



Supplementary Planning Guidance in Sefton

Design Part 2: Site design, layout and access

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1. Introduction

a) Part 2 of this guidance note provides more advice on the design requirements set out in the draft UDP DQ1 and the design aspects of the Part 1 draft policy CS3. It sets out the principles on which the site design, layout and access will be assessed. It will help you to assess your existing site, and design a proposed layout accordingly. Part 4 of this guidance note may also be helpful.

b) Design Guidance Notes (Landscape) provide more information on the technical issues of site design.

c) Information of the design of individual buildings and structures is given in Parts 3 and 4 of this guidance note. Part 4 of this Design SPG gives more information on sustainability, including EcoHomes and 'Lifetime Homes'.

d) Detailed advice on the design of housing developments is given in a separate supplementary planning guidance note 'New residential developments'.

e) Some of the technical terms in this guidance are explained in a glossary at the back of this guidance note. These terms are indicated by a **e**, the first time they appear in each section of the guidance note.

2. General

a) Your proposed development should make best use of the positive features of your site and contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

b) Part 1 of this guidance note looks at the relationship between proposals and their locations. Part 2 explains the issues you should take account for the design of your development to fit within a given site and its surrounding area.

c) Your design should show that you understand the site's characteristics and show that these have been incorporated where feasible into the layout and detailed design of buildings, roads, structures and spaces on the site.

d) In most cases careful appraisal of the development site is necessary to help the design process. This is explained in Section 5.

3. Design requirements

a) Your designs should reinforce the desirable character **e** of the area, by keeping and incorporating existing features and patterns (such as street layouts, surrounding developments, established building lines, plot sizes, boundary walls, fencing, hedging and landscapes). Part 1 of this SPG gives further guidance on this issue.

4. Criteria for the design of your site

General layout

a) Buildings should face on to streets, squares or parks to avoid inward-looking development.

b) Public spaces and routes should be clearly defined, and there should be clear distinction between private and public areas.

c) The layout of buildings and the open spaces around them should have adequate outdoor amenity and service areas for occupants, bearing in mind the type of use and size of your development. Consider the design of outdoor areas at the start of the development process. These areas should be designed to be usable. Attention should also be paid to good quality materials (including planting), detailing and finishes, shading, ease of maintenance and safety and security.

d) The arrangement of buildings, spaces around buildings, and the site layout in general should promote safety and security and avoid the risk of misuse, vandalism and potential crime. For this reason we will discourage cul-de-sacs. The rear gardens of houses should not back onto side roads or footpaths. (Any back entrances should have secure gates, or 'tunnelled' access from the front). Where delivery or service areas are at the back of commercial properties, these should have secure gates and additional security if appropriate. The government's good practice guide 'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention' Home Office/ODPM 2004 may provide helpful information for you.

c) Facilities for storing waste, service areas and outdoor storage must be carefully designed and form part of the overall development. The waste storage area should be large enough to store different sorts of waste separately, to help recycling (for example glass, paper, other waste). Waste storage areas should not create dark recessed areas



which could encourage misuse, vandalism and potential crime.

Orientation⁶ of buildings

f) The arrangement of buildings should promote privacy both within the site and in relation to neighbouring sites and avoid overlooking and overshadowing. However, for houses at least one habitable room (a room that people are in for long periods, such as living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, bedrooms, conservatories, studies and play rooms) should have a window looking out to public areas. For commercial developments the main activity and any public entrances should face the road. Door and windows overlooking public areas can help reduce crime and fear of crime.

g) Layouts should help to save energy by making sure buildings make the best use of heat from the sun and are screened from winds. Where possible roads should run east to west, so that the main windows of buildings face south or within 30 degrees of south. North-south roads should be avoided.

Drainage

h) We welcome designs which control the amount of surface water run-off through features such as permeable surface materials and on-site storage of at least some of this run-off (in ponds, or other specially designed containers – even in water butts for houses). Drainage advice is given in the Merseyside-wide supplementary planning guidance 'Sustainable drainage systems in Merseyside' and the Design Guidance Notes (Landscape) sheets 5.1 to 5.4.

Access

i) Access to the site (roads, footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways) and parking should be designed to promote ease of movement for users, including those with disabilities. Access to and within the site and should provide safe, attractive and easy access for occupants and visitors. Priority should be given to people who are on foot and to people with disabilities. More detailed information of this is given in the Ensuring a Choice of Travel guidance note.

Views

j) The arrangement and design of buildings and structures on the site should make best use of views to and from the site, as well as views within the site. You must carefully consider the effect your development has on the street scene and surrounding area. You should also make the most

of opportunities to add interest to the local environment. Your proposed development should take account of views from its surroundings, and should, as far as possible, avoid being intrusive.

k) Designs should respond positively to surrounding environments such as the coastline, or canalside areas, open spaces, town squares or skylines. Make the most of focal points by framing and screening views, and reinforcing important views or landmarks.

Landform

l) Use existing and proposed levels of land, and appropriate choice and use of trees and shrubs to integrate the development within its site. This should emphasise desirable aspects of the development, or soften its effect where necessary. For instance, buildings should, where possible, follow slope contours to reduce the need to cut into or fill land.

Landscape and habitats

m) Where possible you should incorporate existing landscape features and wildlife habitats into your design, as well as creating new features and habitats. Advice on dealing with trees in development is given in the supplementary planning guidance note 'Trees and development'. You can get advice on creating and managing habitats, local plans and incentives, from the Environmental Advisory Service (see Useful contacts).

Materials

n) The hard and soft materials⁶ you use should be appropriate to the overall design, context⁶ and purpose of your development. They must be used in line with accepted standards of good practice. More guidance is given in the Design Guidance Sheets (Landscape), and in Part 4 of this guidance note.

o) The type and choice of materials in your design can have an impact on the environment. Re-use of brick, stone, slate, timber and recycled plastic reduces the amount of waste and the cost of new materials. The re-use of materials on site is best.

p) Your design should show that you have a realistic understanding of the level of maintenance you expect for the materials you have chosen



Lighting and signage

q) You should integrate lighting into the design to increase security and safety. Take care to avoid light pollution and intrusion in surrounding areas. Where closed circuit television cameras (CCTV) are needed for security and safety these should also be integrated into the design. More information is given in Part 4: Sustainability and EcoHomes.

5. Site appraisal

a) According to Section 2 of draft UDP policy DQ1 you must carry out a site appraisal. This is a survey and evaluation of the existing characteristics of a site and its surroundings.

b) The appraisal will help you to identify the limitations and opportunities of your site at an early stage. You should regard it as the starting point of the design process. The appraisal will help you to develop a scheme which uses your site's positive features, and will identify features worth keeping.

c) The appraisal needs to be tailored to the size and type of your proposed development. It will need to deal with two main aspects – the site in relation to its surrounding area (its context⁶) and also the characteristics of the site itself. The main issues the appraisals should deal with are listed in the next 2 sections. You must decide which requirements are most relevant to you, the level of detail you need to provide and the best way to present the information to us.

d) You may need to support the site the appraisal with detailed surveys of specific topics (for example, level surveys, ground condition surveys, archaeological surveys, tree surveys and habitat surveys) depending on your site and the type of development you are proposing. More advice on specialist surveys is given at the end of Part 2.

The site in context⁶

e) Describe and assess the relationship of the site to its surroundings. To do this you should make reference to;

(i) Buildings, structures and spaces: Identify the existing types of buildings and structures, including types of boundary walls or fences and paved surfaces. Assess the relationship buildings have to streets, open spaces, and established building lines, detailing general

architectural and landscape characteristics, (including the size, form⁶, features and vegetation as well as important details such as lighting, signs, paving and street furniture). Identify any features of particular historic significance which may affect your plans.

(ii) Land use: Describe surrounding land uses and assess implications of types of use, layout, density for site development. Ensure any potentially contaminative uses or other local sources of pollution are identified and their implications assessed.

(iii) Transport and access:

Evaluate existing patterns of movement and circulation around and adjacent to the site. Assess the effectiveness and opportunities of pedestrian, cycle, vehicular or other forms of access; identify constraints and opportunities of important routes, junctions, landmarks and gateways.

(iv) Views: Describe existing and potential views to and from the site, both good and bad. Identify which views should be emphasised, detailing prominent aspects and prospects.

The site itself

f) Describe and assess the nature of the site itself and how this affects the development proposal. You should make reference to the following;

(i) Landform: Describe the existing topography (levels, slope and contours) and significant site features such as retaining walls, water features, and the sites relationship with adjacent areas.

(ii) Ground conditions: Identify any possible constraints on development due to existing or previous development, bearing capacity⁶ and site drainage. Archaeological surveys may be required on sites noted in the Sefton Sites and Monuments Record.

(iii) Landscape/Ecology: Describe the extent, type and location of existing vegetation - trees, shrubs, hedgerows, grassland waterbodies, landscaped areas and invasive species such as Japanese knotweed. Full tree and/or habitat surveys may be required depending on the type and location of site. Identify features to be retained.

(iv) Buildings and structures: Describe the size, type and location of any buildings and structures on site identifying those to be removed or retained. Where



buildings are to be extended, accurate plan and elevation surveys will be needed to show how the extension relates to the existing building. Where the proposal is largely the conversion of existing buildings, it is expected that the proposal will be based on accurate measurements from a survey of the buildings to be converted.

(v) Local climatic influences: Identify best orientation⁶ for sunlight and to give protection from the wind.

(vi) Existing services: Identify any constraints on development due to existing services. For example, public or utility companies may have a right of way over the site or may need to be consulted during the planting of deep rooted trees or shrubs.

6. Specialist Surveys

It is strongly recommend that specialist professional advice is sought where proposals depend on accurate information about site levels, ground conditions, transportation issues, existing buildings and the like.

Early discussion with the Planning and Economic Regeneration Department is also advisable in order to identify or confirm the need for other types of survey such as trees, habitats, and archaeology. The Planning and Economic Regeneration Department may hold information, or be able to direct applicants to sources of information which will be of help in the process of site appraisal.

In some instances, for instance larger or particularly sensitive scheme an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) may be required. You should discuss the need for an EIA with the planning officers. The requirement for EIA is governed by national guidelines for particular types of development.



Glossary

Bearing capacity: The amount (weight) of development that a particular piece of land or ground can support.

Character: See Local Character.

Context: The wider setting of a site or area, including factors such as traffic, activities and land uses as well as landscape and built form.

Form: The layout (urban grain), scale (height and massing), appearance (materials and detail) and landscape of the development, its individual parts and their relationship with neighbouring buildings, adjacent open areas and the local context.

Hard and soft materials: This includes both 'hard' building materials such as bricks, tiles, slates and fencing and 'soft' landscaping such as trees, shrubs and grass.

Layout: How a development or area is set out, as seen from above. There are many different ways development can be laid out (just as there are many ways of laying a table!). So 'road layout' is the way roads look, as seen from above, 'building layout' is the way buildings are set out within a site or along roads, and 'site layout' is where things like buildings, parking area and paths are within a site, for example.

Local Character: The overall atmosphere and 'feel' of a place or area, the things which give it an identity, make it different from (or similar to) anywhere else and make it what it is.

Orientation: The direction in which buildings face, including their relationship to the wider context, for example, surrounding buildings, prevailing winds and the path of the sun.

Sustainability: See Sustainable development.

Sustainable development: Development that helps to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. A sustainable development:

- means **everyone** has the opportunity to use it
- is easy and safe to use
- looks nice/attractive
- encourages investment in the area
- (means jobs are gained not lost)

- reduces the need to use up natural resources
- (including petrol, stone and energy)
- protects trees, other plants, animals & where they live
- improves the environment
- generally makes things better!

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



Further advice and guidance

National design guidance:

'Better Places to Live - A Companion Guide to PPG3', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'Building In Context', available from English Heritage and the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System - Towards Better Practice', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'Design Review', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'PPG1: General Policy and Principles', available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

'The Urban Design Compendium', available from English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation.

'The Value of Urban Design', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention', available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or the Home Office.

Other relevant supplementary planning guidance we have produced:

- Archaeology
- Providing a choice of travel
- House extensions
- Landscape character
- New housing development
- Sustainable drainage systems
- Trees and development

Sefton MBC information notes:

- Renewable Energy information note
- Landscape design guidance sheets

Useful contacts

Planning & Economic Regeneration Department

(For Bootle, Waterloo, Crosby, Hightown, Maghull and Melling)

Planning Department,
Development Control South,
Balliol House,
Balliol Rd,
Bootle,
L20 3RY

Tel: (0151) 934 3572

Fax: (0151) 934 3587

E-mail: planning.department@planning.sefton.gov.uk

(For Southport, Formby, and Ince Blundell)

Planning Department,
Development Control North,
9/11 Eastbank Street,
Southport,
PR8 1DL

Tel: (0151) 934 2206

Fax: (0151) 934 2212

E-mail: planning.dcnorth@planning.sefton.gov.uk

Community Safety Section

Chief Executives Department,
Connolly House
47, Balliol Road,
Bootle
L20 3AA

Tel: (0151) 934 4466

Email: David.Fenney@chief-executives.sefton.gov.uk



Environmental Advisory Service

Bryant House,
Liverpool Rd North,
Maghull,
Merseyside,
L31 2PA
Tel: (0151) 934 4950
Fax: (0151) 934 4955
E-mail: Alan.Jemmett@eas.sefton.gov.uk

ACPO Crime Prevention Initiatives Ltd

7th Floor
25 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EX
Phone: 0207 227 3423
Fax: 0207 227 3400/01
E-mail: acpocpi@acpo.pnn.police.uk
Website: www.securedbydesign.com

Building Research Establishment

Garston
Watford
WD25 9XX
Phone: 01923 664462
Fax: 01923 664103
E-mail: ecohomes@bre.co.uk
Website: www.bre.co.uk

Commission for Architecture and The Built Environment (CABE)

Tower Building
11 York Road
London
SE1 7NX
Phone: 020 7960 2400
Website: www.cabe.org.uk

English Heritage (North West)

Suites 3.3 and 3.4
Canada House
3 Chepstow Street
Manchester
M1 5FW
Phone: 0161 242 1400
Fax: 0161 242 1401
Website: www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Partnerships (North West)

Arpley House
110 Birchwood Boulevard
Birchwood
Warrington
WA3 7QH
Phone: 01925 651144
Fax: 01925 411493
Website: www.englishpartnerships.co.uk

Housing Corporation

Maple House
149 Tottenham Court Road
London
W1T 7BN
Phone: 020 7393 2000
Fax: 020 7393 2111
Email: enquiries@housingcorp.gsx.gov.uk
Website: www.housingcorp.gov.uk

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Phone: 020 7944 3000
Website: www.odpm.gov.uk



APPENDIX 1

Statement of public consultation

a) The Planning Committee approved a draft 'Design' planning guidance note for feedback and to help it make decisions about planning applications on 5 June 2002. It was placed on our website later that year.

b) The guidance was discussed at the meeting of the Sefton Agents' Forum which was held in April 2003. Few comments or questions were raised during the meeting.

c) We consulted interested organisations in July 2003. In total, we sent over 600 letters to local agents, developers, housebuilders and other interested groups (such as parish councils). We then consulted with the general public in September and October 2003. We placed adverts in the local press and the guidance was available in the two planning offices and at four main public libraries (the main library at Bootle was closed for repair in 2003).

d) Our consultation procedure is in line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 'Development Plans' (PPG12) which stresses the importance of consulting widely if we and the Secretary of State are to rely on Supplementary planning guidance notes to help make decisions about planning applications.

e) We received a number of comments about the guidance from Formby Civic Society, Merseyside Civic Society, Government Office North West, Hitchcock and Wright and United Utilities. The table over the page summarises the comments we received, and our responses.

f) We consulted Plain English Campaign on the guidance to help make its wording clearer.

g) We revised the guidance to take account of the comments received during the consultation process, changes proposed to the draft plan, to correct mistakes in the guidance and to make the wording clearer in line with Plain English Campaign's suggestions.

h) We reported the results of the consultation process to the Planning Committee on 17 December 2003. The 'Design' guidance note, including a new Sustainability checklist in Part 4, was adopted on 17 December 2003.

i) On 25 August 2004 the Planning Committee approved draft revisions to Part 2 of the 'Design' planning guidance note, 'Site design, layout and access', for feedback and to help it make decisions about planning applications. The

draft revisions were mostly about safety and security issues and sustainable development issues.

j) We consulted the general public and interested organisations in August and September 2004. In total, we sent 600 letters to local agents, housebuilders and registered social landlords and other interested groups (such as parish councils). We placed adverts in the local press and the guidance was available in the two planning offices and on our website.

k) We received comments about the guidance from Mr Cowell, Secondsite Property Holdings and Government Office North West. The table over the page summarises the comments we received, and our responses.

l) We revised the guidance note to take account of the comments received during the consultation process, and made some other changes.

m) We reported the results of the consultation process to the Planning Committee on 22 September 2004. The revised Part 2 of the 'Design' guidance note was adopted on 22 September 2004.



Table – summarising comments received and our responses

Person or Organisation commenting	Summary of comment	Summary of our response
General comments about all Supplementary planning guidance notes		
Formby Civic Society	Write to support all of the SPGs.	We made a note of this support.
Design Extensions Supplementary planning guidance note		
Formby Civic Society	The section that identified Freshfield Road and Ryeground Lane as characteristic areas is excellent.	We made a note of this support.
Merseyside Civic Society	Supportive of comprehensive assessment of character	We made a note of this support
Government Office North West	Expand introduction to document to include overall vision for Sefton’s urban environment.	We added wording to do this.
Government Office North West	Document could make useful links to Community Strategy and the major plans for neighbourhood renewal in the Borough	We decided that it is more appropriate for the guidance note to refer to other Supplementary planning guidance notes.
Government Office North West	Suggest highlighting design relating to public realm and inclusion of public art/ street furniture as Borough has some good examples to promote as good practice e.g. improvements at Southport	Southport Seafront Supplementary planning guidance note includes appropriate references. The Design Supplementary planning guidance note is aimed at developers and we considered that it is not the appropriate place to refer to street furniture. There is no policy in the draft Plan on public art and so it would not be appropriate to make reference to this in the guidance note.
Government Office North West	<p>Specific points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - useful to mention need for buildings to face streets, squares or parks and avoid inward-facing development - welcome emphasis placed on sustainable drainage systems - section on access could be expanded to take into account public transport considerations - Settlement Character Plans - useful to have the conservation areas marked on the plans as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have included this first point. - We have noted this second point. - We have dealt with access issues in the ‘Providing a Choice of Travel’ guidance note but cross reference will be added. - We added conservation areas to Settlement Character Plans.



Person or Organisation commenting	Summary of comment	Summary of our response
Hitchcock and Wright	Revision of urban edge to include proposed Switch Island/ Thornton Bypass	We think that this is premature until, firstly, the road scheme is approved and, secondly, any consequent change to the Green Belt boundary is made.
United Utilities	Deep rooted shrubs and trees should not be planted in the vicinity of underground /overhead electricity cables, water mains, public sewers and overflow systems.	We amended the guidance note to say that utilities need to be consulted before planting in the vicinity of their apparatus.
Part 2 of Design Supplementary Planning Guidance Note: Site design, layout and access		
Mr Cowell	This is a very good SPG.	We made a note of the support. Amend sentence in 'General layout', part d, to say " ..the rear gardens of houses should not have...". This reads better than ".. and for houses rear gardens should not have....".
Secondsite Property Holdings	It is unreasonable for section 4d to state that cul-de-sacs should be avoided. Schemes should be designed to take account of suitability to the local area, and local context, as well as crime safety. The government's good practice guide 'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention' also says this. Also, the restriction on cul-de-sacs may inadvertently prevent well-designed schemes coming forward.	We changed the wording of section 4d to say that cul-de-sacs will be discouraged, rather than avoided.
Secondsite Property Holdings	Section 4d should not require closed circuit television cameras (CCTV) to be integrated into the design. Well-designed housing schemes, such as those which include natural surveillance, should not need CCTV	We did not mean to suggest that all schemes, including housing schemes, should include closed circuit television cameras (CCTV). The key point is that where CCTV is needed, it should be integrated into the design of the scheme, and we changed the guidance note to say this.
Government Office North West	Welcome the changes to cover more crime and sustainability aspects.	We made a note of this support.







