

# Melton Borough Design SPD

Welcome to the Melton Borough Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document has been created to assist developers and applicants to meet the requirements of the Melton Local Plan in terms of design quality.

Design quality is an important part of the planning process, ensuring that new developments respond to the local context, perform and function well for everyone, and meet the needs of now and the future. This SPD provides additional detail to support Policy D1 - Raising the Standards of Design, alongside the other priorities of the Local Plan. The guidance within this documents will assist you in developing proposals that are a good fit with the local context, that reinforce local distinctiveness and help to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

This document was created through a process of community engagement and seeks to address local priorities. The distinctive and unique places within Melton Borough have been the starting point, and the concerns expressed by residents in terms of design have been taken into consideration. The guidance in this document provides a framework for thinking and design teams are encouraged to use and interpret this, whilst also adding their own skills experience and innovation. This SPD should be considered to be descriptive as opposed to prescriptive.

This SPD is an interactive document that will guide you through the design process and help you to make proposals that work well, add value to the Borough and support the success of your proposed development.

The design principles within this document form the Council's advice in meeting the requirements of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) . In all cases it is the responsibility of the applicant to 'comply or justify' their design decisions. Where departures from the guidance in this document are proposed, these should be clearly identified and a detailed justification given as to how the objectives of the Local Plan and the NPPF have been met or exceeded.

## Foreword


Melton has a rich and diverse history that has helped to shape the places we cherish. Alongside this, we must embrace the changing demands of residents, and their families, to ensure that we create new developments that will be valued, relevant and useful in the future. Good design is a means of ensuring that new developments are a good fit with the context and create beautiful and resilient places. This document provides you with the tools to design better developments that are in line with the aspirations and objectives of the Melton Local Plan, and that will increase the quality, value and desirability of your scheme and pride in the communities we build.



Cllr Higgins - Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity



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# Core Design Principles

The Melton Borough Design SPD is based on six Core Design Principles that reflect the aspirations of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The National Design Guide provides an additional framework that must be considered when designing your scheme. The purpose of this SPD is to localise best practice guidance to support design quality in the Borough of Melton, across a diverse range of contexts and development types.



## Working with Nature

Built up areas can provide additional habitats for wildlife and support biodiversity. A large proportion of farmland is not currently biodiverse and on the edges of towns and villages, greenspaces and existing habitats need to be protected, enhanced and better connected. This SPD provides guidance on how this can be achieved.



The natural environment within a village context



## Making Room for Water

Flood and water management is a key issue that has become more pressing in recent years as a result of climate change. This SPD describes the use of sustainable urban drainage (SUDs) to manage surface water and also provide additional wetland habitats. Alongside this the treatment of existing watercourses and water bodies is described.



Sustainable drainage integrated into new development



## Positive Public Spaces

The public realm provides a key opportunity to support health and wellbeing, social cohesion and improve environmental quality. This SPD requires new public spaces to be multi-functional, contributing to habitat creation, flood and water management, sustainable transport, play and visual amenity. Trees are an important part of the character of the Borough and their inclusion in new development is supported in a way that reinforces local distinctiveness.



Market Place Melton Mowbray

# Core Design Principles



## Accessible and Legible Streets

The private car has had a large impact on many places within the Borough. Poorly managed parking restricts pedestrian and cycle movement and causes safety concerns. The layout of developments is key in promoting the use of public transport, encouraging walking and cycling and ensuring that streets are accessible and welcoming for all. Guidance is provided on the creation of an accessible and attractive network of connected streets and residential parking design.



Streets designed for all users (Living Streets)



## Locally Distinctive Places

A key feature of the best of the Borough is the use of local materials, responses to the underlying landscape and the shape and form of settlements that have developed over time. This SPD supports the design of developments that are a good fit with the context and retain local character.



Somerby High Street



## Adaptable & Resilient Buildings

Places change over time, and buildings that are adaptable and have space to extend will last longer and be useful in the future. This SPD requires some forms of development to be future proofed in terms of use and function. The extension and adaptation of buildings over time has an impact on the quality of a place and this SPD provides guidance on what will be a good fit.



Former shop in Somerby

## How to use this Document

This document takes a staged approach to the design process for a variety of development types and scales. The Core Design Principles applicable to all development types are described first, followed by the application of these to specific layouts and examples. Finally a series of Character Notes provide a range of detailed guidance to assist in ensuring that new development is a good fit with the surrounding area. This SPD is not intended to be a substitute for a thorough site analysis and understanding of the context.

At any point you can view the Core Design Principles by clicking on this icon



The Table of Contents can be accessed by clicking on this icon

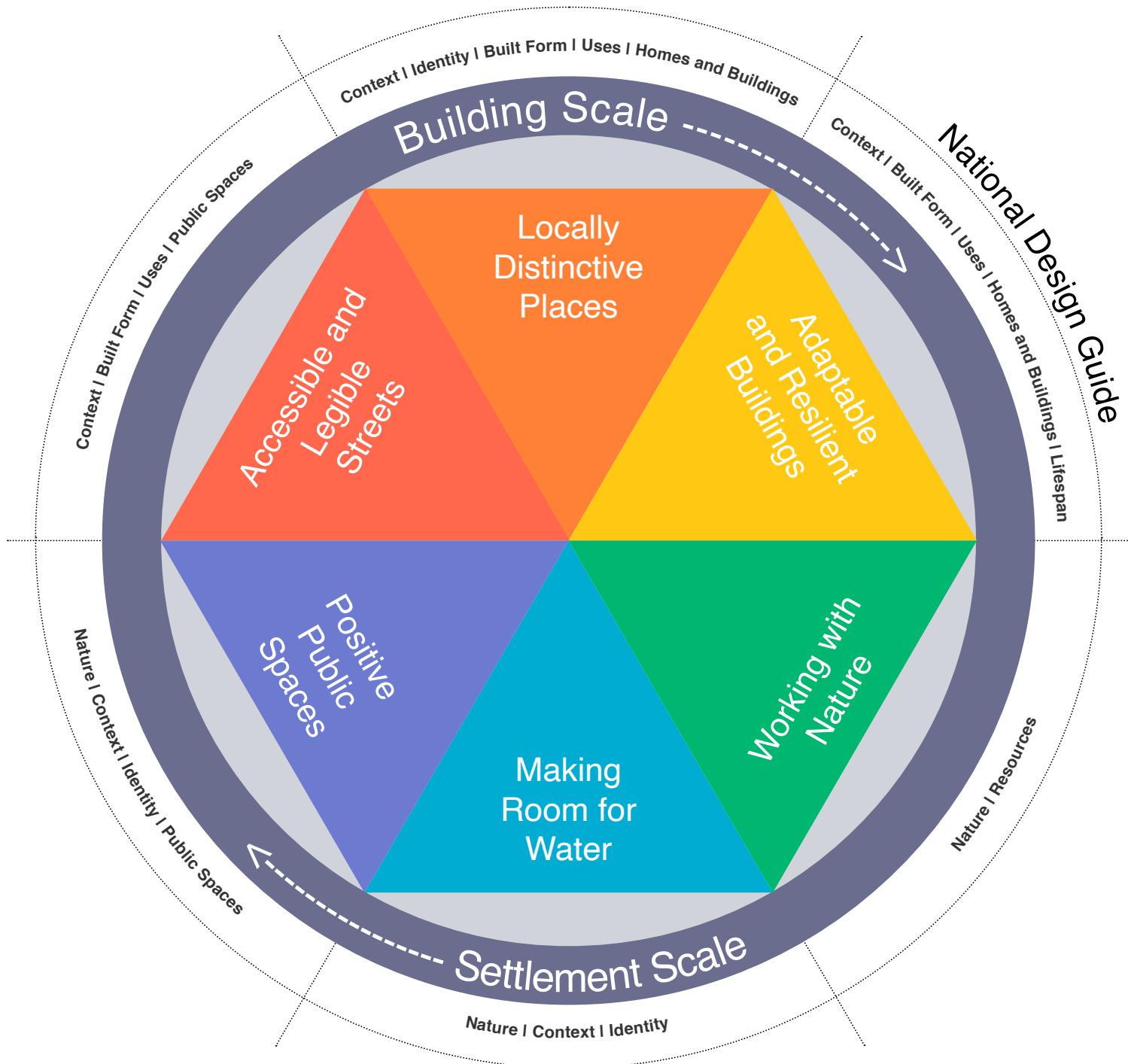


If you wish to return to you last view click on this icon

and this  denotes an external link



# Core Design Principles



## How the Core Design Principles Interact

The Core Design Principles are in a specific order that allows you to consider the key issues sequentially. Some of the Core Design Principles are more relevant to small scale developments, such as an individual building, others require wider, landscape scale matters to be considered first. In most cases, for example Working With Nature, the design considerations are both strategic and detailed, and equally relevant to all developments.

The National Design Guide [🔗](#) shares a number of common principles with this document and it is recommended that this is also used to inform the design of your scheme, alongside other resources such as Building for Life [🔗](#).

In developing your scheme a three stage process should be undertaken:

## STAGE 1

Conformity with Adopted Planning Policy

Use the Melton Local Plan GIS  system to ensure that your proposed development is in conformity with local and national Policy

Pre-Application Enquiry and Discussions

If unsure, or if you require further information, make a pre-application enquiry.

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## STAGE 2

Read the Relevant Documents for the Context

Ascertain if you are in a Conservation Area or within a Neighbourhood Plan. Read the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Neighbourhood Plan before you start.

Analyse and Understand the Context

Undertake a thorough site analysis and identify the key elements of the local context.

Incorporate the Specific Core Design Principles

Follow the strategic guidance and incorporate this into your design


Select Your Development Type

Either Major Residential and Mixed Use, Minor Residential and Infill, Industrial and Commercial Development, Extensions and Adaptations

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## STAGE 3

Apply the Detailed Guidance Based on the Character Notes

Use the Melton Local Plan GIS  system to work out which Zone of the SPD is relevant for your development.

Apply the detailed design guidance relevant to the Zone (such as materials and details) and use the Checklist to check compliance.

## A Quick Note on Context

Context is the combination of a number of characteristics that make up the immediate surroundings to your proposed development. These include:

Topography - how buildings and spaces relate to the form of the land

Urban grain - the size of plots, the width of streets and paths and frontages

Density and Mix - the amount of development and the range of uses in a particular area

Height and Massing - the relative heights of parts of buildings to that of a person, the shape of buildings, and how these frame the landscape

Building Type - the basic shape, roof-line and orientation

Frontage - the relationship of buildings to the street or public realm, including building lines and boundary treatments

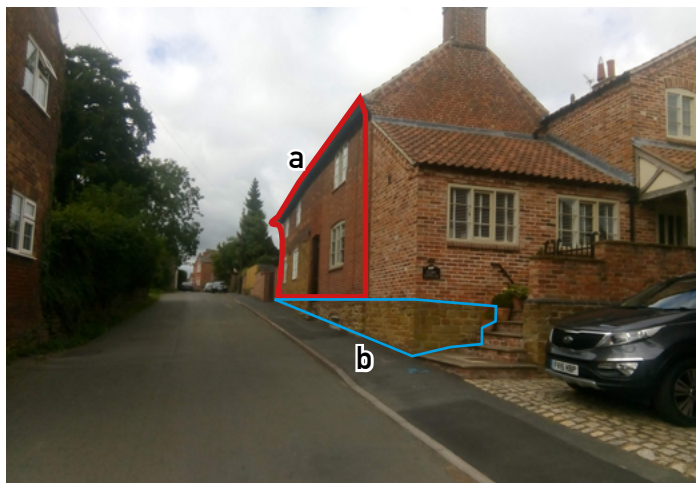
Details and Materials - including the forming of windows and doors

Streetscape and Landscape, including existing habitats, ecology, water features and trees

# Context and Basic Principles

## 1 Topography

It is important to understand how buildings relate to the landscape in a particular context. Do the buildings follow or cross the contours and what impact does this have on the roofline and how they meet the ground. Is there a limit to how wide a building can be before there needs to be a change in the roofline (a) ? Is there a change of materials where the building meets the ground (b) ? Does the topography allow for a lower storey to the front or rear?



Buildings crossing contours

## 2 Urban Grain

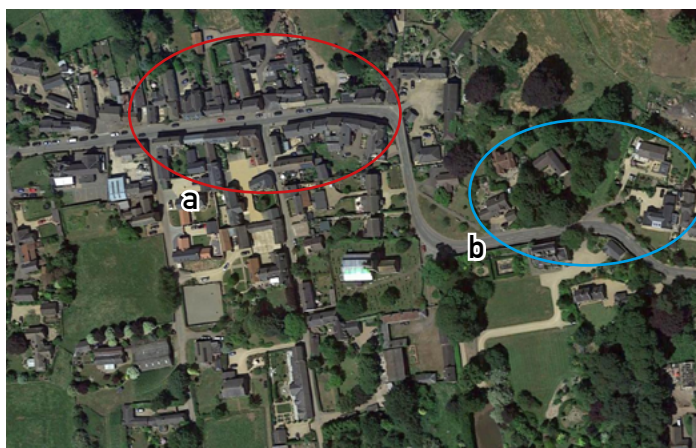
Within a particular context there can be a variety of street widths, plot sizes and relationships to the public realm. Are the plots large with relatively small buildings within them (a) or are they relatively narrow with a building across the whole frontage (b) ? Also see (6) below - Frontage. It is important to understand the defining pattern and design new developments to be a good fit.



Types of plot usage, size and relationship to the street  
ps Somerby

## 3 Density and Mix

Observe how densities change and what impact this has on the heights of buildings and how close together they are. Does the density change closer to the centre of a settlement (a) ? Is there a change in the mix of uses? How does the density and mix help in terms of wayfinding and legibility? Does it help you understand the place and where the centre is? How does density change on the edge of the settlement (b)?



Village centre with tightly packed buildings and a mix of uses

## 4 Height and Massing

How high are buildings in the local context expressed as both the number of storeys and their actual dimensions? Are the elements within the building human scale or designed to give a grand appearance? How do the buildings relate to the landscape and what views are revealed, framed or could be harmed by new development.



Two storey and three storey buildings at a variety of scales



# Context and Basic Principles

## 5 Building Type

What is the shape of the buildings within the context? How are these buildings orientated and how does the roofline relate to the street? Do you see eaves (a) or gables (b), or a combination of these? Does the building type hint at the use of the building, is this a house or a public building?



Changes in roofline and orientation relating to use

## 6 Frontage

Are buildings sited directly behind the pavement or is there a space? How is this space defined, are there railings or a wall, or both? Is there a pavement and if not how do buildings relate to the space?



Garden walls, buildings at the edge of the pavement and lane

## 7 Details and Materials

Observe how openings are made in buildings, are the windows wide or tall, how is the entrance defined? What details are used to form these openings in relationship to the materials used? Is there additional decoration that has been applied? Consider how the materials are used depending on the their relationship to each other.



Materials that express changes made over time

## 8 Streetscape and Landscape

What is role of trees in the street scene, is there a verge and how do buildings relate to these spaces? Is there water that can form part of the layout and how can this be incorporated. Are there any existing habitats and natural features that could add value?



Street trees and wide grass verges at the edge of the village



## 1 Retain Existing Natural Assets

Wherever possible existing trees, hedgerows, ponds and grasslands must be retained and enhanced. This not only protects already established habitats it reduces any mitigation that will be required for any losses. This is both cost effective and also helps to retain the character of the site. Think about how you can creatively include existing natural assets into your development as this will add value.



Established woodland providing biodiversity

## 2 Create Wildlife Corridors

At a landscape scale connect key habitats together, bring these into your proposed development, and make these at least 10m wide. Wildlife corridors must connect using complementary species to the assets being connected, for example species rich grassland connecting meadows and wetlands between ponds. At a detailed level ensure that boundary fences are not less than 130mm from the ground and walls have a hole at ground level to allow the passage of wildlife.



Hedgehog Highway (Image courtesy of Hedgehog Street.org)

## 3 Make it Multifunctional

Green infrastructure must be designed to be multifunctional providing stacked benefits for people and nature. Where a number of habitats are joined together the benefits are increased. The edges of habitats are the most dynamic and provide the most opportunities for nature. Examples include woodland edges, pond margins and wetlands. Places for nature should also be places for play, exploration and recreation (see Positive Public Spaces for more guidance).



Pond margins, woodland edge and verges

## 4 Use Green Roofs and Walls

Green roofs provide multiple benefits including providing a habitat for invertebrates, rainwater interception (see Making Room for Water) reducing the urban heat island effect. On roofs with a pitch less than 30 degrees green roofs must be used. Green walls provide similar benefits to green roofs and can help to remove air pollution, improve thermal performance and increase biodiversity particularly in urban settings. Consider green walls when the orientation is favourable.



An extensive living roof



## 5 Create Wetland Habitats

Surface water management must include swales, SUDs and rain gardens and create opportunities for wildlife. The margins of ponds must be designed to allow and escape route for wildlife. Temporary ponds provide opportunities for amphibians and invertebrates and should form part of the surface water management so they fill up seasonally and in wet weather (for more information see Making Room for Water).



Rain garden as a decorative and functional feature

## 6 Build in Habitats and Roosts

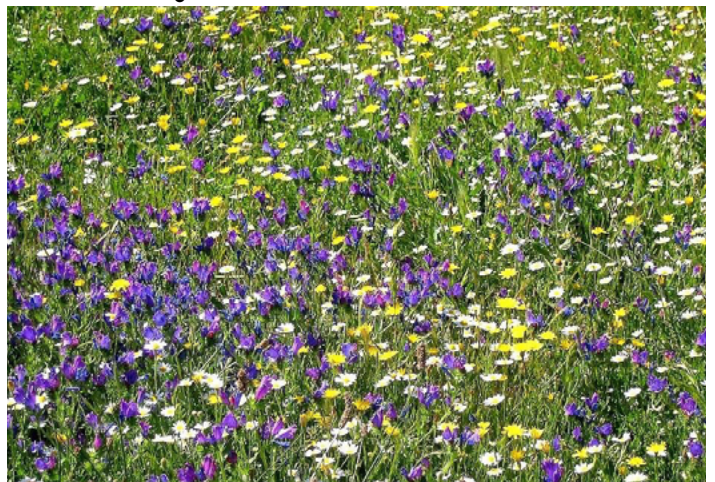
Buildings provide opportunities for wildlife to shelter and roost. Proprietary products are designed to integrate with standard materials to seamlessly fit in. Bat boxes, swift bricks and hibernacula for invertebrates are common inclusions. It is beneficial to cluster specific provision on building faces with a favourable orientation as opposed to on every plot, bearing in mind at least one of each of bat boxes, nest cavities and swift cups must be provided on average.



Swift bricks in a gable wall

## 7 Get Your Priorities Right

When creating new habitats, increase the quality and variety in the area and target types that are rare or in decline. Priority Habitats in Melton Borough include woodland, grassland, standing water, hedgerows and mosaic habitats on brownfield land. Further information is available from the 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010) [↗](#), the Melton Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) [↗](#) and the Open Spaces Strategy (2020) [↗](#).



Species rich grassland

## The Do's and Don'ts of Working with Nature

### Do:

- ✓ Retain existing natural features
- ✓ Connect habitats
- ✓ Create semi-natural greenspace
- ✓ Consider every surface as a habitat

### Don't:

- ✗ Leave nature as a left over space
- ✗ Isolate existing habitats
- ✗ Create barriers for wildlife





## 1 Design SuDS as Natural Assets

The design of new development must ensure that watercourses and flood management measures become positive features in new development, providing new and improved water dependent habitats and revealing natural features. As watercourses are significant green infrastructure assets they should benefit from natural surveillance and active frontages adjoining them (see Positive Public Spaces and Working with Nature).



SuDS as a positive public space

## 2 Avoid Heavily Engineered SuDS

The design of SUDs is a specialist discipline; however, some general guidelines are applicable to all schemes. The use of conspicuous concrete structures must be avoided and natural approaches to safety should be incorporated, such as gently sloping margins to signify the presence of water and allow a means of escape. Marginal areas must be planted to maximise the habitat opportunities between the wetland and the terrestrial environment.



Good and bad practice approaches to SuDS

## 3 Harvest and Store Rainwater

Water butts and rainwater harvesting is encouraged to slow down the flow of surface water and to provide a useful resource for irrigation, vehicle washing and flushing toilets. As a part of wider a wider water management strategy rainwater harvesting can be successfully integrated with green roofs and SuDS schemes for buildings and public spaces. Overall rainwater should be seen as a resource as opposed to a waste product.



Water butts can be decorative features

## 4 Use Green Roofs and Walls

The use of green roofs is encouraged, and these can be accommodated in a variety of developments and roof forms. Green roofs secure multiple benefits for people and the environment. In addition to providing new habitats (see Working with Nature) green roofs also combat the urban heat island effect through the evaporation of storm water over time. Green roofs also improve water quality by filtering airborne particulates preventing them reaching watercourses.



An intensive living roof in the form of a garden



## 5 Creatively Manage Water

On the ground, permeable surfaces must be used wherever possible to reduce surface water run-off from patios, driveways, paths and car parking areas. Water management should be incorporated into public spaces and highway design taking opportunities for habitat creation as an alternative to traditional drainage approaches. This could include the use of rain gardens and bioswales to slow down surface water run-off.



Roadside bioswale creating a habitat rich verge

## 6 Restore Existing Watercourses

Where watercourses have been heavily modified or culverted these should be restored through new development. Where development adjoins a watercourse this must be highlighted as a positive and attractive feature. Wherever possible natural processes should be restored through the creation of naturalised channels, riffles, deflections and allowing for erosion and deposition. Taking a catchment based approach will ensure that the interventions made are suitable and effective.



Watercourse with natural processes

## 7 Create an Appropriate Buffer

Where there is a naturally occurring water body (pond, river or stream) or a SuDS feature has been created buildings must be at least 10m from the margin, creating a buffer and a habitat opportunity. Paths, planting, public art, seating and shelter must be provided to allow people to enjoy and access the water. This might include creative play opportunities, subject to safety considerations.



SuDS with an appropriate building set-back

## The Do's and Don'ts of Making Room for Water

### Do:

- ✓ Treat water as a design opportunity
- ✓ Create new habitats
- ✓ Design features to be natural
- ✓ Integrate SuDS into public space

### Don't:

- ✗ Over engineer SuDS
- ✗ Fence off water features
- ✗ Build over or culvert water courses





## 1 Provide Access for All

Access to public spaces for all is dependent on some basic facilities. Benches allow points where people can rest, socialise and provide focal points in the public realm. In large scale developments places to sit must be provided every 400m and within public spaces. Paths must be wide enough and have gradients that allow wheelchair users to access most areas. Adequate provision of recycling bins should be made in places where people are likely to congregate.



Accessible space with seating, trees and water.

## 2 Design out Crime

Public spaces must benefit from overlooking from adjoining buildings and be well connected to the wider area. Street lighting must be provided to ensure that users of the space feel secure and can safely move around. Planting should be designed to prevent concealed activities. Avoid creating spaces that are to the rear of buildings, and enclosed by high fences. Ensure that spaces are designed to attract a wide range of people to prevent the over-dominance of specific groups.



Natural surveillance, lighting and appropriate planting

## 3 Create Playable Environments

Creating a 'playable' environment that is associated with a wider network of public spaces is often a cost-effective solution. Guidance is available from Play England [↗](#) on the design of new play spaces following 10 Design Principles that include matters of location and accessibility, the use of natural elements, meeting the needs of all age groups and providing sufficient risk and challenge. Examples of natural and creative play opportunities include logs, boulders and water.



Natural and creative play opportunity

## 4 Plant More Trees

Trees are an important part of the character of the borough and street trees must be integrated into developments. There are also additional opportunities to further enhance developments through the creation of new public spaces and parks to fit. All new tree planting should take into consideration the ecosystem services potential that they can offer in terms of shading, cooling, air quality and habitats. Wherever possible trees should native species be of local provenance.



Urban trees creating shade and a sense of place



## 5 Get the Boundaries Right

The provision of clear demarcations between public and private space is important in ensuring that new spaces are inviting, welcoming and safe. The boundary treatment of public spaces needs to be carefully considered balancing accessibility with creating a sense of place and enclosure. Where private boundaries adjoin public spaces these must be low and allow for overlooking.



Overlooked greenspace with estate railings to frontage

## 6 Support Health and Wellbeing

For people with limited mobility, long term conditions, dementia or those caring for the very young, having somewhere to rest improves participation in exercise, access and enjoyment and increases the use of public spaces. Those with dementia can retain independence for longer if streets and public spaces are designed to be easy to find your way around, using landmarks and clear paths and ensuring that extraneous noise is managed through planting.



Benches placed at 1000 step intervals to encourage exercise

## 7 Think About Maintenance

To reduce the future maintenance burden public spaces must be designed to be resilient and require less regular management. This could include the use of natural planting that is infrequently managed, such as meadows or drought resistant species that require less watering. Local communities can be engaged to assist in the maintenance of public spaces, although their intervention should be both meaningful and within their capabilities.



Roadside verges managed as meadows

## The Do's and Don'ts of Positive Public Spaces

### Do:

- ✓ Create natural and semi-natural spaces and green wedges to provide visual breaks
- ✓ Ensure safe access for all
- ✓ Create playable environments
- ✓ Design spaces with maintenance in mind

### Don't:

- ✗ Back buildings onto public spaces
- ✗ Create places that are secluded
- ✗ Create barriers for wildlife

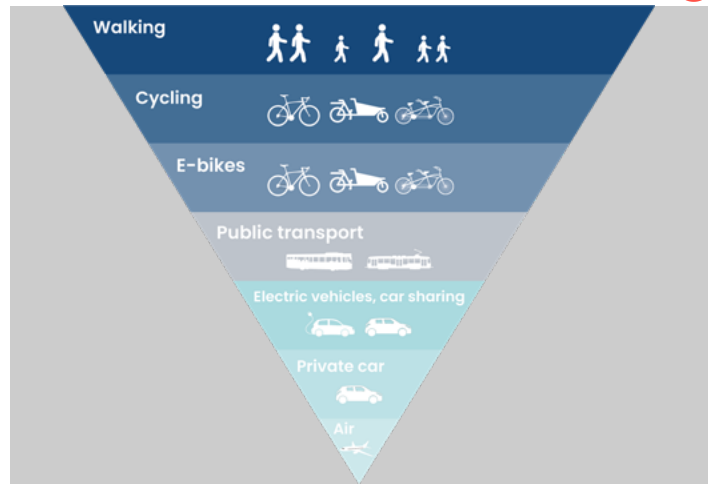






## 1 Use the Transport Hierarchy

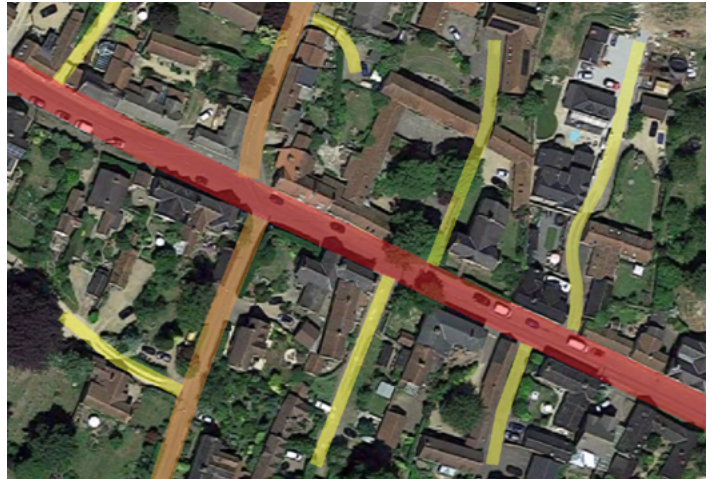
The layout of developments is key to promoting the use of public transport, encouraging walking and cycling and ensuring that streets are accessible and welcoming for all. All new developments should be located where travel can be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised. Trip demand can be minimised through the use of measures such as travel planning, safe and convenient public transport, walking and cycling paths and integration with existing developments.



Transport Hierarchy (Energy Saving Trust)

## 2 Create a Network of Streets

Fundamental to the design of successful places is the creation of a network of walkable streets. Standard housing layouts with little or no hierarchy in terms of street design, width and building frontages create places that are not legible or easy to navigate. Cul-de-sacs discourage walking and cycling and often pedestrian connections are unattractive and lack natural surveillance. Landmarks and a street hierarchy assist wayfinding (see Positive Public Spaces).



Street Hierarchy - Waltham on the Wolds

## 3 Plan for Walking and Cycling

Depending on the street hierarchy provision should be made for cycling. On main streets dedicated and segregated cycle lanes should be provided, with safe connections to secondary streets and off road routes. On secondary streets and local streets speeds must be reduced to 20mph with cycling assumed to be on-road. To support walkable neighbourhoods shops, education and leisure facilities should be clustered to encourage shared trips with sufficient places to rest on the way.



A local centre in a walkable neighbourhood (Living Streets)

## 4 Get the Parking Right

Adequate car parking is often required for new developments as in many locations public transport is unavailable. This provision should be carefully considered as poorly designed parking leads to streets dominated by cars and problems with obstructed pavements and management. As a rule tandem spaces often leads to on-street parking. The design and provision of car parking varies from location to location and guidance is provided for a range of contexts in this SPD.



Pavement parking due to insufficient parking provision





## 5 Create Safe Routes to School

There is more to accessibility than physical distance. The quality of the public realm, perceptions of safety, natural surveillance and clear wayfinding are all determinants of behaviours. The UK has some of the lowest levels of children walking independently to school on account of perceptions of danger from both traffic and strangers, and for this reason the principles of safe routes to school in new development need to be considered.



Safe route to school - Living Streets

## 6 Plant Street Trees

The inclusion of street trees can provide multiple benefits in terms of rainwater interception, better air quality, reductions in traffic speeds and public health and wellbeing. Key considerations include the site and the soil characteristics, many urban soils are challenging in terms of structure and nutrients. Tree placement and location in relationship to services needs to be carefully considered alongside maintenance and the wider landscaping strategy (see Positive Public Spaces).



Mature street trees on a residential street

## 7 Plan for the Future

Electric vehicle (EV) charging points should be designed into new development for residents, workers and visitors as appropriate. On plot provision is easy to incorporate at the time of construction. Thinking ahead, design new communities and streets to accommodate modes of transport other than the private car. Ensure that there is the potential for public transport provision in the future through the development of through routes that may be viable in later years.



EV points should be integrated into new development

## The Do's and Don'ts of Accessible and Legible Streets

### Do:

- ✓ Create a network of streets
- ✓ Cluster education, shopping and leisure
- ✓ Create a street hierarchy
- ✓ Connect to existing development

### Don't:

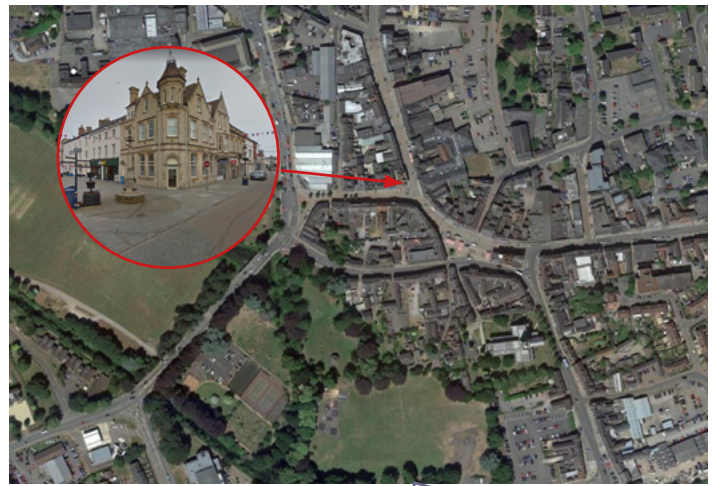
- × Create cul-de-sacs
- × Provide poor quality walking routes
- × Include tandem parking








## 1 Understand the Context

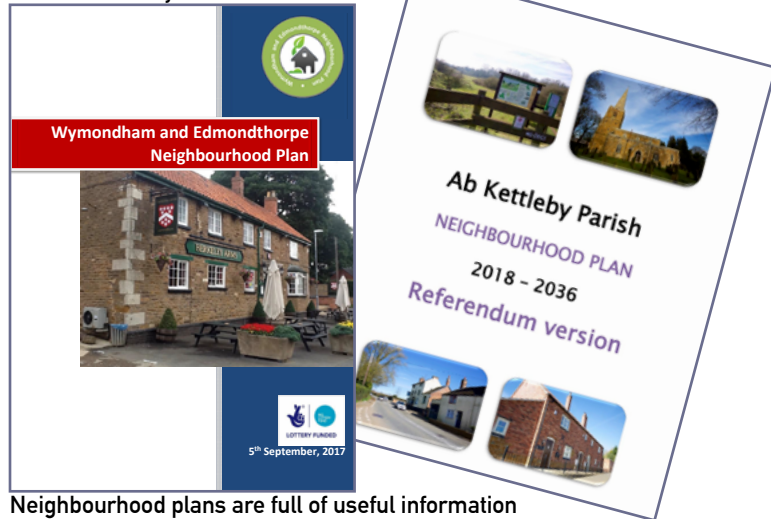
For all proposed developments it is important to fully understand the context and use this to inform the design. Context is the combination of a number of characteristics that make up the immediate surroundings to your proposed development. These include, topography, the urban grain, density and mix, building types and height, frontage treatment, boundaries and landscaping. For major new developments the context will be primarily based on the landscape and topography.



Melton Mowbray Town Centre

## 2 Study the Guidance

Whilst this SPD provides guidance on the appropriate forms of development for a particular context this must be read in conjunction with other information and guidance. This includes the Neighbourhood Plan  where this is in place, alongside documents such as the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan , both of which are available via the Melton Plan GIS  system. These documents provide a wealth of information that can inform your design.



Neighbourhood plans are full of useful information

## 3 Analyse the Site

The design for every new development must be underpinned by site analysis. This should include the following: The orientation and sun-path, proximity of neighbouring properties, building lines, projections and plots, key requirements for connectivity and constraints such as services and drainage, flooding, trees, ecology, the setting of designated heritage assets, the prevailing wind, public rights of way, desire lines and public transport provision.



Example site analysis

## 4 Get the Hierarchies Right

Within any context there is often a hierarchy of building types and materials that signify the relative status or historic use of a particular building. This can also be reflected in the layout and position of the building in relationship to the street. For example, ecclesiastical buildings are often set in their own grounds or are set back from the street facilitating gatherings of people. Additionally the status of these buildings is reflected in the materials palette, detailing and landscaping.



Church in landscape setting



## 5 Include Landmark Buildings

The hierarchy of buildings is important in terms of legibility (see Accessible and Legible Streets), particularly those living with dementia where landmarks and the continuity of use of key buildings is a major contributor to wayfinding (for example banks, Post Offices, museums and libraries). This is combination with other landmarks in the public realm (see Positive Public Spaces), such as public art or market crosses further add to wayfinding and local distinctiveness at specific nodal points.



A prominent landmark building note the scale, materials, and details

## 6 Use Materials Correctly

Within individual buildings the materials palette might have a hierarchy with more expensive ones employed on the main elevation, whereas secondary and rear elevations may be modest. Certain materials are used in specific ways within the Borough. For example ironstone is only ever used on the ground floor when in combination with brick. Modern materials may be appropriate in some contexts, particularly when their use is justified in terms of sustainable construction.



Ironstone and brick

## 7 Take Delight in the Details

Detail and decoration are an important means of creating and reinforcing local distinctiveness. Details should be an expression of the truthful use of materials, whether this be the means of forming window openings or the corbelling at eaves level. Decoration is an important signifier of the status of a building, this does not have to be traditional or involve figurative depictions but can also include the creative use of materials and the integration of public art.



Architectural glass on a commercial building

## The Do's and Don'ts of Locally Distinctive Places

### Do:

- ✓ Study the context and understand the site
- ✓ Read the Neighbourhood Plan
- ✓ Use landmark buildings in key locations
- ✓ Use materials truthfully with good details

### Don't:

- ✗ Use standard designs from elsewhere
- ✗ Create places with no variety
- ✗ Place buildings backing onto the street







## 1 Flexible Ground Floors

In new developments where there is the potential for future conversion from residential use to retail or commercial uses, this must be designed in from the start. This should include an appropriate floor to ceiling height on the ground floor, a flexible layout without load bearing walls and level access. These features may lend themselves to the creation of more accessible residential units close to local services, should demand not arise to convert the unit to retail in the future.



Flexible ground floors suitable for a wide range of uses

## 2 Retain Historic Features

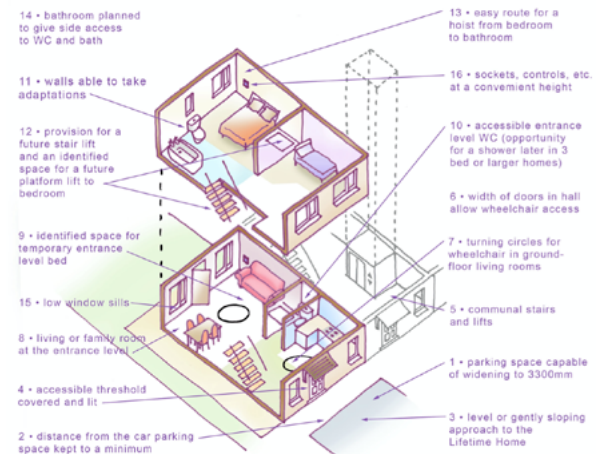
Where there is a change of use from retail or commercial premises to residential the loss of architectural features, such as historic shopfronts, potentially prevents the building being returned to retail or commercial use in the future. Architectural features must be retained, and the proportions, rhythm and detailing of the host building. As a general rule cornices, corbels and pilasters should be retained to create a break between the ground floor and upper storeys.



Sensitive shop conversion to residential use

## 3 Design for Life Stages

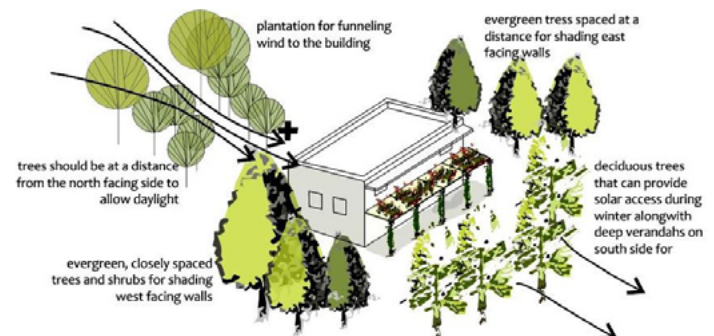
Ground floor flats, bungalows and dormer bungalows should be designed to be adaptable over time, including structural capacity for hoists, flexible layouts to allow changes in room configuration, wide doors and level access. The requirements within the Building Regulations Approved Document M – Category 2 should be the minimum standard for these units and must be considered for all units. Further guidance is available from Lifetime Homes.



Lifetime Homes Design Principles

## 4 Consider Aspect & Orientation

Aspect, orientation and landscaping have an influence on heating and cooling and consequently energy use. The orientation and design of buildings has an influence over the need for heating and cooling. The role of landscaping around buildings is also a key consideration, providing solar shading in summer and shelter from the prevailing winds in winter. Avoid large areas of glazing that will create overheating in summer and design sleeping areas to be to the east wherever possible.



Trees and orientation reducing heating and cooling loads



## 5 Think Fabric First

The design of new development has a clear role to play in reducing energy consumption. The design and construction of new buildings will therefore be expected to achieve carbon reduction by reducing the consumption of energy through features that provide passive heating, cooling and natural lighting, high levels of thermal performance in the building fabric and meeting residual energy requirements through the use of low or zero carbon energy generating technologies.



Passivhaus gym building - ArcCan

## 6 Make Extensions Sympathetic

In many locations, unfortunately, extensions to existing buildings have been low quality, harming the character and appearance of the area. In general terms extensions should be subservient to the host building and be designed to be an enhancement that clearly expresses the old and the new elements. Dormers must be carefully designed so as not to dominate the roof, and be in line with the windows below. Further guidance is provided under Extensions and Adaptations.



High quality extension - Casa Architects

## 7 Allow Room for Expansion

Buildings that allow for extensions from the beginning are more adaptable and useful in the future. Adequate space should be allowed within the plot for future extensions and to reduce the 'terrace' effect. The use of loft spaces at the outset is discouraged, as this prevents expansion at a later date. Internally consider the use of non-load bearing walls to facilitate change over time without structural interventions.



Tightly cramped detached housing

## The Do's and Don'ts of Adaptable and Resilient Buildings

### Do:

- ✓ Retain historic features
- ✓ Use sustainable design features
- ✓ Design buildings to be accessible
- ✓ Consider future uses and changes

### Don't:

- × Minimise outdoor space
- × Dominate the host building with extensions
- × Design loft rooms in new-build houses





## Major Residential and Mixed Use

For developments of over 10 residential units that may also include other uses, that may include:

- Local retail
- Cafés and restaurants
- Leisure
- Employment and offices

The key objective is to create a coherent sense of place using a variety of locally distinctive forms.

## Minor Residential and Infill

For developments of less than 10 residential units that may include:

Infill plots  
Small site allocations  
Individual homes  
Live work units

The key objective is to create a good fit with the local context.

## Industrial and Commercial

Bespoke developments that provide facilities for industry, warehousing, manufacturing, education or commercial activities that cannot be accommodated in more traditional built forms.

The key objective is to create sustainable buildings and landscapes that are accessible and a good fit with the context.

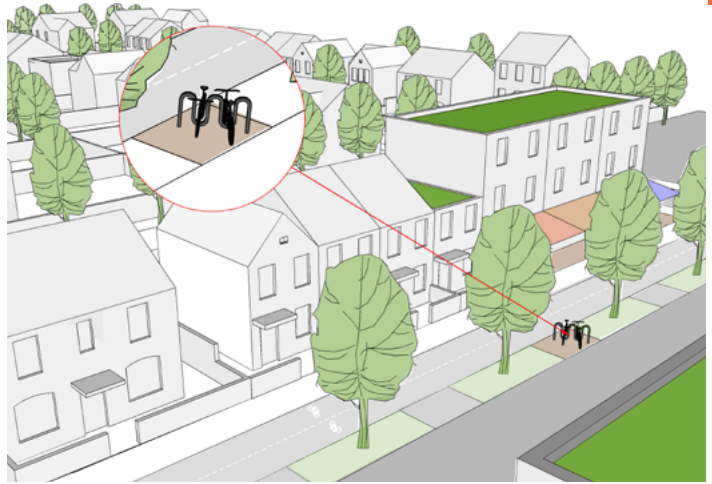
## Extensions and Adaptations

Additions to existing buildings for a variety of uses. Design guidance is also provided where an existing agricultural building is to be converted to residential use.

The key objective is to respond to the host building and create an extension that secures the long term and flexible use of existing assets and provides a clear narrative about the changes being made.

## Cluster Local Services

Cluster shops, services, education and local employment close to public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure (including secure bike parking) creating walkable neighbourhoods. Residential use can be accommodated on upper floors. Where on-street or on-plot car parking cannot be provided this can be accommodated to the rear, subject to natural surveillance from adjoining properties. Place higher density housing close to local services with a taller building forms.



## Get the Parking Right

Provide sufficient off-street parking without relying on tandem parking for day to day usage. Tandem parking may be used for occasional visitor parking. Provide as much front garden as possible and use a suitable boundary treatment, such as a hedge or low wall, preventing cars dominating the street scene. Ensure that access for all is maintained to the front door. Please see the Residential Parking Guidance for more information. Note garages are not counted as parking spaces.



## Provide Adequate Waste Storage

Ensure that provision is made for bins and recycling storage. This should be provided in the locations identified, away from doors and windows wherever possible. Waste storage provision can be integrated with the boundary treatment and landscaping can be used to ensure that this does not dominate the street scene. Storage is an opportunity to create a green roof that intercepts rainwater and provides a new habitat, whilst also disguising the unit.



## Create Streets and Frontages

A strong frontage with a suitable boundary treatment provides a sense of place and enclosure and ensures natural surveillance over the street. Avoid 'gable on' forms unless these are to provide expression and if used these should directly edge the pavement whilst avoiding creating a tunnel effect. Towards the edge of the development, approaching the countryside, set frontages back and create a wider verge of public open space to reveal views and provide a transition.



## Provide Street Trees

Avoid highway dominated developments by incorporating trees, bioswales and green verges. Street trees provide solar shading, improve air quality and intercept rainwater. Species should be chosen in consultation with the Council's arboriculturalist. Trees contribute to developing a hierarchy of streets, assisting in wayfinding and orientation. In public spaces plant trees in clusters. Trees should be managed to ensure highway safety.

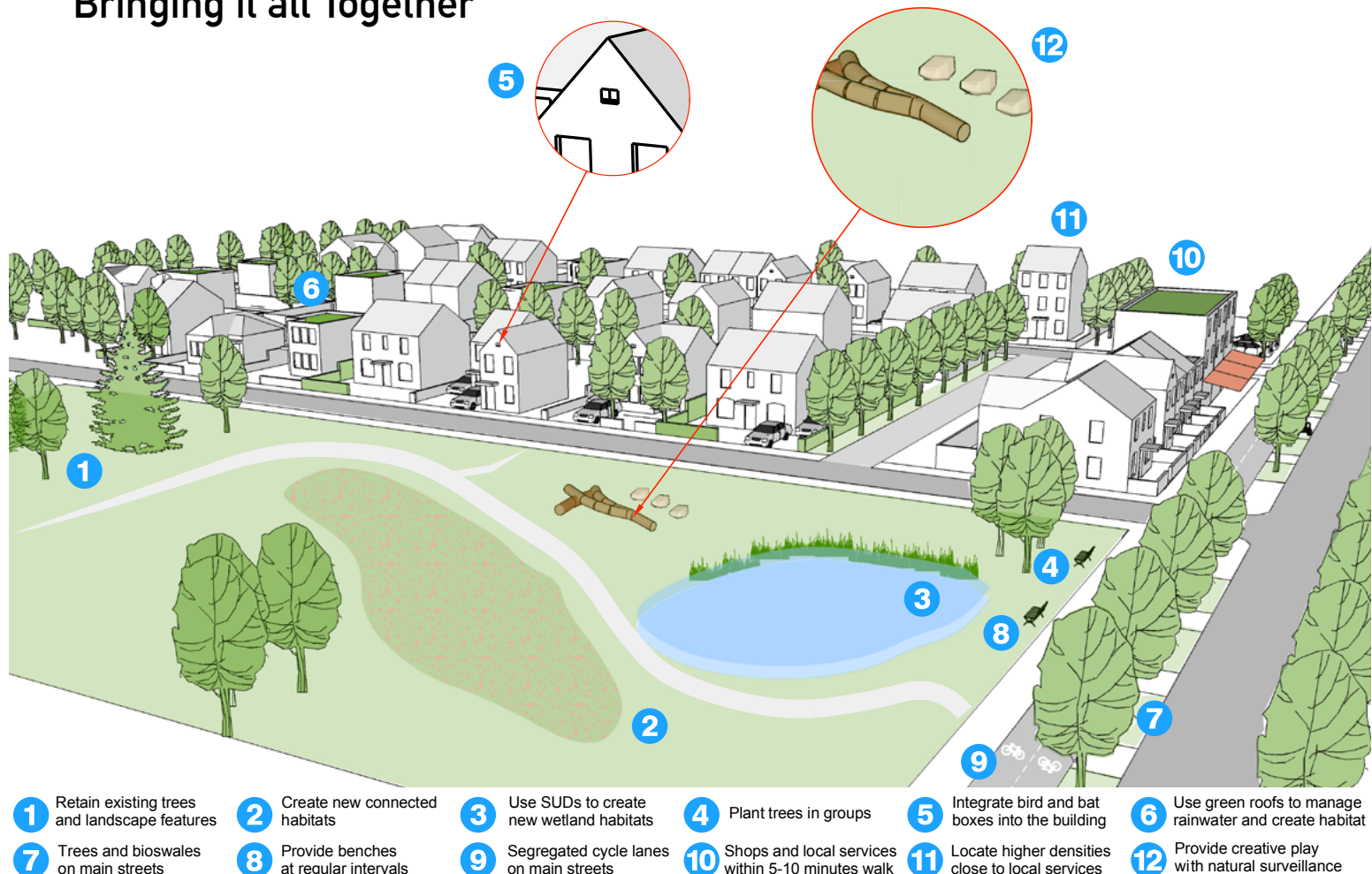


## Soften the Countryside Edges

Use private shared drives to soften the settlement edge where it meets the countryside. Up to six properties can be served in this way. Ideally, as in the layout illustrated, three properties either side is preferable as this reduces the distance required to place waste and recycling for collection. Where public access for walking and cycling is required around the development this must be provided separately with adequate natural surveillance.



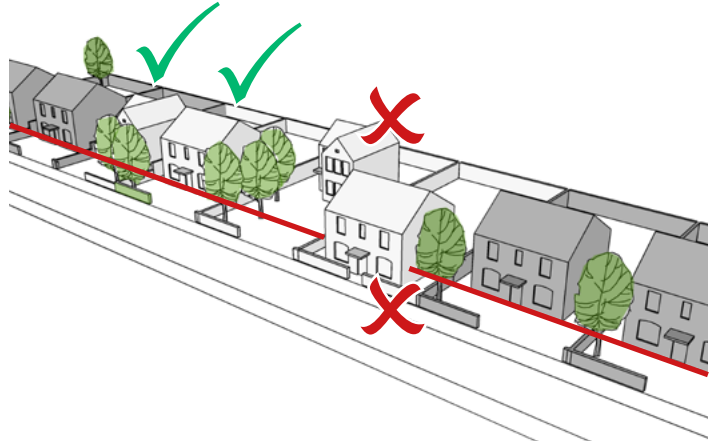
## Bringing it all Together





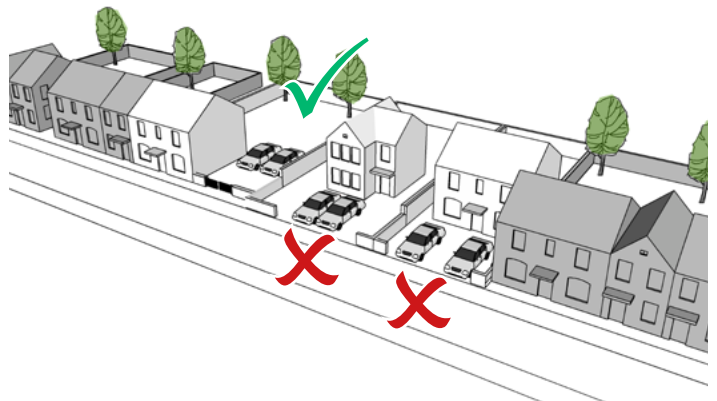
## Respect the Building Line

Every context has a building line or a predominant distance from the frontage to the edge of the pavement. New development should, unless in exceptional circumstances, respect the building line and not be in front of or behind this. Exceptions to this might be where the proposed building is turning a corner, has a use that requires direct access such as a shop or a public building where a forecourt may be desirable to accommodate gatherings.

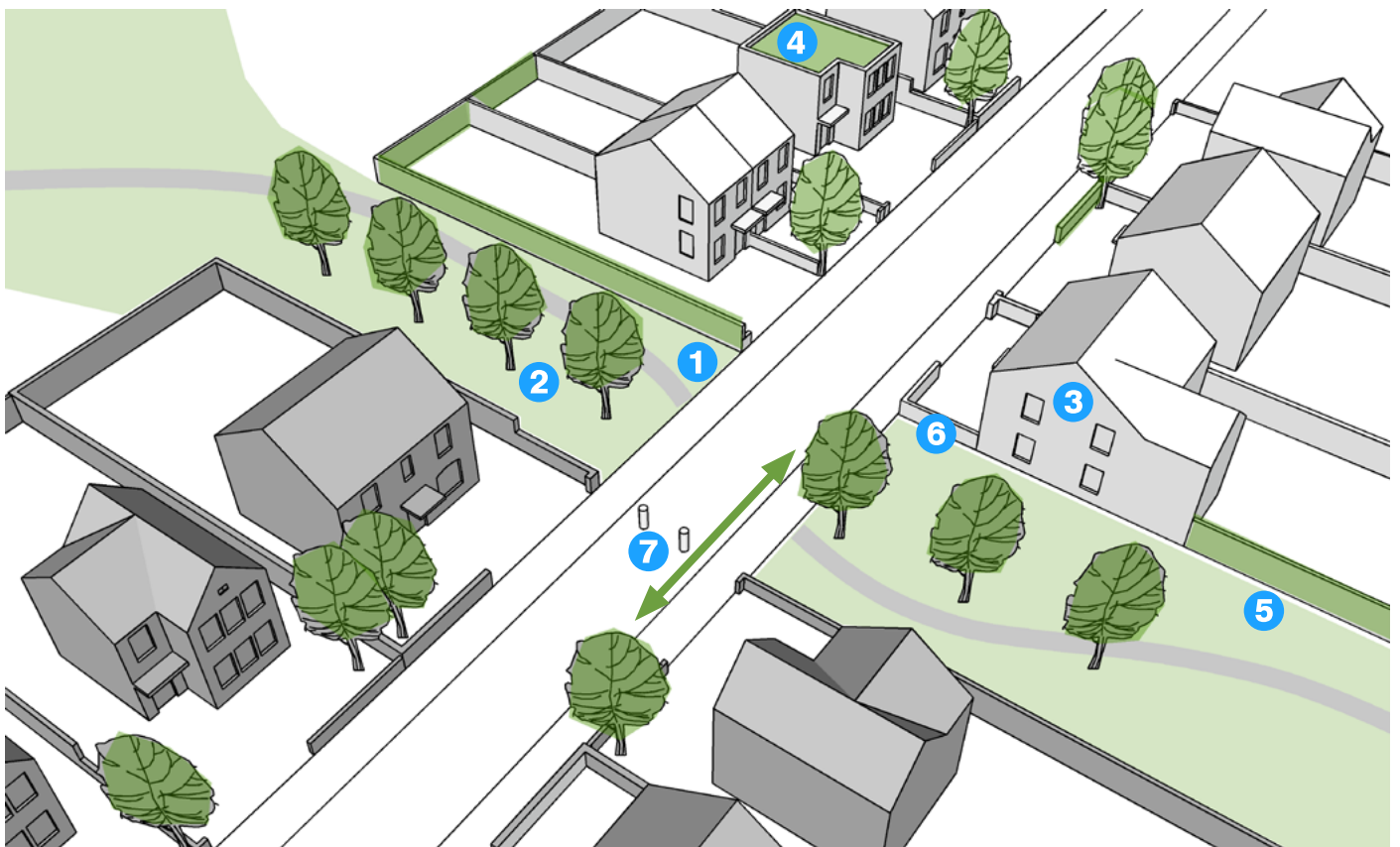


## Don't Let Parking Dominate

In many contexts, for example village centres, buildings are sited on the edge of the pavement. New development should accommodate parking to the side or the rear in these circumstances and not define the design approach through the creation of on-plot parking on the frontage. In all contexts parking should not dominate the street scene and must be screened by boundaries and landscaping. For more information please see the Appendix - Residential Parking Guidance.



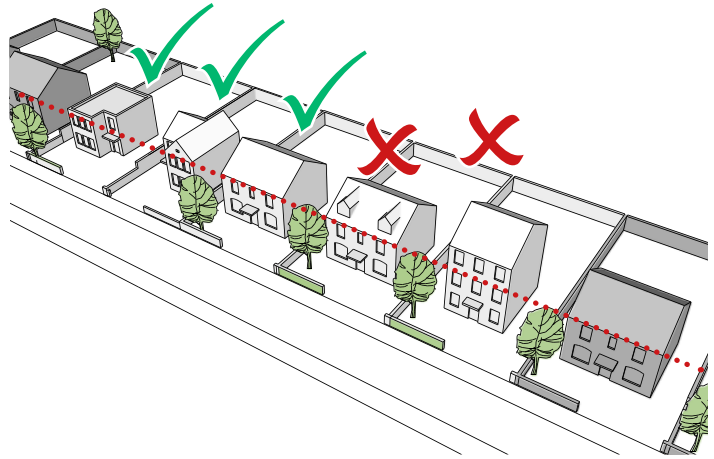
## Connect New and Existing Communities



- 1 Retain wildlife corridors and PROW
- 2 Retain existing trees and habitats
- 3 Provide natural surveillance
- 4 Green roof intercepts rainwater
- 5 Hedge as a boundary
- 6 Low boundaries to frontage
- 7 Bollards preventing through traffic for private vehicles (if required)

## Observe Heights and Roofline

Ensure that new buildings observe the eaves height of the surrounding context. Where a pitched roof is proposed ensure that this is traditional in terms of slope and orientation. Where flat roofs are proposed, these should be behind a parapet feature. Green roofs are encouraged as these provide a habitat opportunity, alongside intercepting rainwater. Avoid creating buildings taller than the context either through additional storeys, or through the use of the roof space.

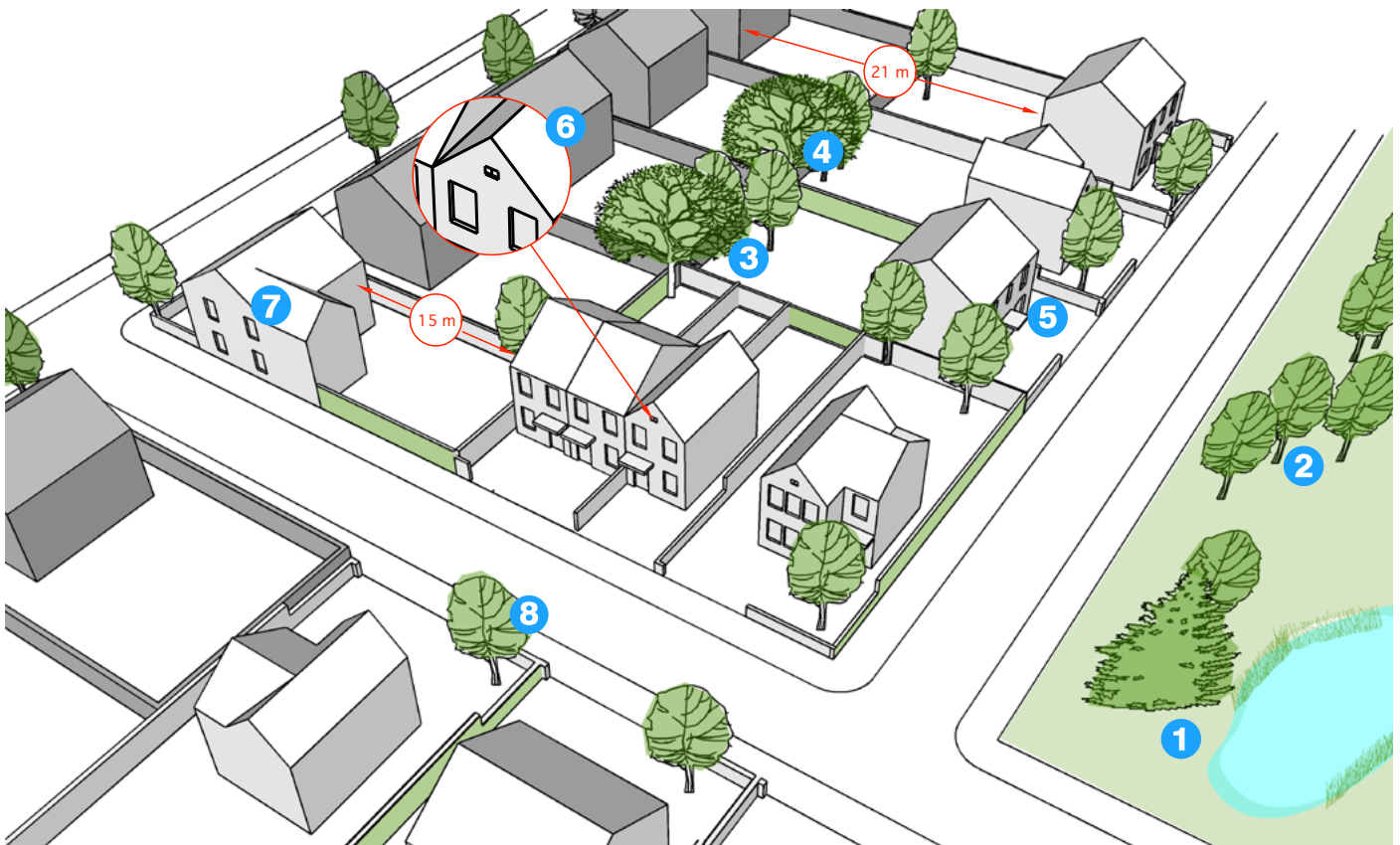


## Get the Boundary Treatment Right

Wherever possible a suitable boundary in the form of a hedge, wall or railings should be provided. Timber fencing must not be used as a frontage treatment. Front boundaries should be no taller than 1m in height. In all cases, buildings should face the street and rear gardens must not be created adjacent to the highway.



## Bringing it all Together \*



- 1 Integrate SUDs with the landscape
- 2 Retain existing trees and habitats
- 3 Existing trees and hedges
- 4 Back new development onto existing
- 5 Frontage to street and landscape
- 6 Provide habitats in the built fabric
- 7 Natural surveillance on corner
- 8 Incorporate new tree planting

\* For further guidance on layout and waste storage see Major Residential and Mixed Use



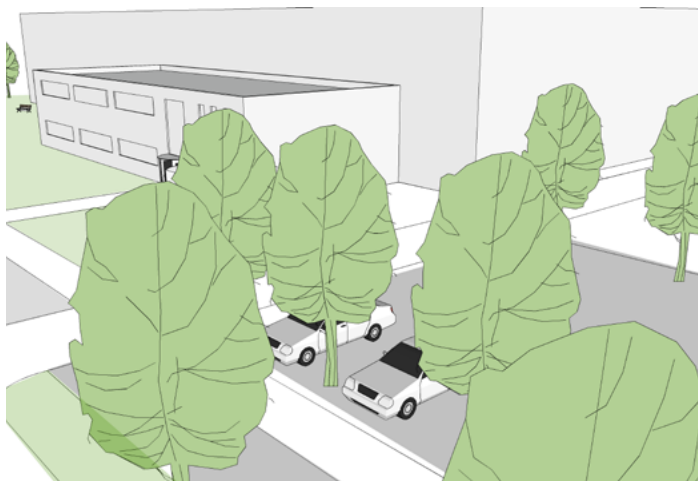
## Create a Street Frontage

Ensure that there is a direct connection to the street for pedestrians and cyclists. Secure covered storage should be provided for cycles close to the main entrance that needs to be accessible for all. The frontage creates an opportunity to mitigate the massing of the main building with a more human scale building. Provide visual interest with either public art, green walls or decoration.



## Landscape the Car Parking

Adequate car parking should be provided serving staff and visitors. This should be situated to the side or the rear of the main building, ensuring that pedestrians, vehicles and servicing are separated. Tree planting mitigates the visual impact of the car park whilst also providing solar shading, habitats, and rainwater interception.



## Make a Feature of SUDs

Often with extensive roof areas industrial and commercial buildings have significant levels of surface water run-off. Whilst some of this can be successfully harvested for vehicle washing, toilets and general cleaning, much of this can be managed through a SUDs scheme. Place this feature close to existing and new habitats and use it as an opportunity to create attractive spaces for breaks, supporting the wellbeing of staff.



## Include Green Roofs and Walls

Green walls provide additional insulation and can soften the impact of large buildings. Providing a habitat they can mitigate any loss of habitat and contribute towards net gain. On shorter spans, for example over the offices and welfare elements of the building green roofs are an ideal opportunity to manage rainwater and provide additional habitats.



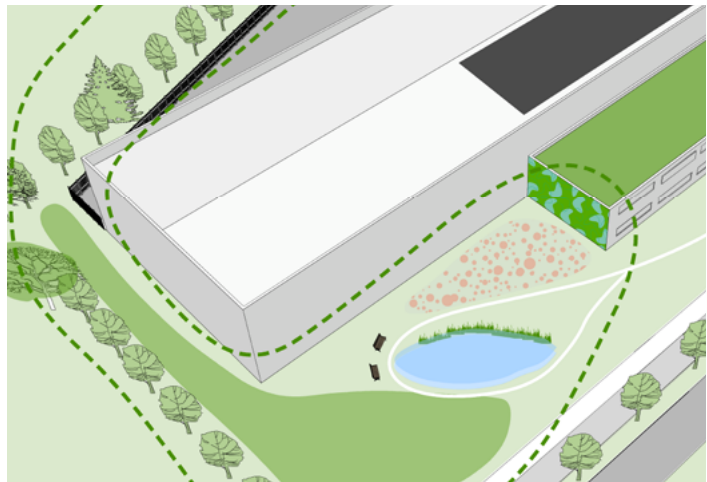
## Minimise Signage

Whilst signage is important to signify a business or service this must be proportionate and complementary to the building. Avoid the garish decoration of buildings and avoid cladding in corporate colours. When choosing cladding colours and materials consider the impact of the building on the landscape and context. A palette of muted naturally inspired colours is often more successful in steel buildings.

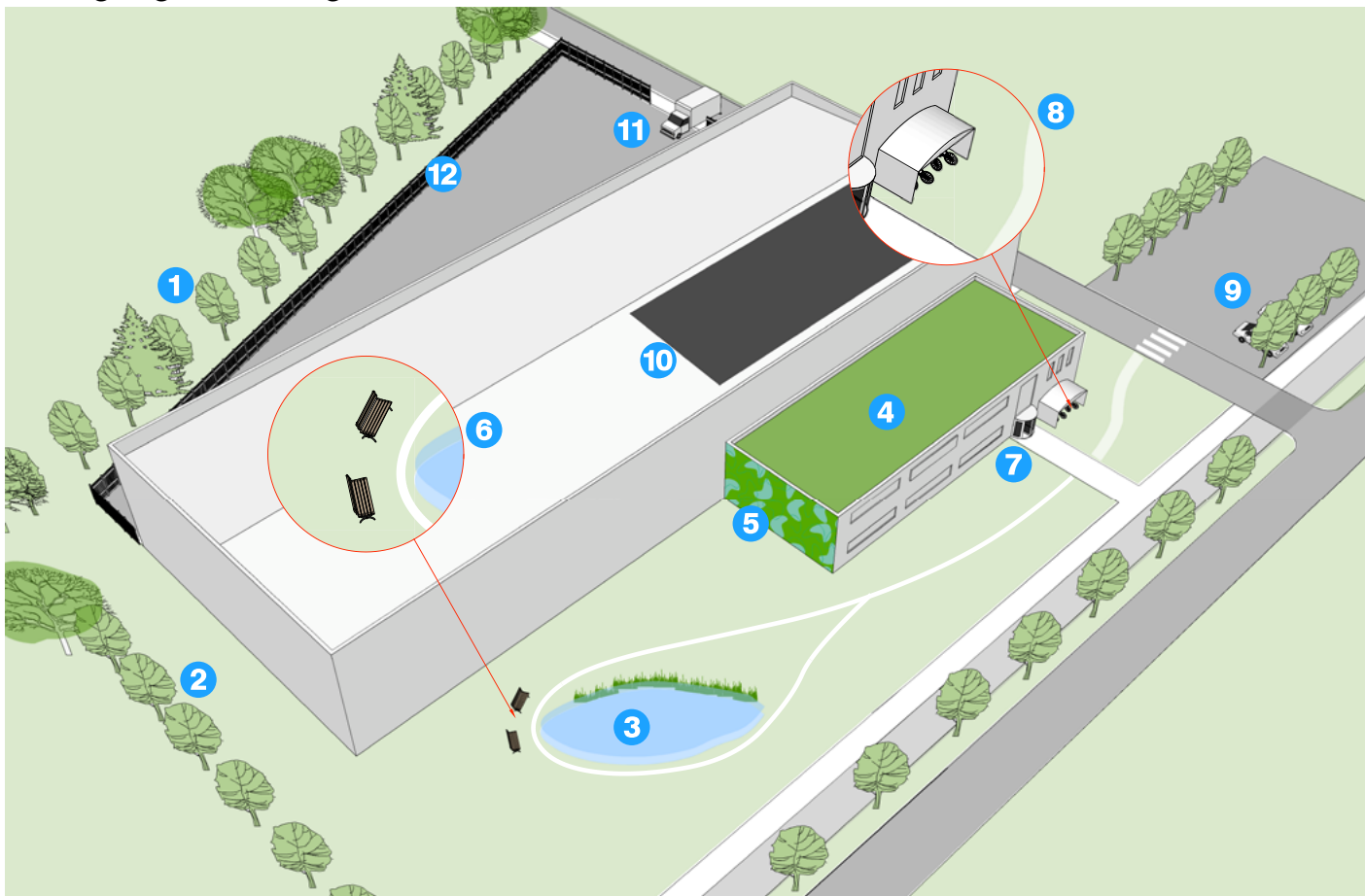


## Link New and Existing Habitats

Hedgerows and trees are often a feature of the countryside that may be developed for industrial or commercial uses. The plan of the buildings and hard standing must respond to these and this should be a consideration from the outset. Wherever possible incorporate existing habitats into the scheme and connect these to new planting that can also screen the buildings and operations whilst also contributing towards net gains for biodiversity.



## Bringing it all Together

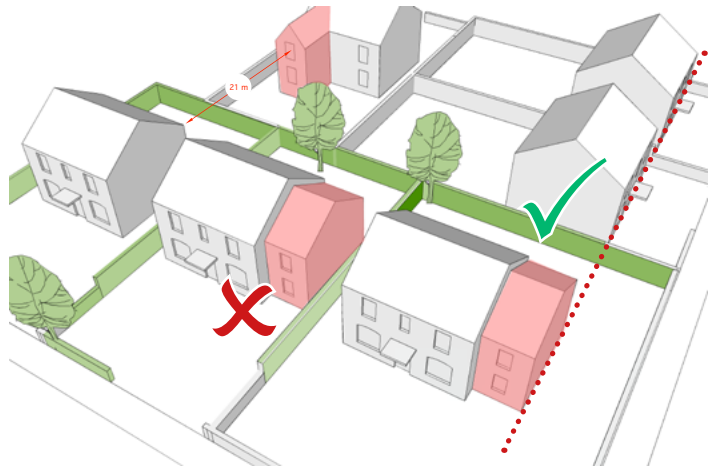


- |   |   |  |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>1</b> Retain existing trees and landscape features | <b>2</b> Create new connected habitats                | <b>3</b> Use SUDs to create new wetland habitats | <b>4</b> Use green roofs on shorter spans | <b>5</b> Green walls to create habitats and provide insulation | <b>6</b> Provide places to take breaks close to nature |
| <b>7</b> Provide a clear front entrance to the street | <b>8</b> Provide cycle parking for staff and visitors | <b>9</b> Create landscaped parking to the side   | <b>10</b> Integrate renewable energy      | <b>11</b> Separate servicing from parking and access           | <b>12</b> Minimise fencing and keep this to the rear   |



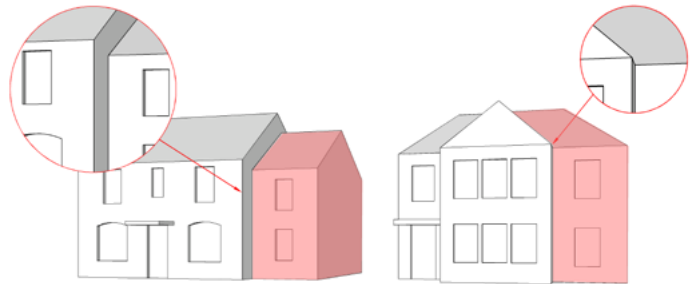
## Consider the Context

When creating two storey extensions it is important to consider the impact of these on the street scene. Where plot widths are narrow, with little room between buildings, a side extension can often cause a 'terracing effect' and harm the amenity of the host and adjoining property. On corner plots ensure that side extensions do not cross the adjoining building line. Ensure that rear extensions do not overlook other properties by observing normal separation distances.



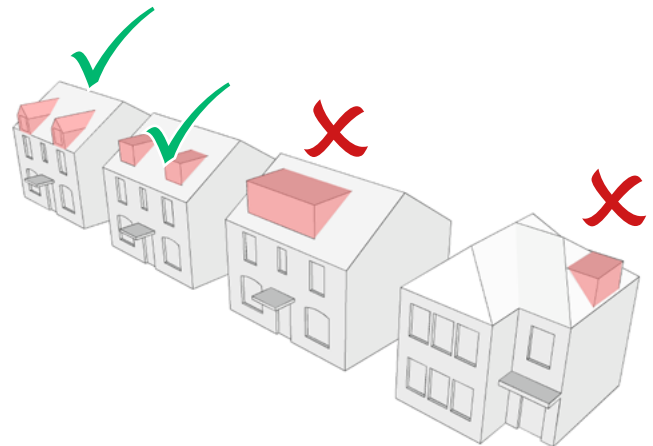
## Make the Extension a Good Fit

Side extensions should be subservient to the main building using a similar materials palette and with matching details in terms of the detailing and proportion of the windows. Provide a set back and reduce the ridge height to reflect this in simple gabled buildings. The window proportions of the extension should be similar to the host building, but reduced in scale. In hipped roof buildings the eaves line should be maintained, with a set back that clearly defines the extension.



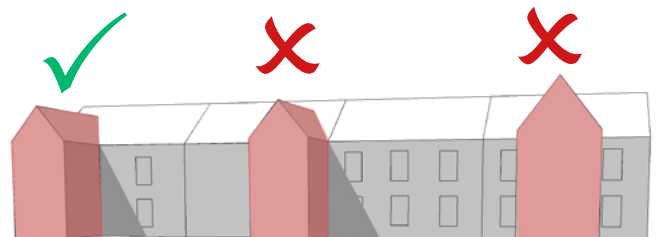
## Get the Roofline Right

Where a pitched roof dormer is included this should be in the form of a gable with the wall material continued upwards beyond the eaves line. Rainwater goods must not pass in front of this detail. Where a dormer is set higher in the roof-line these should be detailed with a flat or segmental roof and should have cheeks and flashing. Dormers should not extend to more than 40% of the roof area. Dormers in low hipped roofs are rarely successful and should be avoided.



## Rear Extensions

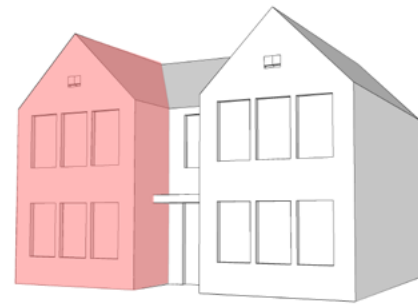
Overshadowing should be considered from the outset and two storey elements must be placed so as not to impact on neighbouring properties. The orientation of the plot is critical to the assessment of the impact throughout the day. For two storey extensions a sunlight and daylight assessment provides the evidence required to demonstrate whether there is overshadowing. Similarly to side extensions, these should be subservient to the host building and reflect the rhythm and proportions.



## Re-ordering

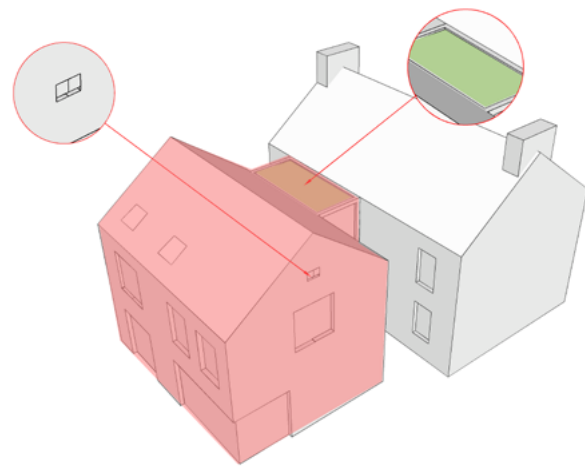
It is possible to 're-order' a building in some contexts, creating a harmonious composition, however, the following factors need to be observed:

- The materials palette must match across the façade, this might be easier to achieve in a rendered building
- The detailing and proportions must match
- The re-ordered building must not create a 'terraced' effect by being built up to the plot boundary



## Contemporary Extensions

Often, in the case of larger scale extensions, a contemporary approach providing a clear contrast to the host building is better. The scale and proportions of the extension should reflect the host building, observing roof pitches and span. In creating a clear division a joining element may be employed use a green roof on flat elements. The proportions of openings and details may differ from the host building, subject to the materials chosen. Include new habitats wherever possible.



## Agricultural Conversions

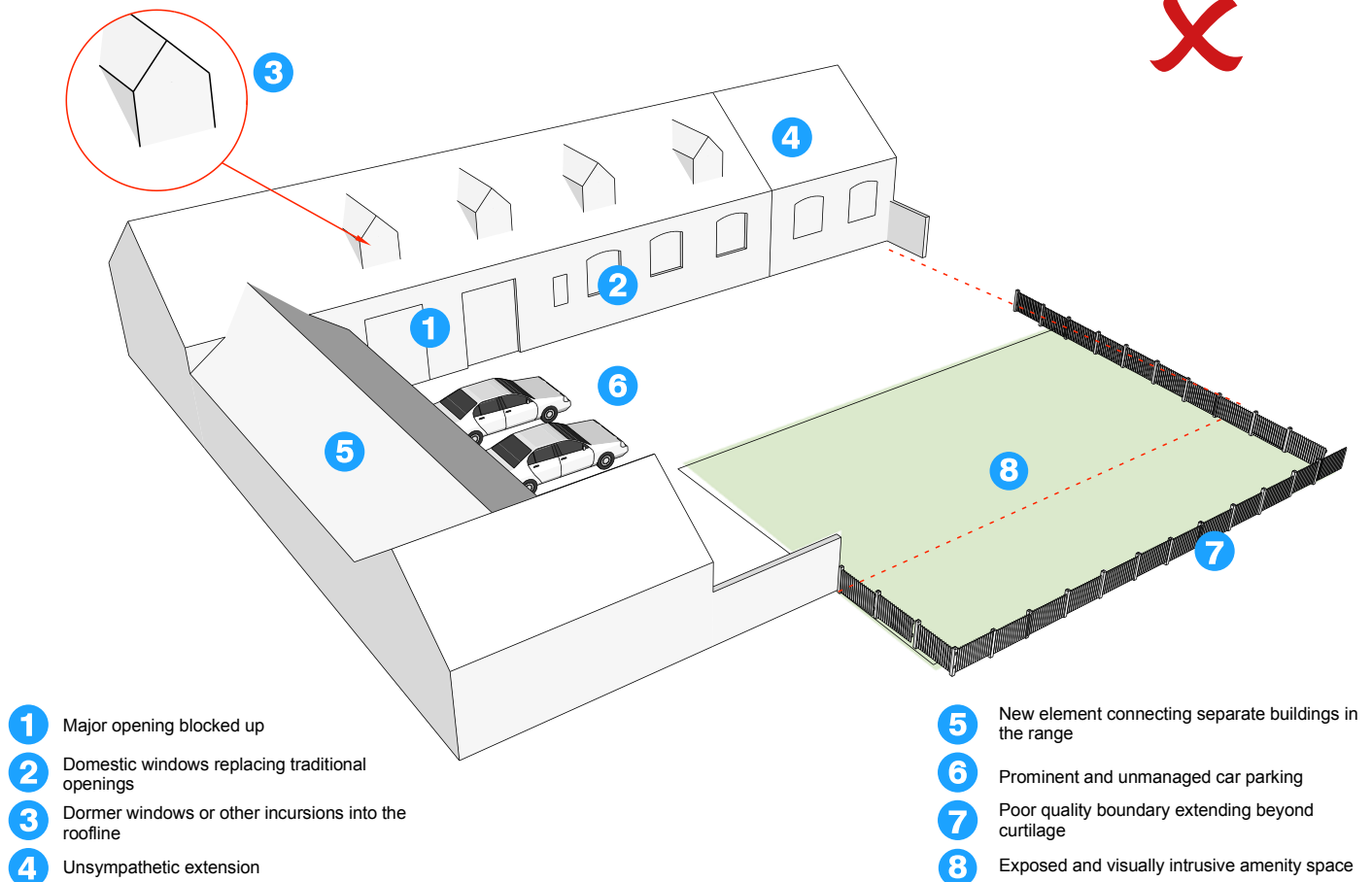
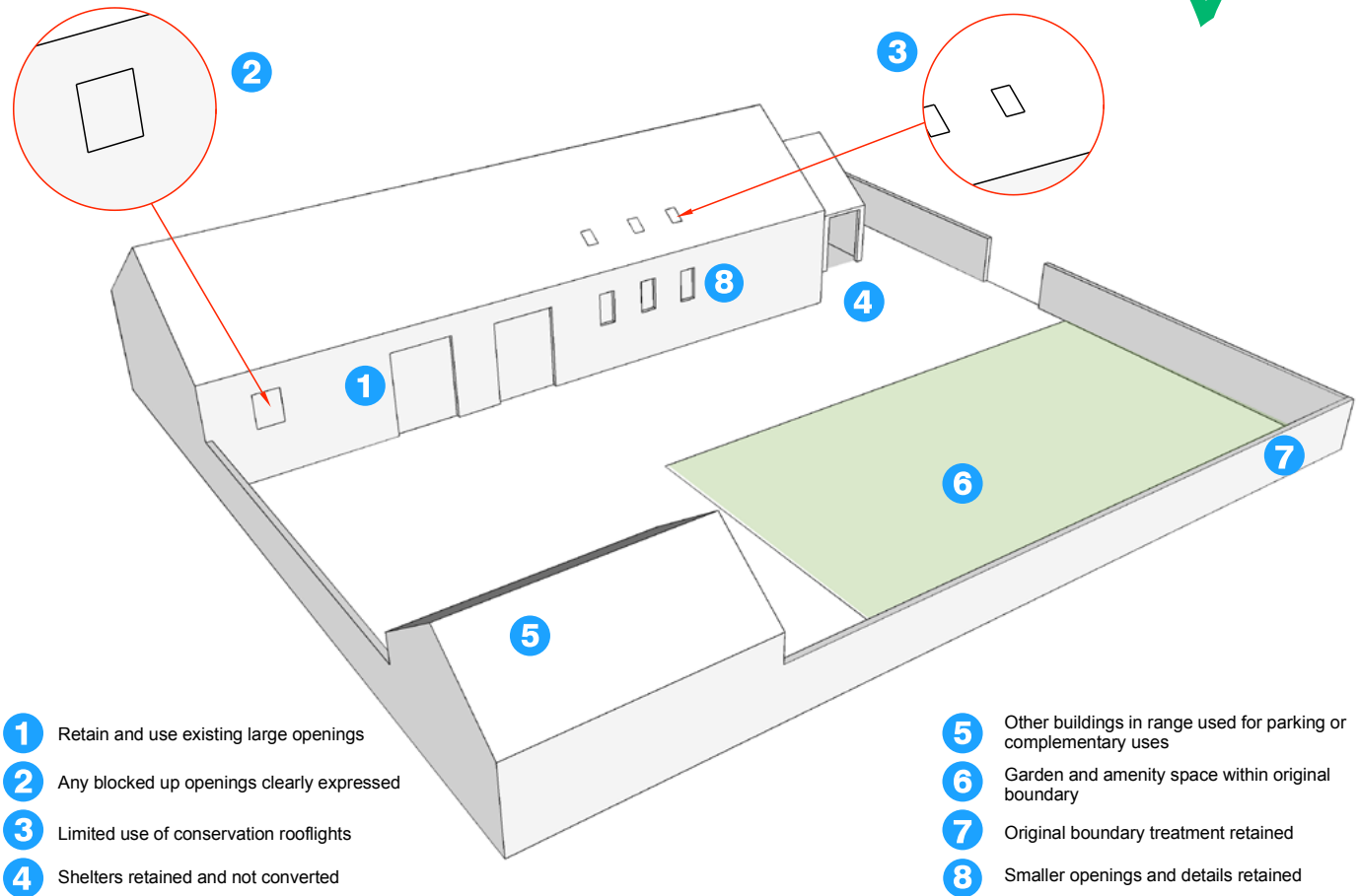
Traditional farm buildings provide an ideal opportunity to create new homes in the countryside, subject to matters such as landscape visual impact and the sensitive re-use of the existing buildings. In all cases historic features such as vent holes, steps and shelters should be retained and there should be minimal changes to the simple forms that often characterise these buildings. Existing boundaries are often an important part of the character and help to screen the development.

Avoid the use of domestic windows and openings and retain features such as barn doors. If floors within the building are to be created, crossing larger openings these need to be considered carefully in terms of design. Garden areas and amenity space must be accommodated within the existing curtilage of the range of buildings and boundaries should be retained.

Avoid connecting separate buildings within the range. Outbuildings can be converted for complementary uses and may be suitable for vehicle parking for example.

# Extensions and Adaptations

## The Do's and Don'ts of Barn Conversions



# Character Notes

Use the Melton Local Plan GIS [↗](#) system to work out Character Area in the SPD you are planning to site your scheme. The GIS system will also let you know if there are any Local Plan policies that relate to your site, whether there is a Neighbourhood Plan or if you are in a Conservation Area.

If your proposed development is in a Neighbourhood Plan area.

Please read the Neighbourhood Plan and take into consideration the policies and design guidance that is included. Neighbourhood Plans contain a wealth of information that can be helpful in designing your scheme and form part of the Development Plan, and as such are a material consideration.

If your proposed development is in a Conservation Area.

Go to Melton Borough Council Conservation webpage [↗](#) to find the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan. Please read these as these contain important information that will affect your design choices.

If your proposed development affects a Listed Building.

Visit Historic England Listed Buildings Online [↗](#) to ascertain if there are any Listed Buildings that could be affected by your proposed development. This could include the building itself, its curtilage or setting. If you are unsure or require any further guidance please contact us. You may need the advice of a heritage specialist in the design process.

Important! Unauthorised Works to a Listed Building is a criminal offence.

Does my proposed development have an impact on designated sites for nature?

Please consult Magic Maps [↗](#) to see if your proposed development could have an impact on a protected area. If so please seek advice from a suitably qualified person.

Please choose from the Character Areas below:

Melton Mowbray Town Centre

Melton Mowbray Edge of Centre

Melton Mowbray Suburbs

The Northern Villages

The Southern Villages



## 1 Landscape and Topography

The topography of the Town Centre is generally flat with a significant presence of greenspace associated with the River Wreake. There are very few street trees and, apart from some enclosed yards and greenspaces behind the frontages, there are few natural features visible on the street. There are few distinctive historic surfaces, with a generally highways dominated environment. The pedestrianised areas are generally constructed of modern materials.



Greenspace associated with the River Wreake

## 2 Space and Movement

There is a clear hierarchy of streets within the town centre. The main streets are wide, expanding further at the Market Square and at the main junctions. A series of side streets extend from the main streets, leading to the Town Park and other historic parks, although these have often been lost over time. A series of yards also lead from the main streets, often accessed through openings in the frontages, leading to internal spaces, occasionally green in character.



Market square and cross at the confluence of two main routes

## 3 Grain and Density

There are sporadic pockets of more suburban type development but in the main a terraced form dominates the character of the area. There are a small number of detached buildings on the edge of the central area with either cultural, civic, or public origins. This leads to a generally high density form of development that quickly reduces away from the central area and main streets. In general buildings are sited at the edge of the pavement with a shopfront as the main frontage treatment with the occasional use of a boundary in the form of a wall or railings.



Town centre plots, spaces and green infrastructure (Google Maps)

## 4 Past and Current Uses

Melton Mowbray Town Centre features a core of medieval origins with a historic street pattern that is still evident. The Town Centre features a variety of streets and spaces that reflect the traditional role of the town as a marketplace. Once an important centre for hunting, the Town Centre has evidence of lodges, stables, yards and hotels that supported this activity. Retail and leisure uses dominate the Town Centre, with pockets of residential, civic and ecclesiastical buildings.



Retail unit, recently converted to residential use



## 5 Heights and Skyline

The Town Centre features a range of storey heights, from four in the centre, three storeys on the main streets and quickly becoming two storeys in height elsewhere. There are very few dormer windows and where incursions into the roof space are made these are usually through the continuation of the wall material upwards through the eaves. In the yards to the rear of the Town Centre historic buildings can be as low as a storey in height, with additional accommodation on the roof.



Four storey limit in the Town Centre

## 6 Massing and Roofscape

The main built form is a simple gabled building, in a terrace. The eaves line faces the street, with the occasional use of a parapet to obscure the roof. There are also distinctive single storey buildings with parapet gabled dormers in the roofline. Occasionally a gable is presented to the street no more than two storeys in height, often with an adjacent access to the rear of the block. Exceptions include the Regal Cinema, concealing the massing to the rear with a two storey frontage.



A combination of rooflines and orientations

## 7 Materials and Details

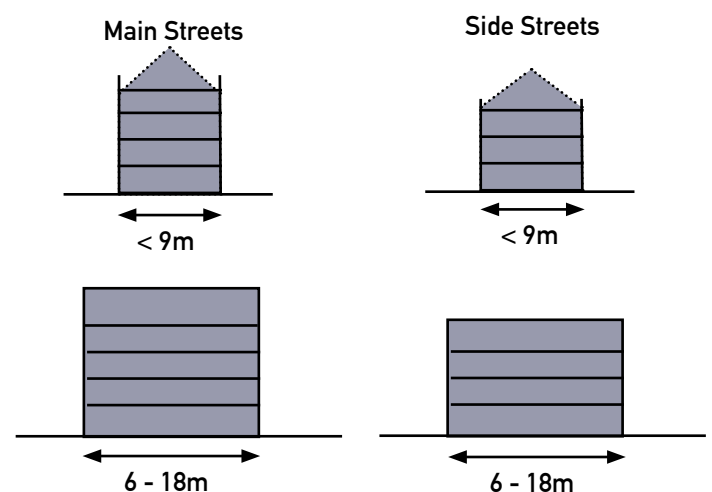
The narrow widths of individual buildings together with "Georgian" style windows give a strong vertical emphasis. Since the nineteenth century shop fronts have been added to these buildings in various styles, many incorporating appropriate traditional details which contribute in a unique way to the character of the Town Centre. Windows in the main are detailed reflecting the truthful use of the wall materials, with an appropriate header and footer detail.



Materials and details in the Town Centre

## Form Based Design Guidance

Main street frontages should not exceed three storeys in height, except for immediately adjoining the Market Place where four storeys may be appropriate. Secondary streets and the periphery of the Town Centre should be limited to two storeys or two and a half storeys in height unless a specific landmark building is required, signifying a major junction for example. To the rear of the main frontages, in the yards extending from the main streets, buildings should not exceed two storeys.





## 1 Landscape and Topography

Bounded by the railway and the route of the disused northern line and incorporating key employment sites alongside mixed uses and residential development this area serves the function of being at the gateway to many routes into Melton Mowbray, and as such has an important role in the image and function of the town. The area includes green infrastructure assets such as Scalford Brook, the former railway trackbed, the River Eye and a redundant canal channel.



Scalford Brook

## 2 Space and Movement

The historic street pattern has been lost as a result of the changes in the area. There are a large number of extensive plots and car parking that reduces permeability in the area. The former railway line provides a sustainable transport corridor and connections to the Melton Country Park and other green infrastructure assets, although this suffers from poor natural surveillance, visibility and a degraded public realm. New development should seek to repair the public realm and promote walking and cycling taking advantage of the accessible location.



Former track bed providing cycling infrastructure

## 3 Grain and Density

Much of this area is dominated by large floorplate buildings and their associated car parking. There are pockets of historic buildings providing evidence of previous higher densities. Historic plots have been lost in the main. There are a variety of building types ranging from semi-detached houses to former industrial buildings and a large number of retail sheds. New development should seek to repair the street pattern and plot sizes, to create a walkable, mixed use place.



Historic street pattern in the area

## 4 Past and Current Uses

Much of the area was associated with the former railway line in terms of uses. As well as this there are fragments of residential buildings alongside the current dominant retail uses along Norman Way. These buildings are currently predominantly in commercial use, although the area as a whole has the potential for future residential and mixed-use development taking advantage of the sustainable location and green infrastructure assets.



Former residential buildings partially in commercial use



## 5 Heights and Skyline

Buildings range from substantial single storey retail sheds to three storey former warehouses. There are also two and a half storey residential properties on the main streets. The average buildings are around two storeys in height. Substantial buildings such as that illustrated demonstrate the potential of the area to accommodate higher density uses.



Former warehouse

## 6 Massing and Roofscape

There are a range of building types reflecting the mixed uses in the area. Retail sheds and car showrooms can be found alongside traditional buildings of two to three storeys. The basic forms of development that can be found and that should form the basis of new development are mainly terraced or semi-detached forms with a gable roof and some former industrial and warehouse buildings over three storeys, with a gable presented to the street.



Traditional forms with later uses and building types

## 7 Materials and Details

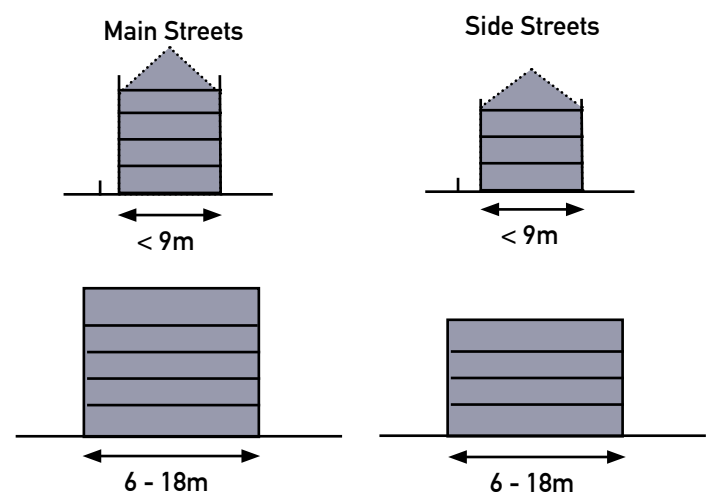
There are good examples of quality traditional buildings with either brick details, such as dentil courses and stone banding. There are also buildings with high quality stone details such as headers and footers above and below windows. Other than in the case of modern buildings windows are generally vertical in their proportions.



Decorative detailing and traditional window forms

## Form Based Design Guidance

Main street frontages should not exceed three storeys in height, although four storeys may be accommodated depending on the topography. In other areas street facing buildings should be at least two storeys in height, providing continuity and enclosure. Frontages should be close to the edge of the pavement, with a small forecourt with a suitable boundary treatment if required. Parking should be accommodated to the rear or within the plot but not on the forecourt.



## 1 Landscape and Topography

There is a gently undulating landscape around Melton Mowbray and in the main roads and streets cross the contours or curve to accommodate changes in topography. The northern suburbs benefit from the presence of the Melton Country Park providing recreation, habitats, flood and water management, and walking and cycling routes. Elsewhere there are sporadic parks and greenspaces alongside private gardens. To the south there are fewer public parks or greenspaces.



Curved street crossing the contours

## 2 Space and Movement

The layout of the suburbs to north has been in layers of growth outwards with a predominance of cul-de-sacs. These are often disconnected from adjoining developments, with no pedestrian access and a combination of private shared drives and fences employed to prevent these connections being made. There are examples of good quality suburban housing and to the south there is more evidence of planned layouts with better connectivity and less areas of extensive cul-de-sacs.



Disconnected pedestrian environment

## 3 Grain and Density

Most buildings are set back from the street and have traditionally had a front garden with either a hedge or a wall as a boundary. These boundaries have often been lost and this has had a harmful effect on the street scene. Later twentieth century development is characterised as open plan, with no boundaries, although this is not considered to be a positive form of development for the future. The suburbs are predominantly medium to low density in character, with some pockets of higher densities close to the Town Centre, within the inner suburbs.



Higher density inner suburbs

## 4 Past and Current Uses

The suburbs are in the main the first wave of development dating from the 20th Century. Predominantly residential, there are a small number of office buildings and industrial facilities. There are some retail premises in the area and local services such as schools, community and sporting facilities. Retail is accommodated in shopping parades, are often set-back from the road behind a car park. There have been some recent adaptations of housing to provide shops.



Historic building pre-dating the suburban growth of Melton Mowbray



## 5 Heights and Skyline

Buildings are typically two storeys with some later two and a half storey houses, although these are rare and not representative of the best quality in the area. Hipped roofs are a common feature, particularly on semi-detached houses and at the end of terraces. Projecting gables are a rare feature, and almost always buildings present and eaves line to the street. Bungalows often occur alongside the main roads, generally constructed in earlier phases of development.



Typical two storey forms

## 6 Massing and Roofscape

There are three main building types that represent the best of suburban development in the area. There are simple gabled or hipped roof forms in both two storey houses and bungalows, alongside L-shaped forms with a prominent gable to the frontage. Whilst other forms exist, with non-functional penetrating gables, for example, these are not considered to be the best precedent for locally distinctive design approaches.



High quality suburban development - L shaped with a hipped roof

## 7 Materials and Details

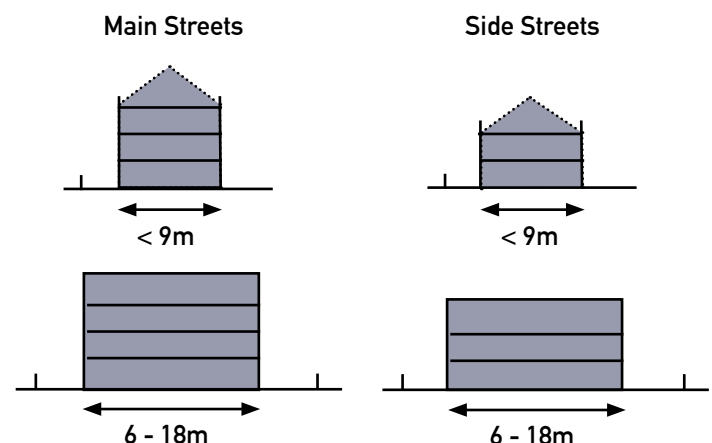
There are a wide variety of window types and proportions that can be found. Many of these are a product of the style of housing at a particular time whether this be early to mid twentieth century or later. Bay windows are a common feature in some areas and phases of development, often the best examples being double height. The main materials used are brick and render, with interlocking tiles often used for roofing. Render is used for upper storeys in the main, usually above brick.



Materials and details in the Melton Mowbray Suburbs

## Form Based Design Guidance

Buildings are to be no taller than two storeys in height, apart from exceptional cases, usually on main streets, where three may be appropriate. Roofs may be pitched or flat with a suitable parapet. Dormer windows are not permitted unless the building is a bungalow. On main streets consider providing a flexible ground floor to allow adaptation in the future. Buildings may be built directly against the pavement edge or with a front garden and suitable boundary treatment.



## 1 Landscape and Topography

The north of the Borough of Melton is characterised by scattered villages in an undulating landscape. These settlements nestle into the landscape with streets and buildings often following the contours or gently curving to cross them. Within the villages there is often evidence of former estate boundaries and relics of past in terms boundaries, ponds, greenspaces and trees. On the edge of villages there are often wide verges. Trees are often a feature of the street in gardens and open spaces.



Topography with change of materials, limited to the length of one plot

## 2 Space and Movement

The street patterns within the Northern Villages are mainly a combination of a main street that passes through the village with a series of side streets and lanes that frame views of the landscape beyond. On the main streets buildings are often built against the edge of the pavement and some will have a ground floor use, such as retail, or evidence of this former use.



Street hierarchy in Waltham on the Wolds (Google Maps)

## 3 Grain and Density

Many properties have either a wall or hedge as a boundary and a front garden, however on corners or the case of shops and village cores buildings directly edge the pavement. This is usually in the case with L shaped buildings where often gable or the return is adjacent to the pavement. Plots are varied in terms of size, giving rise to a variety of densities within a particular settlement ranging from substantial detached properties in extensive grounds to modest cottages in narrow plots.



A variety of orientations, boundary treatments and plot sizes

## 4 Past and Current Uses

Many of the Northern Villages have an agricultural origin with later overlays of estate and hunting heritage and a predominantly residential role in recent years. There is evidence of local shops and services being more prevalent than of present, with some units lost, in decline, or in some cases the opening up of new facilities in new or existing buildings.



Retail unit, recently converted to residential use



## 5 Heights and Skyline

Buildings are generally two storeys in height, with the occasional three storey buildings on main streets and village centres. There are very few dormer windows, and where these do occur they are on single storey buildings. In general, in the village core terraced forms tend to predominate with the occasional detached property. Many villages have evidence of later development, often suburban in layout and style and comprising of semi-detached and detached properties.



A rare three storey building (Stathern Rectory)

## 6 Massing and Roofscape

There are three main building types that can be identified. Simple gable forms, either detached, semi-detached or in a terrace are common. In addition there is a similar, but perpendicular form, that has an entrance onto the street. L-shaped forms also occur as a hybrid type, where the returning gable always adjoins the street directly on at least one face. Chimneys are common feature often set into the end gables.



A combination of rooflines and orientations in Bottesford

## 7 Materials and Details

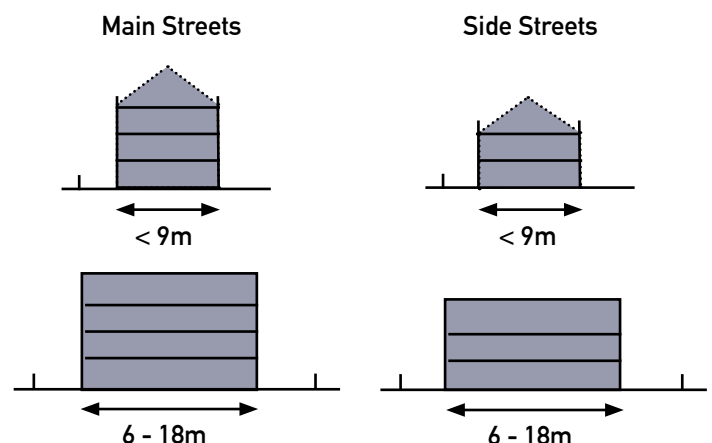
There are large numbers of ironstone buildings, with courses or varying depth. Brick is also found as the main material and on upper storeys above stone. Brick is often used alongside stone headers and footers to form openings in both brick and stone buildings. Render is rarely used. Slate or tile roofs are common. Window proportions are generally vertical in proportion with a suitable header and footer detail. These are usually a lintel or segmental brick, often gently arched.



Materials and details in the Northern Villages

## Form Based Design Guidance

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## 1 Landscape and Topography

The surrounding landscape of many of the villages is multi-layered showing evidence of rig and furrow agriculture, overlayed by later designed landscapes associated with the country estates. Buildings and landscapes that facilitated country sports have had a significant influence on the character of the villages. There are many streams, brooks and areas of standing water in an around the villages to the south of the Borough. Ponds are common, including horse wash ponds.



Horse wash pond Somerby

## 2 Space and Movement

Villages are mainly linear with a legible historic street pattern of main streets, secondary streets and lanes. Often interconnected and responding to the topography by following the contours and revealing glimpses of the countryside beyond, the street patterns and layouts are locally distinctive. Main streets, as the primary access through the village, are often enclosed by frontages in the village centre, with buildings set back from the road on the edges.



Buildings set back from the road on the village edge (Great Dalby).

## 3 Grain and Density

There are a variety of frontage treatments with many properties having either a wall or hedge as a boundary and a front garden. There are occasional locally distinctive dry herringbone pattern brick walls as a boundary treatment. Often on corners or interspersed with other buildings some buildings directly edge the pavement. This is the case with L shaped buildings where often gable or the return is adjacent to the pavement. Railings are an occasional feature. Some L shaped buildings may be used to create corner voids in the street scene, although this is a rare feature.



L-shape and corner void (Asfordby).

## 4 Past and Current Uses

Many of the Southern villages have a dual agricultural and country sporting heritage. In the past they have supported more local services and retail. On the main streets, buildings are often built against the edge of the pavement and some will have a ground floor use, such as retail, or evidence of this former use. Currently many of the Southern Villages have primarily residential function. Some villages have an industrial heritage reflected in the building types, architecture and former uses.



Restaurant use in a more urban style building (Asfordby)

## 5 Heights and Skyline

Buildings are generally two storeys in height, with the occasional three storey buildings on main streets. There are very some dormer windows but in the main these are limited to single storey buildings. Three storey buildings are often not much taller than their neighbouring two storey neighbours. In general, in the village core, terraced forms tend to predominate with the occasional detached property. Many villages have evidence of later two storey suburban development.



Modest three storey building alongside a two storey one (Kirby Bellars)

## 6 Massing and Roofscape

There are a number of late Victorian buildings that have had an influence over the style in terms of scale, massing detailing and frontage treatment. Overall there are three main building types including simple gabled forms, dormer bungalows and L-shaped buildings with at least one elevation directly touching the back of the pavement.



Gabled form perpendicular to the street (Great Dalby)

## 7 Materials and Details

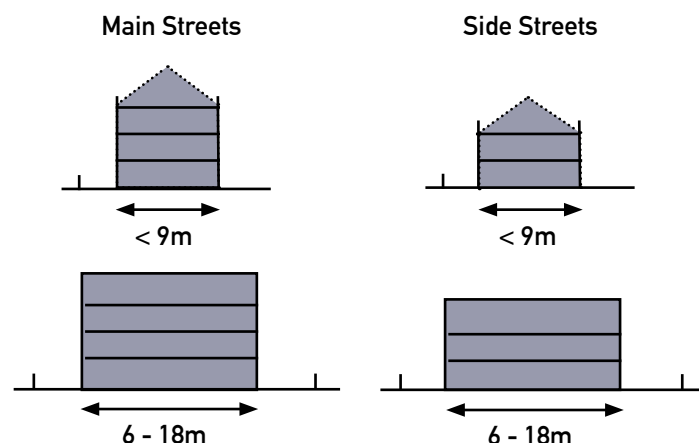
There is a greater proportion of brick and render buildings in this area than in the northern villages, however ironstone is still a common material. Slates and tiles are both found as roofing materials, alongside the occasional use of thatch. Window proportions are generally vertical in proportion with a suitable header and footer detail. There are a number of distinctive timber frame buildings with either brick or render infill often with wider window openings than in masonry construction.



Materials and details in the Southern Villages

## Form Based Design Guidance

Buildings are to be no taller than two storeys in height, apart from exceptional cases, usually on main streets, where three may be appropriate. Roofs may be pitched or flat with a suitable parapet. Dormer windows are not permitted unless the building is a bungalow. On main streets consider providing a flexible ground floor to allow adaptation in the future. Buildings may be built directly against the pavement edge or with a front garden and suitable boundary treatment.





## Working With Nature

- ☐ Have habitats for wildlife been incorporated into the proposed development, for example swift bricks, bat boxes or habitat walls?
- ☐ For developments of over 11 units or 1000m<sup>2</sup> floor space will one Priority Habitat be created or enhanced as a result of the new development?
- ☐ Have the fences and boundaries been designed to allow the migration and movement of wildlife?
- ☐ Have existing trees, hedgerows and unimproved grasslands been preserved?

## Making Room for Water

- ☐ Will SUDs be incorporated into the proposed development and will this provide a habitat opportunity?\*
- ☐ Does the proposed development have a green roof where this is feasible and can be accommodated within the local context?
- ☐ Will water butts and / or rainwater harvesting be used?
- ☐ If the proposed development is adjoining a watercourse has this been revealed and will buildings and hard landscaping be more than 10m from the edge of the channel?

## Positive Public Spaces

- ☐ Have public spaces been designed to be multi-functional?
- ☐ On main streets will seating, shelter, recycling and waste bins be provided at regular intervals of more than 400m apart?
- ☐ Have native trees of local provenance been incorporated into the design of the highway and / or public spaces?
- ☐ Will all public spaces be overlooked and have adjoining active frontages?
- ☐ Has the scheme been designed to be easily and safely maintained and is there a management plan in place?

- ☐ Have green wedges and open spaces been provided for visual relief between built up areas?

## Accessible and Legible Streets

- ☐ Has the proposed development been designed to have a hierarchy of streets to aid legibility, wayfinding and navigation?
- ☐ Have landmarks and landmark buildings been located in a way that aids legibility?
- ☐ Will the proposed development have a permeable network of walkable streets with natural surveillance over them?

- ☐ Has sufficient car parking been provided on plot and has this been designed so as not to dominate the street scene?

- ☐ Has tandem parking been limited to visitor spaces only?

## Locally Distinctive Places

- ☐ Has the proposed development been designed to be a good fit with the local context and based in a thorough site analysis?

- ☐ Will the proposed materials and detailing be truthful?

- ☐ Does the design reflect the local distinctiveness of the area and have the Character Notes informed the design?

## Adaptable and Resilient Buildings

- ☐ Have dormer bungalows and ground floor flats been designed to accommodate the needs of those with limited mobility in the future?

- ☐ Has the life-cycle cost, durability and embodied energy of the building materials been considered?

- ☐ Has energy efficiency, renewable energy and passive design been employed within the proposed development?

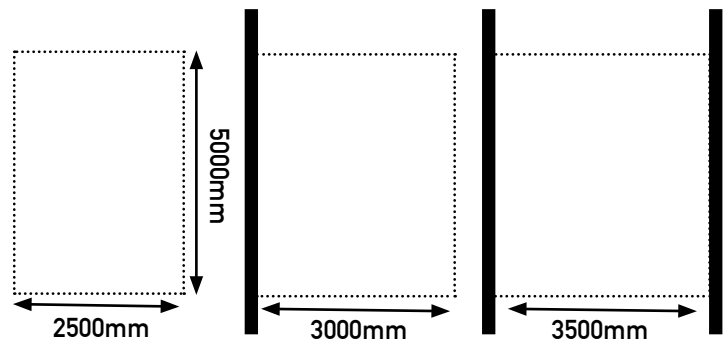
- ☐ On main streets, adjacent to or within an existing or proposed local centre or central location, will the ground floor be flexible to allow for conversion from residential use in the future?



# Residential Car Parking Guidance

## Dimensions

For each car parking space the standards illustrated constitute the minimum requirements. These may need to be increased to accommodate electric vehicle charging provision. Lifetime Homes requirements will potentially increase these dimensions. It is also important to ensure that parking provision at the side of properties allows for the passage of bins and a cyclist pushing a bike, for example. Garages must not be counted as car parking spaces.



Parking space dimensions with no boundary, one boundary and two

## Unallocated Parking

In addition to parking that will naturally occur in the highway (subject to safety considerations) additional spaces should be provided to allow for visitors and tradespeople. These spaces must be unallocated, benefit from natural surveillance and be landscaped so that parking does not dominate the street scene. Depending on space and street design these spaces may be parallel to the highway, at right angles or around a square or public space.



Parking accommodated between trees (CC Northeastern University)

## Parking Courts

For the purposes of this guidance, parking courts are not recommended as they are often not used in favour of parking at the front which is perceived to be more convenient and often better overlooked. They are often poorly overlooked from the properties they serve, leading to perceived and actual security concerns. A lack of perceived ownership of the space can lead to use for rubbish storage and there is a need for additional lighting and security surveillance.



Parking courts are usually unsuccessful spaces




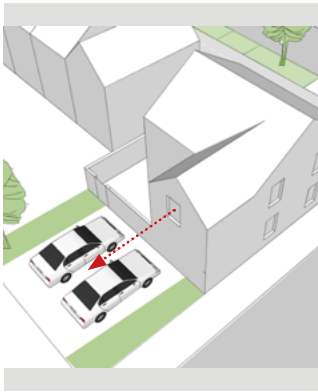
## Electric Vehicle Charging

Electric vehicle charging points are increasingly being accommodated in new development. The location of these and the configuration of the car parking to facilitate convenient charging needs to be carefully considered. In common with all of the configurations detailed overleaf, landscaping prevents vehicle parking dominating the street scene.



EV charging

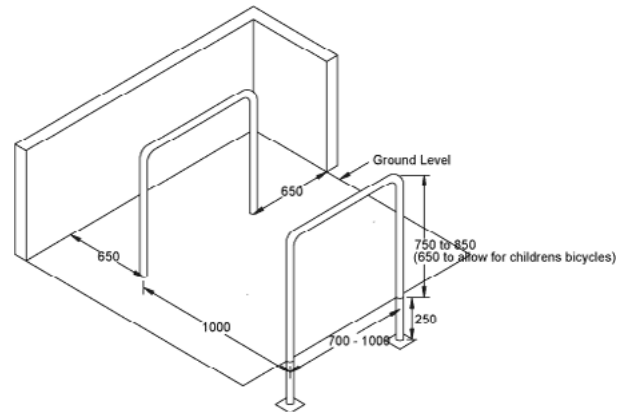
# Residential Car Parking Guidance

Format	Advantages	Disadvantages	Recommendations
<b>Mixed on Plot</b> 	Provides a flexible solution with potential parking space for visitors on plot.	Frontage element may dominate the street scene and additional space may encourage greater car ownership and problems with stacking if anticipated numbers of cars are exceeded.	Landscaping and a suitable boundary to provide screening.
<b>In Front</b> 	Provides on-plot parking where there is insufficient space for parking at the side.	The frontage may be dominated by car parking. In narrower plots access to the front door may be compromised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Landscaping and a suitable boundary to provide screening.</li> <li>•Ensure access for all.</li> </ul>
<b>Tandem (Side)</b> 	Allows room for a front garden and partially obscures the parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tandem driveways can be less convenient as cars may need to be swapped around. This can sometimes lead to cars being left on the street.</li> <li>• Parking can take up space that could be used for bin storage or garden access.</li> </ul>	<b>This approach is not recommended and must be considered a last resort.</b>
<b>Rear on Plot</b> 	When other options have been exhausted this allows for frontages that cannot be accessed by cars from the highway. This may include in local centres, adjoining cycle lanes or where the building faces a footpath.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can reduce street activity as back doors become more convenient for bringing in shopping etc.</li> <li>• Security can be an issue</li> </ul>	Provide suitable lighting and ensure that there is natural surveillance from adjoining properties.



## Dimensions

The diagram illustrates the minimum spatial requirements for bicycle parking utilising a Sheffield hoop. This represents a basic provision of cycle parking that should be enhanced through the measures outlined below and appropriate to the development type proposed. Electric bicycle charging should be provided in commercial developments to encourage cycling to work over greater distances, and provision in residential development is encouraged.



Cycle parking dimensions (Leicestershire County Council)

## Location

Cycle parking for visitors should be close to the main entrance of the building. Cycle parking for commercial buildings should be convenient, covered and secure in a location that allows easy access to the building and staff changing facilities. In residential developments consider the location of covered secure cycle parking that will meet the needs of the occupants commensurate with the size of the house. This is particularly important where no garage is proposed



Covered cycle parking close to the building entrance

## Form and Shelter

Cycle storage is an opportunity to create additional habitat opportunities and reduce surface water run-off. Storage can be combined with structures to accommodate waste and recycling in locations outlined under the residential design guidance, subject to appropriate spatial and separation measures. Ensure that outdoor cycle storage is secure, benefits from overlooking from the building and that cycles are invisible from the public realm, reducing theft and damage.



Green roof on cycle storage within a secure courtyard

## Charging Points

Charging for electric cycles can be integrated with charging and storage that would be suitable for mobility scooters if planned for early in the design stage. This is an important consideration in new housing that does not have a garage.

# Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

## Solar Energy

Solar energy can be harvested using photovoltaic panels (PV), solar roof tiles and hot water collection systems. New developments are an ideal opportunity to install renewables, and this should be considered at the outset as part of the energy strategy and building design. Solar panels are best located with a southerly aspect and should be designed to be part of a harmonious composition within the roofline. Green roofs do not necessarily preclude the installation of solar PV panels.



Solar PV installation that works with the building design

## Ground Source Heat Pumps

Ground and water sourced heat pumps are a mature technology that can be easily incorporated in new development. Using either an extensive area of open ground or boreholes, these heat pumps are highly efficient. Bear in mind the need to design for lower temperature space heating, with underfloor systems being favoured. Water bodies can be used as the source of a consistent temperature to base the system on, as depicted.



Heat pump array prior to installation

## Air Source Heat Pumps

Air sourced heat pumps are becoming increasingly popular as a low carbon heat source. Where these are installed consideration must be given to the noise generated through their operation in relationship to neighbouring properties. Similar to ground sourced heat pumps the design of the heating system needs to be considered at an early stage, alongside thermal storage provision. The above technologies contribute to compliance with Policy EN9 of the Melton Local Plan.



Consider noise and neighbouring properties when using heat pumps

## Summer Cooling

Indoor overheating is becoming an increasing concern in summer and mechanical means of cooling are energy intensive. Additionally, the use of air conditioning can make problems worse for others by increasing localised temperatures and through noise, discouraging natural ventilation. Consider centralised cooling in more dense developments, such as apartments, and ensure that landscaping such as SuDS, trees and greenspaces contribute to summer cooling.



Green roofs and water providing summer cooling (Susdrain)



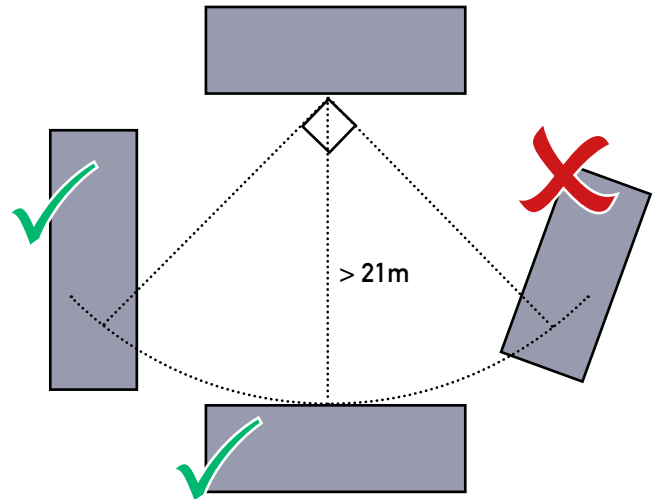
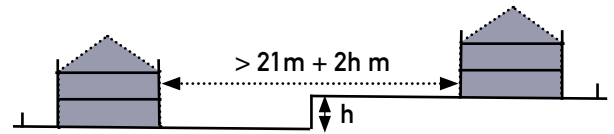
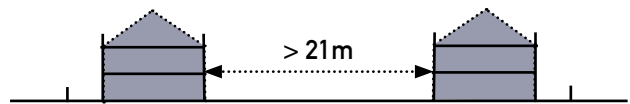
# Residential Separation Distances

## Basic Dimensions

New housing developments should ensure a layout and design that provides high standards of privacy and outlook for both existing and proposed residents. Proposals should avoid the following in order to encourage high levels of amenity and privacy:

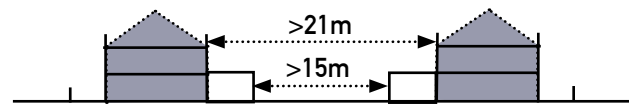
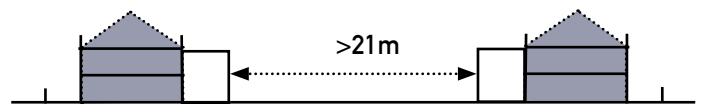
- Siting new dwellings close to existing properties such that overlooking of existing windows and gardens occurs, significantly reducing existing levels of amenity.
- Significant overbearing impacts on existing properties and their private amenity space.
- The intensification of vehicular and pedestrian activity close to the boundary with existing residential properties or their gardens.

The minimum back to back distance between habitable rooms should be 21 metres where dwellings are of the same number of storeys. Where dwellings differ in scale or finished floor level by a metre or greater the back to back distance should be increased in separation by 2 metres for each additional 1 metre of elevation.



## Extensions

Where a minimum separation distance exists the ability of future occupiers to adapt and extend properties will as a result be restricted. However single storey extensions may well be feasible where adequate private garden space is retained. A separation distance of 21 metres will be expected at first floor level however where sufficient garden space remains a single storey extension to each opposing property is feasible which would retain 15 metres of separation.



Note: this guidance does not include permitted development

## 45 Degree Check

This will be taken from the nearest front or rear window at ground floor level which would be affected by the development. The window must be the main source of light to a habitable room. Habitable rooms include kitchens, living rooms, dining rooms and bedrooms. This ensures that no new development above single storey in height crosses a line taken at a 45 degree angle from the midpoint of the nearest habitable room window of an adjoining or adjacent neighbouring dwelling.

