintenance and/ or adoption. Engineered solutions to drainage and flood risk issues may raise maintenance obligations and costs to the Council and may therefore require developer contribution by means of legal agreement. In any case hard surfacing for driveways etc within the curtilage of properties will be required to comply with published 'Guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens' produced by the Environment Agency and Department for Communities and Local Government or any superseding guidance. Any hardstanding within a property boundary shall be designed and constructed in such a way as to prevent surface water runoff onto the highway.'

**3.10.6** Recently published Government Policy in the form of North West of England Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS) also provides that:

"In advance of local targets being set, new non residential

developments above a threshold of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> and all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that it is not feasible or viable."

**3.10.7** All proposals for residential development will be required to demonstrate how this RSS policy will be complied with unless it can be demonstrated that the principles can be achieved through alternative and compensatory means such as increased insulation or energy efficiency measures.

**3.10.8** It is not the intention of this document to specify environmental standards above those specified under current Building Regulations, Regional Spatial Strategy or that contained in PPS25: Development and Flood Risk. Developers are however encouraged as far as possible to design features into new dwellings and residential schemes that take account of these emerging issues and seek to maximise the features which may be incorporated that seek to address them. Any such added provision over and above current requirements, the

additional financial cost associated with it and the wider potential environmental benefits of the scheme may be given weight as a material consideration in balancing all factors including such as housing numbers and separation distances, parking provision etc.

### 3.11 Other Considerations

The following are intended to give an indication of some other areas of consideration in defining the quality and success of a scheme. They are not however intended as an exhaustive checklist.

#### Contribution Towards Infrastructure and Services

Any new development will benefit from the services and facilities provided by the Council and, as such, will be required to make appropriate contributions by means of legal agreement to the additional cost of providing and maintaining these services and facilities as a result of the development. The Council is currently producing a separate Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) relating to Planning Obligations and contributions and other planning gain will be assessed in accordance with that document. In the mean time contributions will be calculated on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with adopted SPD on the provision of Open Space.

## Detailing the Environment

**3.11.1** The features and details of an individual building or development can enhance or detract from its character and success. A suitable mix of detailing for roofs, windows, entrances etc will impact positively on the quality of the development, raising a development above the bland and adding to the architectural strength and character of the development. It is not always necessary however to replicate existing building styles and where appropriate, modern building styles and forms will be encouraged.

**3.11.2** Quality landscaping, retained and new tree planting and public art are features that can further serve to enhance a development. Attention to detail is essential in



## Detailing the Environment

### Principles

*As appropriate use architectural details from the local neighbourhood, such as gable ends, porches, pillars, mouldings, coursing, surfacing and other architectural details for use in the design palette. Draw on local traditions of built form, materials and craftsmanship, such as masonry, ironwork or stained glass.*

*Building details should provide similar levels of visual interest to a development when viewed from a variety of distances.*

*Consider the reinterpretation of historic details in a contemporary way. Use architectural expression to reflect local styles and features yet seek to create a development which is distinctive in it's own right.*

*Consider the visual impact of roof forms. These can be used as a landmark at focal points and reflect the local context where appropriate but also become an over-dominant feature especially when viewed from higher ground.*

*Building facades can be enlivened with bays, balconies or porches. 'Juliette' balconies can add interest where deeper balconies are not possible.*

*Consider how to use public art to contribute to the quality of the development; and*

*Provide detailed heads of terms for legal agreement at an early stage following pre-application discussion.*



### 3.12 Backland and Infill Development

Character and quality are considered key issues in assessing any application for backland or infill development. Particular care is needed to ensure that such development seeks to harmonise with and respect its surroundings even if of a differing architectural style or not particularly prominent from public view. Building plots should normally be of similar size and shape to those in the surrounding area and proposals should seek to make a positive contribution to the area in terms of design, scale, building density and layout. As such, proposals that would appear cramped or squeezed in and lead to the relative over-development of the plot will be resisted.

defining a place whether within a buildings structure or the spaces between buildings through fencing, gates, lighting and boundary treatments and other street furniture. In all such cases care needs to be had that any such features are suited to their setting and will remain so into the future. Tree species in particular must be chosen to ensure that they will have room to mature and that roots won't cause damage to adjoining highways and property.







# Appendix I

## Policy background

### National Policy

This SPD has been produced to ensure that through its function as a Local Planning Authority, the Council complies with national and regional guidance and advice and contributes, wherever possible, to meeting the priorities of the community it serves.

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Creating Sustainable Communities, states that 'good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.' Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development' and that 'design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing. Strategic housing policy objectives that underpin PPS3 are aimed at ensuring that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. Implementing design principles will have a pronounced impact on

achieving this goal. This is recognised within the document under the heading "Achieving high quality housing". The first paragraph reads "Good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities". It is then further stated that poor design that fails to take account of character, quality and functionality should not be accepted.

High design standards will be applicable to all types of housing so that there is a "wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community."

This SPD seeks to provide more detailed guidance to deliver the objectives contained within PPS1 and PPS3 in Halton.

### Regional Policy

One of the core principles of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West is to secure high environmental and design quality within the Region. Policy DP7 states that environmental quality should be protected and enhanced.

### Local Policy

The Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) contains a number of

strategic aims and objectives. These are set out in Part 1 of the UDP. In relation to housing these include:

- ▶ A reduction in the rate of population decline;
- ▶ To ensure that housing densities on new sites allow for a variety of types of housing to meet the needs of new and existing households in the Borough;
- ▶ To ensure a high standard of design, layout and landscaping in new residential development;
- ▶ To protect residential amenity; and
- ▶ To make residential neighbourhoods more self sufficient and sustainable.

Part 2 of the UDP contains policies that seek to implement the broad aims and objectives contained within Part 1 of the UDP. Whilst this SPD is produced to provide additional practical guidance and advice in relation to the policies in the UDP, and more specifically linked to policies BE1, BE2 and H2, work is currently progressing on replacing the Halton UDP with the new system of plan making. As such all UDP policies will be replaced in the future by Development Plan Document policies.

This SPD is also intended to contribute to the priorities,

principles, objectives, and targets as set out in the Halton Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton 2006-2011. "Promoting Urban Renewal" and "Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods" are two of five priorities from the strategy that are relevant to this SPD and objectives from them include:

- ▶ Promotion of sustainable development
- ▶ Remoulding and enhancement of town centres and adjacent residential areas; and
- ▶ Ensuring high quality design and landscaping throughout the Borough and eradicate visible dereliction.

The Corporate Plan 2006 - 2011 outlines goals to help build a better future for Halton. It has five priorities, including "Promoting Urban Renewal" and "Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods". This SPD will help to meet targets and objectives as set out in the Councils Corporate Plan.

As part of the new style of development plan production there are a number of emerging and adopted planning documents which sit along side this SPD. A single document should not however be read in isolation although the following documents are considered to be of particular relevance:

- ▶ Provision of Open Space SPD
- ▶ Designing For Community Safety SPD

## Understanding the issues

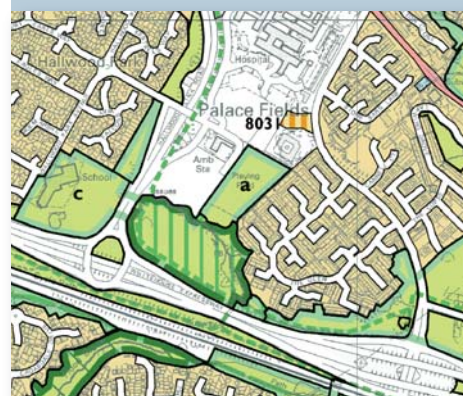
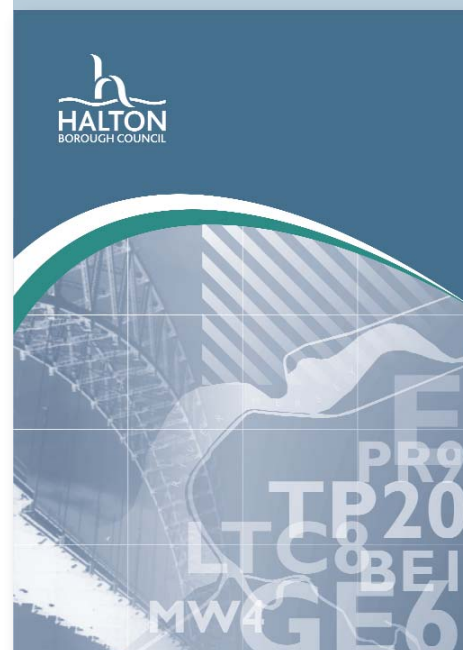
### Meeting the Needs of Borough

The UDP sets out the planning policy approach, including land use allocations to deliver the housing figures allocated to Halton for the period 1996 - 2016 within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The Halton UDP contains the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) allocation of 4620 new dwellings at 330 per annum, for the period 2002 to 2016.

Adopted RSS will reset the figures above for the period 2003-2021 with a new figure of 500 dwellings per annum and a target for affordable housing is for the local authority to set. This will be done through the core strategy and subsequent affordable housing SPD. This situation will be kept under constant review in light of changing housing market conditions.

### Emerging Issues

At the time the UDP was produced, evidence showed that there was adequate stock of affordable housing. More recent evidence from an updated study



(Housing Needs and Market Assessment Survey 2006) shows that the availability of quality affordable housing is now a problem and that due to the national trend of increasing prices, there is now a problem arising between income levels in the borough and the current cost of housing.

On sites where the provision of affordable and intermediate housing is appropriate, it is important that high standards of design and layout are met. Government guidance states that such housing should not be easily distinguishable from open market housing through design or position within the site. It is also advised that, within large scale developments, the affordable housing element should be split into smaller groups and dispersed throughout rather than concentrated in a single group to help promote social inclusion and create more mixed and balanced communities.

In order to best achieve planned levels of growth it is important to make the most efficient use of land, especially previously developed land (PDL). This will assist in achieving national and local sustainability objectives and also those targets contained within national planning guidance. This document will therefore help in achieving higher

densities of well designed types housing so as to provide all parts of the community with an affordable decent home.

Design in its broadest sense must however also encompass matters of sustainability, use of renewable resources and measures to prevent crime. New developments should create areas that are safe, secure and pleasant. To do this they must adhere to the principles of "Secured By Design" which are laid out in the 2005 Supplementary Planning Document "Designing for Community Safety"

### Brownfield / Greenfield Context

The approach of a mix of greenfield and brownfield housing allocations within the Borough can require differing approaches in securing appropriate development and good design.

### Brownfield

Within the Borough there is a large number of previously developed vacant or derelict sites. Such sites are often referred to as brownfield sites. The Council produces an annual report on the number and distribution of brownfield sites; this forms part of the National Land Use Database (NLUD).

Many of the sites identified as part

of the NLUD survey are complex and can be costly to develop. As a result of Halton's legacy from its industrial past, some sites are heavily contaminated and will require remediation before being suitable for residential development. In such locations appropriate ground investigation will often be required to inform the design of the development. Such design consideration can therefore influence the final development proposals, but they must not be at the expense of good place making. Early contact with the Councils Contaminated Land Team is advised in such cases.

### Greenfield

In respect of greenfield housing allocations, these are predominantly detached from the existing urban fabric of the Borough, with little in the way of context to inform design. With such sites it would be easy to fall into the trap of creating a housing estate, rather than a vibrant residential neighbourhood designed to create a sense of place and identity.

With reference to both Brownfield & Greenfield sites, too often a single development is considered in isolation to its surroundings, so that for example, adjoining residential developments will barely relate to each other and the wider environs.

This is especially true of the regeneration areas within the borough, where numerous developers have taken interest in a single site and not considered the significance of adjoining residential uses until the latter stages of the planning process. By considering adjoining sites as early as possible a much higher standard of development can be realized. The requirement for design consideration within the UDP and forthcoming LDF documents means that the Council has the authority to refuse planning permission on design grounds. In any case the Council will expect any new development to not merely replicate surrounding developments but to demonstrate how it will enhance the character and quality of residential places and spaces within them.

### Historical Context - The 'New Town' Experience

Runcom was designated a new town in 1964, the architectural and design legacy is still apparent today. The redevelopment of Southgate into what is now Hallwood Park is a very important design lesson that all those involved within the design and development of residential areas can learn from.

Southgate was designed by the eminent British architect James Stirling. Completed in the 1970's it

was designed as a residential neighbourhood of ultra modern flats and was praised for setting 'new standards in housing design'. The properties were however soon proven to be impractical and became unpopular with residents. In 1989 Southgate was demolished and was replaced by more conventional housing which now operates more successfully as a mixed tenure residential neighbourhood.

The lesson that has been learnt relating to residential design and layout from the unsuccessful new town solutions at Southgate and Castlefields is that they did not meet the requirements for good urban design set out in PPS1: Creating Sustainable Communities, PPS3: Housing and 'By Design' described above. In particular they failed to build in flexibility and adaptability in the light of future changing needs by creating a fixed design solution that was short lived. Innovative and contemporary residential design is encouraged, where appropriate, but this must not be at the expense of the purpose of creating residential environments - creating places where people will want to live now and in the future.



# Appendix 2

## waste storage and collection guidance as part of new residential development

### BI.1 Introduction

**BI.1.1** The UK landfill directive requires an increase in the re-use, recycling and composting of waste material as a means of reducing the amount of material being sent to landfill and achieving sustainable waste targets.

**BI.1.2** The Councils own Community Strategy 2006 - 2011 aims to ensure that 40% of municipal waste is recycled or composted by 2011 as part of meeting the urban renewal objectives.

**BI.1.3** As part of new residential development it is vital that waste collection and storage facilities and the opportunities for residents to separate out their waste are properly considered at the earliest possible stages.

**BI.1.4** The following text is part of an overall process of improving design within Halton and should be read in conjunction with other Council policies. The guidance will help developers produce successful waste management strategies and will also assist in complying with Part H of the Building Regulations 2002.

**BI.1.5** New developments are expected to incorporate a waste management strategy, this guide is

designed to help achieve this. Appendix 2 of this document also details specific waste requirements as regards eco homes standards.

### BI.2 Housing

**BI.2.1** To encourage occupants to recycle waste, internal storage areas should be integrated into kitchen or utility space to encourage occupants to segregate their waste into refuse and recyclables, and store it temporarily, until it can be transferred to external bins.



**BI.2.2** It is the Council's intention

to roll out the introduction of multi materials collections for recyclable items to all suitable properties, in addition to residual waste collections (i.e. mixed household waste not destined for recycling or diversion from landfill). The normal service for all new properties will therefore consist of a three-bin collection system for those properties with gardens, and a two-bin collection service for those without gardens. The table below shows the container sizes that developers will need to make allowances for at individual properties.

**BI.2.3** All site plans submitted, as part of a planning application should clearly identify the location of designated waste container storage areas. These areas should be located within the boundary of each property and be enclosed to hide wheeled bins from general view.

**BI.2.4** Bins should not be stored in public view or visible from a highway. The diagram below illustrates how the boundary wall

Waste Type	Refuse	Garden Waste	Co mingled recyclables
Container Type	Wheeled bin	Wheeled bin	Wheeled bin
Capacity	Up to 240 Litres	240 Litres	140 Litres

provides an enclosure for wheeled bins and is in a location that makes it easy for the householder or collection worker to present bins to the kerbside on the day of collection.

**BI.2.5** Collection vehicles used by Halton Borough Council are detailed later in this document.

**BI.2.6** Bin storage should be sited so that the distance householders are required carry refuse is no more than 30 metres (excluding vertical distance).

### BI.3 Apartments

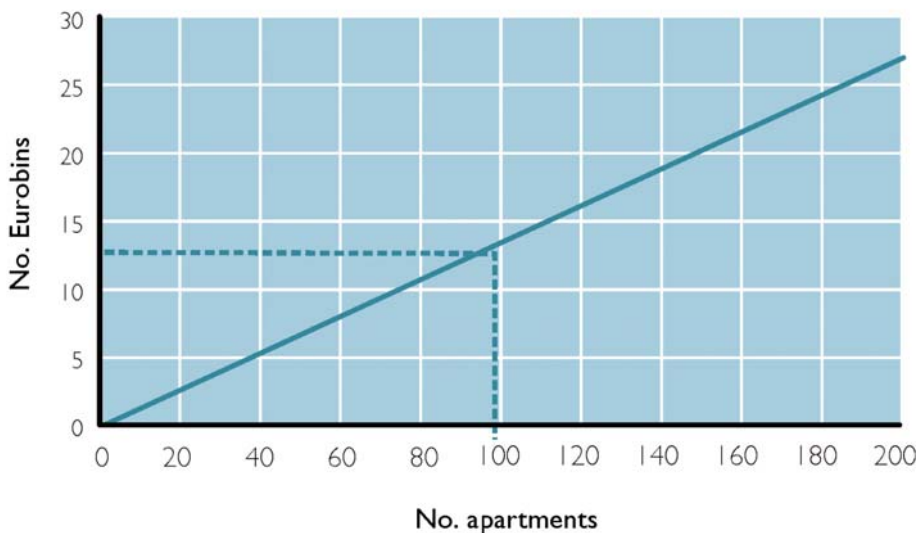
**BI.3.1** Many of the principles that apply to the design of bin storage

for houses will be relevant to apartment developments, however, if individual storage points are not provided, communal storage areas will normally be serviced by the use of 1100 L Euro bins.

**BI.3.2** The number of bins required in an apartment development can be calculated using the graph below.

**BI.3.3** The total number of bins required for a development will be split between residual waste at 60% and recyclables at 40%. For example if a development requires a total of 10 bins, 6 will be for residual waste and 4 for recyclables.

**Euro Bins required for apartment developments**



*Many current developments are not equipped to store the increased number of wheeled bins now required for each property. As a result they not look highly untidy and clutter up peoples driveways.*

**BI.3.4** Within the 40% recyclable bins the council will allocate different waste streams within this figure as appropriate to the development site.

**BI.4 Location and design standards**

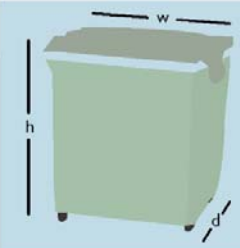


**BI.4.1** Waste storage areas should be sited within a development so as to allow residents and collection workers to safely access the facilities. Bin collection points should not obstruct users of any highway or inconvenience access to properties.

**BI.4.2** Bins should not be taken through buildings in order to be emptied. The collection point should ideally be located near to a highway so that a container should not have to be moved more than 10 m to the refuse vehicle.

**BI.4.2** Communal bin storage should provide sufficient space between and around the bins to allow for manoeuvring and cleaning. This minimum distance should be 150mm. If two Euro bins are positioned facing each other there should be 1000 mm clearance between the two.

**BI.4.3** Smooth and durable surfacing should be provided at the bin storage area and on the route to the collection point. These paths



Container	Dimensions		Floorspace required	
<b>1100L Eurobin</b>	Width	1375mm	1575mm x 1190mm	
	Depth	990mm		
	Height	1370mm		
	Height (with open lid)	2370mm		
<b>240L wheeled bin</b>	Width	580mm	780mm x 940mm	
	Depth	740mm		
	Height	1100mm		
	Height (with open lid)	1750mm		
<b>140L wheeled bin</b>	Width	480mm	680mm x 750mm	
	Depth	550mm		
	Height	1100mm		
	Height (with open lid)	1700mm		
<b>Can sack</b>	Placed at top of glass or paper bin for collection so no floorspace required.			



should be clear of kerbs, (dropped kerbs are acceptable) steps or steep gradients. The maximum slope allowed is 1:12, however this may be exceeded in exceptional circumstances provided the greater gradient is only for a short distance.

**BI.4.4** Please note that access paths to bin storage areas should provide adequate clearance for containers on either side of the path whilst they are being manoeuvred to the collection vehicle. For example, where communal parking spaces are to be placed next to such paths in apartment developments. The use of markings in the form of hatched areas may be required to designate access points.

**BI.4.5** A series of no more than 3 steps may be acceptable for bins not exceeding 250 litres.

**BI.4.6** In certain circumstances communal bin stores may not be able to be located within 10 metres of the nearest highway. In cases such as this an appropriate hard surfaced access and turning space must be provided to bring refuse vehicles within range of the bins. The maximum slope on this access can be no greater than 1:20. For the first 7 metres of access, road width should be 4.1 m to allow traffic to pass without causing congestion.

**BI.4.7** Waste storage areas should ideally form part of the main building structure. If the structure is free standing it should be inconspicuously located in a convenient location to the side or rear of the building and be properly planned and constructed as part of the development.

**BI.4.8** Storage areas must be located and designed in a manner that avoids noise, visual intrusion, odour or loss of privacy resulting from the comings and goings of refuse collectors.

**BI.4.9** Storage areas must have hard surfaced, impervious flooring incorporating suitable drainage that takes wastewater discharge into the sewer. This will allow adequate cleaning of storage areas, which will not contaminate surrounding natural water or SUDS systems.

**BI.4.10** Where storage facilities are enclosed, ventilation systems should be provided top and bottom away from windows and ventilation of the main buildings.

**BI.4.11** In densely populated areas where site size is at premium it may be preferable to investigate the option of underground storage of waste and recyclable material. This is mentioned with particular reference to town centre sites and infill developments where design



features will be critical in making a development fit neatly into its environment.

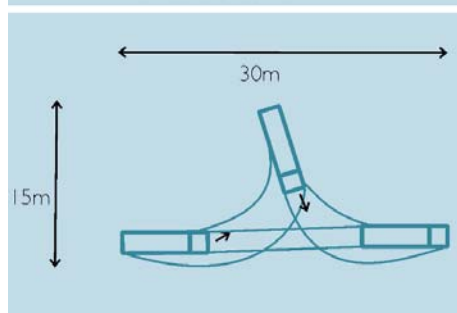
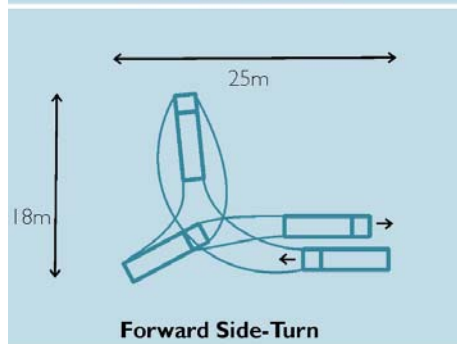
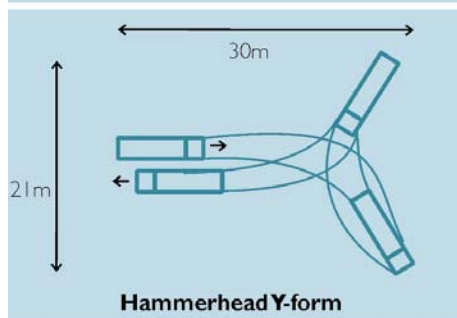
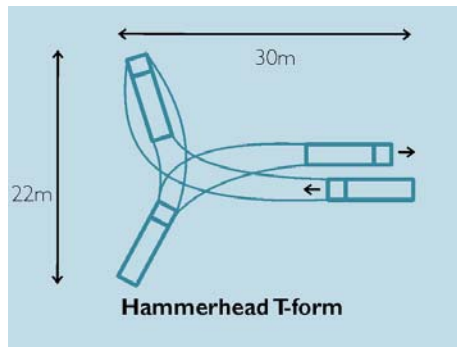
**BI.4.12** The aesthetics of bin storage facilities can be improved by using screening. Landscaping, railings, low rise walls and gates can all be used as measures to minimise the unsightly visual impact. Any screening will need to be a minimum of 450mm above the height of the bins. Storage shelters will need suitably styled roofing, high enough for bin lids to be opened fully. Bin storage may have doors which would need to open outwards to allow bins to be brought out and manoeuvred into position. Doors will not be allowed to obstruct an access or pathway.

**BI.4.13** Chutes can be provided in an apartment development provided that a scheme is included that enables residents to recycle. Different types of recyclable material will be collected in the future in addition to those currently collected from apartments. Waste management strategies using chutes must take this into account.

## BI.5 Collection Vehicles

**BI.5.1** With reference to the turning circles above, developers will be required to provide sufficient room the manoeuvre and load a vehicle of the following dimensions.

Length - 11 m  
Length When Loading - 13.1 m  
Width 2.4 m  
Width when Loading - 4.1m  
Height - 6m



**BI.5.2** Fully laden vehicles weigh up to 29 tonnes therefore any roadway or access should be capable of sustaining this load.

## BI.6 Mixed Use Development

**BI.6.1** Separate stores for refuse and recycling containers should be provided for the commercial aspects of a development and the residential aspects. No mixing of commercial waste and residential waste is permitted.

**BI.6.1** Relevant contact details for the Councils waste department can be found within appendix B of the Design of New residential Development SPD. Developers should contact this section at the beginning of the design process to discuss implications for waste.

# Appendix 3

## Trees on Development Sites



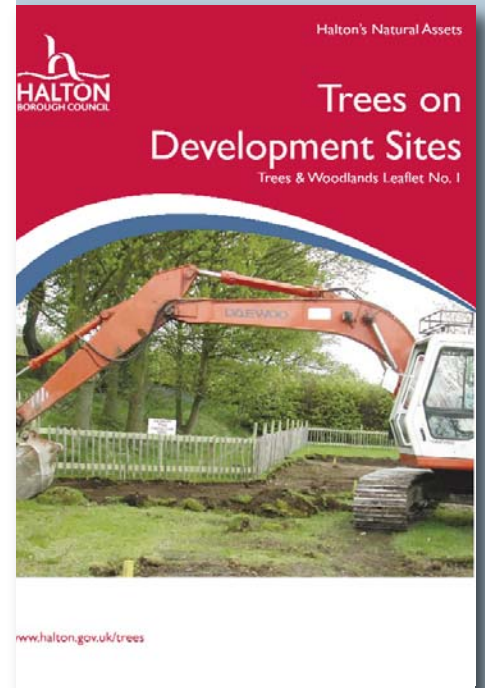
Established trees are generally of great value to the environment and usually held in high regard by the majority of nearby residents. Because of their size, shape and colour, trees are often prominent features in the local landscape and reflect the changing seasons in a familiar and pleasing way. They bring nature into the urban environment and add to the quality of life. It is therefore not surprising that controversy can arise when trees appear to be threatened by a development proposal. The careful retention of healthy trees can give a sense of maturity to a new development and can be a significant asset when selling new properties. However, there is no point in trying to keep trees which are overmature or defective and which could soon become dangerous in their new surroundings. Where there are trees on a potential development site, pre-application consultation with the Council is advisable at an early stage of the planning process. Where the trees are a critical issue,

developers are advised to engage a specialist consultant to prepare a detailed report about the arboricultural implications of the development. Such a commitment may be necessary to show that all the factors relating to trees have been properly considered and that the granting of planning permission will not result in a net loss to the environment. The Council's policies regarding trees on development sites are contained in the UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN and the NATURAL ASSETS STRATEGY. In summary, these policies aim to protect the most important trees from development, to replace any which are unavoidably lost, and overall to increase the number and quality of trees in the Borough.

### Legal Considerations

In determining planning applications, the Council will seek to retain trees wherever this is appropriate in the interests of public amenity. Trees can be afforded legal protection in a number of ways:

- ▶ When included in a Tree Preservation Order,
  - ▶ When situated within a designated conservation area,
  - ▶ When subject to a planning condition,
  - ▶ When subject to felling licence requirements.
- Without due thought and



consideration, trees on development sites can be threatened in a number of ways, including:

- ▶ Felling to create more space for construction works,
- ▶ Careless use of machinery, causing damage to roots, trunk or branches,
- ▶ Ground compaction or contamination,
- ▶ Alterations to the existing soil level or water table,
- ▶ Excavation of service trenches.

It is strongly recommended that landowners or developers consult with the Council before undertaking any tree work. Otherwise, any unauthorised work may lead to prosecution.

## British Standard

British Standard 5837 "TREES IN RELATION TO CONSTRUCTION" should be regarded as an essential reference for all those concerned with the development of sites containing



trees. It gives valuable guidance, following a logical sequence from the initial survey through the design period to the protection of retained trees from site works by the provision of temporary fencing. All developers of land in Halton where trees are present are expected to adopt these principles when submitting applications for planning permission.

## Tree survey and design of development



An essential first stage of planning a development should be to carry out a thorough survey of existing natural features. Such a survey should plot all trees accurately and record details of species, size, approximate age and physical condition. The trees should then be categorised in accordance with the BS5837 guidelines:

*Category R - Trees which should be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management (e.g. trees*

*which are dead, diseased or dangerous).*

*Category A, B and C - Trees to be considered for retention and graded according to their condition, value and useful life expectancy.*

The information gathered from the tree survey should be taken into account when designing possible layouts for the site. The trees which are worthy of retention should be clearly marked on the plan, with the full branch spread shown to scale. Wherever possible, any roads, access drives, footpaths or service trenches should be routed so as not to trespass beneath the branches of trees to be retained. This area is where the majority (but not all) of the roots will be located close to the surface, and so should not be disturbed if the trees are to survive. Buildings should be positioned a reasonable distance away from any trees, bearing in mind nuisance factors to future occupants such as light obstruction and leaf fall, as well as safety factors such as the possibility of falling branches in adverse weather conditions. The distance allocated between trees and buildings is of critical importance and should depend on the size, species and condition of the each tree. Only by ensuring that the tree has adequate space, including allowance for future growth, can a satisfactory

juxtaposition be achieved. The architect should always seek guidance from an experienced arboriculturalist in this respect.

## Arboricultural method statement

Damage is usually unnecessary and can be avoided if the importance of trees is recognised and appreciated from the start by all concerned. An arboricultural method statement is a useful means of describing all the measures to be taken to ensure the protection and continued healthy existence of all trees shown to be retained on the approved plan. In particular, before any site works begin, all trees to be retained should be protected by robust temporary fencing. The minimum distance between the tree and fence should be determined by a qualified arboriculturalist, with reference to British Standard 5837. The protective fencing must remain in place for the duration of the development and no activity whatsoever should take place within the enclosed area, unless the advice of an arboriculturalist is first sought. There may be other special ways of working which need to be taken on some sites and these should also form part of the arboricultural method statement. For example, the installation of underground services could be proposed if carried out in

accordance with NJUG 10 (National Joint Utilities Group, Publication 10), or the provision of some hard surfacing could be proposed if carried out in accordance with APN 1 (Arboricultural Practice Note 1, "Driveways close to trees"). It may be appropriate to carry out surgery on some trees which are retained on development sites. This should only be carried out by a specialist contractor, with the consent of the Council and in accordance with British Standard 3998 (see Leaflets 3 & series)



## Depth of foundations

When building in the vicinity of trees, special precautions may be necessary to ensure that the roots do not cause damage in the future. This is particularly important where the soil has a clay content. By extracting water, trees can in some cases influence the moisture content (and therefore the volume) of shrinkable soils, leading to subsidence. Foundations need to be provided to a depth that is below



the level of any likely soil movement. The depth of foundation for all new buildings should comply with current building regulations, usually as determined by reference to NHBC Standards, Chapter 4.2 "BUILDING NEAR TREES". Further advice is available from the Council's Building Control Officers.

## Landscaping

After site work has been completed, an approved landscaping plan should be implemented during the first available planting season. This should include the planting of suitable trees:

- ▶ To enhance the new development,
- ▶ To compensate for any trees which have been felled,
- ▶ To complement those trees which have been retained, and
- ▶ To ensure continuity of tree cover in the future.

Large-growing trees should be sited



wherever there is room for unrestricted growth, such as wide verges or public open spaces. Species of more modest ultimate size should be used on narrow verges or in gardens.

The series of "Trees & Woodlands" Leaflets:

- ▶ No. 1 – TREES ON DEVELOPMENT SITES
- ▶ No. 2 – TREE PLANTING & MAINTENANCE
- ▶ No. 3 – THE CARE OF MATURE TREES
- ▶ No. 4 – TREE WORK CONTRACTORS
- ▶ No. 5 - MANAGING TREES OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

These information leaflets have been produced to support the Council's approved NATURAL ASSETS STRATEGY. One of the policies contained in the Natural Assets Strategy is: "The Council recognises the important contribution made by trees and woodlands to the environment and is committed to the responsible and sustainable custodianship of this resource on any land which it owns or influences." For further information, contact:

John White (Trees & Woodlands Officer)

Landscape Services

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WA7 4UB

Telephone: 01928 583918

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Halton Borough Council  
**Design of new residential development**

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