Elmbridge
Borough Council
... bridging the communities ...

Leisure and recreation
Mix of architectural styles
mixed use
Conservation areas
Abundance of trees
parks and gardens
Varied and diverse materials
Key Strategic Views and Vistas
Surrey
Greens
Rich historic environment
Elmbridge
Predominately residential
vibrant town and villages
allotments
common land
high quality environment
Commercial areas
Green Belt
open urban areas
listed buildings
recreation grounds
visitor attractions
Riverways that define and shape the Borough

Elmbridge
Local Plan

Design and Character
Supplementary
Planning Document

April 2012

Elmbridge Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

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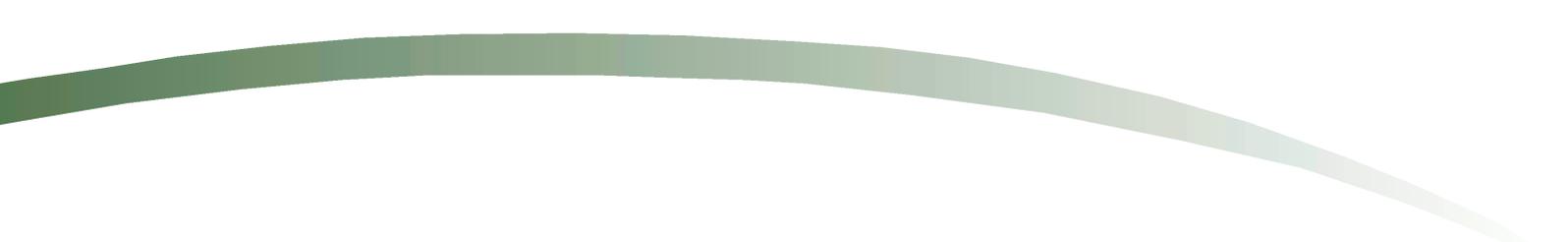
Elmbridge Borough Council

Civic Centre

High Street

Esher

Surrey

KT10 9SD

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1 Introduction

Purpose of the Document

1.1   The purpose of this Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to secure the delivery of distinctive, high quality development across the Borough, that respects local character. The document provides design guidance relating to all new development in the Borough. Its overall aim is to ensure that the design of future development is more locally responsive, sustainable and built to a high quality. It sets out how the Council will expect the location, form and type of new residential and non residential development in Elmbridge to be considered through the Design Process.

1.2   The need for this SPD has arisen from consultation responses during the preparation of the Core Strategy. Feedback from these consultations highlighted local people's concerns about the impact of future development in their local area. Accommodating new growth in each settlement area means that special care needs to be taken when designing development proposals. This SPD will help address these concerns and ensure that new development reflects people's aspirations for their local area.

1.3   The document should not be seen as imposing a certain design taste or style but promotes a 4 stage design process as a method to ensure all new development respects and enhances the site and surrounding area.

Ensuring High Quality Design in Elmbridge

1.4   Located immediately to the South West of London, Elmbridge has good accessibility by road and rail to Central London and is within easy reach of Heathrow and Gatwick Airports, the M25 and M3. Its desirability as a place to live is due in part to its accessibility, but also to its high quality environment. This is characterised by its rivers and waterways that flow through the Borough, a rich diversity

of historic buildings as well as an abundance of natural landscapes. Future development should respect and improve this high quality environment.

Policy Context

1.5   This SPD has been developed in accordance with national and local planning policy.

National Context

1.6   During the document's production, the Government has released a number of documents that confirm the importance to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design. This commitment is made apparent in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) **(1)** and the Government report 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy' **(2)**. Both documents dedicate specific chapters to design. Reflecting the Government's drive to improve design quality, the Design and Character SPD will deliver more locally distinctive high quality, sustainable design that takes account of local character.

1.7   The approach to the production of the document is also in line with the Government's Localism agenda. Local community groups have been involved in the document's development from the outset, providing valuable local knowledge and helping shape the settlement area character assessments. It is hoped that this experience will encourage local people to continue to be more involved in the long term planning of their local areas.

Local Context

1.8   The Core Strategy recognises the importance of high quality, sustainable design. Policy CS1, which sets out the spatial strategy for the Borough, aims to protect Elmbridge's Green Infrastructure assets, by directing new development towards previously developed land within the existing built up areas. Within this overarching context, the policy states that,

1   Chapter 7: Requiring good design, National Planning Policy Framework, CLG, March 2012
2   Chapter 7: Quality, sustainability and design, Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England, CLG, Nov 2011

'All new developments must be high quality, well designed and locally distinctive. They should be sensitive to the character and quality of the area, respecting environmental and historic assets and, where appropriate, introduce contemporary designs that can positively improve local character.'

1.9 Reference to the delivery of high quality design and the importance of local character features throughout the document. The intention is to provide further details in order to ensure the effective implementation of Core Strategy policy. Whilst Government policy and national advice have been taken into account, this is a local document produced in partnership with local people. It shows how Localism and growth can indeed be compatible objectives that deliver local benefits.

Status of the Guide

1.10 This SPD replaces the Elmbridge Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted in 2002.

1.11 The Design and Character SPD was approved by the Council on 18 April 2012. Its adoption means that it is a material consideration which has considerable weight in making decisions on planning applications.

Community Involvement

1.12 During April and May 2011, eight community workshops were held across the Borough and participants played a significant role in identifying the variety of character areas within their particular part of the Borough. Additional feedback sessions held in September 2011 allowed participants to comment on the draft settlement area character assessments. In addition to this, the document was subject to a six week public consultation in November 2011. The SPD has developed throughout these consultation stages and takes account of many of the comments made.

1.13 Further details of the consultation arrangements, including the comments made and how these have been addressed in the document are set out in the Regulation 17 Consultation Statement.

The Design Process

1.14 The design process is a fundamental aspect in the delivery of high quality development. Each stage in the design process should be set out in the Design and Access Statement, to be submitted with the planning application. The step-by-step guide in section 2 explains how this works.

1.15 The SPD is made up of eleven separate documents. This document explains the design process, advising on how to assess character, appraise a site, develop a design concept and design a final scheme for submission. It contains general and specific design guidance and demonstrates this 4 stage design process through a series of case studies.

1.16 The SPD also includes a suite of documents containing companion guides:

- **8 companion guides provide detailed character assessments for each of the Borough's settlement areas.** It is not necessary to read all of these. Make reference to the particular character assessment where you intend to develop.

- **The Character of Elmbridge Companion Guide** provides an overview of the Borough including how Elmbridge has developed over the years.

- **The Home Extensions Companion Guide** provides guidance for householders wishing to extend or modify their property.

1.17 The illustrations which feature in this SPD have been designed and drawn by Richard Guise, Context 4D and are subject to copyright.

2 How to use the SPD

2.1 The following step-by-step guide helps to explain how the SPD works and demonstrates the 4 stage design process required to achieve high quality designed development when developing and submitting proposals.

2.2 As validation requirements, fees and forms can change, this page contains references to the website where you will find up to date information.

Early Research

2.3 At the outset of this process, conduct some initial research. This could relate to the immediate constraints and capacity of the site, planning history, and the examination of relevant national and local policy.

Elmbridge
Borough Council
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Elmbridge
Core Strategy

July 2011
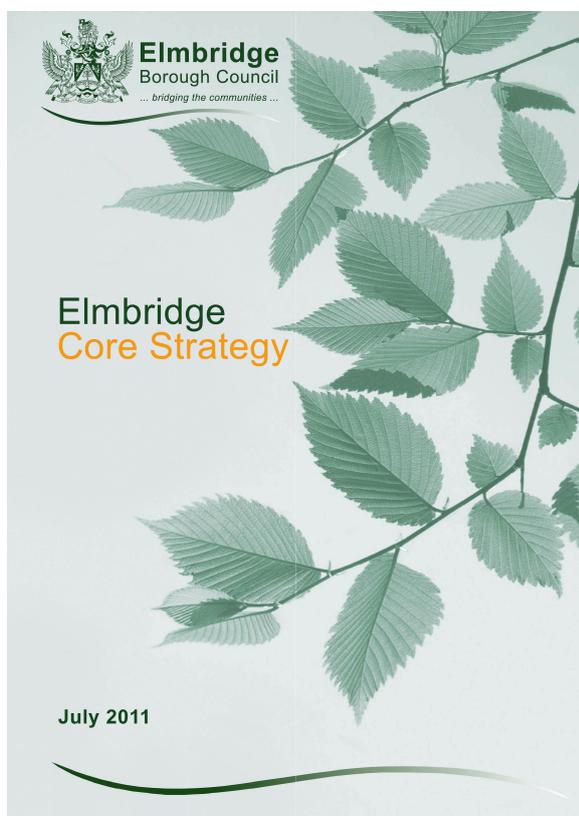
Elmbridge Local Plan documents can be found at the Planning Policy web pages- www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy

The Design Process

STEP 1: Understand the Context

2.4 Before embarking on a design proposal it is essential to understand the local character of the area. Consult the relevant companion guide for the settlement area you intend to build in and read the detailed character assessment. This will provide links to appropriate design guidance located in the main document.

The 8 companion guides are available on the Design and Character web page at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy

Please use 'My Elmbridge' to zoom into the maps, which is available at www.elmbridge.gov.uk

STEP 2: Appraise the Site and its Setting

2.5 Conducting a desktop study and on-location survey will help identify important factors that will shape your design proposal. (See section 4 for more detailed advice on appraisal)

2.6 Depending on the size of the development, you are advised to contact the local community to understand their aspirations for the site.

2.7 Begin to develop your Design and Access Statement* and start early pre-application discussions.

For guidance on how to arrange pre-planning advice and the fee schedule, please see the pre-application advice web page at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning

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STEP 3: Develop a Design Concept and Design an Indicative Scheme

2.8 To help develop an appropriate design solution it is important to consult relevant design advice. This document contains general design advice including sustainable design principles at section 5. Specific design guidance is also provided with relation to various development types at section 6.

2.9 The case studies at section 7 help to illustrate some of the key issues to take into account.

2.10 Further pre-application discussions and liaison with the local community is recommended at this stage to help you develop the scheme.

STEP 4: Develop the Full Scheme and Submit the Planning Application

2.11 Develop the full scheme, taking account of all relevant design guidance, and complete the Design and Access Statement* explaining the process outlined above.

2.12 Make sure that you are aware of all validation requirements and submit your planning application.

For all current validation requirements including an up to date schedule of fees and options for payment please see the 'Fees and Guidance' web page at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning

*Design and Access Statements

A Design and Access Statement is a written and illustrated report accompanying a planning application. The statement should show how the applicant has analysed the site and its setting and how the applicant has formulated and applied design principles to achieve good design.

2.13 Design and Access Statements must be submitted for all planning applications, except householder applications. As explained in the step-by-step guide, you should prepare the Design and Access Statement from the start of the process and include the rationale for deciding upon the preferred design solution.
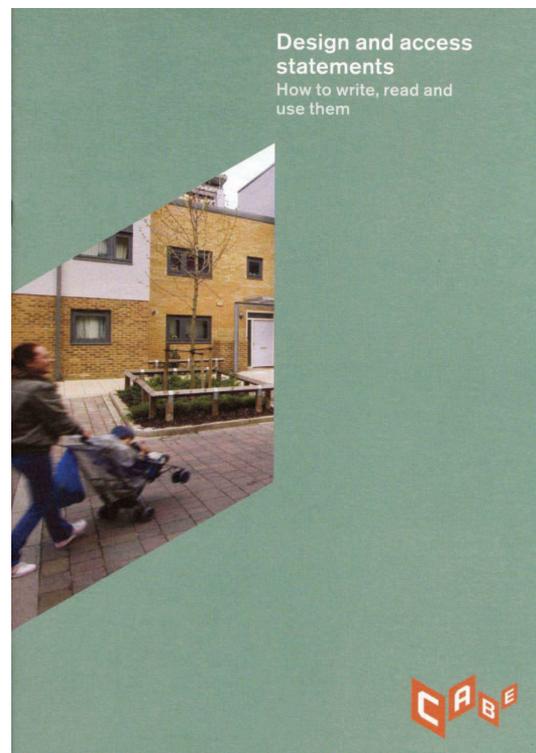
Further information on Design and Access Statements can be found at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning under applications, fees and guidance.

3 Understanding Character

3.1 For the purposes of this SPD, character is defined as:

'locally distinctive areas that share a sense of place through their physical and functional attributes, which combine to distinguish one part of the Borough from another.' [3]

3.2 The idea of establishing the character of a place and responding positively to that character is now a well-established principle of modern planning. Developments should,'respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation' [4]

3.3 The Elmbridge Core Strategy embraces the concept of local character and context, containing specific policies for eight distinctive settlement areas across the Borough. This SPD provides more detailed assessments on the character of the urban areas of the Borough on a settlement by settlement basis within the individual companion guides.

3.4 The diagram below reflects the wide range of components that contribute to the character of an area. They will each have different emphasis, depending on the character of a particular place. It is important to remember that the character of a place is evolving; it is different today than it was a century ago and it is still changing. Every place contains remnants of its past (heritage assets) and as they adapt they contribute to its present character.
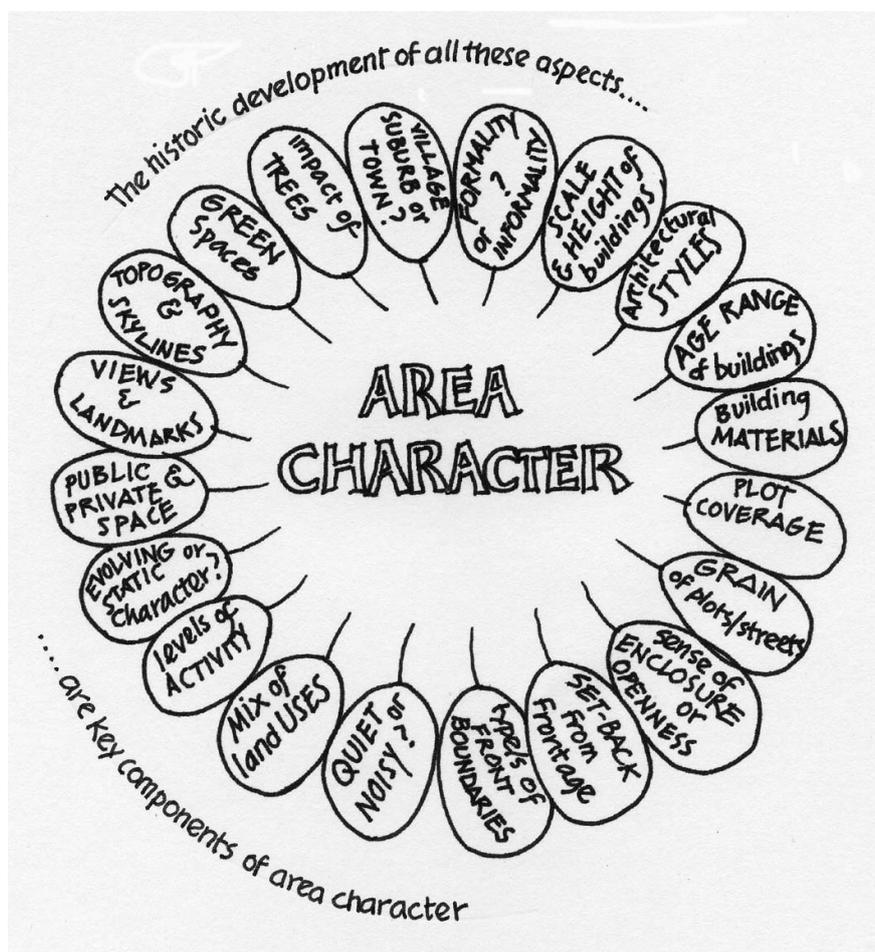

Figure 3.1 Character components diagram

3   Forum Heritage Services, June 2011
4   National Planning Policy Framework, CLG, March 2012

Why is Character Important?

3.5 The understanding and sensitive response to the character of a place is an essential part of delivering successful development. Your understanding should come from appraising the site and its immediate and wider setting (section 4).

3.6 The context of a site will provide key indicators of character which will inform how the site can be developed in order to maintain and enhance the character of a place. Such characteristics as the general pattern and scale of development; the influence of landscape; short and longer views; skylines; and predominant materials will all have an influence on the character of a place and you will need to consider these issues when proposing change.

3.7 Sites and settings evolve; sometimes over many centuries of overlays of development and use. This can often be subtle elements such as the line of an historic boundary or the survival of remnant sections of a landscape scheme. You can turn these assets to your advantage in creating a place with a positive character which responds to the past, maintains the essential qualities of the present, but looks to creating the character of the future.

3.8 When considering new development, it is important to note that there are other important sources of information that should be referred to in addition to this SPD. These include:

The Elmbridge Local Plan

3.9 This currently comprises the Elmbridge Core Strategy, the proposals map and saved policies from the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans

3.10 These have been produced by the Council for some of its 24 Conservation Areas. They:

- Define the character of the Conservation Area
- Contain development guidelines, and
- Identify enhancement opportunities

3.11 These documents are referenced in the settlement area appraisals and should be referred to should your site fall within a conservation area.[5]

Claygate Village Design Statement

3.12 The Claygate Village Design Statement[6] was published in 2009 by Claygate Parish Council. This provides a detailed appraisal of the local character of the village and the surrounding land which together give Claygate a unique sense of identity. The Village Design Statement has provided a useful source of information in drafting the Claygate character assessment.

The Envisage Project

3.13 Produced by the local community, the Envisage Project presents an innovative "action plan" for the areas of Cobham, Downside, Oxshott and Stoke D'Abernon[7] This is a comprehensive document covering a wide range of issues specific to the area including local character.

The Character of Elmbridge (Summaries)

3.14 The following section contains summary pages, which present the key characteristics of Elmbridge and its individual settlement areas. The summaries provide a snapshot of the area and can only reflect key features. For a full analysis of character, please refer to the relevant companion guide.

5   These can be found at www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/heritage
6   www.claygate-vds.info
7   www.envisage.org.uk

Elmbridge

Open Spaces

- Green open space, either within or surrounding the urban areas, is close at hand to most residents in Elmbridge
- 57% of the Borough is Green Belt
- Significant areas of common land
- Strategic open urban land and other open urban land such as school playing fields, allotments, recreation grounds, parks and gardens provide highly valued open spaces throughout the urban area.
- Greens located across the Borough, particularly in towns and villages, add to the attractiveness and distinctiveness of local areas, encouraging biodiversity, providing drainage and improving air quality.
- Many residential properties have large, well landscaped, gardens.

West End Green

Trees and Landscape

- Elmbridge is known for its abundance of trees and high quality green spaces
- Great diversity of trees on the commons, woodlands, park estates, private gardens and public highways providing 21% canopy cover.
- 2.8% of total land area is Ancient Woodland.
- Trees add scale, structure and interest and help to reduce pollution and provide important habitats for a variety of insects, birds and mammals.

Views and Vistas

- Key strategic views, many characterised by their tree dominance, including the River Thames and across to the Surrey Hills.
- Short views and local townscape views often around the Borough's notable church spires.
- Long views are often foreshortened by tree enclosure or changes to topographical levels combined with woodland.

Telegraph Hill, Hinchley Wood

Specimen Tree, Cobham

For a detailed assessment of the character of Elmbridge please see the overview companion guide

Architectural Styles

- 18th century houses are widespread across the Borough
- Some modern Neo-Georgian and some Queen Anne Revival examples of the late 19th century
- Victorian Villas can be found in areas such as Kent Town, East Molesey and Giggs Hill Green, Thames Ditton.
- Fine examples of Arts and Crafts' architecture found in areas such as Foley Road, Claygate
- 20th century vernacular revival style is present in many of the town and village centres
- Inter-war and post-war redevelopment of the town centres
- Striking modern developments, including Mercedes Benz World and 'The Heart' at Walton Town Centre

Mercedes Benz, Weybridge

The Heart, Walton

Residential Road, Weybridge

Historic Assets

- Rich historic environment
- 24 conservation areas, 750 statutory listed buildings
- Locally listed buildings
- 3 historic parks and gardens

Timmans Cottages, Cobham Downside

View of River Thames, East Molesey

Uses

- The 8 urban settlement areas are predominately residential
- Large detached and semi-detached houses dominate.
- Flatted developments are now common in some parts of the Borough.
- Town and Village centres provide mixed uses mainly retail, cafes, restaurants and bars, residential and office buildings.
- Commercial areas such as Brooklands and Molesey Industrial Estate
- Public buildings such as the Civic Centre in Esher, as well as numerous village halls and community centres
- Recreational uses such as Xcel Leisure Centre and all weather sports pitches at Waterside Drive
- Visitor attractions, including Sandown Racecourse, Brooklands Museum, Painshill Park and Claremont Landscape Gardens.

Waterways

- The River Thames, Wey Navigation, River Mole, Ember and Rythe shape and define the Borough.
- The riverscape provides contrast between open wider landscapes and more intimate views along tree-lined banks.
- The waterways provide a highly valued recreational resource as well important wildlife corridors.

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Walton on Thames

Green Space

- The area offers a wide variety of open spaces including sports grounds, recreation fields, allotment gardens and parks.
- Raised reservoirs and large areas of open space along the River Thames and at Molesey Heath to the east provides an attractive landscape setting to the urban area and buffer between Molesey and Walton.

Elm Grove Recreation Ground

Walton Town Centre and Local Shops

- 'The Heart' is a large mixed-use development providing housing, high quality retail units, a library, restaurants, bars and cafes. It has a strong urban character, which is modern and distinctive in style. Recent environmental improvements along the High Street have further enhanced the attractiveness of the centre.
- Local centres at Terrace Road and The Halfway provide easily accessible 'day to day' shopping and services for nearby residents.

The Heart

Transport Links

- Walton Bridge provides a strategic crossing point and important gateway into the Borough.
- The train station provides good access to and from London.

Key Landmarks and Views

Landmarks are scattered throughout the area and include;
- 'The Heart'
- Walton Methodist Church Spire, Terrace Road
- The former 'Birds Eye' HQ, Station Avenue.

Walton Methodist Church

Please see the Walton Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

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Walton
Riverside
Conservation
Area

Terrace
Road

Walton (Church St/Bridge St)
Conservation Area

Walton-on-Thames

R. Thames

R. Mole

The
Halfway

Hersham
Station

Rydens
School

Walton
Station
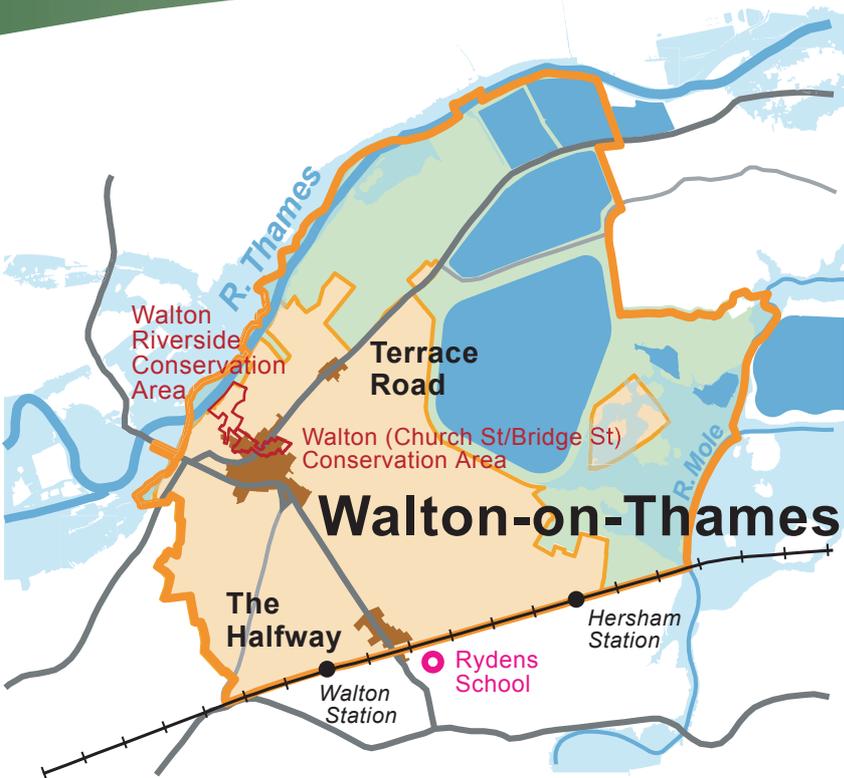
Residential Properties

The area offers a wide range of house types including;

- Flatted developments, generally found in the town centre and around the train station, but also elsewhere.
- Maisonettes, bungalows/chalets, terraced, semi and detached dwellings throughout the area. Older Victorian/Edwardian houses on 'river roads'.
- Large detached properties in spacious grounds in private/ semi private roads eg. Ashley Park.
- Larger housing estates, built between 1930s to the present day, offering a good range of family housing.
- Areas of high architectural quality located across the area

Waterways

The riverside fulfils a variety of roles and provides a highly distinctive and attractive landscape setting. It is easily accessible and well-used providing for a wide range of recreational pursuits as well as providing a highly desirable waterside environment for residential properties and public houses.

Walton Riverside

The Anglers, Walton Riverside

Stuart Avenue

Russell Road

Silverdale Avenue

Heritage Assets

With medieval origins, there are two conservation areas: Walton Riverside and Walton Church Street/Bridge Street. Among various buildings of historic interest the settlement includes a Grade I listed building 'Old Manor House' and Walton Wharf.

Sports, Recreation and Leisure

- Elmbridge Xcel Leisure Centre provides high quality leisure facilities for the use of all Borough residents. The sports pitches which adjoin Xcel further contribute to the sporting opportunities on offer in this part of the Borough.
- Stompond Lane athletics stadium and football ground is located close to the station.
- A variety of rowing clubs are located along the river bank together with Walton Marina and Cowey Sale.

Xcel Leisure Centre

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Weybridge

Weybridge: Key Features

Weybridge, which also includes Oatlands and St George's Hill, lies in the west of Elmbridge at the confluence of the River Thames and the River Wey Navigation which define the western and northern boundaries. The area is characterised by its diverse residential areas, vibrant town centre, historic assets, high quality green spaces and access to the waterside. It has a well established district centre, which is lively during the evening as well as the day. The Heights and Brooklands Business Park, home to prestigious companies including Proctor and Gamble, Mercedes-Benz and Sony, combine to provide the largest employment area in the Borough. The area has good access to the M25 and fast rail links to and from London.

Green Space

Weybridge has a number of green spaces throughout the urban area including greens, allotments, gardens, recreation grounds and school fields. Churchfields Recreation Ground, located behind the High Street, Oatlands Park and Brooklands Community Park combine to offer a wide range of recreational facilities. Oatlands Park has historic significance and parts of its landscape setting remain within the surrounding residential developments.

Greens are an important characteristic of the area. Monument Green, Heath Road Green and The Cricket Green are all key focal points for local people.

Cricket Green, Queen's Road

Wey Bridge

Key Landmarks and Views

The landmark spire of St James' Church, Church Street can be seen throughout the town centre. Other landmarks include Oatlands Park Hotel and the Duchess of York column on Monument Green.
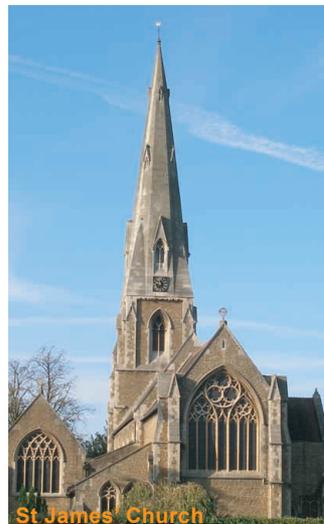
St James' Church

Waterways

Good public access to the Wey Navigation and the River Thames, offer significant opportunities for walking, cycling and water sports.

Heritage Assets

The area has 4 conservation areas including: Monument Green, Wey Navigation, Weybridge Town Centre and Brooklands motor racing and aviation area. The site of the historic Oatlands Palace and Park is also a highly valued local heritage asset.

Trees

Large areas of tree cover, mostly to private gardens, are particularly evident at St George's Hill, Lower St Georges Hill and parts of Oatlands.

Please see the Weybridge Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

Weybridge

Wey Navigation Conservation Area

Monument Green Conservation Area

Weybridge Conservation Area

Heathside School

Brooklands College

Weybridge Station

Brooklands Museum

Mercedes-Benz World

Brooklands Conservation Area

St George's Hill

Oatlands

Queen's Road

Walton Station

R. Thames

R. Wey

M25

10

A244

A317

A245

A3
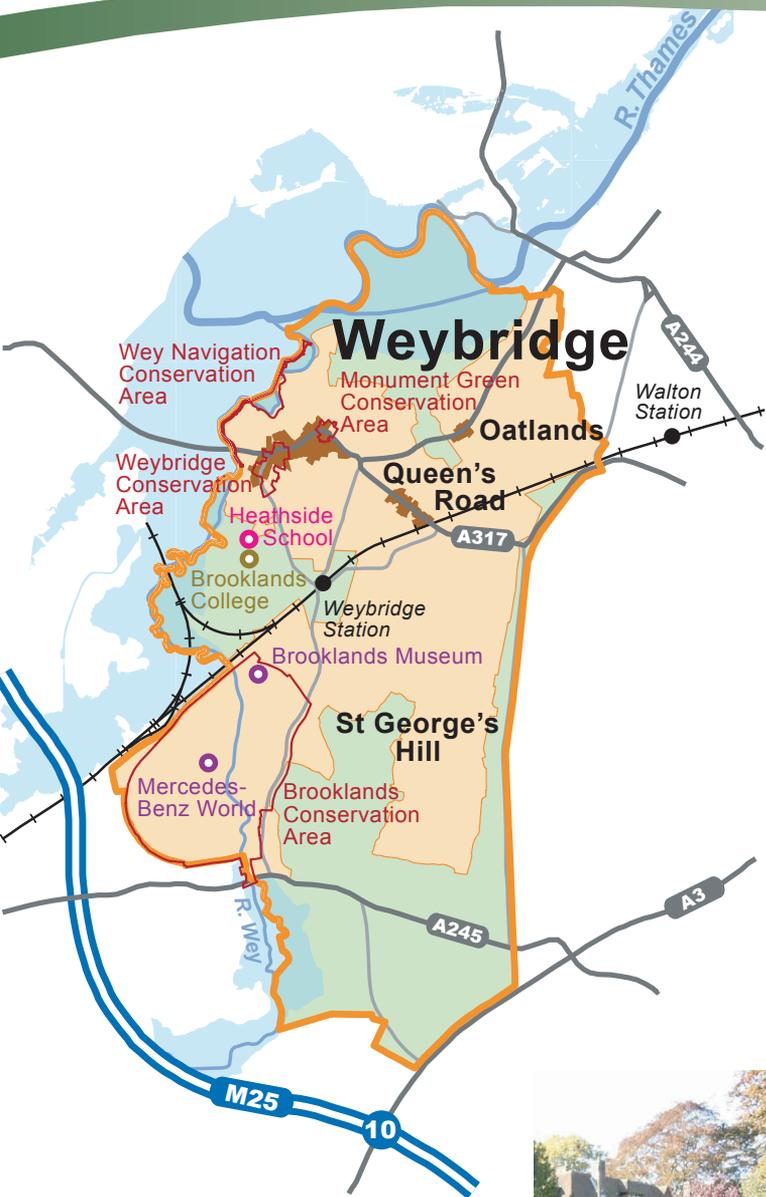
District and Local Centres

Weybridge town centre provides for a range of retail, commercial, leisure and residential uses. It also has a library, hospital, and church. The Centre has a high quality built environment much of which lies within a conservation area with a number of listed buildings, although it is heavily trafficked. In addition to the town centre, there are two small local centres at Queens Road and Oatlands Village. Both have distinctive characteristics, each providing for a different range of shops, services, restaurants and bars.

High Street

Weybridge Park

Churchill Drive
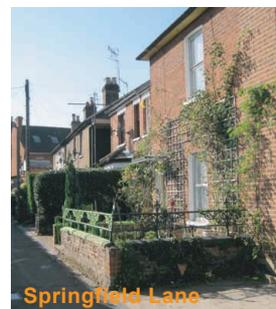
Springfield Lane

Residential Properties

The area comprises well-established residential suburbs with a diverse mix of age and style of property including significant areas of gated private estates, pockets of ex-local authority and SPAN housing. Victorian/Edwardian properties immediately surround the town centre, smaller cottages are common-place on roads near the river. Substantial houses and flats are located on the lower slopes of St George's Hill, with large, individually designed houses within the private estate itself. More modest properties of varying age feature in and around the Oatlands area, with 1960s development and modernist architecture along Oatlands Drive and St George's Avenue. More recently, a large housing estate has been built at Brooklands with new waterside townhouses and flats on Whittets Ait.

Mercedes Benz World, Brooklands

Commercial, Tourism and Leisure

The Brooklands area is some distance away from Weybridge town centre. It has its own individual identity containing a diverse mix of uses and some striking architecture within an historic setting. Uses include a retail park, storage/distribution centre, HQ office buildings, hotel, museum, a community park and a car technology and sales centre.

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Hersham

Hersham: Key Features

Hersham is characterised by its strong village identity centred on 'The Green', which provides a focal point for retail and recreation activity. The north of the area contains a diverse mix of residential properties, including large housing estates built by the Local Authority in the 1940s, and low density private estates such as Burwood Park. It also provides some important industrial office uses clustered around the Barley Mow roundabout (A244). Whiteley Village, a unique village for older people built in c1912, is designated as a Conservation Area with the majority of buildings being listed. There is extensive Green Belt land to the south, which is used for a variety of uses including farming and recreation. These open spaces within the Green Belt, along with the historically important Painshill Park, create a varied and impressive landscape setting.

Green Space

Green spaces play a significant part in establishing Hersham's character. Open spaces are located throughout the urban area including recreation grounds, school fields and playing grounds, as well as smaller local Greens. These are particularly apparent around Hersham Village with a sequence of well linked green spaces including The Green, Back Green, The Memorial Gardens and Vaux Mead. Participation in the national initiative Hersham in Bloom contributes to an attractive public realm.

The Green (Courtesy of Hersham Village Society)

Coronation Recreation Ground

Trees and Landscape

The area benefits from a significant number of mature broadleaf trees located within the Green Belt, along the roadsides and within private gardens.

Sports and Education

There are a number of schools located in Hersham, which have large school fields adding to the settlement urban open areas. The grounds of Rydens School, together with the adjoining Coronation Recreation Ground, provide a significant area of Strategic Open Urban Land.

Key Landmarks and Views

The spire of St Peter is glimpsed throughout Hersham Village.
Painshill House and the Gothic Tower are key landmarks.

St Peter's Church

Please see the Hersham Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

Residential Properties

Hersham is primarily a residential area with a diverse mix of housing types including;

- Older properties around The Green and off Queens Road.
- Large housing estates, such as Longmore, built by the Local Authority in the 1940s.
- Higher density residential development around Walton station.
- Burwood Park, a private estate, is a special low-density residential area containing large detached dwellings on spacious plots.
- Whiteley Village is a unique self contained village for older people.

Onslow Road

Brampton Gardens

Longmore Road

Heritage Assets

Hersham has 2 Conservation Areas.

- Hersham Village, which covers The Green, Vaux Mead and the Memorial Gardens.
- Whiteley Village, located in the south of the area within the Green Belt

There are numerous listed buildings including St Peter's Church and many of those within Whiteley Village.

Memorial Gardens

Hersham Village Centre

Hersham Village is a well-used district centre of independent shops and services which includes a village hall and day centre. The Village Green lies at the heart of the centre and this adds to the character and attractiveness of the area.

Waterways

The River Mole strongly defines the eastern and southern boundary of this settlement area.

Molesey Road

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East & West Molesey

East and West Molesey: Key Features

East and West Molesey lie in the north of the Borough where the River Thames meets the River Mole. Their riverside location and the large reservoirs in the north and south of the settlement provide the area with a distinctive local identity and impressive landscape setting. The area has developed within a very distinct time in terms of built form. East Molesey is characterised by its older properties, grand avenues and three conservation areas. West Molesey includes a large industrial area, several residential estates and significant green space at Hurst Park. This predominately residential area is served by a number of local shopping centres/ parades offering a wide variety of goods and services to residents as well as tourists. The settlement has a strong urban character and many parts are of significant historic value. Hampton Court Bridge is a key crossing point over the River Thames and an important gateway into the Borough.

Transport Links

Hampton Court Bridge provides a busy river crossing for both vehicles and pedestrians.
Hampton Court Station is located close to the bridge and provides access between Hampton Court Palace and London.

Green Space

The settlement contains a large number of open green spaces including recreation grounds, sports fields, allotments, playing fields and a large cemetery. Most significant is Hurst Park, which lies alongside the River Thames.

Hurst Park

Trees

Kent Town and areas of public open space in East Molesey are strongly defined by extensive tree cover.
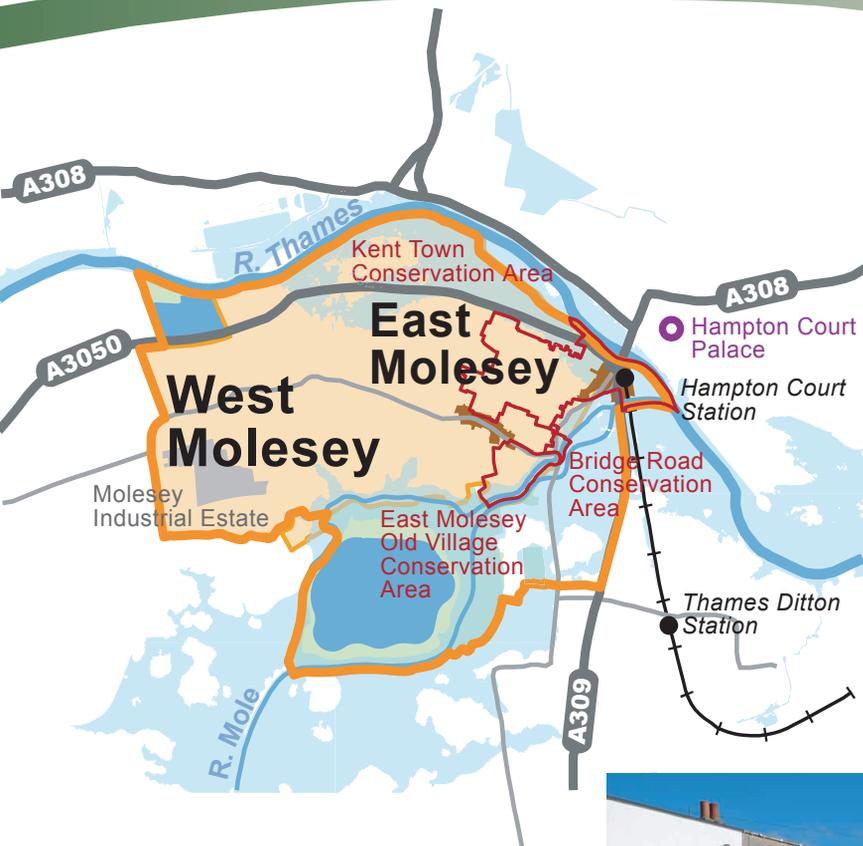
West Molesey Local Centre

District and Local Shopping Centres

The area has distinct shopping areas at Bridge Road / Hampton Court, Walton Road and Central Avenue offering a range of good quality, often independent shops and local services.

Palace Road, East Molesey

Bridge Road

Please see the East and West Molesey Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

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Kent Town
Conservation Area

East Molesey

A308

○ Hampton Court Palace

Hampton Court Station

West Molesey

Molesey Industrial Estate

Bridge Road Conservation Area

East Molesey Old Village Conservation Area

Thames Ditton Station

R. Mole

A308

A3050

R. Thames

A309

Industrial Uses

Molesey Industrial Estate was built in the 1930s and offers a range of accommodation for industrial, storage and business uses.

Heritage Assets

There are several areas of high heritage value including the Old Village, Kent Town and Bridge Road Conservation Areas, Molesey Lock and the River Thames. Hampton Court Palace lies immediately over the bridge and is clearly visible from the river bank.

Residential Properties

There is a wide variety of housing type across the settlement. The housing pattern throughout is medium to high density reflecting its urban character.

- West Molesey contains many large residential estates offering a good range of family housing including Hurst Park, Fleetside and Bishop Fox Way. These properties are modern, often with flat roofs.
- East Molesey contains many classic Victorian and Edwardian buildings of high aesthetic value.

Eastcote Avenue, West Molesey
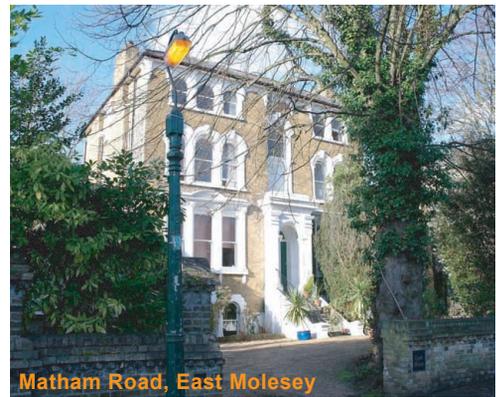
Matham Road, East Molesey

Buckingham Avenue, Hurst Park Estate

Key Landmarks and Views

Key landmarks such as St Paul's church spire and other architectural features are glimpsed in various views and across the river.

Waterways

The area benefits from open spaces next to the river side with direct access to the Thames Path. The River Thames plays an important role in shaping the character of the area, offering a multifunctional recreational resource, as well as an impressive landscape setting.

View of Gothic Spire at No. 16 Riverside

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Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood & Weston Green

Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green: Key Features

Located in the north east of the Borough, this settlement area consists of four individual settlements providing pleasant, and individually distinctive, residential areas. The River Thames runs along the northern boundary of the area, with green rural open land to the south. The area is characterised by a rich diversity of suburban residential roads, extensive greens, historic buildings and conservation areas. Local shopping centres add to its character and provide important focal points for the community. The area has good road and rail access to and from London, with stations at Esher, Thames Ditton and Hinchley Wood.

Green Space

The area is well provided for with a variety of green open spaces. Giggs Hill Green and Weston Green are integral to the urban and suburban character of the area. Recreation parks, allotment gardens, school grounds and sports fields add to the areas open space.

Trees

Some roads, such as St Mary's Road and Station Road (Thames Ditton), are strongly defined by trees within front boundaries and elsewhere, private and public trees contribute to the street scene.

Giggs Hill Green, Thames Ditton

Weston Green Conservation Area

Thames Ditton High Street

Heritage Assets

The area is rich with heritage assets and is home to 4 of the Borough's conservation areas: including Thames Ditton, Giggs Hill Green, Weston Green and Long Ditton (Church and Manor House).

Local Centres

There is no district or town centre in this settlement. Thames Ditton and Hinchley Wood have local centres providing important retail and community services. There are small parades of shops in Long Ditton and Weston Green, which provide for local need.

Hinchley Wood Shopping Parade

Please see the Thames Ditton, Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

Residential Properties

- Predominately a residential area, large semi-detached and detached houses dominate, interspersed with pockets of smaller terraced and semi-detached housing. Flatted development is limited.
- Some architecturally distinctive and cohesive residential areas including Hinchley Wood, St James Park and Hayward Road (former Milk Marketing Board site) and, at the smaller scale, older estates such as Basing Way and Basingfield Road.

Effingham Road, Long Ditton
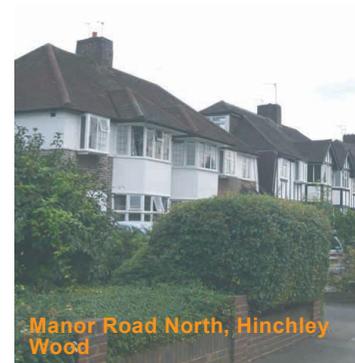
Manor Road North, Hinchley Wood
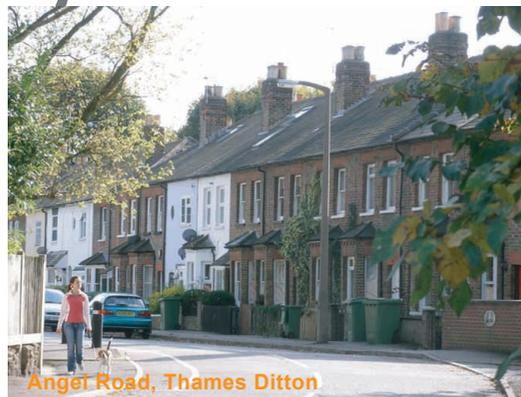
Angel Road, Thames Ditton

St Nicholas Church, Thames Ditton

Key Landmarks and Views

There are continuous views towards the settlement area from the River Thames.
Strategic landmarks include;
- The Spire of the Church of St Nicholas, Thames Ditton
- The Engine House, Surbiton Waterworks, Long Ditton

Hampton Court Palace, and Parkland lies immediately to the north of this settlement area.

Waterways

Public access to the Thames riverside is limited although this stretch of the river is well developed, with a high level of activity and private access to the waterside.

Esher

Esher: Key Features

Esher lies at the centre of the Borough. Its high quality environment is characterised by village greens, large detached houses, common land and historic landscaped gardens. The area has a strong sense of place with a busy town centre providing a lively hub for numerous cafés and restaurants. Sandown Racecourse and the Borough's Civic Centre are also located in Esher. Lying at the junction of several main roads, traffic can be a problem at peak periods.

Green Space

Esher has large areas of green space with West End, Esher Common and historic Claremont Park to the south of the settlement. As well as separating the urban areas, this provides an impressive recreational, wildlife and landscape setting.

Greens contribute to Esher's high quality environment:
- West End Green, which is a self-contained, semi-rural village with an historic core.
- Esher Green to the west of the district centre located next to Christ Church.
- Hare Lane Green- open tree lined space of high amenity value.

West End Green

High Street

District Centre

This is a mixed-use commercial centre with a variety of office buildings, retail and residential units above shops. There are many specialist shops and boutiques in the High Street/Church Street. Restaurants, cafés, bars prevail and this, along with the cinema, creates a popular evening venue.

Esher Cinema, High Street

Please see the Esher Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

Esher

Hersham Station

Esher Station

Esher High School

Sandown Race Course

Elmbridge Civic Centre

Esher Conservation Area

Hinchley Wood Station

A244

West End

A307

A244

West End Conservation Area

Claremont Gardens

R. Rythe

Claygate Station

Esher Commons

A3

R. Mole

Residential Areas

Residential properties mainly consist of large detached dwellings on spacious plots, which are often gated. There are a number of semi-private/private residential roads and estates with high quality architecture, landscaping and tree cover.

A variety of smaller houses/ cottages can be found in the north of Esher.

Esher Park Avenue

Lower Green Road
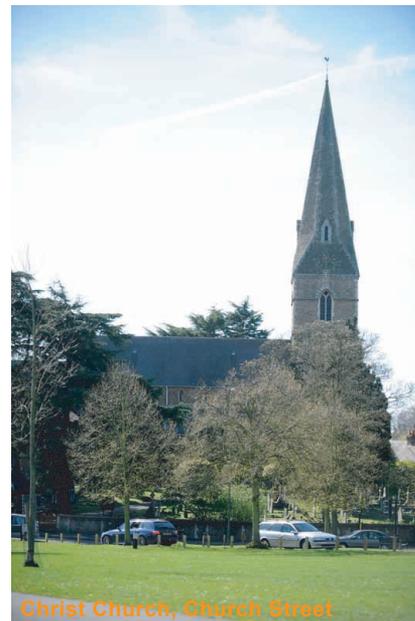
Christ Church, Church Street

Key Landmarks and Views

The spire of Christ Church is glimpsed throughout the local townscape over roofs and between buildings. Sandown Racecourse provides impressive long views towards London.

Sandown Racecourse

Civic Centre, High Street

Civic, Leisure and Entertainment

The Council/Police Offices and public library provides a public sector hub behind the High Street. Significant tourist/recreational and leisure uses lie to the north (Sandown Racecourse) and south of the settlement (Claremont Landscape Garden and commons).

Heritage Assets

The area contains a number of listed buildings, many within the two conservation areas, West End, Esher and Clive Road as well as the landscaped gardens of Claremont Park, a Grade I Registered Park and Garden.

Waterways

The River Mole borders Esher to the west but there is limited public access to the riverside.

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Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon & Downside

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Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon & Downside: Key Features

Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon and the small rural village of Downside are 4 individual areas located to the south of the A3 and north of the M25. Although there is an important inter-relationship with Cobham, each area is a separate community with its own distinctive character. Overall, the settlement is known for its high quality, varied, environment characterised by its rural nature in the south, private and semi private estates, and historic local centres. Good road and rail links to and from London, coupled with easy access to a wealth of open spaces, combine to make this area a highly desirable place to live.

Green Space

The Green, Downside

- Open countryside is easily accessible from all 4 areas.
- There are also several open urban areas throughout the settlement including sports fields, recreation grounds and allotments.
- The Green at Downside defines its village character.

Leigh Hill Road

Trees

Many of the private and semi private estates are characterised by a well established landscape structure providing a high quality setting for residential properties. Many of the lanes and roads throughout Cobham and Oxshott are flanked by trees and woods.

Commercial and Retail Centres

- Cobham district centre is an important service centre, which retains its historic character and scale. It provides a varied range of shops, cafés and restaurants as well as local community services.
- Oxshott local centre contains a variety of local shops and services and, although located on the busy A244, has a village 'high street' character. There is also a parade of shops at Stoke D'Abernon adjacent to the station.
- A number of large commercial and office buildings are located along the Portsmouth Road.

Cobham District Centre
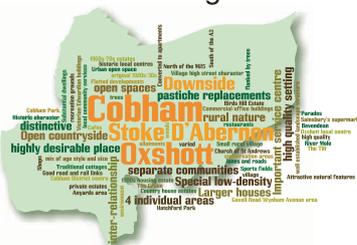
Please see the Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon and Downside Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

Cobham

Painshill Park

The Tilt Conservation Area

Cobham Conservation Area

Plough Corner Conservation Area

Cobham & Stoke D'Abernon Station

Downside Conservation Area

Downside

Esher Commons

Oxshott Station

Crown Estate

Oxshott

Stoke D'Abernon

Stoke D'Abernon Conservation Area

R. Mole

A3

A3

A244

A245

M25

10

9

Birds Hill Estate

Oak Road
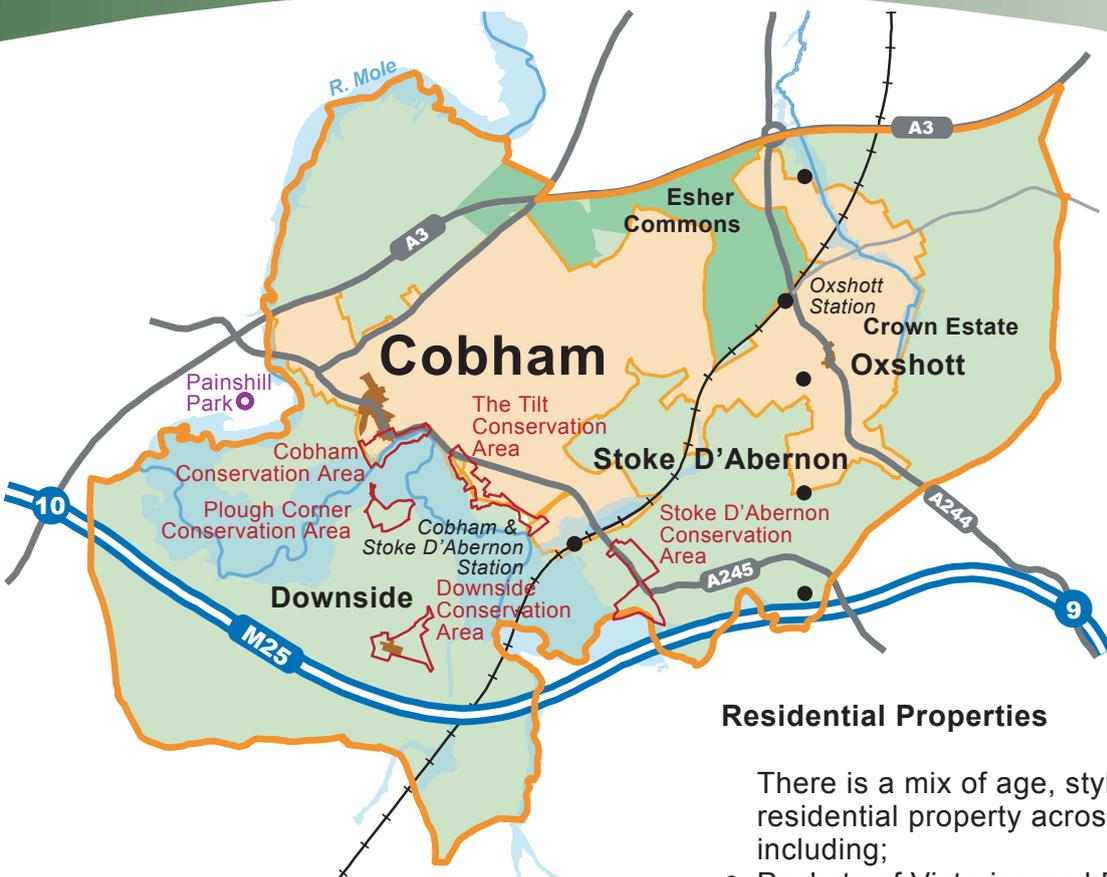
Residential Properties

There is a mix of age, style and size of residential property across the settlement including;

- Pockets of Victorian and Edwardian housing with traditional cottages in the Anyards area near to the town centre,
- Larger houses and flatted developments in and around the Stoke Road,
- 1960s/70s housing estates (Gavell Road / Wyndham Ave area, Lockhart Road area),
- 1990s housing estate adjacent to Sainsbury supermarket,
- Substantial dwellings often within private estates, some of which are original 1920s/30s houses but many are often pastiche replacements.
- Country house estates, Cobham Park and Hatchford Park (both now converted to apartments)
- Special low-density residential area at Birds Hill Estate and Bevendean

Anyards Road

Heritage Assets

- The settlement has 5 conservation areas - Cobham, The Tilt, Downside Village, Stoke D'Abernon, and Cobham (Plough Corner)
- The Church of St Andrews in Cobham is a statutory Grade I listed building and a key landmark.
- Church Street, River Hill and Mill Road contain several statutory and locally listed buildings.

Tilt Road

The Old Bear

Cobham Mill
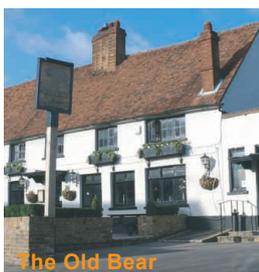
Waterways

The River Mole runs through the countryside south of Cobham providing an attractive natural feature and recreational resource.

Claygate

Claygate: Key Features

With open countryside almost completely surrounding the urban area, Claygate has a semi rural character with historic field boundaries, public hedgerows and older lanes and footpaths as well as a vibrant local shopping centre, historic old village and mix of residential areas. Claygate has its own Parish Council and has a strong sense of identity, largely due to its separation from other communities, and its distinctive village character.

The Claygate Village Design Statement aims to, 'Protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of Claygate, in respect of its built environment and landscape, through guiding new development and other changes to the environment.'

Green Space

- Claygate recreation ground lies at the heart of the village, and provides for a variety of sporting activities throughout the year.
- The old Village Green provides a strong link to the past and is highly valued by the community.
- The village is almost entirely surrounded by easily accessible greenspace.

The Green, Old Village

Hare Lane

Trees/Landscape

- Mature trees, historic field boundaries and older lanes and footpaths give a rural feel to parts of Claygate.
- Well landscaped front gardens and boundaries of natural vegetation often define the roadside.
- Tree lined roadsides are a strong characteristic of some parts of the settlement area.

Local Centres

There are two local shopping areas in Claygate. The main shopping centre, 'The Parade', is located next to the station and contains a wide variety of independent shops. The second area, the Old Village, is much smaller with a limited number of shops, as well as restaurants and a public house.

The Parade
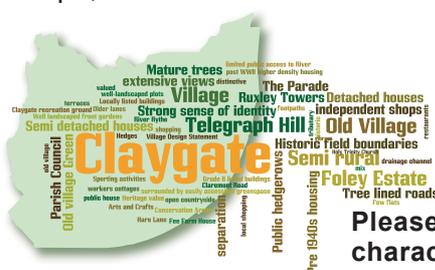
Please see the Claygate Companion Guide to view the detailed character assessment

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Residential Use/Type and Size

- A general predominance of pre 1940s housing, which consist mainly of large detached and semi detached houses on large well-landscaped plots, interspersed with post WWII higher density housing with smaller gardens.
- Limited flatted development found adjacent to or set within commercial areas such as the station environs and the Old Village.
- Modest workers cottages, some terraced, located around the old village core and to Coverts Road.
- Some fine examples of houses influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement (Foley Estate).

Claremont Road

Loseberry Road

Ruxley Towers

Key Landmarks and Views

- There are extensive views to open countryside particularly to the south of the settlement area (from Claremont Road and Gordon Road) and across the urban area from Telegraph Hill in the north.
- Landmarks include Holy Trinity Church and Ruxley Towers.

Holy Trinity Church, Church Road
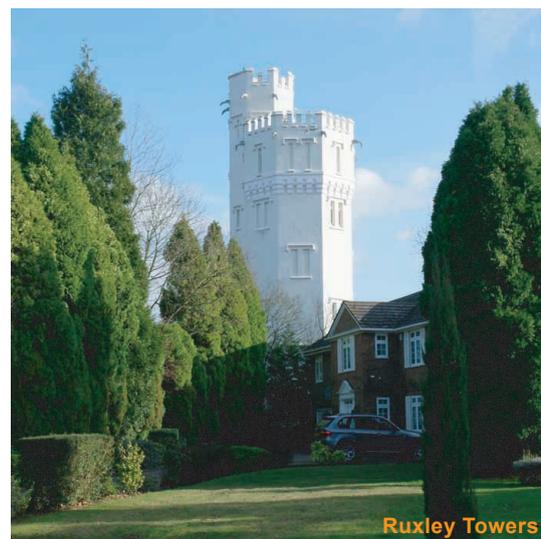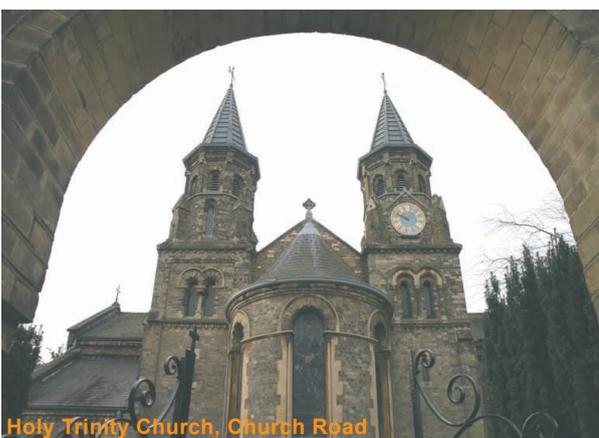
Heritage Assets

- Claygate Village and the Foley Estate Conservation Areas have significant heritage value and contain many locally listed buildings.
- There are 4 Grade II statutory listed buildings including the Church of Holy Trinity, Fee Farm House, The Tower of Ruxley and a Barn north of Manor Lodge.

Waterways

The River Rythe, a tributary of the River Thames, flows immediately to the west of Claygate. Functioning as a drainage channel, it has limited public access, but does make a positive contribution to the natural landscape that surrounds the village.

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4 The Design Process

4.1 This section outlines the process by which design proposals should evolve, through the incorporation and integration of:

1. The understanding of the character of Elmbridge and its sub-areas (summarised in section 3 and detailed in the companion guides).
2. The appraisal of the development site and its setting.
3. The generation of a design concept.

4.2 Points 2 and 3 above are introduced and illustrated through the six case studies, in section 7.

4.3 The elements of the process described in this section should prove useful for applicants and the local community, in explaining, discussing and assessing the rationale for a particular design, thus making the evolution of the design more transparent. Moreover, the process should provide a valuable basis in the compilation of a Design and Access Statement.

4.4 All the following sections give a fuller explanation of the objectives of design, which are illustrated in the case studies.

4.5 The application of this process may result in a range of possible design solutions, some innovative, others more conventional, but none of which are standardised and lacking in local distinctiveness. If closely followed, each design solution will be grounded in a demonstrably sensitive response to its site and context.

4.6 Many new developments can result in poor replicas of the past, and modern schemes can often jar with their immediate surroundings. If it is your intention to reproduce a recognised style from the past, consider the design in its entirety. Contemporary buildings can add interest to an area provided that they respect key design principles, and can deliver fine examples of 21st Century architecture. Whatever style you choose, make sure it is high quality, true to its style, and respectful of its neighbours.

Appraising the Development Site and its Setting

Before appraising the development site and its setting, it is crucial that you understand the wider context of the settlement and sub-area. Please refer to the relevant companion guide for this part of the design process. It is important that the Design and Access Statement refers to this analysis of character.

Getting Started

4.7 Once you have understood the character of the settlement area and sub-area, it is important to evaluate the nature of the site and its setting, in order to ensure that:

1. The proposals relate sensitively to the built and landscape character and are locally distinctive
2. The land is used efficiently
3. The opportunities for renewable energy and carbon dioxide reductions are utilised
4. Biodiversity is enhanced
5. The layout of the proposal enables easy access by its users to existing facilities, services and linkage in the neighbourhood
6. Through the use of appropriate place making principles, an attractive, coherent, safe, convenient and healthy development is created

Conducting the Appraisal

4.8 **Appraisal** means the evaluation of relevant factors on site and within the setting of the site. The use of a **SWOT** analysis (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats) may help the process. Sometimes it may be helpful to add the heading 'constraint' to this list.
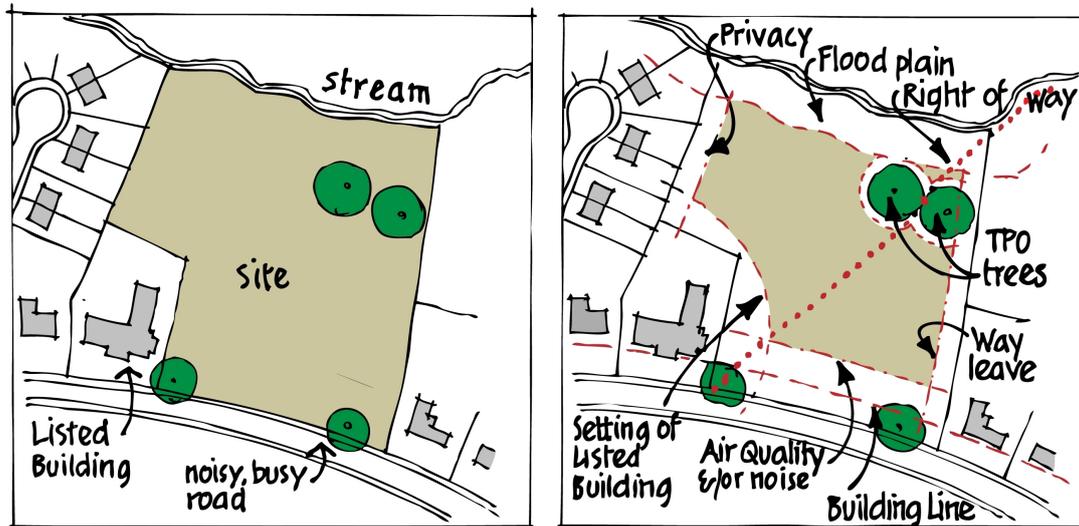
Whilst the site capacity may appear adequate for the proposed development at the outset.....

....the developable area of the site may be significantly reduced, due to designations & policy constraints.

Figure 4.1 Conducting the site appraisal

4.9 Appraisals consist of both 'desk study' research and on-location surveys.

Desk studies can include:

- the planning history of the site (to ascertain reasons for previous refusals etc)
- analysis of historic maps. This will indicate previous building uses (including potential hazards), footprints, key boundaries, lost street alignments, place names etc.
- designations covering the site or setting, e.g. Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, flood risk, nature or landscape designations, wayleaves etc).
- contour maps covering the local context
- the use of satellite imaging is also helpful in identifying tree cover (canopy spread) and nearby local facilities.

4.10 There is no substitute for an appropriate amount of time being spent on the site and its vicinity, however much effort is expended on desk study. The notes in the following sub sections on site and setting surveys will identify typical factors for consideration. In general, these surveys should concentrate on those aspects which

cannot be ascertained fully through desk study (even by online search, e.g. 'street view' or similar).

4.11 Factors may include; critical building and tree heights, boundary materials, condition, key views, ridges or skylines, sounds, levels of activity and change, the effect of different seasons, perceptions of safety etc.

Local Consultation

4.12 The Council will expect you to consult neighbours or the wider community at various points in the appraisal, explaining the background to a scheme and the development of a design. Workshops or forums could help to identify local issues and aspirations.

4.13 It is strongly recommended that you consult with the Council at a pre-application stage in order that the aspirations of the Council in regard to the site and the proposed amount of development can be discussed. This is also a good opportunity for you to understand the validation requirements for the application as well.

How is the setting defined?

Every setting and context is different. However, as a general guide, the setting could be defined as the area from which the site can be seen and the points from which the height of any proposed buildings could be seen, especially in relation to critical skylines or landmarks.

Typical factors to note when appraising the setting of a site (Context Appraisal)

- **The 'grain' or structure of the surrounding streetscape:** The general size and shape of plots; the typical distance between the building frontages and the front boundary of plots (building line); the spacing (if any) between the buildings and the sides of plots; general density of development; and the typical percentage of building footprint to site area.

- **The appearance of the surrounding streetscape:** The character of the typical front boundaries e.g. 'open plan', brick walls, hedges, fences, railings. The degree of enclosure and dominance of mature trees. The sense of enclosure of the streetscape, e.g. 'open' such as greens, suburban-buildings close to or on the back edge of the pavement. Are the streets winding or geometric in layout?

- **Typical built form in the surrounding streetscape:** Range of building styles and materials, noting the predominant styles. The range of building uses and the predominant use. Note whether the context is changing in terms of building form and uses or whether this pattern is static.

- **Key views within the setting of the site:** Are there any view corridors to critical skylines, roof lines and landmarks which you should identify? Are there any

important panoramas or vistas which might be affected by proposed development and frontages of the site?

- **Linkages:** Identify the routes and distances to the nearest bus stop, railway station, shops, local facilities, primary school etc. Note where potential improvements to walking routes might be improved.

- **Roles within the street scene:** What role does the site (and existing building if applicable) play within the local street scene? (e.g. pivotal corner, terminating view, key group etc, see paragraph 5.64 onwards). To what degree should the new development reinforce this role?

Typical factors to note when appraising the development site (Site Appraisal)

- **Site topography:** Note changes in level as these may have an influence on the layout of any built form or structures, or orientation for solar gain (it is assumed that bearing capacity, stability, risk of contamination, flood risk, underground services, wayleaves and levels, will be established through surveys).

- **Site features:** Plot accurately existing buildings, structures, walls, trees, hedges or bushes, access ways, (driveways, yards, roadways etc.). Evaluate each to assess their condition and their potential for rehabilitation and re-use. This will be essential if they are considered a heritage asset, or if they are considered as important components contributing to the positive character of the area. Even if these features are of little value in this category, it is good sustainable practice to re-use as much as is feasible.

- **Site boundaries and their sensitivity:** Plot all site boundaries, describing materials, condition and height. Additionally, note their sensitivity to overlooking and overshadowing. The heights of buildings adjacent to the site and the position of windows to habitable

rooms should be noted. Locate the existing access point(s) to the site and evaluate future levels of vehicular access. Existing gate piers or other entrance features should generally be retained where appropriate.

4.14   An overall design concept should be generated prior to embarking on a detailed design scheme. This will emerge through dialogue with the community and the Council and by applying the conclusions of the site and context appraisals. The Design and Access Statement will then demonstrate how you have adopted the principles of good placemaking and sustainable development in generating a design concept and a rationale for the layout and form of development.
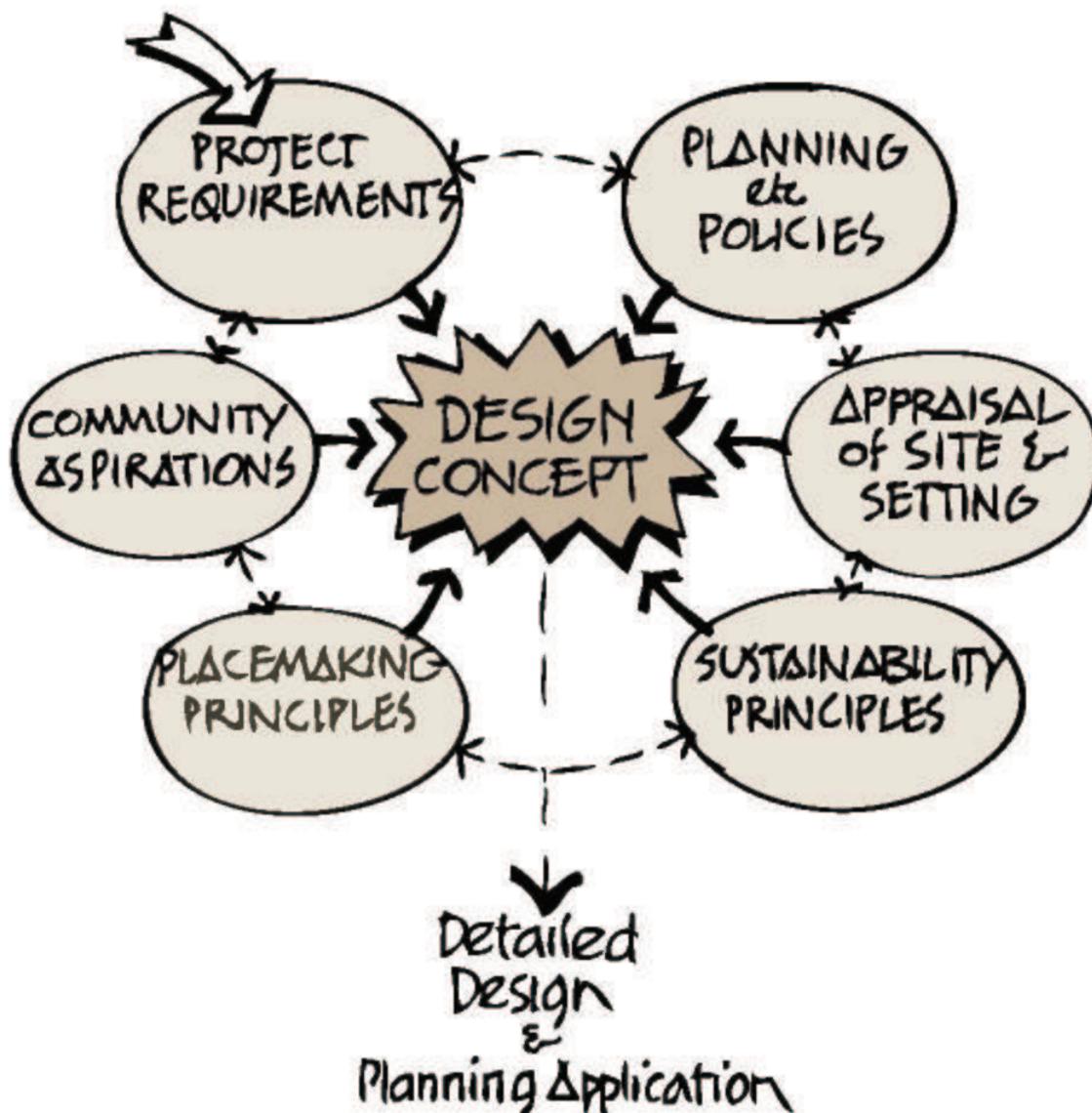
Figure 4.2 Generating a design concept

5 Design Guidance: General Aspects of Design

5.1   This section provides general design guidance and amplifies some aspects which require particular emphasis within Elmbridge, relating to:

- Sustainability
- Layout
- Roles in the streetscape
- Massing and scale
- Landscape design
- Privacy
- Storage
- Materials
- Boundaries

5.2   The concept of 'placemaking' is also introduced here, which is the use of established urban design principles to develop places that are attractive, safe, neighbourly and legible. Questions are provided in text boxes throughout this section to help you consider initial placemaking principles following your appraisal of the site and its context.

Sustainability

> What opportunities are there to meet **sustainability** objectives within the development?

5.3   The use of land and resources is one of the central components of the English Spatial Planning System.   The aim, and direction of travel, of both national and local planning policy is that sustainable development is fundamental to the principles of good planning[8].

5.4   The purpose of this section is to encourage you to carefully consider matters relating to sustainability at the outset. It should be read with all other elements of this SPD.

5.5   Elmbridge has one of the highest qualities of life in the UK, however it also has one of the highest carbon footprints. As such, careful consideration needs to be given to the impact of new development on carbon emissions, climate change and the sensible use of finite resources.

5.6   Current legislation, as set out within the Climate Change Act 2008, sets legally binding targets for the nation to meet for the reduction of carbon emissions. One of the primary tools to achieve this relates to the construction of the built environment. Indeed it is the Government's view that all new residential dwellings will be zero emission development from 2016.

5.7   Sustainable development can be defined in a number of ways, but in terms of this document it should be considered in terms of minimising the impact of the development upon the natural and local environments, be this through design, minimising energy and water consumption, reducing the need for private transport etc. In the first instance, consider your development's environmental impact, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation potential.

5.8   The following Core Strategy policies are most relevant in securing sustainable design:

- CS14 – Green Infrastructure
- CS15 – Biodiversity
- CS26 – Flooding
- CS27 – Sustainable Buildings

5.9   Currently there are also a number of industry-leading assessments that should be considered at an early stage of the design process in determining the sustainability of schemes, including:

- Code for Sustainable Homes
- Building for Life
- BREEAM 2008
- Lifetime Homes

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8   The Elmbridge Core Strategy includes policies relating to the sustainable location of development; Local character, Density and Design; Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity; Travel and Accessibility; Flooding; and Sustainable Buildings. All these policies should be referred to when you are considering the overall sustainability of a development

5.10   The BREEAM assessment offers a large number of assessment types depending on the type and use of a particular development. This list is not exhaustive and will no doubt change over the lifetime of this SPD.

Initial design strategies

5.11   Many aspects of design can contribute towards appropriate forms of sustainable development; from location and layout, materials and recycling facilities to water use and energy. Whilst sustainability principles permeate this SPD, this section highlights key sustainable design considerations.

5.12   Within a wider context, you should consider the appropriateness of the type of development proposed. For example, schemes for higher densities can help to reduce the use of greenfield sites for new development and can contribute to the viability of local services, and are generally situated in more accessible urban locations. However, densities for specific sites should be appropriate and respond positively to the character of the area.

5.13   Larger residential environments are more likely to become sustainable neighbourhoods if essential supporting facilities and infrastructure are conveniently located within easy walking distance of the home (approximately 400 metres). Thus a focal point of development as a whole, be it residential, commercial or mixed use, should be its relationship with uses such as community facilities, shops and workplaces, which can add vitality to an area and should be considered at the outset.

5.14   Development should be laid out in a manner to facilitate walking or cycling to the nearest town and/or village centre and to the nearest bus stops, train station or cycle path. Routes to these should be as direct, safe and attractive as possible.

5.15   There are a large number of factors to consider when planning and designing a new development. The elements below should be carefully considered at the earliest stage:

- Water (internal, external use and surface water run off)
- Energy
- Materials
- Waste and Pollution
- Ecology
- Who will be using the development and how?

5.16   Developments should seek to minimise their impact on the environment, be this by using passive heating and ventilation, consideration of flooding impacts, or other relevant matters which would impact on a development's sustainability.

Development layout, orientation, design and form

5.17   The layout and orientation of a development can help maximise the use of renewable energy and improve sustainability. Consider thermal efficiency, solar gain or the potential for the use of renewable or low carbon technologies at the outset.

5.18   Developments should also provide sufficient space for cycle parking or storage and, for residential schemes, should consider opportunities for home working.

5.19   Natural light and ventilation can significantly minimise the need for daytime artificial lighting and mechanical ventilation as well as creating better environments to live and work in. Natural convection currents, which can be supplemented by heat exchangers, can optimise comfort conditions for occupants. Pitched roofs in various configurations, with heat exchange and vent stacks, can often provide skyline interest.

5.20   Building 'envelopes', material and form of design can also make a significant contribution to energy efficiency. Give thought to walls that contain a high thermal mass, and the origin and insulating properties of materials. Glazing will be affected by a number of factors depending on orientation, such as whether external sun shading is adequate, and whether development would be overcome by heating and shading. The design properties of glazing i.e. its reflective

nature and how this responds to its environment and the occupants of the proposed building, is also important.

5.21 Building materials and structures that have a long life and are adaptable result in more sustainable developments. Buildings that have potential for future conversion and extension will contribute to the sustainability of a development.

> How can **orientation** be used to maximise the sustainability potential of the development?

5.22 Carefully consider building orientation within the development. Although southerly (30° either side of south) orientation ensures maximum passive heat gain, it can result in overheating and glare for occupants. Elevational devices such as sunscreens or 'brise soleil' may therefore be considered when designing the layout of your development. A southerly orientation also means that the opposite side of the building will be in permanent shadow. A scheme which consists solely of south facing buildings can lead to a development which is of repetitive character and may not be of high quality design, conflicting with the grain and built form of adjacent buildings, contrary to placemaking principles. The indicative diagrammatic layouts (Figures 5.1 and 5.2) summarise the issue.

5.23 **Figure 5.1** shows a layout aligned strictly due south. This results in a strongly linear and geometric layout which is at odds with the more organic grain of the area. Moreover, the geometric plot and building layout produces oddly shaped 'space left over' at the interface with the street frontage, making poor utilisation of space (often overshadowed) with significant maintenance implications.

Figure 5.1 Layout - south

5.24 **Figure 5.2** makes full use of the '30° option' for orientation as well as ensuring that at least 25% of the houses face due south.

Area of roofs covered by photovoltaic panels

[S] 'SLOAP' Space Left Over After Planning'
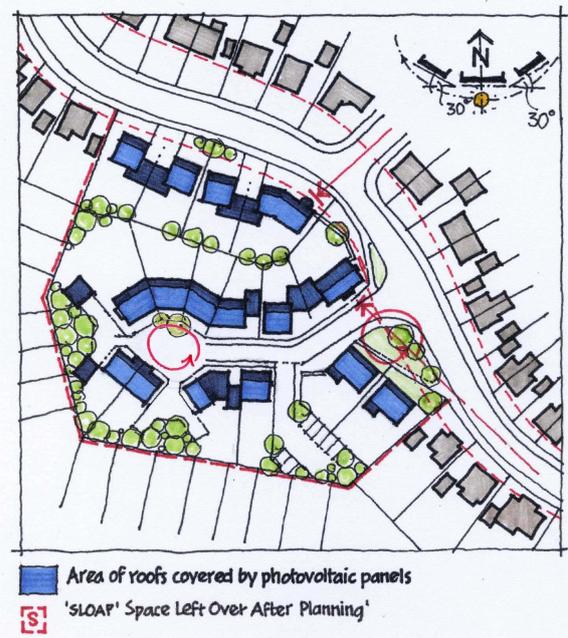
Figure 5.2 Layout - 30° option

Energy

5.25 All developments use energy. Heating, lighting, cooking, cleaning, transport, etc. will all have an impact on energy use, which in turn will impact on a building's efficiency and emissions. Consideration at an early stage can both reduce emissions as well as reduce the future running costs of the development.

5.26 Address key factors at the initial stages of development, including reducing the need for energy, using and supplying energy efficiently, and the use of renewable or low carbon options.

5.27 These can come in a number of guises, from wind turbines to ground source heat pumps. Currently there are some allowances for these to be implemented under permitted development, however these should be considered as an integral part of development. Further details are set out within the General Permitted Development Order.

5.28 Developments should aim to minimise the overall emissions of the building through the fabric efficiency of the building, i.e. appropriate levels of insulation.

5.29 Air conditioning can significantly increase energy consumption and also emissions. Appropriate design can mitigate the need for such systems. Furthermore this will also allow for consideration of drying space to reduce the need for energy consuming white goods.

5.30 It is important to note that these technologies, and the use of renewable energy generation, may have a significant influence on the appearance of buildings. However, they should not dictate the design of buildings to such an extent that they have an adverse effect on scale and appearance.

Solar panels on traditional roofslope

5.31 Whilst it is acknowledged that some developments may incorporate elements such as passive ventilation chimneys, these can be an integral part of the design, rather than being a late addition that detracts from an intended design. Energy options could include a large number of solutions, either singularly or in combinations, of which some are set out below:

- **Combined heat and power generation:** Viable on medium to larger, relatively compact developments.
- **Biomass boiler systems:** Particularly effective where biomass fuel pellets can be sourced on site (e.g. coppiced woodland) or within the local area.
- **Ground source heat:** Either via relatively extensive areas of grass, for a sub surface system, or deep bore holes. Both options have limited visual impact. Water source or air source could also be considered)
- **Wind generators:** The relatively sheltered character of Elmbridge and the effect of turbulence caused by nearby trees and building can limit the opportunities for wind generation.
- **Solar water heating panels:** Optimal performance when integrated into a southerly oriented pitched roof.
- **Photovoltaic panels:** Large arrays can be very effective, especially when incorporated into roof, atrium or canopy design. Orientation is important although

near horizontal configurations can receive significant light.

- **Heat and energy recovery systems:** These can be appropriate for commercial developments where excess energy can be re-used within the development.

Water (internal, external use and surface water run off)

5.32   Water consumption for both internal and external use can be significantly reduced through the proper planning of new development. The use of grey water (re-use of potable water) can therefore reduce the amount of water used within a development. For example, low flush and restricted pressure fixtures will reduce the amount of water required.

5.33   In respect of exterior areas, the use and storage of water such as rainwater harvesting systems, water butts or centralised rainwater harvesting systems should form an integral part of the design as appropriate.

5.34   Surface water run off and rainwater discharge can also be a major issue for development. Currently for residential developments, sites should demonstrate that systems are in place to ensure that there is no run off. This can be achieved through a number of methods, mainly SuDS (Sustainable urban Drainage Systems). In order to minimise run off, especially following periods of intensive rain, surfaces should be as porous as possible. Incorporating green roofs, soft landscaped areas, trees, porous paved surfaces, the use of balancing ponds, and other appropriate methods should be integrated into the design at an early stage.

5.35   The capture, treatment and re-use of water can be attained through a large number of methods such as green roofs or swales. Implementation can also reduce the risk of flooding for the development site. The installations of such systems should also be considered in conjunction with flood risk and drainage assessments where appropriate. It

is also important for you to check that your development site is not within an area at risk of flooding[9]

Ecology

5.36   The protection and use of ecology in developments can be a key part of maintaining the character of the Borough as well as increasing and preserving its biodiversity. Elmbridge consists of large numbers of natural habitats of international, national and local significance including large and mixed population of trees and ancient woodland, waterways and heathland[10]. Many of these sites lie within the urban area as well as the more rural parts of the Borough. In addition, waterways, hedgerows, woodlands, trees and verges form important wildlife corridors providing essential links between habitats and the wider Green Infrastructure network.

5.37   Retention and protection of these features can not only reduce the impact of development but will also allow development to adapt more suitably to its surroundings and preserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity, Green Infrastructure and distinctive character as well as improving its resilience to climate change.

5.38   Development should take account of the ecological value of a site and enhance and protect it where appropriate. As the largest living element within the environment, trees should not be seen as a constraint to development but can provide their own biodiversity and ecology as well as amenity and character to the wider area. They can screen unsightly views, improve aesthetics by softening buildings and have an important cooling effect in the urban environment. Suitable design should include existing features and encompass them within development. The provision for planting and retention of trees offers significant opportunities to increase sustainability including the influence on rainfall, essential wildlife habitat, creation of shade and shelter, reduction of soil erosion and an ability to

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9   Environment Agency Flood Maps - www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/default.aspx
10   Proposals Map – www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy

recycle organic matter. The Council has produced guidance relating to trees and development in Elmbridge [11].

5.39 For schemes with landscaped areas, you should also consider their resilience and adaptability to climate change and extreme weather events. There are a number of design considerations such as 'green or brown roofs' and 'green walls' among others that could be considered, which would enhance biodiversity. In turn, the preservation and promotion of Green Infrastructure contributes to the health and wellbeing of Borough residents.

5.40 The creation and retention of trees and hedgerows to establish an environment sheltered from strong winds should be demonstrated in design schemes.

5.41 Give careful consideration to the presence of any protected species or flora and fauna on site. Given the Borough's building stock, landscape and environment, there are also a large number of species within the Borough, such as bats, which are protected, both under National and European Legislation. Further information relating to development and protected species is available from Natural England [12].

Building materials

5.42 First consider if existing buildings and structures on site have potential for re-use. If this is not feasible, materials should be retained, re-used or recycled.

5.43 One of the main sustainable elements of a building is the materials it uses. Consider the appropriateness of materials, the embodied energy within them, and if any existing building materials can be re-used or recycled.

5.44 The materials used for the buildings and paved surfaces should be considered within the context of their durability, thermal efficiency (where relevant), insulation

properties, maintenance regimes and their source. For example, where possible, materials should be from a responsible source e.g. timber should be FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified.

5.45 Wherever possible, you should utilise locally produced materials, e.g. bricks, timber components or straw bale walling, especially if the energy consumption is low in their manufacture and transportation the energy consumption is low. Such considerations could make a building considerably more sustainable, reduce its overall impact on the environment, and often more in keeping with a local vernacular.

Waste and pollution

5.46 You should ensure that waste and pollution generated during and post development does not unduly impact on its locality, increase waste to land fill and should allow for recycling where appropriate.

5.47 During development, you are encouraged to sign up to one of the Government's recognised schemes such as 'considerate constructors'. This would require waste and pollution to be addressed during development. Surrey County Council has a plan for waste management, which should be taken into account during the design of any scheme. [13]

5.48 Consider if the development is suitably insulated to reduce emissions and increase thermal efficiency. Potential emissions from heating of space and water, for example nitrogen oxide emissions, should be addressed through suitable efficient heating systems.

5.49 Material for recycling, whether solid or compostable, can require a variety of measures that need to be taken account of, including convenient storage and accessibility for collection.

11   Trees and Development in Elmbridge - A Guide to incorporating Trees in Proposals for Development - www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/trees
12   Natural England - www.naturalengland.org.uk
13   Surrey Waste Partnership, A Plan for Waste Management: Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, 2010 available to view at www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/waste-and-recycling

Who will using the development and how?

5.50   The early consideration of the 'end user' can significantly increase the sustainability of a development the overall health and well being of its occupants.

**5.51**   A number of matters set out below should be considered:

- The convenient location of storage for bicycles
- Opportunities for Car Clubs or car sharing
- Are routes to and within the site appropriately lit?
- Is there sufficient amenity space for future occupants?
- Is there suitable space and infrastructure for a home office?
- Is there suitable daylight and sound insulation for future occupants, thereby reducing the need for electric lighting within buildings?
- Does the design of the building offer flexibility for conversion to another use in the future?

5.52   This is by no means exhaustive and other relevant elements should be considered where appropriate.

Layout

> Will the development respond to the **rhythm** of the streetscape?

5.53   In designing a scheme, carefully consider issues such as the grain, building line and plot coverage. Take care to respect established spacing patterns in the streetscape and to relate to the character of the area (Figure 5.3). The siting should avoid creating or increasing a terracing effect by effectively closing gaps between buildings with development.
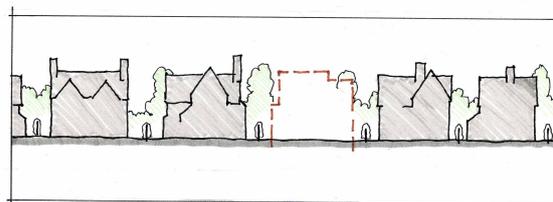

Figure 5.3 Infill development respecting the rhythm of the streetscape

5.54   Maintaining a well defined building line can be key to ensuring new development responds to the character of the area. See also 'Continuity' in the 'Roles within the Streetscape' section paragraph 5.65.

5.55   The grain of the existing area will influence the siting of new development and you should consider the pattern of buildings within the streetscape and the character area but also where density could be increased in suitable locations. It might be useful to produce a figure ground diagram (Figures 5.4 and 5.5) within the context of the site whereby proposals can be tested for appropriateness to the site context.

Figure 5.4 Figure ground diagram
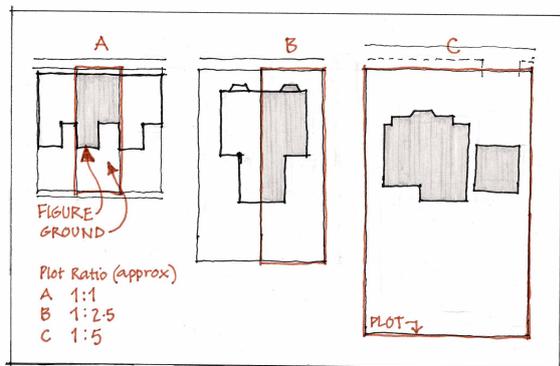
Figure 5.5 Plot ratios for differing patterns of development

How will **garden space** be provided to meet the needs of future residents?

5.56   Where gardens are included within residential development, they should be of an appropriate size to provide amenity space for occupiers. The size of the garden may also be key to enhancing the setting of a building, particularly larger flatted developments. In some instances, a minimum garden depth of 11 metres should be provided, which is a dimension that Elmbridge has often required. However, this will depend on the character of the area and the type of development proposed.

5.57   Issues to consider include whether a home is likely to be occupied by a family, the size of the building and if the amount of usable space is constrained, perhaps by its topography or the presence of large trees, for example. Higher density urban locations may benefit from individual design solutions to the provision of amenity space, such as providing balconies, courtyards or communal space, rather than a private garden of specified depth. Such an approach could be taken especially when overlooking is avoided through design (see Privacy section at paragraph 5.84), rather than requiring a degree of separation often associated with the provision of traditional rear gardens. However, more spacious gardens will be appropriate in other settings where the character of the area warrants a greater depth, usually in excess of 15 metres.

5.58   The case studies (at section 7) provide useful guidance on how amenity space can be provided within particular contexts and demonstrate how suitable garden sizes can be achieved.

How will **amenity** issues influence the design and siting of buildings on the site?

5.59   It is important that you consider the relationship of new development to other buildings, both within the site and to existing dwellings outside the site. Take care to ensure the development is neighbourly and does not have a negative effect on light and outlook from windows and amenity spaces. The character of the area and the context of the site will influence the siting of buildings. For example, spacious settings should be respected in lower density areas whilst a dense grain may be appropriate in more urban locations. The orientation of buildings will also affect the impact of new development on daylight and sunlight to neighbouring dwellings.

5.60   A useful tool to assess the effect of new development on neighbours' amenity and to influence the siting of new buildings is to apply the '45 degree rule' as depicted below (Figure 5.6). This illustrates an acceptable relationship between buildings, with new single storey development positioned further than 8 metres from the existing dwelling and the two storey element further than 15 metres when located within a 90 degree arc from the edges of main windows to habitable rooms.
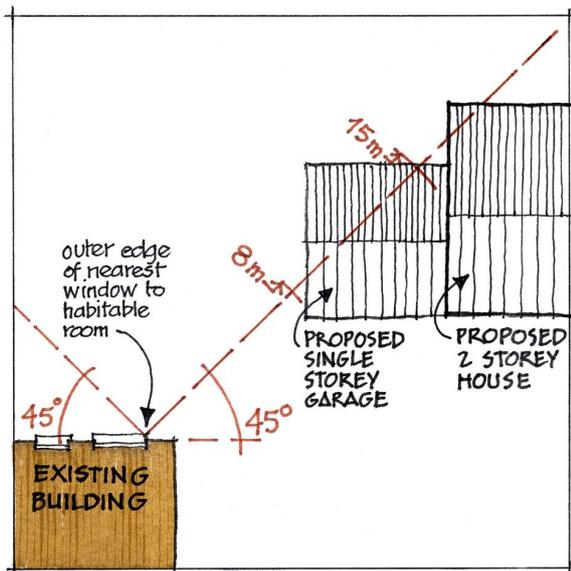
Figure 5.6 The 45 degree rule

5.61   An additional tool for considering the relationship between buildings is the '25 degree rule of thumb'. This Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance advises that daylight and sunlight levels may be adversely affected by the presence of buildings near to windows serving habitable rooms (Figure 5.7).
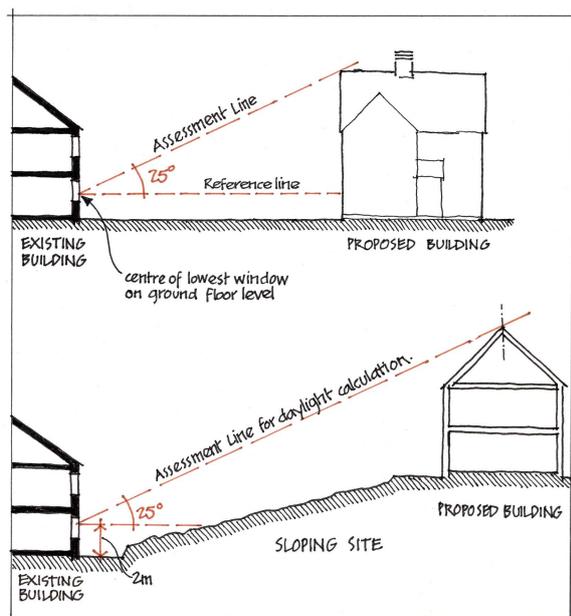
Figure 5.7 The 25 degree rule

5.62   The character of an area should inform the means of access and the manner in which parking can be accommodated in the site where necessary. Developments should not be dominated by hardstanding and it may be appropriate to intersperse parking spaces throughout the site. Landscaping can be used to mitigate the impacts on residential amenity and to integrate parking and driveways, as well as cycle and refuse storage, into the development in a neighbourly manner. The sections on Landscape Design (paragraphs 5.78-5.83) and Storage (paragraphs 5.87 & 5.88) provide further guidance on this issue and the case studies demonstrate how this can be achieved in practice. Some types of development, particularly to the rear of existing buildings, and some character areas may be particularly sensitive and require thoughtful design solutions to the provision of parking and access. For further advice on the layout of this aspect of development see Manual for Streets[14]

5.63   Give consideration to designing places with the appropriate level and type of access, both vehicular and pedestrian, in order to reduce potential for crime. For larger schemes, this may include ensuring well defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security in addition to avoiding secluded footpaths and maximising surveillance over driveways, parking areas and cycle stores. Advice can be given to you at the pre-application stage in conjunction with the police's architectural liaison officers.

41

Roles within the Streetscape

What **role** should the development play within the streetscape?

5.64   The character of a development site will to some extent be defined by its location within the streetscape. The following six examples of typical locations illustrate the key 'roles' they represent. These roles and locations are similar whether the context is village, suburb or town. The design response to the role will however vary in each case in terms of massing, scale height etc. depending on context. There will be situations where the site may perform more than one of these roles.

Continuity

5.65   The existing building line, frontage alignment, plot width, spacing (or lack of it) is highly defined, consistent and considered as a component contributing to the character of the area (Figure 5.8). In this case, the design proposals should generally defer to these characteristics.
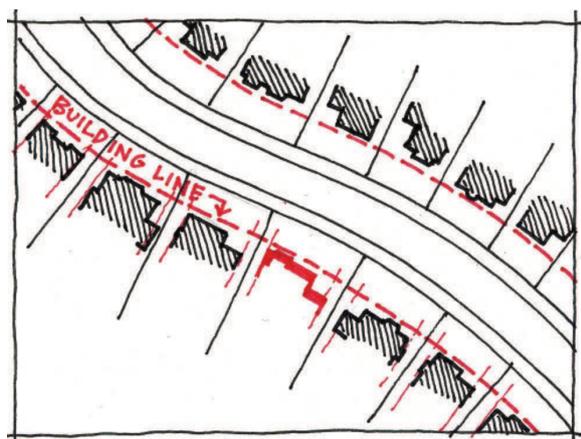

Figure 5.8 Continuity

Termination of Vista

5.66   The site and any proposed building would be visible at the end of a street/road (Figure 5.9). It has the function of 'closing' the view. Any building would be viewed in elevation (rather than obliquely as usual) and at some distance. Because of these considerations, the elevational design should be coherent at a distance, regarding its roof line, scale of openings, formality etc.
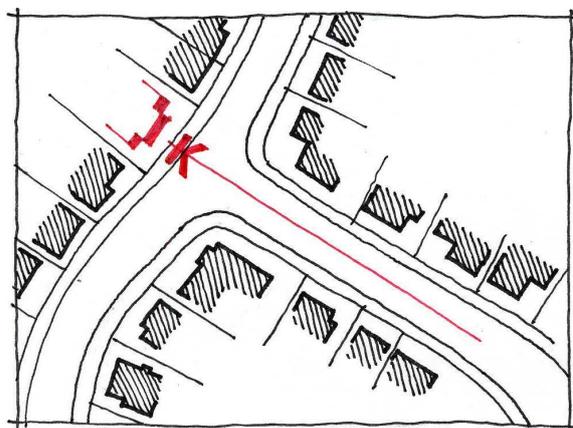
Figure 5.9 Termination of Vista

Key Corner

5.67   There are particular corner sites which play a 'pivotal' part in the streetscape, where the character changes from one street to another and where traditionally the corner or prow of the site is 'celebrated' in the massing of the building, including its roof line (Figure 5.10). The corner building is perceived in three dimensions rather than the usual two, where only the main elevations are seen.

Figure 5.10 Key Corner

Key Group

5.68   Some larger sites may be the focus of a number of views and the frontage may consist of a number of plots (Figure 5.11). Typically a key group may need to form the background to a green space. Key groups

may be required at focal points in some larger developments or at the **gateway** to a development or settlement. The design response should ensure that each unit (e.g. house) should contribute to the total scene, at the appropriate scale.

Figure 5.11 Key Group
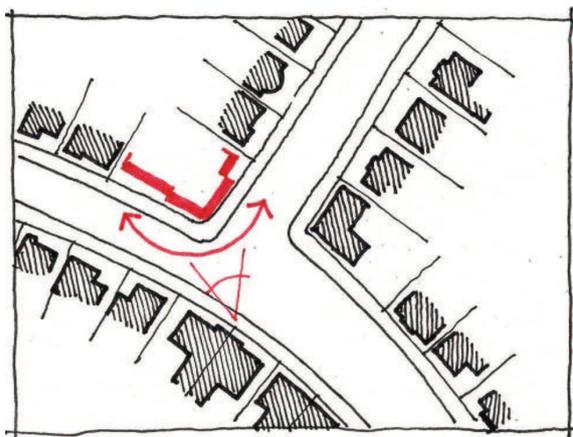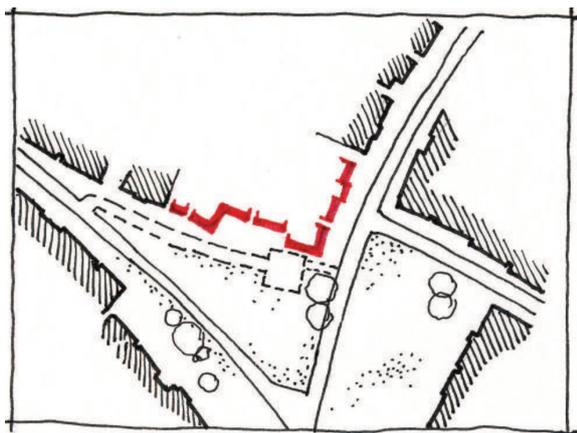
Landmark

5.69   The site may be the focus of a number of direct or indirect views and/or be at a critical junction or location in the street network (Figure 5.12). The nature or volume of the building or the site's previous significance may also contribute to the landmark status of the building. It will be a matter of judgement whether a major or minor landmark would be appropriate and to what extent the development should contrast with its surroundings.
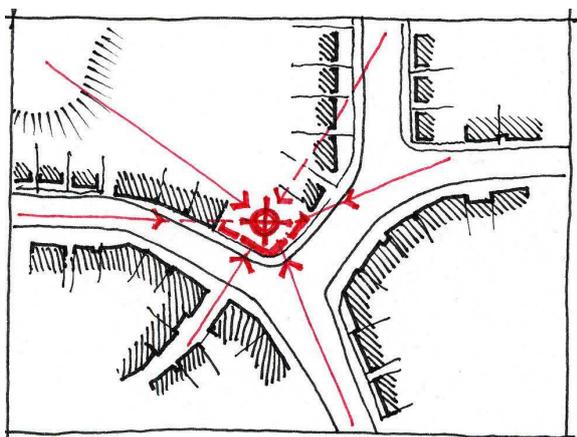
Figure 5.12 Landmark

Enclosed Backland

5.70   The site is only partially visible from the main street frontages and is located behind street frontage properties (Figure 5.13). It may have a secluded garden context, or be in a yard-type context behind commercial properties. In most cases its main characteristics will be intimate, inward-looking and constrained by the requirements of privacy and overshadowing of its neighbours. The development should be designed to positively terminate the view into the site from the entrance, to convey a positive sense of place.
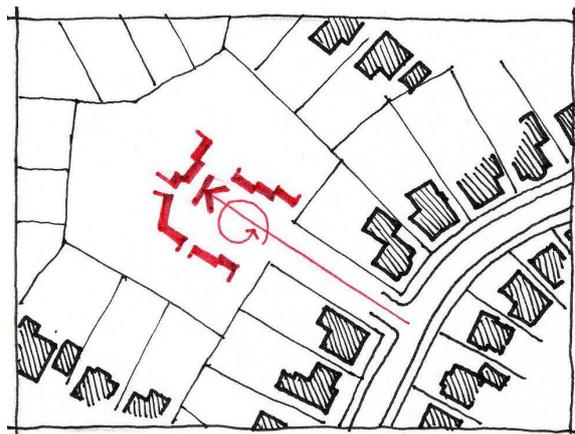
Figure 5.13 Enclosed Backland

Edge

5.71   These sites directly address the boundary of a settlement or the interface between a built-up area and countryside, busy road, waterside or contrasting land use (Figure 5.14). In these situations it is usually critical that a positive **active frontage** faces these areas, rather than 'accidental' nondescript or dead (blank) frontage design.

Figure 5.14 Edge

Massing and Scale

What approach will be taken regarding the **massing** and **scale** of the development?

5.72 A key design response, both to the role of the proposed development in the street and to its site, is to consider the massing of the scheme. The massing will play a large part in determining the character of the building and its appropriateness.

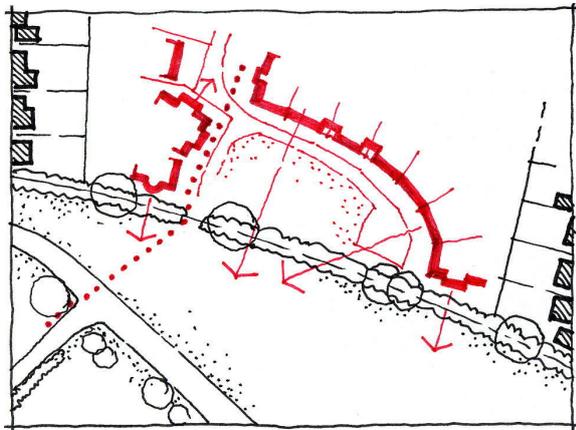**5.73** For any given volume of accommodation there is a range of options to the way it can be given form or massing. These options can range from simple, flush, cubic shapes (see Figure 5.15 below), to a more modelled approach (see Figure 5.16), where various elements of the building are recessed, projected or subtly turned (to follow a street frontage etc), or perhaps to give prominence to entrances or corners. Massing can be used both to manipulate the plan shape or footprint, and heights, to give skyline interest and break down the bulk of a building.

5.74 The handling of massing can reflect the character of a scheme: whether it is formal or repetitive, or whether it is informal, as appropriate.

5.75 The orientation of the building should also be taken into account in its massing. Deep recesses on plan or elevation can provide interesting modelling on sunlit

southerly aspects, but will emphasise the lack of light on northern or north easterly elevations.
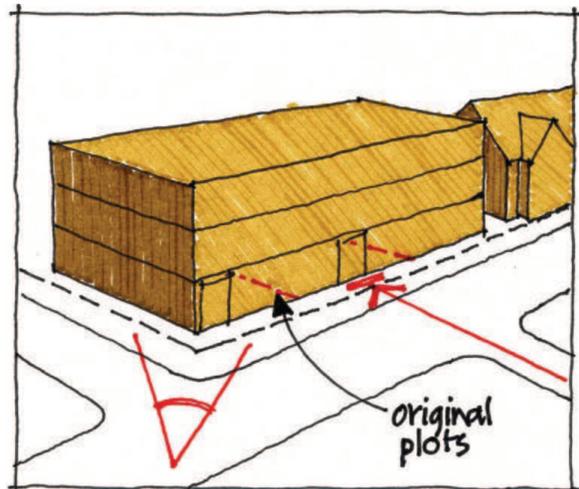
Figure 5.15 Cubic volume

5.76 **Figure 5.15** shows the notional volume of the proposed building expressed as a plain cubic form, with little differentiation of its elements, nor acknowledgement of its roles in the streetscape. Its strong horizontal scale is at odds with its neighbours. The extensive flat roof emphasises this contrast. The grain of the original plots, is a key element of the scale of the street, but is ignored in the design of the elevations. There may however, be limited contexts where flush cubic forms could be appropriate.
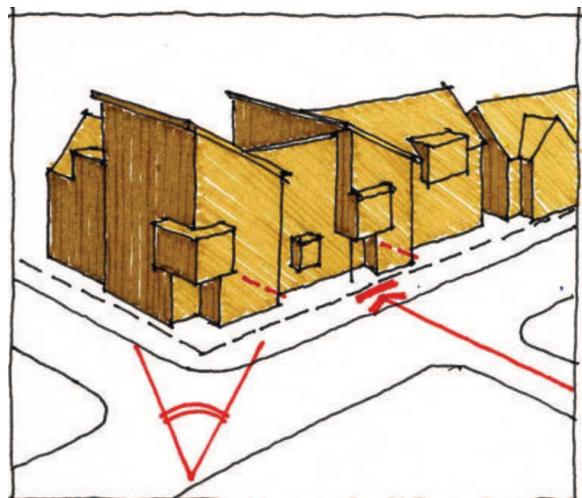
Figure 5.16 Modelled volume

5.77 **Figure 5.16** shows the same volume as in Figure 5.15 but it is expressed as a hierarchy of elements, some given prominence – at entrances, at the pivotal corner of the building and at the termination of the vista from the side street. The elements are slightly projecting or recessed – enough to cast shadows, allowing some modelling of the elevations. This helps to reflect the 'grain' of the original building plots. Overall, verticals and horizontals are balanced. Pitched roofs can aid the subdivision of the building and enhance its coherence.

Landscape Design

Why is **landscape** important in considering new development and how can it reinforce sustainability and placemaking principles?

5.78 Elmbridge is characterised by significant green areas including woodland, ancient woodland, common land, greens, farmland, rivers, reservoirs, playing fields, golf courses and parkland. Development in these green areas, on the edge of towns and villages and in sensitive and/or significant locations will affect the landscape character of the area.

**5.79** The landscape of the Borough and its local areas has been identified as a significant attraction for local residents and businesses and the Council places great importance on its protection and enhancement.

Landscape Design: Considerations

- Landscape design should respond to the existing character so that it contributes to a 'sense of place' and integrates new development.

- Landscape plans provide the opportunity to develop visual interest and distinctiveness.

- They should also help increase biodiversity, create linkages to other Green Infrastructure areas wherever possible; and

- Develop sustainability such as SuDS through permeable landscaping and swales.

5.80 Professional advice is usually required at an early stage to demonstrate an understanding of the existing site and surroundings and provide proposals to integrate and enhance the development as well as advising on existing trees and their protection[15]. Master Plans are a useful tool to develop and deliver a landscape design for larger sites.

5.81 Give careful consideration to the character of the area and site based on the character areas identified in this SPD as well as:

- The design and siting of the new development in relation to existing topography, trees, other buildings, external views into and out of the site and internal views within the site.
- Site features such as hedges, ponds, terraces, paths and boundary walls.
- The presence of individual trees and groups, their condition and age and how the development could successfully integrate them to give scale and maturity.
- Potential open spaces and new areas for planting and integration of car parking and access within the development to avoid dominating the residential and landscape environment.
- The choice of hard materials (walls, surfaces) and soft materials (planting types, extent and species) which should be appropriate to the area, the scale of

15   For further information regarding trees and development, please refer to the Trees and Development Supplementary Planning
      Guidance which can be downloaded from the trees and planning applications web pages at
      www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/trees

development and future maintenance requirements.

5.82   Boundary treatments should reflect those in the vicinity and security fences and gates should not be allowed to dominate the street scene. Designs should not rely on screening with fast growing conifers such as leylandii since these are intrusive features requiring regular maintenance and which often create shade problems for adjacent properties. The impact and effect of lighting in the landscape, particularly in large non-residential development should also be considered.

5.83   Public realm is any part of the site that everyone can use and enjoy including streets, squares and parks. Residents and users of these spaces should feel a sense of ownership and responsibility, aided by clarity over where public space ends and where communal, semi-private or private space begins, and thoughtful use of hard and soft landscaping. The design of legible, interesting, integrated, inclusive and safe spaces is crucial to their success and should follow best practice from the design guidance produced by national organisations which are referred to in section 8. More information will also be available in the future Greenspace Strategy.

Privacy

> Can reasonable **privacy** be achieved, both within the site and with adjacent properties, either through conventional separation or through design?

5.84   In many cases a notional degree of visual privacy is achieved through the conventional requirement to ensure about 22 metres between rear elevations facing each other. This is generally applicable in suburban contexts. However, it may be appropriate to increase this distance in some contexts. In more compact contexts, in the centre of towns or even in some village sites, especially in infill situations, it may not be possible or appropriate to achieve the conventional distances.

5.85   Schemes should demonstrate that visual privacy can be achieved between nearby habitable rooms and private amenity spaces, through the layout, massing and design of buildings. For instance, the juxtaposition of one room related to another, the projection or recession of different elements of the building, the use of above eye level boundaries, and the use of planting can be effective, as can the choice of window sizes and their location in an elevation. The following figures illustrate different ways of achieving privacy.

Figure 5.17 Privacy - Terraced housing

- Terraced housing incorporating modest ground floor projections, creating a private patio and screening of full height living room windows (Figure 5.17).
- High cill windows restricting overlooking.
- Full height slit window adjacent to a partition wall allow glimpses of the garden yet little opportunity for lateral vision.
- Fences and associate planting contribute to privacy in an attractive manner.
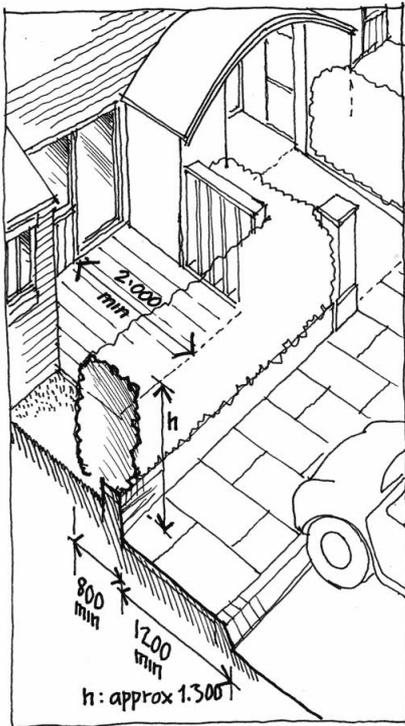
Figure 5.18 Ground floor apartments

Figure 5.19 Rooflights and high level windows

- The use of roof lights and high level windows is effective in achieving privacy and high levels of daylighting, without recourse to obscured glazing (Figure 5.19).

- Ground floor apartments with adjacent parking bays (Figure 5.18) can often cause disturbance and a lack of privacy.
- The minimum distance between a parked car and living room window should be approximately 4 metres, with a deep 'defensive' hedge.
- Preferably a difference of level between the car hardstanding and the living room of at least 300mm should be provided, to reduce a sense of being overlooked.
- A semi private sitting out space of a least 2 metres depth should be provided outside the living room.
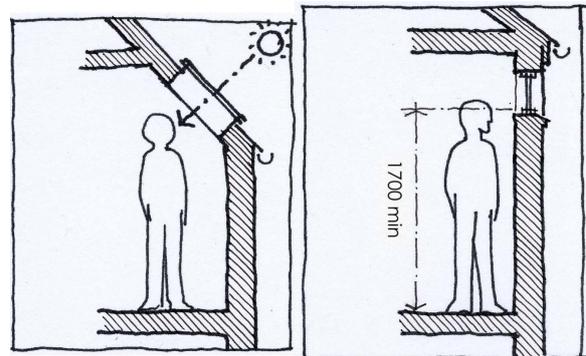
Figure 5.20 Oblique views

- These windows (Figure 5.20) are designed to give oblique views and good sources of daylight, especially for use on flank walls adjacent to sensitive boundaries.

Figure 5.21 Garages

Storage (recycling, bikes and garage)

Is **storage** for cars, bikes and bins achieved in a discreet and appropriate manner?

5.87   The need for storage space is often underestimated in the design of housing. Additionally the requirements to accommodate 'wheelie' bins and food containers for recycling and the encouragement to use bicycles for short journeys, all imply considerable space allocations.

5.88   You should demonstrate on your plans how specific key items identified above, and others as appropriate, can be accommodated and directly retrieved.

- Figure 5.22 indicates how the storage of bicycles and recycling can be accommodated.
- Dimensions are those recommended.
- Schemes should show how basic storage is accommodated if alternative provision is proposed.
- At least two bicycles should be accommodated and accessed directly without having to move a car.
- Garage width should allow for this and have sufficient space to fully open the driver's door of most cars.
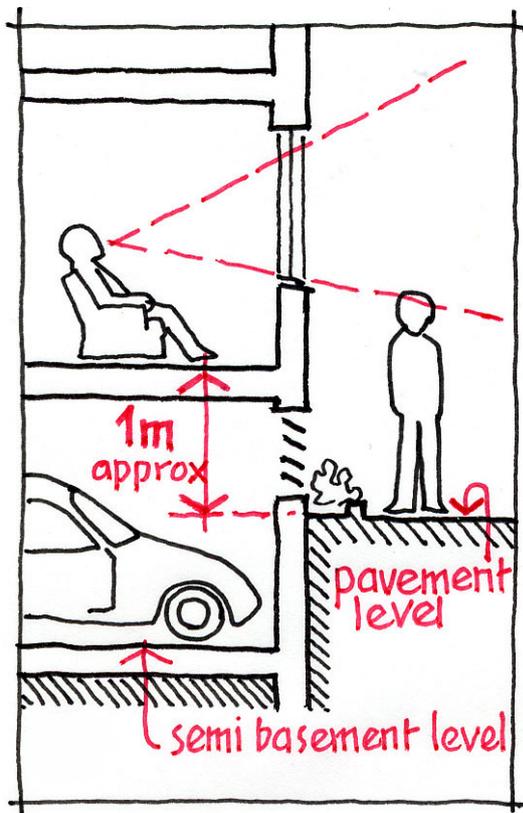- A 3.3 metre width would also allow for wheelchair access to a car.
- The principles of Secured by Design should be incorporated to reduce the potential for crime.

For further advice and specific dimensions of bin provisions, please see the Council's 'Guidance on the storage and collection of household waste'.[16]

- Garaging in a semi basement should not project any more than 1 metre from ground level to habitable room level (Figure 5.21). This arrangement can afford excellent visual privacy as the cill height is at a pedestrian's eye level, whilst minimising the visual impact of parked cars.

5.86   When positioning windows to maximise privacy, also give consideration to ensuring natural surveillance over publicly accessible spaces such as communal parking areas by avoiding blank walls and exploiting opportunities for overlooking these types of area to aid crime prevention.
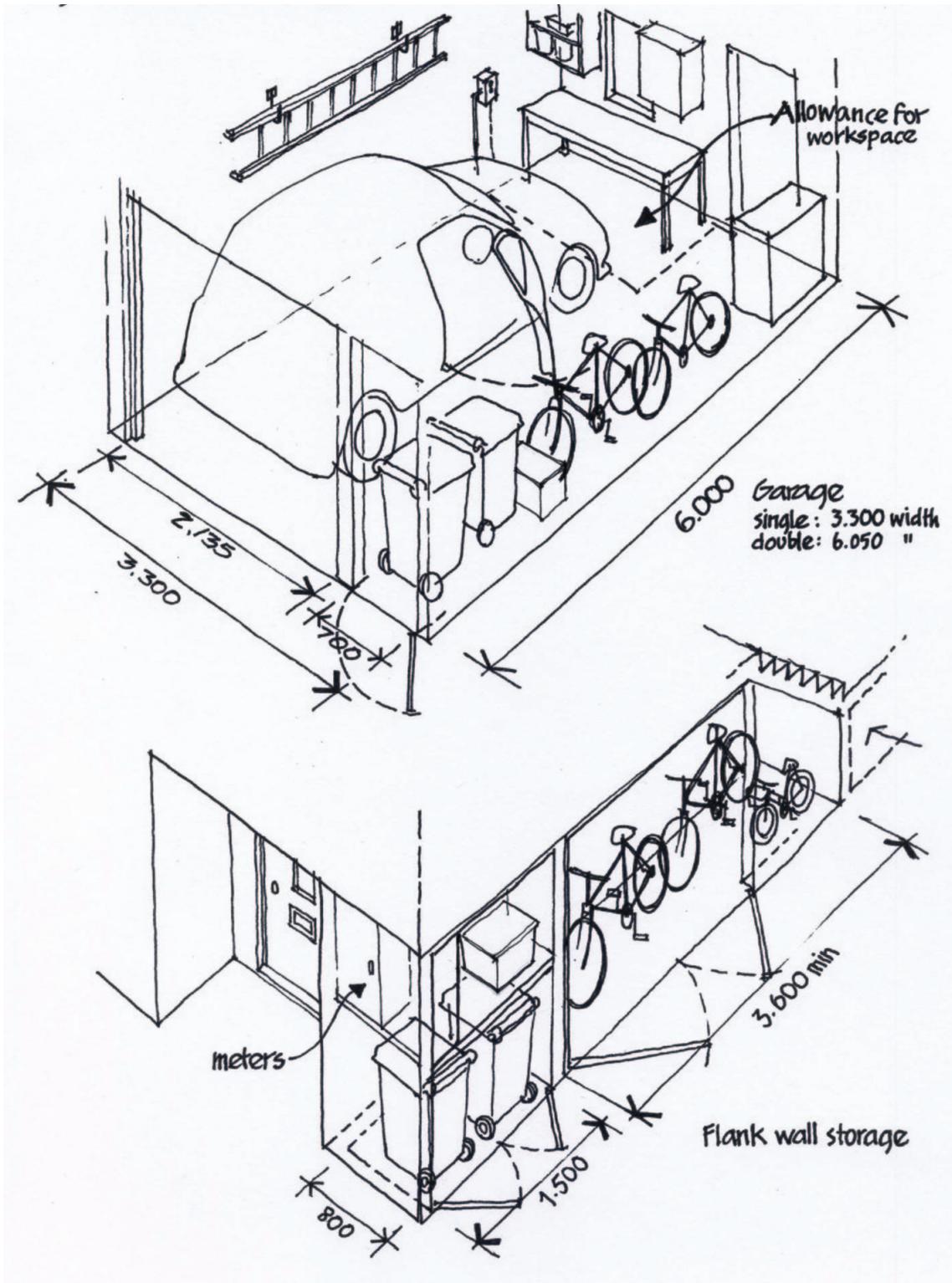
Figure 5.22 Storage - Residential

Materials

> What approach will be taken when choosing the most appropriate and sustainable **materials** for the development?

5.89 There is now an almost limitless choice of materials, and therefore more judgement is required as to the appropriateness of the selected materials.

5.90 Design and Access Statements should discuss your reasons for using particular materials. You will usually need to submit samples of the materials to be used on the external faces and roof of new development to the Borough Council for written approval.

5.91 Additionally, the Planning Authority will consider the following:

- Whether the material has been sourced as locally as possible.
- The degree to which the material incorporates recycled material.
- The length of life of the material and whether it can be safely recycled.

5.92 In sensitive contexts, the following considerations will be important:

- The effects of weathering of the material (liability to stain, lose colour or erode) and conversely whether the effects of weathering actually enhance the appearance of the material.
- The texture or absence of texture of the material related to existing materials on adjacent buildings.
- The colour of the material and its reflectance, related to nearby buildings and landscape.
- The unit size and proportions of the material, e.g. storey height prefabricated panels or large horizontal glazing units will determine the scale of a building in relation to its neighbours.

- Whether the material has been selected on the basis that it is popular or fashionable, but is likely to appear dated in a relatively short period.
- General appropriateness: e.g. timber cladding is attractive in rural and suburban contexts, but can look out of place in urban or town centre settings, or tokenistic when used in small panels.

5.93 Consult the settlement area character assessment in the relevant companion guide regarding the predominant pattern of colours, textures and materials in a locality. Where it is not feasible to replicate these, give careful consideration to complementary materials in terms of colour, texture and unit size.

5.94 The 'Sustainability' section at paragraphs 5.42-5.45 also provides information on building materials.

Boundaries

> How does the development relate to established **boundaries** in the street?

5.95 The front boundary to a property is a critical interface between private property and public space. The character of the cumulative effect of boundaries in a street largely creates the character of the street, road or lane. It is therefore essential that the design of the boundary must be given the same contextual consideration as for the design of the development project as a whole.

5.96 You should appraise the predominant pattern of boundary designs within a street as part of the initial stages of the design process. Where boundaries make a consistent and positive contribution to the character of the street, this design should be adhered to. This is equally true of conservation areas [17], areas where village design statements have identified these features [18], or in the sub-areas defined in the relevant companion guide where boundaries form an important aspect of local character.

17   www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/heritage
18   www.claygate.info/villagedesign
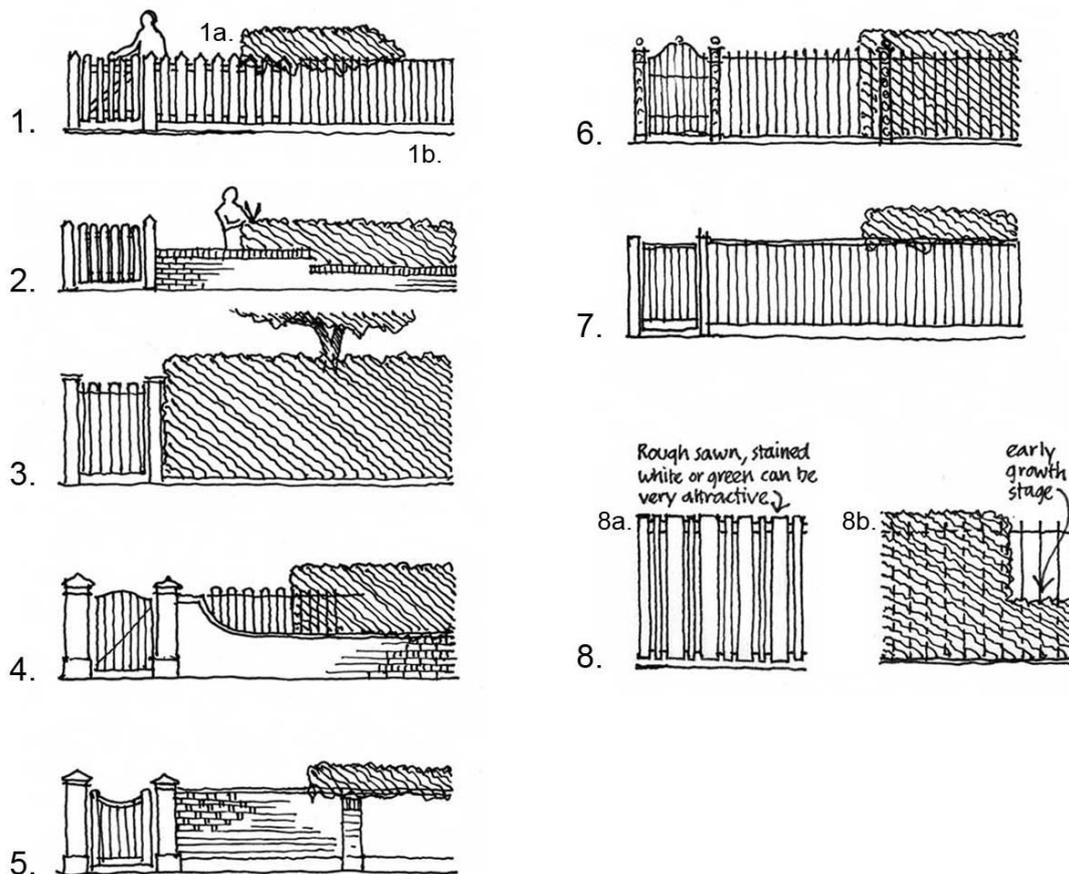
Figure 5.23 Boundary Treatments

1. **Picket fence (a):** usually in village settings or **close boarded fence (b):** usually in village or suburban contexts. Matching timber gate in both cases/types

2. **Low wall with hedge:** usually in suburban contexts

3. **Full height hedge:** usually in well established suburban settings. Often associated with extensive tree planting, creating a predominately 'arcadian' streetscape. Timber or railing gates

4. **Wall with railings and/or hedge:** usually with substantial gate piers and the wall 'swept' to full height at the piers. Mainly in towns or well established suburbs although sometimes at a large house in a village.

5. **Full height wall:** usually with substantial gate piers and intermediate piers. Brick (English garden wall bond is appropriate) with copings. Mainly in towns or well established suburbs.

6. **Full height railings:** A 'formal' boundary usually appropriate in town contexts.

7. **Full height close boarded fence:** Normally more appropriate as side or rear boundary. This can present a 'dead' frontage to a streetscape.

8. **Some other design solutions: (a)** Thick and thin alternate open boarded fence. Visually more attractive and less wind resistant than close boarded full height fencing and less formal than railings. **(b)** Railings set behind hedge planting give a softer appearance.

5.97 In many parts of the Borough, boundaries consist of hedges and mature trees, often dominating the view down the street so that no buildings are visible. In other cases hedges are no more than about a metre high, perhaps associated with picket fences or low brick walls. In some town locations higher walls can predominate, often associated with boldly expressed brick piers. Sometimes railings are apparent, either on their own or topping a brick wall. Some developments, designed in the 1960s-70s have 'open plan' frontages as an integral part of their design concept and should be retained.

5.98 Where strong boundary treatments are broken, ill considered contrasting design or materials can have a sharply discordant effect on the streetscape and erode its quality. Avoid long, unbroken stretches of high, blank walls or fences, as this can have a deadening effect on the street, making it feel less attractive and safe. Many of these boundary treatments are erected for security reasons, however high fences and gates can prevent active frontages, obscure natural surveillance and isolate communities.

6 Design Guidance: Specific Development Types

6.1 Elmbridge is a primarily residential borough where the nature of development is generally small scale. The focus of this document is therefore on these sort of schemes, be they residential replacement/ infill or mixed use schemes in and around the town centres.

6.2 There are occasions when development proposals fall outside of this category of development. Whilst the general principles of placemaking and sustainability still apply, an individual approach to the design of the building is likely to be more appropriate. It is impossible to provide guidance on all development types that would apply to all sites in this document, but there are certain aspects of this guide that are equally applicable to 'exceptional' developments. This section highlights some of the key issues that you need to consider when dealing with specific development types, for example commercial buildings and riverside development. It also provides some useful information relating to the provision of lifetime homes, affordable housing and accommodation for older people. Where other sources of information would be helpful, these have been referred to within the text.

6.3 It is important to note that before designing any type of new development in the Borough, you should take into account the settlement and sub-area analysis (contained in the relevant companion guide) in order to understand the context of the site. This will inform the design concept as set out at section 4 of the SPD.

Commercial Development

6.4 As commercial development is so varied it is not possible to give comprehensive guidance in this document. However, you should follow the stages of the design process (Section 4) in any application. The general design principles (Section 5) should also be adhered to.

6.5 Many commercial developments are located in prominent positions and therefore their potential role within the streetscape should be fully considered and taken account of in the design (section 5.64 onwards). It is likely that any commercial building will be required to incorporate active frontages and legible entrances in their street elevations.

6.6 Care should be taken when designing commercial development in close proximity to residential uses in order to preserve the amenity of existing and future residents. (Please see general design guidance on layout starting at paragraph 5.53 for further advice)

6.7 Additionally, aspects of Case Studies CS5 Town Centre Mixed Uses, and CS6 Edge of Town Mixed Use Development at section 7, will provide further guidance.

6.8 Design briefs may be issued in particularly critical locations, in those within sensitive contexts or those with which, due to their size, or use may have a critical impact.

6.9 If the guidelines above are fully incorporated into a design scheme, innovative architectural solutions which nevertheless respond sensitively to their context would be welcome.

Riverside Development

6.10 The riverside is a significant characteristic of Elmbridge and contributes to the landscape quality of the Borough. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure a high quality design of new development along the river frontage. In order to maintain its character and not detract from its appeal, some key points to take into account are highlighted below.

- Understand the character of the part of the riverside to be developed. (See section 4 on how to appraise the site and its setting). It is important to understand that the riverside has different elements of character from urban to pastoral.
- Future development should face the waterway in order to encourage access

and security and make a positive contribution to the waterside character.

- Development should avoid blocking riverside views.[19]

- Historical, archaeological and cultural features, including small items such as mooring bollards, provide reminders of the river's past and should be preserved and displayed wherever possible.

- Car parking should be set back from the riverside wherever possible.

- Wherever practical, new development should ensure public access to the waterway.

- It is highly likely that the site will fall within an area of high flood risk. The potential impact of this should be taken into account at the outset of site consideration.[20]

> For further information of the character and management strategy of Thames please see the Thames Landscape Strategy: an overall strategy for the riverside between Kew and Hampton.[21]

Lifetime Homes Standard

> Core Strategy Policy CS17 - Local Character, Design and Density states that all new residential development will be built to Lifetime Home standards. This must be demonstrated and justified in the submitted Design and Access Statement.

6.11 Lifetime Homes are ordinary homes designed to accommodate the changing needs of occupants throughout their lives. Habinteg Housing Association's Lifetime Homes standards are nationally recognised principles to raise the standard of housing and are based around meeting 16 design features [22]. All 16 design features should be met or exceeded to reach Lifetime Homes standards to benefit everyone and help residents remain in their communities. Where it is not possible for all 16 features to be met due to site constraints, you should provide details of which standards cannot be met and justify the reasons for each through your Design and Access Statement.

Affordable Housing

> Core Strategy Policy CS17 - Local Character, Design and Density states that in schemes including a mix of affordable and market homes, tenures will be integrated to ensure social cohesion.

6.12 Design guidance specifically related to affordable housing can be found in the Developer Contributions SPD [23].

Accommodation for Older People

> Core Strategy Policy CS20 - Older People states that specialist accommodation for older people should utilise creative design, be of high quality specification, incorporate generous space standards and a high proportion of two bedroom units (at least 50%) and have full wheelchair access.

6.13 Specialist accommodation for older people should be designed appropriately to meet the needs of its residents. There is a particular need for larger, high quality units within the Borough. Schemes should incorporate creative design and have full wheelchair access throughout, internally and externally.

19   See Core Strategy policy CS14
20   Please refer to Core Strategy policy CS26 and the Council's most up to date strategic flood risk assessment.
21   www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/
22   Lifetime Homes Standards - www.lifetimehomes.org.uk
23   Developer Contributions SPD - www.elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy

6.14   Flatted development, whether new or converted, should be designed to provide lifts to service floors above ground floor ensuring all flats are accessible.

6.15   Extra care schemes should offer at least 20% of the space as communal facilities unless this would result in a duplication of existing locally available facilities.

6.16   You should refer to the detailed standards and technical guidance within the "Wheelchair Housing Design Guide" (2nd edition), written by Stephen Thorpe and Habinteg Housing Association to ensure accommodation is fully wheelchair accessible.

> Core Strategy Policy CS19: Housing Type and Size seeks to ensure that an appropriate proportion of new housing is wheelchair accessible, or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users.

6.17   In designing accommodation to be wheelchair accessible, you should have regard to the Mayor of London's "Best Practice Guidance on Wheelchair Accessible Housing". The guidance is intended to ensure that designated wheelchair accessible dwellings are suitable and easily adaptable for occupation by a wheelchair user at a later date. Homes should therefore be designed so that they can be adapted without the need for structural alteration, through minor modifications such as fixing grab rails, replacing kitchen units or replacing a bath with a shower. Homes should be large enough to accommodate the additional circulation and storage space requirements of wheelchair users, in all rooms and circulation areas.

7 Design Guidance: Case Studies

Bringing it all together

7.1 The following six case studies demonstrate how the process of understanding local character; appraising the site and its setting; and the generation of a design concept, are integrated into a design solution.

7.2 Each case study is illustrated by annotated maps[24], with supporting text which adopt the following step by step approach:

1. Context Appraisal
2. Site Appraisal
3. Design Concept (taking into account placemaking and sustainability principles)
4. Indicative Design

7.3 A key to the notation symbols used on these maps is included at the end of this document.

7.4 The Indicative Design demonstrates how the above considerations could be developed into a specific design layout. It is stressed that the design is **a** solution, not necessarily the only solution to the issues raised. The design is shown solely in plan form to avoid being unnecessarily prescriptive about elevational design.

7.5 When referring in the case studies to a residential or commercial use for a new building or the number of units that could be accommodated within it, this would not necessarily preclude an alternative use or level of occupation. For example, Case Study 1 refers to a replacement building but it could comprise flats or a single dwelling and most of the design principles will be applicable to either scenario. Other policies and guidance on the management of development will inform the appropriate use of a building in a given context.

The Case Studies

CS1: Replacement Residential Building

CS2: Residential Plot Subdivision

CS3: Infill Residential Development

CS4: Land rear of Shopping Parade

CS5: Town Centre Mixed Use

CS6: Edge of Town Centre Mixed Use Site

7.6 The case studies listed above have been selected for inclusion as some of them are common development scenarios in Elmbridge, which continue to come forward. Others present more challenging sites and schemes that reflect the need to make more efficient use of land in urban locations, such as land to the rear of shopping parades (see text box below).

Shopping parades are a feature of many town and village centres throughout most of Elmbridge. They date from every period and style from the late 19th Century to the mid 20th Century. These parades offer a wide choice of mainly independent shops, services and food outlets, and often provide flats at first and second floor level. However, in some cases the backland areas, which can be quite constricted, have become rundown or unfit for their service function. Therefore they can offer opportunities for redevelopment, particularly in view of their sustainable, urban locations. Due to considerable site constraints, design and layout must be carefully planned. Case Study 4 has been included here specifically to illustrate some of the factors to be taken into account and offers an indicative solution.

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24   The maps are diagrammatic representations of an amalgam of the built environments of Elmbridge and do not represent any particular settlement or site.

Case Study 1: Replacement Residential Building

Context Appraisal

7.7   The site is located in a well established spacious suburban area.

7.8   The road on which the site is situated is gently winding, lined predominantly by tall hedges interspersed by mature trees. The individual plots are between 0.1 and 0.2ha, occupied by older style large detached houses. The generous spacing between each house maintains the spacious, 'leafy' character of the street. Some of these houses have been converted to apartments or replaced by larger footprint buildings.

7.9   Whilst the original houses reflect a variety of forms albeit on a common theme, the established building line is a particular characteristic of the area.

Site Appraisal
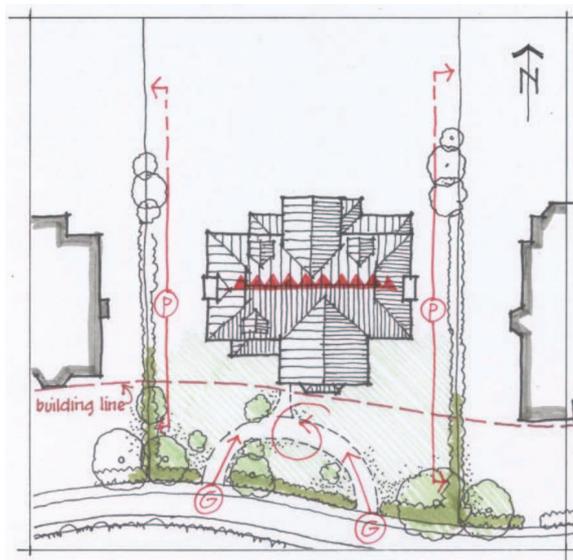
7.10   The site is occupied by a large two storey house with rooms in the roof. A central entrance wing, topped by a substantial gable, projects forward from the main elevation. The space between the building and the side boundaries ranges between 6 and 7 metres.

7.11   A semi elliptical gravel driveway forms the access to the house and high hedges form most of the side and front boundaries.

7.12   The front elevation faces due south, but the space between buildings allows sunlight onto the side elevations. The remainder of this site which is almost level, consists of spacious lawns with clumps of ornamental trees.

7.13   The original building is constructed of soft red brick, supplemented by 'half timbering' on the gables and tile hanging on the first floor of the projecting wing. Whilst it has architectural merit, it is not considered to be a heritage asset. It is considered that replacement by a high quality new development would be appropriate.

Design Concept

Indicative Design
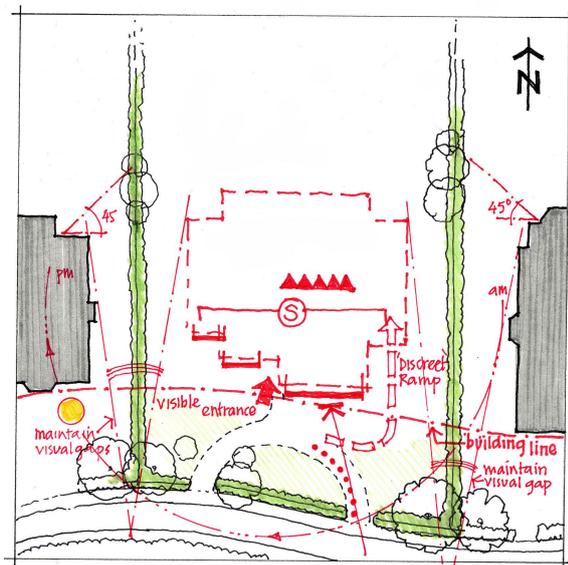
7.14 The footprint of the building and its envelope will largely determine its overall capacity. The established building line of the street should be maintained. The building should respect the existing 6 metre separation to side boundaries and the general spacing in the street. The rear projection of the building should not infringe the 45° rule, and the distance to the rear boundary should be 15 metres or more for larger buildings.

7.15 The built form of the development should reflect the informality of plan shape and massing which is the predominant character of this streetscape. Adequate and convenient provision should be made for bicycle and refuse/recycling storage.

7.16 The open, landscaped character of the streetscape should be maintained and rear gardens free from vehicular intrusion. Therefore, parking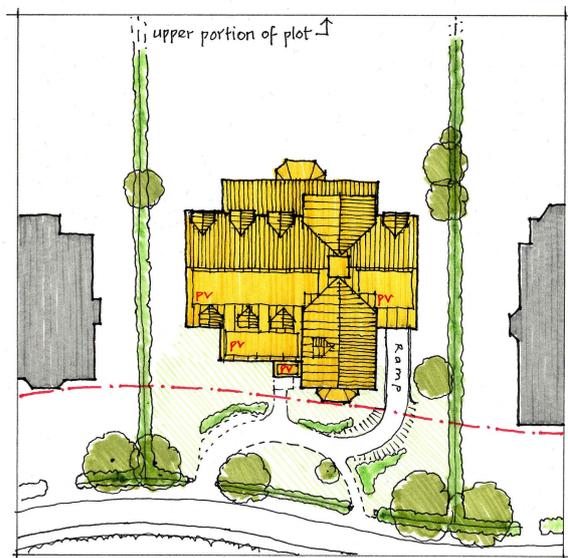 could be accommodated within a basement area (for a larger flatted development), taking care to site the ramp to minimise impact on neighbours, or sensitively within the frontage for a development requiring fewer car parking spaces.

7.17 The sketch plan demonstrates how the appraisal of site and context, plus the application of principles of placemaking and sustainability in the design concept, can be incorporated into a design scheme.

7.18 The building is located within the parameters of the footprint and height envelope of two storeys with rooms in the roof. The openness of the front garden is maintained and the characteristic density of frontage hedge is retained. The surface to the driveway is permeable, with 'soft' edges.

7.19 In this instance, residents' parking is located within a basement level, with space for visitor parking adjacent to the driveway. A ramp is located well away from the landscaped boundary to the side.

7.20 The roofscape is enlivened by a variety of related forms including dormers and gables. The south facing roof pitches provide substantial areas for photovoltaic panels.

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Case Study 2: Residential Plot Subdivision

Context Appraisal

7.21 The site is located in a well established and spacious suburban setting of winding roads, with verges framed by high hedges and mature trees. Large detached houses, mainly dating from the 1920s to 1950s, are set well back from the front boundaries and glimpsed through protective gateways.

7.22 The spacing between the houses allows views of the trees to the rear of each property, reinforcing the spacious and green character of the area. Plot sizes and areas vary to some extent.

7.23 Garages are generally located to the sides of houses, set back, allowing views to the trees on the side and rear boundaries.

Site Appraisal

7.24 The site was formerly occupied by an inter-war house and the proposal is to replace it with two houses. The boundary planting of hedges and mature trees is attractive and in good condition. The semicircular driveway establishes two entry points to the subdivided plot, without alteration to the hedge frontage.

7.25 The garages of adjacent properties are located close to the side boundaries, which suggests that these are the areas where the footprint of new development could be carefully located near the boundary in places. The consistent building line along the road contributes to the character of the area and should influence the layout of the development.

7.26 The orientation of the site is suitable for the installation of photovoltaic panels. Indeed, the size of the site also lends itself to ground source heat pump technology (although this is not always economic). Wood chip boilers (and related storage) or air sourced heat pumps may be appropriate alternatives. (See the sustainability design guidance at section 5)

Design Concept

Indicative Scheme

7.27   The plot would be divided to retain the characteristic access pattern and footprint of the area. Each house should not be identical; reflecting the variety of in the road.

7.28   Garages should be recessed to ensure they do not dominate and are generally used to maintain visual space between the proposed houses and their neighbours, allowing views of trees in the rear garden. Their roofs should either be pitched to maintain the characteristic roofline or have a sedum layer, appropriate in this semi woodland setting. The boundary between the plots should be designed as a 'green element' with hedge and tree planting established at the outset.

7.29   The houses could be of a contemporary design which reflects aspects of the character of the context. Some form of pitched roof is considered appropriate, which also ensures the integration of photovoltaic panels, to facilitate grey water recycling and to provide storage accommodation (See the sustainability design guidance at section 5 for further information).

7.30   There are a number of possible footprint permutations and this scheme proposes two houses with similar floor areas and characteristic garden sizes.

7.31   Plot 'A' on the west side, has its long axis aligned east-west. This building could incorporate photovoltaics on its southerly facing roof. Its entrance is located in the centre of its façade; its freestanding garage with green roof, recessed to the left. Plot 'B' consists of a building with its long axis oriented north-south, creating a dominant gable and a well articulated relationship between the two houses. The original building line is maintained and respected. The front gable wing would be designed to avoid overshadowing the adjacent house. The double garage wing to Plot 'B' is recessed and is appropriate for installing photovoltaic panels.

7.32   Driveways utilise existing entry points adapted from the original driveway, paved with a porous finish and landscaped to ensure the open, green frontage is retained.

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Case Study 3: Infill Residential Development

Context Appraisal

**Site Appraisal**

7.33 The site lies about 500 metres from a town centre. To the north-west late Victorian semi-detached villas front a small triangular green lined with mature street trees. The side elevation of a Victorian church frames the green to the west. It terminates the view on approach to the town centre and its spire and interesting roofline are minor local landmarks. This green and the enclosing buildings form an attractive sense of place. The road runs towards the town centre at this point, and the last few shops and commercial premises of the centre (2 and 3 storey) are shown on the south side of the street.

7.34 Further east, the townscape is dominated by inter-war semi detached houses, two storey with hipped roofs, set back from the back edge of the pavement behind hedges. To the east of the site some large Victorian houses face the main road. On the south west of the site there is a small network of streets characterised by Victorian artisan terraces and semi detached villas.
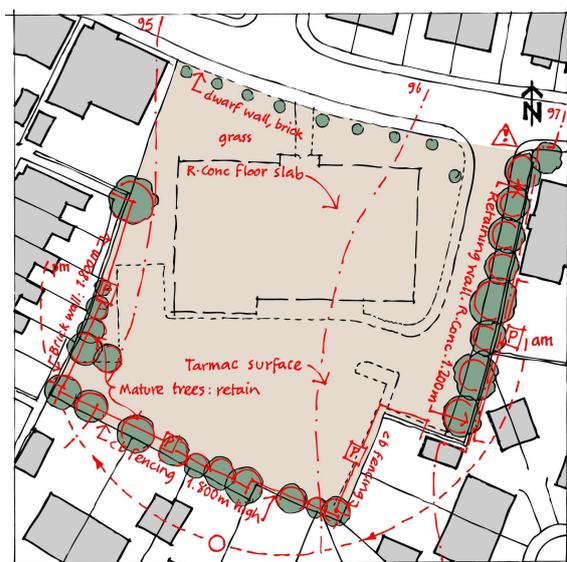
7.35 The site, approximately 0.25 hectares, lies on the south side of the main road. It was formerly occupied by a large commercial building (indicated by the broken line on the map). The site gently slopes to the west, and has a low retaining wall on its eastern boundary. The site has extensive tree screen planting on its eastern and southern boundaries (deciduous trees, some 50 years old).

7.36 The boundary on the western side is comprised of the unsightly flank wall of commercial premises, exposed when this building was constructed, and a Victorian brick wall to the rear of the terrace. The front boundary is open, with a low brick wall with grass behind, and an access way on the eastern boundary.

Design Concept

Indicative Scheme
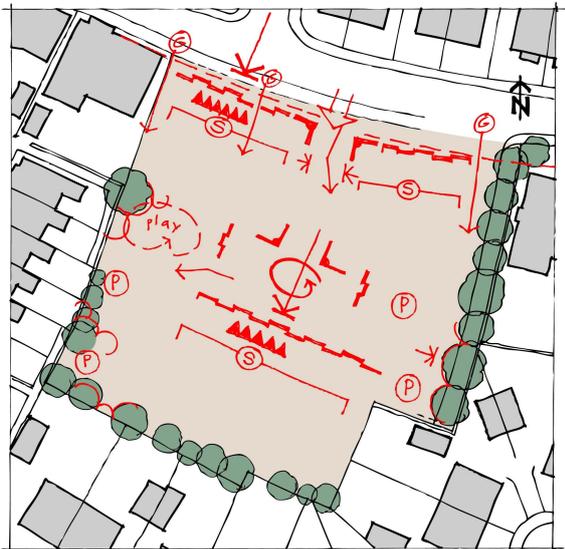
7.37 The site frontage should maintain street continuity, reinstating the established building line. The site entrance is located towards the centre of the frontage. The near central site entrance ensures at least two terraces.

7.38 The view into the development is terminated by a terrace, creating an attractive sense of place. The housing group is mainly oriented east–west, for the best utilisation of the site area and optimal orientation for PV panels. The layout allows for adequate private gardens and privacy.

7.39 Parking could be grouped to minimise visual impact and create space around the periphery, avoiding intrusion on neighbouring properties. Existing trees should be supplemented by new planting to soften the impact of parked cars. A toddlers' play area could be located in a sheltered, sunny, south facing corner and be enclosed by walls and trees but overlooked by properties to the north and south.

7.40 The choice of housing units reflects the variety and spacing of buildings related to their plots, including a larger apartment block (units 1-6) and a short terrace (units 8-10) making efficient use of the street frontage. The entrance roadway is designed informally. First floor oriel windows overlook the space.

7.41 The central space is a shared surface of semi porous material. Trees are planted here to reinforce its informality. The dotted line indicates that large vehicles can turn easily. A toddlers' play area is located in a sunny area framed by walls and overlooked by various units.

7.42 The scheme has a higher density appropriate to its edge of town centre location yet has a spacious character due to the layout of gardens and landscaped parking areas. Garden sizes and separation distances are appropriate for the character of the area and the size of buildings. The buildings and roof design are oriented in a southerly direction for PV panels.

Case Study 4: Land to Rear of Shopping Parade

Context Appraisal
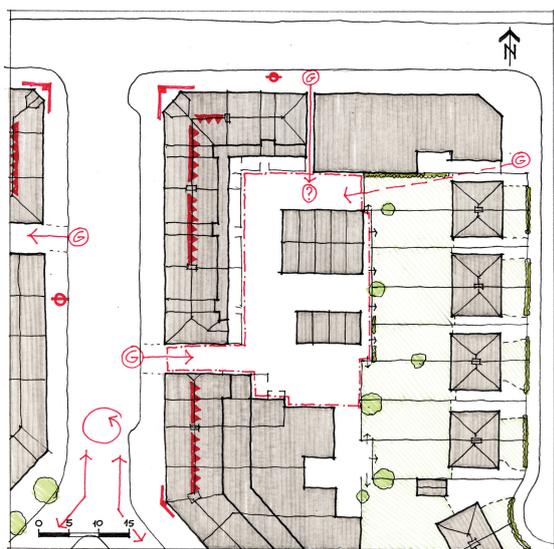
7.43 The site is located to the rear of a shopping parade in a busy High Street, which forms the frontage of the parade. The spur road leads to a railway station. To the north is lined mainly with inter-war housing and some retail and commercial outlets. To the east is a quiet residential cul de sac of inter-war semi detached houses with long gardens backing onto the site.

7.44 The south side of the site comprises a rather cramped service access way to the shops fronting the station approach. The immediate area lacks green spaces, except for the private gardens of the houses to the east.

7.45 All the shops are in three storey buildings with the first and second floors being flats. The shop to the north east is a single storey food store. The shopping parade and its neighbouring parades were built in the 1930s in the neo-Georgian style. Brickwork is relatively plain but embellished by quoins and decorative panels.

Site Appraisal
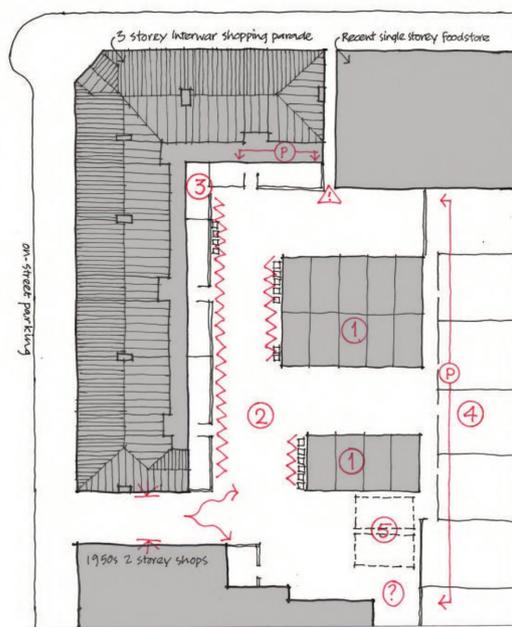
7.46 Figures refer to those on the Site Appraisal plan.

1. Single storey garage blocks. Precast concrete wall panels and corrugated asbestos roofs. Inadequate width for convenient parking. Most underused or storerooms.
2. Concrete road surface in poor condition. Some areas unmade.
3. Rear areas to shops. Poor condition screen walls. Inadequate provision for recycling bins.
4. Rear gardens to 1930s semi detached houses plus rear access pathway, accessed from the back land area.
5. Informal van parking area

In general the area is unattractive and slightly insecure. It has inadequate space for vehicle servicing and turning.

Design Concept
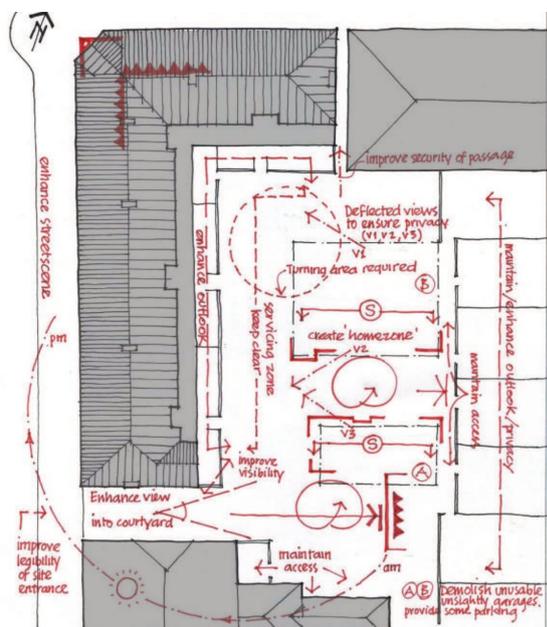
7.47 The area is poorly defined and neglected. New development should aim to transform it into a pleasant yet functional 'place' for those who work and live there. The first impression of this proposed 'mews' area should reflect this aim and convey that this place is 'owned' by its residents. Thus one of the proposed buildings is aligned to terminate the view from the entrance. The existing garages should be demolished as they are too narrow and in poor condition. This cleared area would be the site for further residential buildings, all facing north–south across a yard.

7.48 This alignment would reduce the corridor effect of this site and reduce any direct overlooking between dwellings. It would create a 'homezone' area which is set at right angles to the service area, defining its different function, and provide a more attractive and less overbearing outlook from the houses/gardens to the east of the site, with more attractive access to their rear garden gates. The views from the new houses would be carefully 'deflected' by the design and location of the windows. The servicing zone behind the shops would be clearly defined and include a turning area. New walls to the rear yards of the existing flats and shops could incorporate storage.

Indicative Design

7.49 Figures refer to Indicative Layout plan above.

1. Main view into the area is terminated by the gable window of a 'mews' apartment and a tree, (attractive sense of place). Indication this is an 'owned' and overlooked place.
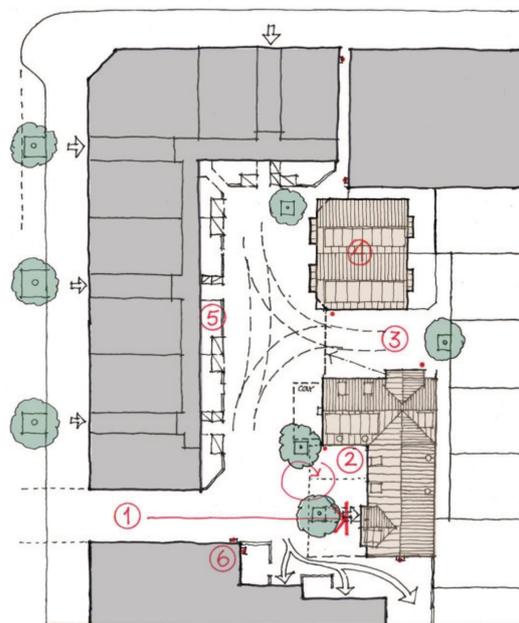2. Two mews flats, two storeys high with rooms in the roof, set at right angles.
3. Due to the limited separation distance between the two buildings, they could not face each other and share a central courtyard space which acts as a turning arm for large vehicles plus cycle storage.
4. This building could accommodate a pair of maisonettes with undercroft parking. The dwellings should have controlled outlook to the rear ensuring privacy. South facing roofs provide opportunities for solar energy generation.
5. Rear yards to shops, rebuilt, with bin and cycle stores integrated with 2 metre high walls.
6. High level wall mounted lights at various points, indicated by red dots.

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Case Study 5: Town Centre Mixed Use

Context Appraisal
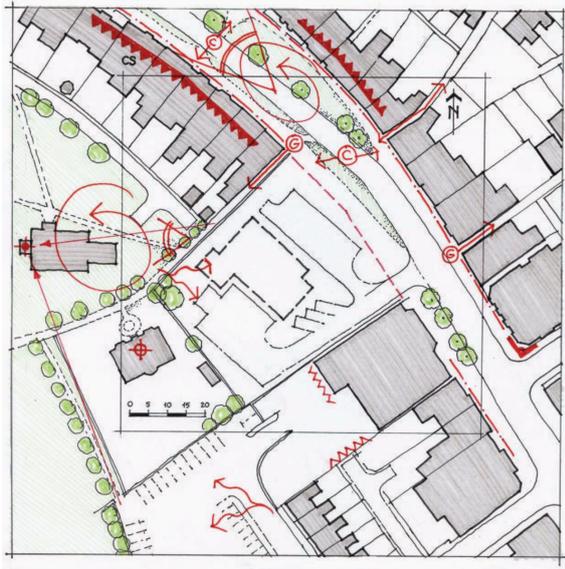
7.50   The site is located on the west side of a high street in an historic town. It is at the northern end of the shopping area with larger 3 storey shops fronting on to the south of the site and smaller scale (2 storey) shops to the north. The slightly winding High Street widens to the north and is more enclosed to the south.

7.51   The building line of the High Street is a key component of its character. Its subtle curvature remains largely intact. The existing public building on the site has broken the building line, by straightening and recessing the front boundary. It is substantially set back, underlining the break in the continuity of the street frontage. To the back (or west) of the site stands a house in its walled garden, and immediately to the north of this is the medieval church, which is a local landmark, glimpsed from many points in the High Street.

7.52   A network of alleys and footpaths are aligned at right angles to the High Street, enhancing the connectivity of the area.

Site Appraisal
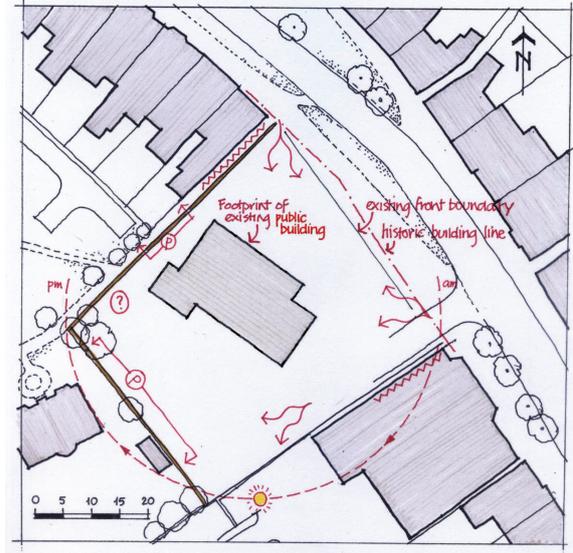
7.53   The existing site utilisation is poor and somewhat wasteful, with the public building set at angles to all of the site boundaries, creating poorly defined spaces around much of the building.

7.54   An historic brick wall delineates the northern boundary of the site. This feature comprises the main historic asset of the site, and its general maintenance is considered essential. Mature trees on the north western corner are also an asset, especially as it forms the interface with the church yard at this point. These considerations, plus the need to respect the privacy of the 18th century house on the western boundary, reinforce the need to locate the bulk of the development towards the high street.

7.55   The existing access driveway is well located, and due to the curvature of the high street is probably in the best position regarding sight lines. The site slopes gradually from west to east. The orientation of the site is quite favourable for passive solar energy generation.

Design Concept

Indicative Design

7.56   The primary objective is to follow the building line as closely as possible to reinstate the street frontage. This suggests two shops either side of an entrance door and hallway access for the apartments above taking up the pivotal wedge shape between.

7.57   Due to the lower building heights and glimpses of the church tower on the north side of the site, the development should be two storey on this side and three storey on the southern wing. It is important that the outlook from the west facing apartments avoids the view of what could be an unattractive flat roof. The development should be as carbon neutral as possible by incorporating natural daylight, natural ventilation, and renewable energy regeneration.

7.58   Main pedestrian access to both shops and apartments should be via the street frontage. As some parking can be accommodated on site, it is recognised that pedestrian access will also be via the rear of the development. This should be as attractive and secure as possible.

7.59   The building footprint closely follows the design concept for the street frontage. The entrance lobby for the apartments is accessed from the front, with cycle storage and recycling storage easily accessed from the rear.

7.60   The apartments are arranged as three per floor per wing, totalling 9 units. Each end apartment has dual outlook. All have shallow balconies. The flat roof to the rear of the shops is a living/green roof, with combined northlights & PV panels.

7.61   The access road serves a delivery bay and car park sited as far away from windows as possible. Rear pedestrian access to the shops and to the apartment lobby would be securely designed for when the shops are closed. The building has a pitched roof on the frontage to relate sympathetically to its neighbours. The development should provide opportunities for balanced elevation design, reducing undue emphasis on horizontal lines in this context.

Case Study 6: Edge of Town Centre Mixed Use Site

Context Appraisal

Site Appraisal

7.62   The site lies directly behind the range of shops facing the high street to the south. On the east and north side of the site a busy road leads out of town. An attractive small green lined with houses is situated on the opposite side of this road. On the west side of the site, a minor street is mainly fronted by Victorian terrace houses and a public building. Further to the west, the spire of the fine neo-gothic church is a local landmark.

7.63   The site is situated at the interface between the shopping area to the south, some commercial premises just behind these, and areas of town centre housing. Due to its 'transitional' location between a number of land uses a mixed scheme would be appropriate. A mixed use scheme adjacent to the town centre would also promote diversity and vitality in a sustainable location.

7.64   Having a relatively central situation, the site is conveniently located for local services, facilities and bus stops, with the railway station a little further on.

7.65   The site is occupied by a continuation of the Victorian terrace houses on its south western side. It will be important for the development to respect the private side of these houses. Most of the eastern and central part of the site is an unsightly collection of single storey warehouses and an associated lorry park.

7.66   The site slopes down gently to the north. Boundaries are mainly chain link fences and hoardings, presenting an unattractive frontage to the green and the entrance to the town. The southern boundary is shared with the service areas to the rear of the 3 storey shops and offices facing the High Street.

Design Concept

Indicative Scheme
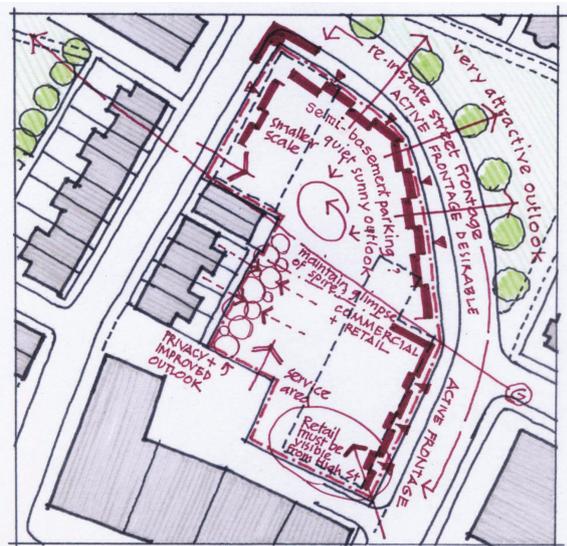
7.67 The primary aim should be to reinstate the frontage of the main road to create an edge to the green and an improved entry to the centre. The development proposals should 'step down' the sloping site somewhat, to create skyline interest. A 'natural' break in the proposed land uses suggests itself at the turn of the corner. The potential view of the church spire could be realised at this point.

7.68 The corner at the northern point of the site should be 'celebrated', as this is seen on approaching the town centre. The frontages to the side street should diminish in scale. The area behind the frontages in the core of the site will be sunny and relatively quiet, as it is located in the 'sound shadow' of the proposed building. The area should have a definite sense of place, and substantial boundary planting will be necessary at the rear of the terrace housing and public hall.

7.69 Apartments on the northern side of the site would have good outlook on both sides of the building, ensuring natural ventilation and daylight, and access to the sunny quiet court and views of the green.

7.70 Entrances on the street frontage, but the staircases would also be accessible from the basement garage area. The basement garage, is situated 1 metre below average pavement level. The roof is pitched to allow for the installation of photovoltaic panels, and to allow for efficient rainwater collection.

7.71 A mixed use building, either offices or residential units could be accommodated within the storeys above. The block has a maximum depth of 13 – 14 metres, which allows for good natural lighting and ventilation. It is also a reasonable depth for future conversion to a commercial use such as a hotel, or corridor access flats. The incorporation of balconies and terraces would provide valuable amenity space for the apartments to the north.

8 Monitoring the SPD

8.1 The Council's approach to monitoring design is based on adopting assessment measures widely supported by Government and industry alongside other monitoring tools that reflect community-led design aspirations.

8.2 The indicators outlined in this section build on the relevant monitoring requirements set out within the Objective-Led performance framework in Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy. Results of any monitoring that takes place will be reported on in the Council's Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR). The level of monitoring will be dependent on Council resources.

Housing quality

- Number of schemes scoring >14/20 in a Building for Life assessment

8.3 The Government's Single Data List includes a range of Core Output Indicators required to be monitored through the AMR. Core Output Indicator 024-09 relates to monitoring housing quality using Building for Life criteria. The criteria relate not just to the character and specific design of the scheme but also to wider issues such as the environment, community and accessibility. Its aim is to promote design excellence and celebrate best practice in the housing building industry. Formal assessments must be carried out by an accredited Building for Life assessor. The Government has recently renewed its commitment to the use of Building for Life in assessing housing quality and design.

8.4 The Council will ensure that there is an accredited assessor within Planning Services in order that formal assessments of schemes can be undertaken locally. You will be encouraged to have regard to the Building for Life criteria in designing individual schemes and demonstrate this through your Design and Access Statement.

Sustainable design

- Number of completed schemes/units achieving Level 4 for the energy and carbon element of the Code for Sustainable Homes

8.5 The Code for Sustainable Homes provides a useful benchmark national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Government intends to bring forward the energy and carbon elements of the Code over time through changes to the Building Regulations with a view to achieving zero carbon by 2016. However, Core Strategy Policy CS27 expects developments of 10 units or more to meet the energy and carbon element of Code Level 4, which is above current Building Regulations requirements. This will need to be monitored through the planning process and via an accredited assessor. The Council's validation checklist will be updated to include a requirement for a pre-construction assessment to be submitted alongside a planning application demonstrating compliance with Code Level 4. Adherence to the standard will be secured through planning condition with a post-construction assessment also being required to be submitted once the development is complete. The Council will ensure that there is an accredited assessor within Planning Services to undertake the assessment process.

8.6 The Council will also use its Climate Neutral Development Checklist to monitor the energy/carbon performance of all new development in the Borough. It is a local validation requirement to submit the checklist alongside a planning application.

- Achieving various levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes/BREEAM
- Types of renewable energy incorporated
- Reuse/recycling of construction materials
- Energy savings
- Meeting SuDS requirements

Lifetime Homes

● Number and percentage of new homes meeting lifetime homes criteria

8.7 Lifetime Homes is based on five overarching principles including: Inclusivity, Accessibility, Adaptability, Sustainability and Good Value and contains 16 assessment criteria. You will be expected to demonstrate how these criteria have been met on individual schemes through the Design and Access Statement.

Community-led design

● Number of schemes that include community-led design as part of the pre-application process

8.8 Through the NPPF and Localism Act the Government is championing good design with a locally driven, plan-led approach. They are also committed to creating opportunities for communities to shape design in their areas. The Neighbourhood planning proposals and Localism Act include requirements for developers of large schemes to involve the community at the pre-application stage. Going forward it will become increasingly important to understand and respond to their design aspirations in order to ensure community support and ownership of projects. The Government encourages Councils to favour schemes that have been designed in collaboration with the community. The review of the Statement of Community Involvement will look at these requirements in further detail.

8.9 Periodically the Council will reconsult local communities to ensure that local issues are still correctly identified and remain up to date.

8.10 The Council will also keep abreast of other opportunities to monitor/review good design and regularly review the reference documents below to ensure they remain relevant and up to date. Details will be included within the AMR.

References

8.11 The range of advice from CABE/Design Council and other national sources provides a comprehensive agenda for design principles and useful checklists by which schemes can be assessed by designers, planning officers and local communities. As a developer or designer, you should be fully aware of the advice provided by the sources shown below:

● **By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System - Towards Better Practice** DETR/CABE 2000
● **Better Places to Live By Design** DTLR/CABE 2001
● **Manual for Streets** (1 and 2) DfT 2007 and 2010
● **Building for Life** CABE/HBF/HC 2008
● **Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention** OPDM/The Home Office 2004
● **Secured by Design** ACPO 2004
● **Code for Sustainable Homes** CLG 2006
● **Design and Access Statements: How to read, write and use them** CABE 2007
● **Building in Context - New development in Historic Areas** EH/CABE 2001

Other documents may be useful:

● **The Urban Design Compendium** (2nd edition) EP/HBF 2008
● **Shaping Neighbourhoods** (2nd edition) Barton H, Guise R, Grant M, Routledge 2011

Appendix 1: Glossary

Access

This term has two broad meanings:

- The route(s) to a site and the route layout within a site, related to different modes of movement (foot, cycle, vehicular).
- The inclusive approach to design, which aims to create a built environment which is accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability.

Active frontage

A frontage to the public realm which is characterised by multiple entrances and windows (domestic, commercial or retail), allowing an interaction of people between the public realm and the premises facing the street.

Articulation

The design of architectural elevations to achieve coherence, attractiveness and/or relate to context. An elevation can be articulated by subdivision, horizontally or vertically, by the projection or recession of particular elements (structural bays, columns, beams, grouping or framing of doors and windows), the organising of the jointing patterns or size of building units (bricks, cladding panels etc), or the use colour or texture to achieve certain effects (contrast, recession, prominence, domesticity etc).

Building line

The relationship between a sequence of buildings and the street frontage, either notional or expressed as a line on a map.

Character

The combination of features of a building or a place that give it a distinctive identity compared with other buildings or areas.

Context (or setting)

The physical (built and landscape), community and economic surroundings in which the development takes place.

Brown roofs

Roof areas that utilise soil, spoil and recycled material, often from local buildings sites or the development site itself, to provide the sub-layer or 'substrate'. It will usually be brown in colour initially but over time plant species will grow over this substrate and the end result will be a green-coloured roof. In common with a **green roof**, it can provide a habitat for wildlife and contribute to sustainability and biodiversity objectives.

Density

A measure of the number of dwellings or people per hectare. This can be expressed as a net figure (the area of a development purely devoted to residential and ancillary land uses and related access) or as gross related to the total area of a site (which may include mixed uses, landscape areas etc).

Design

The integrative process of manipulating elements of built form, landscape and the public realm, to achieve specific functional, sustainable, social and aesthetic effects. It involves working at a variety of levels from strategic to detailed.

Enclosure

The relationship (both in layout and relative height) of buildings, walls, trees etc, resulting in the defining of a space or spaces conveying different senses of character (e.g. intimacy, privacy spaciousness etc).

Entry-point

(see **Gateway**)

Footprint

The shape taken up at ground level by a building or group of buildings.

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Formal/Informal

A formal layout of streets and building groups is characterised by symmetrical or geometric plans and elevations. The features of an informal design include layout and elevations which are asymmetrical, winding and which relate to natural site characteristics.

Gateway

The marking of a point of entry to an area of character or to a specific development by:

- A bridge crossing a river or railway cutting.
- The view framed by a bridge, group of trees etc, at the point where the character of an area changes.
- The creation of a key group of buildings, or the emphasis of a specifically located building which 'announces' or signifies the entrance to a development.
- The placing of a gate or the narrowing of a roadway by buildings, walls or other features, to signify a transition from one built environment to another.

Gateways can be used to convey to motorists that speed should be reduced, as an area has pedestrian priority or a shared surface.

Grain

The pattern of property lines, both on plan and elevation, plots, streets and lanes. The general shape and direction of building footprints. Fine grain refers to the higher intensity of smaller plots or streets. Coarse grain refers to larger scale plots with fewer roads.

Green roofs

Roof areas made up of layers that create an environment suitable for plants to grow. They can contribute to the sustainability of a development, for example by reducing the amount of surface water running off the roof and so reducing the risk of flooding; providing habitat, shelter and feeding opportunities for wildlife; and offering extra heat and noise insulation for a building. (See also **Brown roofs**)

Green walls

Also called 'living walls', they are covered in some form of vegetation, either planted into the structure of the wall itself or some form of additional structure attached to the wall on which climbing plants are supported. They offer environmental benefits by enhancing biodiversity; improving the thermal insulation and cooling properties of the building; can help improve air quality; improving noise attenuation properties; and improving visual amenity. They can be designed in conjunction with or as an alternative to a **green/brown roof**.

Hierarchy

A logical sequence of spaces, streets or building forms, increasing or decreasing in size or density throughout a development.

Legibility

The layout of a residential development is legible if it is easily comprehended by residents and visitors. The hierarchy of built form, routes and landmarks are structured to facilitate orientation.

Local distinctiveness

A locally distinctive scheme is one where the design has been influenced by its setting, not one which is standard to any location. The design will refer to site characteristics, local built forms, layouts and (where still available) materials.

Massing

The three dimensional arrangement of the volume of a building to achieve specific effects, e.g. simple forms, fragmented or symmetrical forms etc.

Natural surveillance

The discouragement to wrongdoing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen out of surrounding windows. Also known as passive surveillance (or supervision).

Permeability

The degree to which a residential development can be penetrated by routes by foot and vehicle and the connectivity of the development to adjacent development

Place

A space in the built environment that has some meaning for people due to the activities and uses which characterise the space, or the quality of the space itself.

Placemaking

Creating the physical conditions that people find attractive, safe, neighbourly and legible. This is achieved through using good urban design principles. Placemaking is particularly important where there are few obvious positive site characteristics.

Public realm

The public realm is any part of a site, area, village, town or city that everyone can use and enjoy, including streets, squares and parks. The public realm is very important for pedestrian movement, as it connects various places and buildings.

Scale

This can have two meanings: either equivalent to mass or bulk (see massing above) or (more strictly correct) the subdivision of a building to create different effects e.g. domestic or civic, subdivision by bays, intervals of windows, proportions etc.

Setting

(See **Context**)

Streetscape

The character of the street environment, existing or proposed.

Sustainable development

An all embracing concept which in the context of a residential environment includes (in no order of priority):

• Reducing the need to travel short distances by car, by arranging the development to be accessible by foot, bike or bus

• Maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity

• Re-use of resources such as land, buildings and materials

• Encouragement of the use of renewable energy sources

• Reduction of energy resources

• Sensitive use of site features

Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS)

A range of different drainage systems that are designed to promote the filtration and evaporation as close to the source as possible and to break down pollutants. They are an alternative to drainage through pipes directly to a water course and will help enhance water quality and biodiversity, maintain groundwater levels and reduce the risk of flooding.

Swale

A shallow drainage channel with gentle side slopes in the ground where water running off a site can collect and soak away. Can be incorporated within a development as a component of **SuDS**.

Termination, terminated view

A building or other feature which is placed at the end of a view down a street or square, to aid enclosure or provide a landmark.

Topography

A description (or visual representation on a map) of the shape of the land, for example, contours or changes in the height of land above sea level.

Townscape

The urban equivalent of landscape: the overall effect of the combination of buildings, changes of level, green spaces, boundary walls, colours and textures, street surfaces, street furniture, uses, scale, enclosure, views etc.
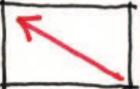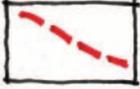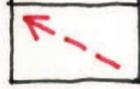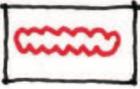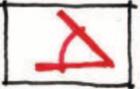
Vernacular buildings

The building tradition, usually prior to the industrial revolution, which gives an area its local distinctiveness, through its use of locally sourced materials (stone, timber, clay etc), building types, scale and form. Vernacular patterns of building can be detected in late 19th and early 20th century domestic architecture when the sense of the vernacular was revived, chiefly in the use of plain tile roofs, tile hanging, half timbering and a general informality in building form.

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Appendix 2: Notation Symbols

These are a selection of notation symbols that can be helpful when assessing a site and developing a design concept. The diagrams within the case studies demonstrate how they can be used.

Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning
	SENSE OF PLACE		VIEW TO LANDMARK		CONSIDER PRIVACY
	SIGNIFICANT GREEN SPACE		VIEW TERMINATED BY BUILDING		ACTIVE FRONTAGE
	CRITICAL BUILT FRONTAGE		DEFLECTED VIEW		PARKING AREA
	KEY BUILDING LINE		GLIMPSE		GRADIENT (POINTING UP)
	IMPORTANT HEDGE FRONT		EXTENSIVE VIEW		CHANGE OF LEVEL
	SIGNIFICANT TREE GROUP		'PINCH-POINT'		STOREY HEIGHT
	SIGNIFICANT EDGE		PIVOTAL CORNER		POSSIBLE CONNECTION
	IMPORTANT ROOFLINE		SUN'S PATH		FOOT ROUTE
	LANDMARK		GOOD SOLAR ORIENTATION		HERITAGE ASSET
	INTRUSIVE FRONTAGE		POORLY DEFINED AREA		NEAREST FOOD SHOP
	LACK OF ENCLOSURE		NOISY AREA (PP = QUIET)		NEAREST PRIMARY SCHOOL
	HAZARD		NEAREST BUS STOP		NEAREST COMMUNITY FACILITY

These symbols are derived from Gordon Cullen and Kevin Lynch, adapted and added to by Richard Guise (Context 4D).

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