Housing design, density and character
supplementary planning document

Adopted April 2006
This document was formally adopted by the New Forest District Council cabinet at its meeting of April 5th 2006. This guidance should therefore be referred to in the preparation of applications for all development involving housing.

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Housing design, density and character

Aims of this Supplementary Planning Document

• To promote good design in new residential development.
• To ensure that new residential development respects local character and identity.
• To promote the successful implementation of policies which promote higher densities in new residential development.
• To give practical advice to the designers and developers of new housing, on how to achieve successful developments that can secure planning permission.
• To highlight the links between quality of design and successful higher density development.
• To assist in the preparation of Design and Access Statements that will accompany planning applications for residential schemes.
• This document is not a design guide. The SPD is about the process that should be followed in order to achieve better designed new residential environments in our towns and villages.
If you are considering making a planning application that includes residential development, it is important to take account of this guidance in making your submission, and to do this from a very early stage in working up your proposals for a site.

This guidance is supplementary to the New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration, and relates particularly to the following policies:

**Policy DW-E1 General development criteria**

Development shall be appropriate and sympathetic in scale, appearance, materials, form, siting and layout, and shall not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shading or other adverse impact on local amenities. Developers shall have regard to:

a the scale and siting of the proposal in relation to adjoining development, spaces, the character of the area and the wider landscape. This will involve consideration of height, massing and density, relationship to adjoining buildings and land uses and landscape features on and off site, and other potential impacts of the proposal on local amenities e.g. noise, light or other forms of pollution, including those arising from traffic generated by the development (see also Policy DW-E43, Section C6); and

b materials and built form in relation to the character of adjoining development, local vernacular and any historic features (see also Policies DW-E18 to DW-E29, Section C2).

**Policy DW-E2 Density and Mix of Housing Development**

Within the defined built-up areas the average net density of residential development should be a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph). Higher net densities (40-50 dph and above) should be achieved at locations where good pedestrian and public transport access to local and town centre facilities exists, or can be created. Sites in or close to town centres as defined on the Proposals Map will be expected to provide for densities of at least 50 dph.

**Development should:**

i reflect the principles of good urban design as set out in Policy DW-E1, ensuring the creation of a high quality living environment with no unacceptable impact on the established character of the area (including Conservation Areas in accordance with Policy DW-E23, Section C2 and Areas of Special Character in accordance with Policy DW-E11 below); and

ii on sites of 15 or more dwellings provide a minimum of 50% 1 and 2 bedroom units; and

iii have regard to Policy DW-T9, Section C9 regarding parking standards; and

iv meet the open space requirements set out in Policies DW-R3, Section C10 and DW-E10 below.
National policy

Government policies promote good design in new development.

Planning applications for new housing development must be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (DCLG Circular 01/2006 - from 10-8-06). The Circular defines a Design and Access Statement as a report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way. The guidance contained in this document should be used to prepare the Design and Access Statement.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development sets out the Government’s objectives for the planning system. Particularly relevant to this SPD are the objectives:

• To promote urban and rural regeneration to improve the well being of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for the people living in those communities.

And

• To promote the more efficient use of land through higher density mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should seek actively to bring vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use to achieve the targets the Government has set for development on previously developed land.

PPS1 emphasises the importance of design and seeks positive consideration of design issues. One of the Key Principles set out in PPS1 is:

“13(iv): Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. Design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.”

Further, paragraph 33 states:

“Good design ensures attractive usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.”

It states good design should:

• address the connections between people and places by considering the needs of people to access jobs and key services;

• be integrated into the existing urban form and the natural and built environments;

• be an integral part of the processes for ensuring successful, safe and inclusive villages, towns and cities;

• create an environment where everyone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society; and,

• consider the direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment.
Included as key objectives for new developments are:

- optimising the potential of the site to accommodate development, creating and sustaining an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and supporting local facilities and transport networks;
- responding to the local context and creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness; and
- visual attractiveness as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

**Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing**, sets the national policy for housing development including increasing the density of new housing development and improving the quality of design. This will be revised by a new national Planning Policy Statement (PPS3) Housing. National guidance seeks to achieve the following:

- New housing development should make more efficient use of land by maximising the use of previously developed land and reducing the need to use ‘greenfield’ sites
- Building at higher densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare and higher in locations with good access to public transport facilities and services such as town and district centres
- Good design to help in making more efficient use of land and improving the quality and attractiveness of residential areas.

Design quality, alongside density, are at the centre of policies on housing development:

‘Local planning authorities should:

Promote good design in new housing developments in order to create attractive, high-quality living environments in which people will choose to live.’ (PPG3 para.2)

‘New development should be of high quality inclusive design and layout (consistent with Planning Policy Statement 1), and be informed by its wider context, having regard not just to neighbouring buildings but to the townscape and landscape of the wider locality. This does not mean that new development should replicate its surroundings. The key consideration should be whether a development positively improves the character and environmental quality of an area and the way it functions.’ (Draft PPS3 para.37)

**Local policy**

**Hampshire County Structure Plan Review**

The County Structure Plan Review (2000) sets the strategic policy context. Policy UB3 covers design standards and seeks to ensure that the highest possible standards and quality of development are achieved. It states:

**UB3** All development permitted in accordance with other policies of this Plan should be appropriate in design, scale, layout and density to its surroundings and contribute to the quality of the built environment.
Changing Lives: New Forest Community Strategy

The Community Strategy: Changing Lives, includes Objective d(i) Environment (Built) which covers design and character issues. The objective is to protect and enhance the character of the built environment by respecting the integrity of buildings and spaces; to promote the highest standards of design; and promote public understanding of the historic built environment.

New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration

The adopted Local Plan includes the following objective:

Objective 9 Environmental design

To encourage the highest possible standards of design in new development and in environmental improvements; and to provide attractive, stimulating and safe places in which to live, work and play.
Sustainable homes

The planning system is key to creating sustainable communities by, for example, ensuring that development is located on sustainable sites and that development is located in such a way as to reduce the need to travel. The Government sees protection of the countryside, maximising the use of brownfield sites/land and the efficient use of land as an important part of its Sustainable Communities agenda. Minimum densities for new housing development have been set out in Government Guidance.

Apart from the various opportunities available for creating buildings that are more sustainable in themselves, developers should seek ways in which the places and spaces that are created can be sustainable. At one level this is about offering choice so that people can live more sustainable lifestyles. e.g. enable walking or cycle use more easily; enable recycling through design for external waste storage. At a wider level, developers should address sustainability in construction and design of streets and spaces: Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) principles should be adopted wherever opportunities are available. Ecological balance should be sought in creating or retaining green space and in selection of plant species.

The design of new housing has a significant impact on sustainability and enabling its occupiers to make sustainable lifestyle choices. Through Building Regulations minimum environmental standards are set. However, environmental standards and the sustainability of new housing can be further increased by considering the following:

- energy efficiency in the fabric of the building and appliances in the building;
- water efficiency, for example, fitting dual or low flush toilets and reduced flow taps;
- surface water management, for example sustainable drainage;
- site waste management, as building construction is responsible for a significant proportion of waste that currently goes to landfill;
- household waste management. This means providing space for bins, such as segmented kitchen bins for recycling waste;
- use of materials.

The Government intends to set minimum standards for the above factors in a Code for Sustainable Homes.

In addition, the following features will significantly contribute to the sustainability of new homes:

- The use of materials that are locally sourced, recycled or sustainably managed.
- Lifetime Homes. (This is about internal adaptability so that a home can be adapted for use of an elderly or disabled person);
- additional sound insulation which is important especially in apartment developments;
- higher daylighting standard which is beneficial to health and reduces the need for electric lighting;
- layout and orientation of buildings and choice of materials which conserves energy.
In the process described in the following sections you will need to consider how the above factors, which contribute to the sustainability of the development, will be taken into account when designing for your site.

This Hampshire example provides:

- 44 dwellings per ha
- Grey water suds
- Green roofs
- Underground parking
- Balconies
- Shared spaces
- Maximum light

Courtesy of Keith Leaman, Regeneration Partnership
Designing new residential development
- the process

This guidance provides advice to help those proposing a new residential development to meet national and local policies for good design. It is aimed at developers, landowners, agents and designers. It will also be used as a point of reference by the local planning authority in its assessment of planning applications. The guidance outlines a process which, if followed, should lead to good design solutions on development sites.

Building at higher densities than currently exists in most of the towns and villages in New Forest District at present, inevitably creates public concerns because of perceived changes it may bring to the character of an area. However, through good design, these changes can be brought about in a way which will protect and can often enhance the character of our towns and villages, while at the same time providing additional housing and minimising the need to build on green field sites in the District.

Poorly designed high density development is not acceptable, and does not comply with either national or local planning policies. A scheme developed solely on the premise of achieving a certain density target on a site is unlikely to result in a satisfactory form of development or a planning permission being granted.

The process set out in this SPD is recommended when preparing proposals for new housing development. By following the guidance given you will enhance the chances of securing a planning permission. The advice does not prescribe solutions or set rigid design standards, but outlines a process and methodology which, if followed, will result in better design solutions for new developments and a better understanding of the design by the decision makers and the wider community.

Planning applications for new residential development should be accompanied by a ‘Design and Access Statement’. The process set out in this SPD will also help you prepare the Design and Access Statement for your development proposal.
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 for the proposed buildings, streets, routes and spaces.
A design approach - research, analyse, respond, design

The following table summarises the process recommended by the Local Planning Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background work:</strong> read the documents, visit the area, walk the area. Contact the local planning authority: establish early dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Research available documentation to assist in assessing character and identity. e.g. New Forest Landscape Character Appraisal, conservation area appraisals, village design statements; and find out what policies and guidance affect the site. If necessary seek clarification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Define from where it is intended to analyse character and identity. Identify the appropriate area for study – see page 17. Identify locally important buildings or pattern of buildings. Identify relevant historical features, streetscapes or landmarks.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>analyse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyse the site context:</strong> measure, photograph, list, sketch - it needn’t be neat, it needn’t be glossy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Assemble data describing the character and identity of the chosen area by filling out a typology checklist such as that set out on page 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Analyse access, movement and permeability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Analyse activity and social expectation (involve the community).</td>
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<tr>
<th>respond</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Propose a response to the context.</strong> Include concept diagrams, bullet points, sketches. Keep it brief but effective. These are the aspirations - not the finished design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Return to the checklist to describe the development aspiration against each element of character and identity. Also propose a hierarchy where some elements are to be considered more important to carry through to the design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Describe aspirations for access and movement across the site and entrances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Describe proposed activity in terms of intended and potential uses and in terms of aspiration for use of public realm.</td>
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<tr>
<th>bringing it all together</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bring together your research and ideas - a concept plan, a design philosophy.</strong> Contact the local planning authority: get feedback on your emerging ideas. The best assistance the LPA can offer will be before detailed work to establish dwelling numbers is done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Draw together the proposed response to all three elements by way of a concept plan with a descriptive design philosophy that is dearly drawn from the analysis. Describe what sort of a place it is intended to create here. Sketch out a basic concept plan to calculate building area, mass and thereby numbers of dwellings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Finalise design and access statement and undertake detailed design work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The policy background

Establish the policy and infrastructure requirements for the proposed development – check out the Local Plan and relevant supplementary planning documents/guidance. These can be viewed on the New Forest District Council web-site at: www.newforest.gov.uk

You may find help in the following District Council publications:

- New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration
- Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents, including New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment (Supplementary Planning Guidance) and The Delivery of Affordable Housing (on Development Sites) through the Planning Process (Supplementary Planning Document)

Some of the things you will need to establish as they will have an impact on how a site is developed:

- Are there any policies or guidance relating to the site?
- Is there a requirement to provide affordable housing as part of the development?
- Is there a requirement for on-site public open space?
- What are the relevant car parking standards?
- Is local transport and social infrastructure sufficient?
The site

Get to know the area around the site and define the appropriate area for study. Identify locally important buildings or styles of buildings; identify relevant historical features or patterns of development; indentify the uses and activities that take place in the area. While the immediate surroundings will usually be the most relevant, the character of a wider area should also be examined.

To design a successful development and one that will receive planning permission you will need to have a good understanding of the site’s context – this is more than simply a site survey.

The guidance below sets out what you will need to examine.

Context is the setting of a site or area. As well as the areas landscape and townscape, it includes factors such as movement in and around the site (people as well as vehicles), and activities and uses. ‘Site context’ can be broken down into three sub-headings:

- A Character and sense of identity
- B Access, movement and permeability
- C Activity and social expectation

You will need to consider each of these.
A Character and sense of identity

Define your area

You will need to analyse the character of the area surrounding the site to be developed. Your earlier research about the location of the site should help you to do this. Character is not just a matter of building styles and settings, but also an area’s function and levels of activity. Sometimes there may be very little in terms of positive identity offered by the immediate surroundings. There may be elements that are unloved or even detrimental to the area. These should be acknowledged in the analysis, even though they may often need to be set aside when assessing the typology (see below).

While the immediate surroundings will usually be the most relevant, the character of a wider area should also be considered. This will particularly be the case where the identity of the area around the site is poorly defined, or the character is in need of much improvement. In such cases a wider search area or a different (but successful) location may need to be researched. You should consider the wider location, including the identity offered by approaching streets and routes. You should identify an area where the proposed ‘tissue’ (building footprint, streets and spaces) is successful and locally relevant before continuing. (The example given in this document illustrates this.) It would be useful to discuss this with the local planning authority at this stage.

Identify on a simple plan the area around your proposed development, and if appropriate, the wider research area. Annotate it to reveal any key aspects of identity and character such as important buildings, key views into and out of the site, spaces and trees.

Record information about the area

For any particular area, it is possible to glean a general sense of its character and identity. Usually, this will be a subconscious act. However, by careful analysis of factual, measurable and observable elements, an objective recognition of what makes up the character can be achieved. To ensure that character and identity are thoroughly understood, you should record the specific elements that make up the character of the chosen sample area(s), routes, features or buildings.

The objectively analysed elements of character can be termed ‘the typology’.
### Analyse the context

#### The typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Layout - Urban Structure and Urban Grain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plot width</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical width of each plot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Line</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining line of front of main building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volume.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Build up of building line</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of plot width built up (ignoring side extensions). Relationship between buildings and spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set back</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widths of verge, pavement and the distance from the front boundary to building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Front boundary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of types incl. heights, construction, materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building format</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns in relationships between building elements e.g. detached houses with ridge lines parallel to the street, regular gables to bay window frontage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape setting/features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees, avenues, hedges, green features etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topographical nature of the site and surroundings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mounds, slopes, bunds, level changes.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Massing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume (depth and heights) of buildings in relation to other buildings, streets and spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Dimensions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human scale:- eaves height, ridge height, roof pitch, depth of plan etc in relation to street width or external space dimensions and human form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appearance - Detail and Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm of facades, repetition of elements and patterns in such elements as bays, dormers, repeated gables and chimneys. Rhythm and pattern on the skyline through roof shapes and articulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Details</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmanship, building techniques, façade treatment (proportion and pattern of elements).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture, colour, pattern, durability/quality.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Density and Mix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site coverage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate proportion of built to un-built land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Density</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate numbers of dwellings per hectare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use mix</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate proportion of building floor space taken up by dwellings against that taken up by commercial and other uses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B Access, movement and permeability

You should analyse both vehicle and pedestrian movements in and around the site. You should identify existing routes and desire lines for possible future patterns of movement. The best way to illustrate your analysis will be an annotated diagram of the area around the site. You should show the following (as appropriate to your site):

- pedestrian routes and access points;
- pedestrian destinations within the area e.g. bus stops/routes, play areas, school, shops etc;
- routes with problems such as restricted access, i.e. steps or narrow width, or with safety issues;
- cycle routes and access points;
- vehicular routes and stopping and access points;
- access points and movements from neighbouring development.

Other features such as the location of bus stops, on-street parking restrictions and speed limits should also be noted.

The lack of appropriate infrastructure may be a limiting factor on a site's development, and may need addressing as part of a development proposal.

C Activity and social expectation

Record the nature of any activity carried out on the land including the current or allocated land use (e.g. housing, retail) and incidental uses (e.g. dog walking, play). The analysis should record the intensity of use and time of uses.

What is the local provision of public open spaces? Is there a deficiency in children’s play space in the vicinity of the site? Is there a need for on-site public open space? Is there a need to provide for children’s play as part of the development?

Are there any community safety issues relating to the site? Are there any known criminal or anti-social behaviour problems in the area? Are there any potential security issues raised by the principle of development for new housing on the site?

How prominent is the site in the local environment? How is ‘change’ likely to be viewed? (The development site may have been regarded as a local eyesore, or contain features that are highly valued by local people – trees, boundary walls for example.)

These issues will be specific to the site and immediate surroundings and generally can be explained as a brief description or simple diagram. For more complicated sites, records of such things as pedestrian counts and community consultation should be used.
“Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.”

(Para.34 PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development)

You will now have a detailed knowledge and understanding of your development site and the surrounding area. This detailed knowledge should be used to develop ideas for the development of the site and to assess the capacity of the site to accommodate new development at an appropriate density. Whether the density of development on the site can be increased, and to what extent, should be determined through a design-led response to the context.

The design response for all sites will need to draw on elements of the context appraisal. For many sites, the appropriate design solution will be one embedded in the existing ‘site context’, and which complements and blends with the existing character and identity of the locality. However, some sites will warrant a freedom to aspire to something different. Such sites may be corner plots or plots where a significant landmark or feature is needed to create a memorable sense of place. Sites may also be in transitional zones between one place with an easily recognised character and another with a contrasting one. Finally sites may form important edges to a built up area. All design statements should make clear which elements are considered to be most important in carrying forward to the new design.

As with the analysis stage, the design response should consider the site context in relation to:

- **A** Character and sense of identity
- **B** Access, movement and permeability
- **C** Activity and social expectation
A Responding to character and sense of identity

Aspirations for the character of the proposed development must be drawn from the analysis of context. Whether fitting in, strengthening or enhancing the existing or creating a new identity, the analysis of the character and identity will be vital. Using the checklist prepared at the analysis stage (the typology), the elements should be considered in terms of relative importance to the character and sense of identity of the area.

Where the site warrants an approach that fits a development neatly into the existing character of the area, the typology may need to be followed as closely as possible. Where a site needs clearly to strengthen the identity and quality of the area, it will be important to draw influence from the most well defined and valued elements of the typology, adding definition to those elements that are weaker but of local value. Where existing character is poor and unloved or identity weak, the opportunity should be taken, through good quality new design, to initiate positive change in the area.

It is important to remember that when a site is developed, it will not ultimately be compared with the buildings that it replaces but will be seen in its own right, and in its setting.

B Responding to access, movement and permeability

Aspirations for developing and improving the access, movement and permeability and for developing or altering the level of movement activity and circulation on and around the site should be set out as a clear statement and/or a conceptual drawing. You should consider how the access arrangements will ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access to buildings, spaces and the public transport network (See also Annex 1).

This should include:

- potential pedestrian and vehicular access points;
- potential pedestrian routes through the site, including where appropriate public rights of way;
- potential pedestrian and vehicular movements on and around the site;
- likely importance or hierarchy of such routes;
- key linkages to public transport networks and;
- access for emergency services.
C Responding to activity and social expectation

In addition to establishing the planning policy and infrastructure requirements for the development site at the ‘research’ stage, you will have assessed the needs and desires of the local community and what importance might be attached to these in reinforcing the sense of place. You now need to ensure that these are fully considered as a part of the design concept. It will be the designer’s response to local expectations and desires that will enable a scheme to respect its context and thus reinforce or reinvigorate the sense of place.

The spaces between buildings are every bit as important as the built form in any new development.

The sense of space, the visual access to sky and greenery in proportion to building, should have been dealt with as described above in terms of character and identity.

At a more physical level, developing at higher densities creates greater pressure for use and movement upon the public realm and upon external spaces. If designed well, a greater efficiency of land use will be achieved but it is important that consideration is given to all the likely uses that the public realm and other spaces will need to accommodate.

External space is needed in residential developments for a variety of purposes. This includes:

- Space for resident and visitor car parking (see annex 1).
- Space for car manoeuvrability (turning space, sight lines etc).
- Public space for play.
- Private gardens.
- Space for other elements of amenity (e.g. trees, shrubs, seating, bins).
- Waste storage and collection points.
- Bicycle storage and parking.
- Space allocated for underground services where occasional access might be needed.

It is important that not only are the existing pressures and conflicts between these uses recognised at the context analysis stage, but also that the design for future use takes into account the increasing pressures upon the land and an acceptable balance is achieved. Advice on resolving some common space problems is given in Annex 2.
Creating successful places

Having established the planning policy and infrastructure requirements for the development site at the ‘research’ stage, requirements such as affordable housing, public open space or necessary highway improvements will need to be included within the development. Generally, housing developments will be required to include affordable housing on the site. Where there is such a requirement, the design process should ensure that affordable housing is fully integrated into the development.

You should bring together the response to the whole context as a set of key design principles and/or a simple design philosophy. This, together with a drawn concept framework showing how the broad issues of layout can be accomplished should be produced before going on to design for the site.

This will suggest the appropriate density (and help to assess the feasibility of including particular dwelling types and sizes); a density that can be justified by its response to context and its aspirations to improve the character and identity of the area.

Making a planning application

The process described in this document should be followed before submitting a planning application for a site. It cannot be applied retrospectively to justify a certain form of development.

Developers are advised to undertake the initial stages of the process described here – the research stage and at least a preliminary site analysis – before committing to acquire a site. Assuming that a certain form or density of development is likely to be acceptable on a site may result in an incorrect assessment of its value, which could have a detrimental impact on the viability of proposals.
In this next section a worked example, relating to a site in Totton, is given to show this process in practice. The example illustrates the process of designing for a site in a transitional area between the town centre and a residential area. This is followed by a second example, from outside the New Forest District area, illustrating in greater detail how the ‘analysis’ stage of the process is done.

**Tissue selections, context appraisal and a design response**

Design that respects its context is not simply about conforming to what has gone before. All development sites represent an opportunity to improve on the character and identity of a place. To illustrate the process of designing in an area of transition, a site in Totton town centre* has been selected. The immediate surroundings to this site do not suggest many obvious characteristics that might act as cues to the design. However, a more in depth look at the context is vital in developing a design philosophy. New development will need to reaffirm an identity and character through creating new qualities based on well researched analysis of the character of the area. The following pages are set in the order of the actions given in the table on page14.

* This site is selected as a hypothetical example only. It is not intended as specific guidance for, or to bear relation to any future development implemented under any previous planning approvals.

**1st Action: Investigate available documentation**

Local Plan Policy TE-5 covers uses for this area. These include business, office, financial or professional service use and residential, including affordable housing. Vehicle access should be from Water Lane. There is no conservation area but this site is referred to in the Totton Town Centre – Urban Design Framework (2003). This supplementary guidance (SPG) seeks to repair the perimeter block structure of the town in this location with buildings fronting the street on each side of this site and an internal courtyard for parking and amenity use. The SPG highlights this site as an opportunity for new building to face onto the public realm. The frontage along Water Lane is intended to be treated as a ‘shopping street’ with a consistent character for the streetscape. The Ringwood Road frontage is intended to be treated as a ‘town centre street’ with low, permanent quality boundaries and front doors facing directly onto the street. The whole site is within what the SPG refers to as a pedestrian preference zone. The east end of the site on Water Lane is singled out as needing a high quality of architecture (as part of a nodal area). The southern boundary is expected to include a tree line and provision for future cycle path along a widened pavement. Other relevant SPG includes the Design for Community Safety (adopted 1998), Landscape Requirement for New Development (1999), Access for Disabled People (2000) and Shopfront Design Guide (2001). National guidance in ‘By Design’ (DETR and CABE) and ‘By Design better places to live’ (DTLR and CABE) is also particularly relevant.
2nd Action: Identify from where it is intended to analyse character and identity

Character and identity have been eroded in this part of Totton. It is therefore useful to look at a nearby but related area of the town, in this case a street that one passes through immediately before reaching the site. The figure ground drawing below illustrates the importance of the definition of spaces and streets contained by built form. It can be seen that even poor buildings have assisted this definition, nevertheless building lines and build up of streets is often fragmented in the town centre. Buildings of good architectural quality or with particularly recognizable characteristics are few and far between. The photograph overleaf picks out those that may be of benefit to a positive identity for the town.

For this example, a study of this area along Ringwood Road is analysed using the typology checklist. This area shows a more consistent character and identity than the immediate site surroundings that can be used to inform future design.
Worked example 1

Elements that may be of benefit as part of a positive identity for the town
## Worked example 1

1. Junction Road Terrace – showing typical higher density housing right in the centre of town. Double bays topped with gables gives strong street rhythm. Minimal private space defines a margin for personalisation of dwellings and security to front doors.

2. Commercial Road. Town centre shops showing domestic scale and rhythm of oriel bays and gables.

3. Elephant and Castle. C18th rural pub. Historic detail and materials may be of interest if a traditional style is aspired to.

4. Cross Keys and neighbouring buildings. Listed pub and similar neighbouring building. One of a few three storey examples in a town that has long cherished its village status. The cluster of buildings shows a well balanced mix of 2-3 storey shops with accommodation over.

5. HSBC Bank

6. Salisbury Road medical centre. 1980s worthwhile attempt to set a new character for the town centre with traditional materials and a well articulated roof form.

7. Water Lane recent flats. A single building that is well enough articulated to emulate the domestic scale of the Water Lane dwellings that one passes on the way into town with front doors and narrow gardens. But the density and additional storey height make efficient use of town centre land.

8. Ringwood Road historical streetscene (lost within living memory). An example to show how the domestic scale of the Ringwood Road approach to the town centre became higher density nearer the town centre.
**Worked example 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of character and identity</th>
<th>Existing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layout</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot width</td>
<td>Typically 7.5m south of the road and 9.5m north of the road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building line</td>
<td>See site analysis drawing. (For study area – average 4.7m).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build up of building line</td>
<td>Typically 65% on north side and 75% on south side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set back</td>
<td>See section below, Average 4.7m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front boundary</td>
<td>Ignoring those overgrown hedges or c/b fences that detract from the street scene, these are typically wall topped with picket fence to chest/shoulder height on north side, similar or simple picket fence on south side at waist height.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building format</td>
<td>Mix of semis and occasional terraces all two-storey. Variety of roof types interspersed with gables over bays. Main ridges run to parallel to street with approx. 50% hipped and deeper plots with secondary ridges running back from buildings. Check drawing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting and features</td>
<td>North side has short gardens with shrub and occasional trees to offer an element of greenery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Worked example 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topography</th>
<th>Generally flat but in common with the site itself Ringwood Road’s north side has a shallow rise between the edge of highway and building line (approx 0.5m).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Eaves height between 4.8m and 5.2m. Occasionally 5.8m on shallow depth buildings. Depth generally 8.9m on north side and 7.5m on south side.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Appearance—details and materials | Portrait windows approx. ratio 1:2 typically sash. Bay windows mostly on ground floor only, occasionally two with gable. Chimneys, quoins and string corner decoration in brickwork. |

| Detail     | Richness is shown through a limited palette of materials with variety shown through craftsmanship and details of things such as bays, door heads, window heads and sills, name stones, patterned slate arrangements, quoins and string courses. |

| Density and mix | 22 dwellings per ha across sample tissue. 40 per ha at its most dense. |

| Approx. percentage built to unbuilt land | See figure ground drawing. |

| Approx. percentage of built floor space as dwellings against other uses | Only two commercial premises and one church – therefore 95%. |

Density, build up and building format: this figure ground diagram of the tissue study area shows a typical urban ‘grain’ near to the town centre.
4th Action: Analysing access, movement and permeability

The site sits at a strategically important position in the town centre in terms of movement. Pedestrian streams run along all boundaries of the site accessing the shopping frontages especially those of the Water Lane and Salisbury Road junction. An important bus stop lies on Ringwood Road, picking up shoppers from the major Asda store. There are no specific cycle routes but the town centre seeks improvement to cycle facilities in this, the ‘pedestrian preference zone’. The diagram shows the site in relation to the town centre. There are bus stops immediately adjacent to either side of the site leading into and out of Southampton and the main line station for Totton is approximately 0.6km to the east.

The following factors are plotted on these diagrams of the site and its more immediate surroundings:

- Fully inclusive pedestrian movement routes and access points. Orange arrows show the major routes.
- Pedestrian destinations within the neighbourhood e.g. bus stops/routes, play areas, school, shop etc. Shown in blue these are mainly shop fronts.
- Occasional, pedestrian movement routes and access points that may be special or restricted e.g. by steps or width. None of the pavements are particularly buggy/wheelchair ‘friendly’ and there are no crossings other than that shown.
- Cycle routes and access points – none exist at present.
- Vehicular routes and access points. Beige arrows show main routes. Hatching denotes areas where vehicle movements also occur and this often conflicts with pedestrian movement.
- All potential access points left by previous neighbouring development. These are shown but may be less relevant as the local plan outlines a specific access requirement.
5th Action: Analysing current activity and social expectation

Much of the land is currently unused with three derelict bungalows facing Water Lane and a two storey house partly demolished on the south side. A local estate agent is relocating within the town centre, vacating the two storey building in the north east corner. A row of advertisement hoardings along the south of the site face Ringwood Road and are a detriment to the identity of the town. In front of these a layby has, until recently, been used for ad-hoc private car sales and as a result has been secured off by temporary concrete barriers. A small section of this layby remains open for car parking use of the three remaining dwellings on the south-western corner, all three of which remain in use at present.

The surrounding streets see considerable pedestrian activity through most of the daytime whenever the shops are open. During the evenings this is usually reduced to activity focused upon the two garage shops either side of Ringwood Road, access to the Asda store in the early evening and people on route to one of the few town centre pubs located east of the site along Ringwood Road. The northern aspect of the site has the potential to benefit from shopping activity on the opposite side of Water Lane but at present, the on-street car parking makes crossing the road difficult and also adds to vehicle congestion. Local expectations for the site will be high following the consultation upon and subsequent publication of the SPG. This referred to earlier public consultation carried out in spring 2000 where local people looked for the redevelopment of land blighted by the possibility of a link road and also for an improved pedestrian realm.

The sketch below summarizes the uses and activity on and around the site.
## Worked example 1

6th Action: Note aspirations and set hierarchy against elements in the check list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of character and identity</th>
<th>Aspiration for the site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layout</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot width</td>
<td>An even rhythm of plot widths identified across site frontages picking up the tighter dimensions that are characteristic to emphasise proximity to town centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build up of building line</td>
<td>Tightening gaps between built form and bringing the building line towards the front of the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front boundary</td>
<td>Reinforce plot widths with wall and piers to create a rhythm. Introduce gates to reinforce the boundary and retain the rhythm but allow visibility and connectivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building format</td>
<td>Picking up the pattern of pairs of dwellings and terraces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key dimensions</td>
<td>Use characteristic storey heights to define overall building heights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting and features</td>
<td>Avenue line and minimal front garden along Ringwood Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appearance—details and materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key features</th>
<th>Window opening to follow characteristic portrait format, however if landscape is appropriate to façade composition, function, etc., then subframe introduced to reinforce vertical proportion.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Density and mix</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of dwellings per hectare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. percentage built to unbuilt land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. percentage of built floor space as dwellings against other uses</td>
<td>A density of building footprint picking up but intensifying the grain in the analysed figure ground drawing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7th Action: Describe the aspirations for access and movement across the site and its entrances

Shops with dwellings on storeys above are the intended uses for the Water Lane frontage. Dwellings are intended to face both Ringwood Road and Popes Lane and thus access the public realm and public transport networks as recorded earlier.

**Fully inclusive pedestrian movement routes and access points**

Shops will open onto existing pavements either at grade or up short ramps. Totton SPG describes the area as ‘Pedestrian Preference Zone’. It is therefore intended to provide cycle parking close to the shop fronts. Shops will have canopies to provide shelter. Bollards will double as ownership defining markers and protection for the pedestrian realm.

**Pedestrian destinations within the neighbourhood**

e.g. bus stops/routes, play areas, school, shop etc.

It is intended to provide individual front doors facing onto Ringwood Road to allow easy access to the Bus stop and Asda store. Flats above shops along Water Lane will be accessed via a central courtyard with a clearly defined and well lit pedestrian route alongside the vehicular access point.

**Routes with problems**

Occasional, pedestrian movement routes and access points that may be special or restricted e.g. by steps or width. All routes are intended to be inclusive for buggies and wheelchair access.

**Cycle routes and access points**

Additional width along Ringwood Road will be set aside for cycle route. Cycle parking for dwellings will be included within stair well designs for flats and in a lockable shelter within a central courtyard.

**Vehicular routes and access points**

Access for the buildings will be via internal courtyards, accessed from a single point on Water Lane. On-street servicing is intended for the shops on the Water Lane frontage.

**All potential access points left by previous development**

The derelict lay-by on Ringwood Road will be incorporated in the front gardens with paths to front doors. This with the exception of a margin to provide cycle route.

**Emergency access**

With all buildings fronting the public streets, vehicular emergency access will simply be from these streets. Additional access to the inner courtyard will be restricted in height and width by built form. Fire and ambulance services will be consulted regarding any additional access needs within the block. Fire escapes and the rear of buildings will be designed to allow evacuation into the internal courtyard and at least two external access routes will be created to connect to the wider street network.
8th Action: Describe proposed activity, - how car parking, play and amenity space are to be dealt with

Shop fronts will include a margin for displaying wares or outdoor café uses. Canopies and balconies will help make these margins more sheltered.

Car parking will be restricted to residents within the courtyard. Deliveries will be from Water Lane frontage. Play value will be included in the courtyard designs and home zone/play street ideas for Popes Lane will be discussed with the LPA. Local amenity opportunities exist for informal use to the south of the railway. Of more immediate benefit will be the reintroduction of a village green at Water Lane/Salisbury Road as proposed in the Totton Town Centre SPG. Contributions will be proposed towards achieving this.

9th Action: Bringing it all together - the developed design philosophy.

All three elements of context are drawn together to form the following concept and design philosophy. The proposal will:

- Use traditional materials and existing rhythms and proportion in a contemporary manner to create an attractive and vibrant place; intrinsically part of the town centre, thus offering a clear new identity at the culmination of the Ringwood Road’s approach to the town centre and setting a standard for future neighbouring development.

- Complete the ‘perimeter block’ with built form defining the edge of Water Lane, Popes Lane and Ringwood Road using a combination of terraced and semi-detached dwellings and shops at heights of two and a half to three storeys.

- Create a roof form and rhythm of buildings that builds upon the essential characteristics identified on the Ringwood Road approach to the town centre and that embraces a more condensed and active town centre use.

- Offer a vibrant and lively edge to Water Lane.

- Contribute to a pedestrian friendly Popes Lane that also introduces play value as part of a home zone style street.

- Create an internal courtyard that is a pleasant place for residents to use; an amenity that offers visual delight as well as a place for car/cycle parking and storage.

- Create a place that enables individual residents to enjoy a lifestyle that minimises negative impacts upon the environment. For example including: energy efficient building construction, insulation, recycling provision, internal cycle storage facilities.

The plan shows a conceptual layout for the development (which will allow approximately: 8 town houses facing Ringwood Road, 10 flats on the corner of Popes Lane, approximately 20 one and two bedroom flats along Water Lane set above approximately 600 square metres of shop units). It also includes a courtyard for car parking, tree planting, cycle and bin storage and rear gardens plots for Ringwood Road houses and Popes Lane flats.
The elevations illustrate both a contemporary and a traditional approach to the Water Lane terrace in which the built form has a homogenous appearance responding to rhythms and plot widths derived from the analysis.

Note: This is the first time that an attempt to suggest quantum for development is made. Even at this stage the actual quantum of development is approximate and needs to be honed during final design preparation. If the process is followed then it is at this stage that a value for the land starts to suggest itself and not before.

**10th Action: Bringing it all together - Finalise the design statement and undertake detailed design work**

The final stage will lead to a planning application at which point the land value can finally be determined as a function of the quality that is offered.
This second example uses a typology checklist to establish a response to the character and identity of a place

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council have prescribed a similar ‘typology’ checklist in order to establish the character and identity elements of context. The following example is taken from Solihull (Ref: Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance: New Housing in Context, November 2003). It shows the initial developer response followed by a more sympathetic response to the character of the street as defined by a typology checklist. This example shows how higher density can be achieved in areas where the character is already well defined and illustrates the advantages of a thorough approach to assessing and responding to the character and identity of an area. This extract should, however, be viewed with caution as it does not present the complete process but simply part of it.

In areas where the identity is strong and the checklist can define most of the cherished elements of the context, it is important to use these to build a design philosophy. Issues of access, movement, permeability and of activity and social expectation can rarely be ignored in responding to the context although it can be seen in this example that there are occasions where these elements remain unaffected by a development proposal.
Example 2: 339-347 Station Road, Dorridge

Project Outline

Proposal to replace four semi-detached houses and one detached house with 24 flats in four blocks. Three of these face directly onto the street, whilst the other one is accessed from the car park.

The site sits between two different building typologies, one of which is a church, and so is ruled out as suitable for housing. The other is a row of two-storey Edwardian properties with some rooms on the second floor in the roof space. Despite variations in the details of the buildings, they establish a strong building line, with clearly continuous eaves and ridge line.

A location plan with the site hatched in red and the building line clearly indicated as a blue dotted line.

The existing semi-detached buildings with their heavily planted front gardens.
### Project outline

| **Plot Width** | 18m typical with minimum of 15m and maximum of 20m |
| **Building Line** | Typically as indicated on the location plan. |
| **Building Line Build Up** | Typically approximately 60% of the building line is built up by the main building, with single storey garages and side extensions in addition. |
| **Building Set Back** | Typically 2.2m pavement with a 10.4m front garden which gives a total set back from the kerb of 12.6m. |
| **Front Boundary** | Typically a 2m hedge with additional trees. |
| **Landscape Setting and Features** |  |
| **Plot Format** | Detached houses. |
| **Parking** | Garages to the side of properties, with some front drive parking. |
| **Plot Access** | Gateways opening directly onto the pavement at the front of the plot. |
| **Building Format** | Large detached houses, 2-storey with some rooms on the 2nd floor in the roof space. Building shape is a simple wide box, with the main ridge running parallel to the street. |
| **Key Dimensions** | Eaves height approx 5.4m |
| | Ridge height approx 8.6m |
| | Roof pitch approx 45 degrees |
| **Key Features** | Half-timbered gable to the street—approx 4m wide. Substantial brick chimneys—typically over 2m tall with three pots. Single-storey bays. |
| **Roofing Materials** | Dark brown/terracotta plain tiles with matching ridge. |
| **Wall Materials** | Bright terracotta smooth red brick with smooth sandstone quoins. |
| **Window Format** | Windows are vertically proportioned, with wider panels split into several vertical casements. Typical Edwardian pattern uses tall lower side hung casements with square top hung casement. |
| **Typical Details** | Stone quoins, lintels and sills, with more elaborate brick and stone detailing around the door, and a stone bay window. Some buildings use very pale cream bricks for details/quoins in place of stone. |

Above: The neighbouring buildings used to establish the typology for the site.
**Assessment of the proposal**

Whilst superficially acceptable from an architectural point of view, the proposal could be improved on a number of counts which would help it to relate more seamlessly with the neighbouring typology:

- The building line of the proposal only partly follows that already established by the neighbouring buildings. The buildings themselves are also heavily articulated, and much more complex than the adjacent typology. This further fragments the building line and dilutes the existing context.

- The front boundary treatment breaks substantially with the prevailing typology, and not only includes the provision of railings, but adds in a deep verge between the railings and the pavement. This does not occur elsewhere on the street and represents a major change to the public space. This change has largely been brought about by the switch from driveways serving each dwelling and only a few vehicles, to a large shared car park where many vehicle movements can be expected and where more rigorous visibility splays are required.

![The street elevation showing the proposed buildings in context.](image)

![The plan for the proposed scheme. Note the large three-storey block to the rear of the plot overlooking the church and car park, and the large communal parking area which fills most of the site not used by buildings.](image)
Assessment of the proposal

The sections above show a comparison between the proposal and the existing typology. The building line is established by the main body of the typology building rather than the projecting gable or bay, but the proposed scheme projects substantially forward of both. At the front boundary, the substantial hedge at the edge of the pavement has been replaced by railings and planting set back behind a verge. This greatly increases the level of visibility of the front gardens and removes privacy, it also significantly widens the street scene by allowing the buildings rather than the hedge to provide the primary visual endosure.

- The scheme successfully identifies and follows the typical plot width, however, the buildings which are then placed onto those plots are much wider, filling 80% rather than 60% of the building line.
- Although the eaves height and roof pitch of block A initially match the existing neighbouring building, this is not continued along the street, and the bulk of the roofs in particular continues to increase. What is also noticeable is that the gables facing the road vary in width and height, rather than maintaining the steady rhythm set up by the neighbouring plots.
- The scheme includes a substantial new building at the rear of one of the plots within the centre of the block, with the same scale and volume as the buildings facing the street. This creates a very dominating presence due to its visibility from the street and adjacent properties.
**Example of redevelopment in the context of the neighbouring typology**

The scheme below illustrates how the guidance can be applied, based on the previous typology study. This creates a total of 15 units in place of the original five, with a mix of 12 flats and three houses. It differs from the original proposal on the following key points:

- It closely follows the basic form and scale of the neighbouring typology, respecting the eaves height and ridge height. Most importantly, it retains the plot widths, building line build-up and front boundary treatment.

- Additional volume is added in the form of wings to the rear of the buildings, where they are set back from the building line and do not interrupt the street scene, and through single storey side extensions, following the precedent of the garages in the existing typology.

- Gardens are provided for each building, and each has a small car-park in place of one large communal one which allows for the provision of lawns, planting and the retention of important landscape features to reflect and preserve the existing landscape character. This also impacts on the surrounding properties, while providing better security through more frequent use of a variety of areas on the site.

- To ensure that the entrance and access works effectively, a turning/passing area is included immediately inside the gateway.

The alternative scheme closely mimics the form of the existing typology, with additional building volume provided in buildings set well back from the building line.

The plan for the alternative scheme.

1. Turning/passing area
2. Private garden
3. Parking for residents and visitors
4. Mews
Example of redevelopment in the context of the neighbouring typology

The sections above demonstrate how the additional accommodation is provided within the example, using a more modest scale of building based closely on the existing typology. Crucially, the new scheme uses a series of smaller entrances off the road which avoids the need to set the hedge line back to create the visibility splay.

- The use of separate car park entrances in place of one combined one ensures that each entrance is used with far less frequency. This permits greater flexibility in the application of visibility splays, ensuring that the front boundary can be better maintained, an important feature of the landscape character.

- The scheme uses low scale mews buildings to create additional accommodation within the plot. This avoids the need to place any substantial buildings against the boundaries at the rear of the property, significantly reducing the impact of the scheme on the neighbouring rear gardens and the church. It also ensures that the scheme contains a mix of housing types, including some family houses alongside the flats, as recommended in PPG3.

- The mews is entered between two of the buildings, and provides three houses with integral garages. Visitor and over-spill parking is provided off the turning area at the bottom of the mews.
Annex 1 - Car parking in areas of increased housing density

Planning applications for higher density residential development submitted to New Forest District Council must be accompanied by a design and access statement. The Council will expect that the issue of prevention of inappropriate car parking will have been fully addressed within this statement.

**Typical problems**

Designers and agents should consider the following list of potential problems that may arise in preparing their proposals:

- Effective widening of cross over points on pavements to the detriment of the pedestrian.
- Inappropriate on-road parking, creating safety or emergency access problems.
- Drivers, wishing to keep the carriageway clear, often parking on space intended for other uses. Verge, pavement, even public open space get parked on and the proper use of these is then prevented.
- Creation of neighbour conflict.
- Take over of amenity space.
- Knock on effect of reducing provision in one location may cause congested and inappropriate parking in a nearby neighbourhood.
- Loss of front gardens and thereby a loss of streetscape, character and visual amenity.
- Removal of trees or prevention of the planting of trees in the streetscape.
- Blocking of emergency access. This extends to whole stretches of road and not just gateways. Road widths may be part of the problem.
- Garaging and spaces designed for car parking being used for other purposes.
- Informal areas on shared surface streets that are not designed for any particular use provide inappropriate additional car spaces.
Housing design, density and character
Solutions

A number of design solutions are available that if used sensitively may help. These include:

1. Choosing parking styles in a combination which is appropriate to the location and site conditions:
   - Remote or integral garaging or car ports
   - Frontage parking
   - Side parking
   - Parallel on-street parking
   - Right angled on-street parking
   - Courtyards and squares as part of the streetscape
   - Rear parking courts
   - Rear garden parking
   - Underground parking or basement car parks
   - Individual basement garaging or underground car ports

2. Bollards, bunds or barriers to deal with verge and amenity land parking.

3. Bollards or barriers to prevent pavement parking or to cater for it.

4. Using hard and soft landscape in the design of new streets to make intended uses clear and physically prevent inappropriate parking.

5. Using car ports instead of garages to keep a lively street frontage and ensure that such spaces are not taken up for other storage etc. This would not only free up the space allocated by the garage, but obviate the need for extra manoeuvring space (to draw off the street while garage doors are opened).

6. Street widths could be either wider to allow parking without preventing emergency access or narrower to prevent ad-hoc parking by making it more obvious that it obstructs.

7. Developers might introduce covenants for residents regulating car ownership and storage.

8. Residents’ parking schemes and waiting restrictions – commuted sums will be needed from developers to allow the local authority to introduce and enforce these.

9. Parking squares (as part of the streetscape – possibly with allocated 90 degree spaces) might be considered. Commuted sums for street maintenance or neighbourhood parking schemes could be introduced at the outset.

10. Removal of permitted development rights can protect front gardens and green streetscapes. Developers may wish the LPA to consider this as part of their proposal.
Inappropriate car parking can be very detrimental to the quality and character of places. It is not the intention of the council to dictate prescriptive solutions to such problems. It is therefore open to developers to employ professionally qualified designers (Architects, Landscape Architects, Urban Designers or Highway Engineers) to make use of these notes and to create designs that comply with each of the requirements below.

Designs will therefore only be considered as appropriate if the external space within the development can be shown to comply with the following requirements of good quality residential places.

- Residential places should be designed to prevent or discourage unauthorised off-road parking. This is to prevent obstruction of pedestrian, wheelchair and buggy access and to protect amenity and open spaces. However, care will be needed in designing preventative measures, that they do not themselves impinge upon amenity or intended pedestrian movement (especially for those with special visual or mobility requirements).

- Gardens, trees, areas of open space and amenity should be protected from car encroachment and mechanisms put in place to prevent later removal of such amenities for additional car parking (unless subsequently agreed with the LPA). This is to retain the balance of activity and opportunity on the street and to ensure that the intended provision for play and amenity is retained.

- Streets and spaces should be designed to ensure that excessive or inappropriate on-road parking will not happen: to prevent blocking of emergency access; to reduce neighbour conflict; and to retain character of streets such that they are not visually over-dominated by parked cars.

- Development should be designed to house cars in useable, convenient and safe locations to prevent any potential reluctance by owners to use the car spaces provided.

- Developments should be able to retain space designed for car parking for that use, this may be through design and/or agreement mechanisms. To prevent car spaces from being built over or garaging being lost to other types of storage or conversion. Garages often get converted or driveways built over in the assumption that removal of front gardens or the increase in on-street car parking is acceptable – it often is not.

Solution 6
Solution 7
Solution 8
Solution 9
Solution 10
Annex 2 - Advice on resolving problems over competition for space

The spaces between buildings are as important as the buildings themselves in creating a sense of place

Developing at higher densities offers increased pressure upon the public realm and upon external spaces. If designed well, a greater efficiency of land use will be achieved but it is important that consideration is given to all the likely uses that the public realm will need to accommodate.

External space is needed in residential developments for a variety of purposes. This includes:

- Space for resident and visitor car parking
- Space for car manoeuvrability (turning space, sight lines etc)
- Public space for play
- Private gardens
- Space for other elements of amenity (e.g. trees, shrubs, seating, bins)
- Waste storage and collection points
- Bicycle storage and parking
- Space allocated for underground services where occasional access might be needed

It is important that design for future use takes into account the increasing pressures upon the land and an acceptable balance achieved. Whilst a number of these elements are regulated through other planning, highway and building controls, there is a danger that any of the elements that do not have a minimum standard may be reduced or omitted to the extreme detriment of any final scheme. Typically it will be the amenity and garden spaces of any new higher density development that tend to be reduced, often rendering the design unacceptable.
Maximize value of amenity space

If there is a perceived shortfall of private amenity space within a development, this can be partially alleviated by recreating some of the advantages of amenity space in other ways. Green roofs, trellises on walls and roofs, window boxes and trees between car spaces can all add to the green ‘atmosphere’ of a place. Balconies, roof gardens and intimate courtyards can offer an intensity of outdoor use that rivals gardens of much greater size in other (lower density) developments. In short, raising the quality and utilizing the opportunities to the full may be the key to justifying a higher density.

Ensure that space is used for its intended purpose

Areas of amenity or for pedestrian use are often taken over for car parking – make sure there is a clear purpose to the amenity. Poorly designed places may offer paths that go nowhere useful or are obviously too convoluted. Green space that is too shaded or is out of sight, sparsely planted or unmaintained becomes abused and should be avoided.

Car garaging is often used for storage or conversion – car ports or canopies could be considered.

Front gardens that are intended to offer amenity to the street are often resurfaced or screened off - agree covenants or management schedules with prospective owners; agree protection measures such as TPO with the local planning authority (for instance an avenue designed with minimum land-take may use trees in front gardens. By agreement, a TPO could ensure the trees longevity before planting).
Offer shared uses of land

Good design, can either obviate the need for one or more uses, or create an environment where space can be shared between the uses:

Combine several legitimate uses of the public realm along home zone principles – play, pedestrian circulation, car parking and manoeuvring.

Service runs can usually act as footpaths or in shared surface streets, if bollards or subtle landscape features can demark the channel, these margins can become part of the green amenity of a place (It isn’t really acceptable to avoid quality surface treatment for such margins simply to enable service providers to reinstate easily and cheaply. Pre-cast concrete kerbs set as markers in grass are a detriment to amenity and are unlikely to be acceptable except in special circumstances).

Underground service runs only need accessing occasionally, space for visitor parking might use this margin as part of the streetscape.

Car parking can be decked over with shared garden space - use roofs, decks, balconies and canopies to maximise the amenity use of land.

Swales and storm water detention areas can double as fine weather green space or even as permanent wetland areas of ecological and visual amenity value. SUDS is illustrated under construction.
Enable facilities to be shared

Some spaces can have one use at one time of day and another later on – parking squares may be designed for amenity.

Bin and cycle storage might combine with porches.

On-street car parking may be designed to cater for different users at different times of day.

Bollards can define boundaries, can be signs, can be gateway markers, can be cycle stands and even offer play value.

Seats, trip rails, low walls and patterned surfaces can all offer play value, increasing the play opportunities in an area.

Reduce conflict between land uses

Ensure that the intended use is clear by design and that boundaries between segregated uses are clearly defined and secure. Use permanent quality rails, fences, bollards, trees, street lights or low bunds and swales to protect soft edges and green space (boundary definition such as birds mouth trip rails and wire fencing are only appropriate where they are not expected to be permanent).

Remove conflict through collaborative design: trees and street lighting cannot be designed in isolation from each other. If a tree line is intended, the lighting engineer must be aware of it. Canopy heights can be adjusted through long terms management, column heights can be selected to suit the tree line and species.

Reduce wasted space

Left over space is usually an end product of over-regulated design, either through standardisation of house types or through over-zealously applied standards or design codes.

Slower car speeds can mean less land-take for manoeuvring vehicles.

Unusable slivers of land should be designed out. Buildings can be orientated to run parallel to streets leaving excess land within gardens or including it within the built form. If a patch of gravel or trowelled mortar is needed to keep weeds at bay, if there is a need for ‘pedestrian deterrent’ paving then surely there is a wasted opportunity; an inefficient use of land.
Reduce land-take of one or more uses through mixing development

This can be done by creating a mixture of dwelling types and sizes thus offering choice.

Awkward corner plots, landmark buildings, building over undercroft access or parking and roof space over car ports can include additional accommodation.

Reduce land-take of one or more uses through regulation

As explained above, there is a danger in regulating using minimum standards where there is pressure on land use. However, setting a maximum standard for some elements may avoid an over-indulgence in some elements that may seem easy options in the short term but lead to less sustainable lifestyles.

For example car parking is now given as a maximum standard. There may be a negative impact in applying a maximum standard, if the inevitable behaviour of users is not fully taken into account. Car parking in particular can spoil the best intentions of design if it is not fully considered at the outset. Annex 1 contains a short guidance note listing the possible problems and ideas for relieving the potential problems through design.
This glossary is intended to provide general guidance, not authoritative definitions of terms which are sometimes controversial or used with different meanings in different contexts.

Accessibility
The ease with which people can move round an area and reach places and facilities, including elderly and disabled people, those with young children and those encumbered with luggage or shopping. Proposals for accessibility (including vehicle accessibility) should be included as part of the Design and Access statement accompanying most planning applications.

Adaptability
The capacity of a building or space to be changed so as to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions. See also Robustness.

Building line
The line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street. The ‘building line’ can be shown on a plan or section.

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

Design principle
An expression of one of the basic design ideas at the heart of an urban design framework, design guide, development brief or a development proposal.

Design statement
(a) A pre-application design statement is made by a developer to indicate the design principles upon which a development proposal in progress is based. It enables the local authority to give an initial response to the main issues raised by the proposal, (b) A planning application design statement sets out the design principles that the planning applicant has adopted in relation to the site and its wider context, as required by PPG 1.

Design and access statement
From August 2006 most planning applications for development will be required to include a design and access statement (refer to Statutory instruments 2006 No.1062.) Whereas a design statement (set out above and elsewhere in this document) would normally include issues of access, there will be a requirement to include access as a specific part of such a statement.

Figure ground (or figure and ground, or Nolli) diagram
A plan showing the relationship between built form and publicly accessible space (including streets) by presenting the former in black and the latter as a white background (or the other way round).
Glossary

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

Home zone
A small highly traffic calmed residential area, often with road and pavement integrated into a single suface, where pedestrians and cyclists have priority over cars.

Landscape
The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements and the way these components combine. Landscape character can be expressed through landscape appraisal, and maps or plans. In towns ‘townscape’ describes the same concept.

Legibility
The degree to which a place can be easily understood and thus traversed without getting lost or having to seek formal directions. A place where one can see where to go and recognise links and directions through the memorable qualities of townscape without having to rely on signposts can be said to be legible.

Local distinctiveness
The positive features of a place and its communities which contribute to its special character and sense of place.

Massing
The combined effect of the height, bulk and silhouette of a building or group of buildings.

Natural surveillance (or supervision)
The discouragement to wrong-doing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen from surrounding buildings or spaces. This is also known as passive surveillance (or supervision).

Permeability
The extent to which an environment allows people a choice of access routes through it from place to place (Bentley et al 1985). To offer a true choice of routes, an environment would need such routes to be pleasant, convenient and safe.

Public realm
The parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks. Also called ‘public domain’.
Glossary

Quantum
Amount (of development).

Robustness
The capacity of a building or space to offer a choice of uses or accept change without detriment to its inherent character. A robust building might offer this choice through its ability to offer changes in use responding to changing social, technological and economic conditions. See also Adaptability.

Scale
The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly as experienced in relation to the size of a person. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale: at other times it is the size of the elements and the way they are combined.

SUDS Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
A combination of design techniques that allows drainage to be dealt with in ways that don't create drainage and flooding problems offsite or unnecessarily alter ground water conditions to the detriment of the land. Techniques that offer more natural design solutions such as creating swales, soak-aways, ponds and open ditches can avoid exacerbating harmful flooding, can allow replenishment of ground water, can aid the recycling of water and can add to amenity and biodiversity through sensitive landscape design. More information can be found on www.environment-agency.gov.uk.

Sustainable development
Defined by the Brundtland Commission (1987, and quoted in PPG I) as 'Development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations'.

Tissue
A combination of the grain, scale and layout of different areas of settlements. Just as the cells that make up part of a living organism form various tissues, the built forms, spaces and routes form the tissue of an area or settlement.

Tissue study
Comparison of scale and layout of different areas of settlements. This technique can make use of overprinting or tracing maps of successful places over the proposed development site or area, at the same scale. Its gives the designer a clue to the capacity of a place and how it may be structured.

Typology
The elements of character and identity that make up the particular area of settlement. To describe a typology, these elements need to be objectively analyzed avoiding the inclusion of subjective elements of design such as style.