Beckington

Design guidance and codes

Final report

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Quality information

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INTRODUCTION

01

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

This design guide supports the design policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. It contains contextual information and guidance and codes, which demonstrate how development may reflect the design policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The guidance and codes should be considered when designing development alongside other national and local policies and guidance.

1.2 PROCESS TO PREPARE THIS DESIGN GUIDE

The Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (BNPSG) are preparing the Neighbourhood Plan for Beckington.

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design guidance to support the BNPSG.

To ensure this design guide accurately reflects Beckington's community aspirations, the Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Working Group BNPWG provided AECOM with guidance and local knowledge. Figure 1 provides a brief overview of the key milestones for the design guide preparation.

Figure 01: Diagram illustrating the process to preparing this design guide

1.3 AREA OF STUDY

Beckington is a small village and civil parish located on the eastern edge of Mendip District. It also includes the small rural hamlets of Rudge and Standerwick. It is a historic settlement surrounded by attractive countryside and bisected by the River Frome to the west. The parish's historic core is an important Conservation Area, details of this are covered in the Beckington Conservation Area appraisal and section 2.1.

The population of Beckington parish has grown steadily over the years with various new housing developments, the largest of these are to the north and east of the village. The parish also includes two hamlets, Rudge to the east and Standerwick (of which only a small part of is within Beckington parish) to the south along the A36. Beckington is served by Bath Road from the north, Warminster Road from the east and Frome Road from the south.

The centre comprises a range of small businesses which sit around the confluence of the three main routes into the village. Other facilities include: 2 churches, a primary school, a prep school, a nursery, The Woolpack, Beckington Motors, Mes Amis Café, The Foresters, Beckington Memorial Hall, the recreation grounds, and tennis club. Travelodge, Starbucks and the BP/M&S service station are situated on the edge of Beckington alongside the bypass. Facilities in Rudge and Standerwick include The Full Moon Inn, The Bell and an indoor bowls club.

Figure 02: Map showing the context of the Neighbourhood Area

1.4 HOW TO USE THIS DESIGN GUIDE

This design guide should be a valuable tool in securing locally distinctive, high quality development in Beckington parish. It may be used differently by various stakeholders in the planning and development process, as summarised in Table 1.

A valuable way the design guide can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that seeks to understand and take account of local preferences and expectation for design quality. As such, the design guidelines and codes (refer to Section 4) can help to facilitate conversations on the various topics to align expectation and aid understanding on key local issues. The design guide is an evidence based document informing the Neighbourhood Plan and providing further detail for the policies contained therein.

Stakeholders	How they may use this design guide
Applicants, developers and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Design Guidance and Codes as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a guide when assessing whether the design of planning applications reflect Neighbourhood Plan policies. The Design Guidance and Codes should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application engagement.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines and Codes are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: How stakeholders may use this design guide

1.5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

This section outlines the national and local planning policy and guidance documents that have informed this design guide. These should be read in conjunction with this document.

1.5.1 NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2023 - National Planning Policy Framework

Development should comply with national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). In particular, the NPPF Chapter 12: 'Achieving well-designed and beautiful places' stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

2021 - National Model Design Code

The National Model Design Code 2021 provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.

2021 - National Design Guide

The National Design Guide 2021 illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

BHL is supported by Streets for a Healthy Life, which demonstrates what can be achieved in creating streets as places for people.

2007 - Manual for Streets

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets 2007 and subsequent updates, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

1.5.2 MENDIP COUNCIL LOCAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2018 - Mendip Local Plan Parts 1 and 2

The Mendip District Local Plan Part I sets out a long term strategic vision for the future of the District and how it will develop between 2014 and 2029. This plan now sets out how the Council intends to stimulate the development which the district needs including housing, economic development and infrastructure. It also puts in place a selection of policies to manage development in a manner appropriate to this district which generic national policy would not adequately cover.

A further part of the plan, Part II: Site Allocations, was prepared by the Council to allocate and/or designate specific sites for development or other purposes in line with the intentions of the policies in this Part I document.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - Mendip

Mendip District Council council has various SPDs which work as addendums to the Local Plan to help ensure that design is in keeping with the historic settlements in the area, also respecting the countryside. The following SPDs should be read in alongside this document:

- Mendip Greenspace SPD
- Mendip Design and Amenity of New Development
- Self and Custom-build single plot exception sites SPD
- Marketing and Business evidence to support planning applications SPD

NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA CONTEXT

02

2. NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA CONTEXT

This section presents a snapshot of the Neighbourhood Area today to inform the design objectives of the design guidance and codes. It provides an overview of Beckington parish's heritage, landscape, movement network and built form.

2.1 HERITAGE

2.1.1 HISTORIC ORIGINS AND PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT

Beckington

The rich heritage is a huge part of the makeup of Beckington's character. Evidence has been found of Roman settlement in the area and St George's Church has impressive Norman features in its tower and chancel. From the street it appears that there is a prominence of 17th and 18th century stone built houses with well-lit upper floors, which is typical of cloth-producing areas in the Mendips. These historic buildings and tight urban grain create a historic sense of arrival when looking down the hill towards the mini roundabout at the bottom of Bath Road.

The historic character of Beckington village is supported by the Conservation Area[1] designation that much of the village falls within. Originally designated in 1973 and extended in 1996, the existing heritage is one of the most highly valued assets in the parish.

Figure 03: Rudge Hill House.

Figure 04: Springmead School, on Castle Corner.

1 https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/heritage-and-landscape/conservation-areas/conservation-areas-maps-and-appraisals/

Figure 05: Beckington village historic assets map.

N

KEYS

- Roads
- Woodland
- Built form
- Existing water body
- Conservation Area
- Listed buildings

Designated heritage assets

There are 105 listed buildings within the neighbourhood area, with 85 of them located within the Conservation Area. Some of the significant assets are listed below and displayed in the Figures 6-11:

- Grade I – St George's Church
- Grade II* - Beckington Castle
- Grade II* - Beckington Abbey and Grange
- Grade II* - The Cedars
- Grade II* - The Gazebo of The Cedars
- Grade II* - The Old Manse
- Grade II* - Standerwick Court

Figure 06: Grade I - St George's Church

Figure 07: Grade II* - Beckington Castle.

Figure 08: Grade II* - Beckington Abbey and Grange

Figure 09: Grade II* - The Cedars

Figure 10: Grade II* - The Gazebo of The Cedars

Figure 11: Grade II* - The Old Manse

Rudge

Rudge is also a historic settlement with 8 listed buildings. The historic buildings are often detached and more spaced out than Beckington's which helps create the rural sense of place. An example of one of these buildings is the Old Manor.

KEYS

- Neighbourhood Area
- Roads
- Woodland
- Built form
- Listed buildings

Figure 12: Rudge heritage assets.

Standerwick

Standerwick, part of which falls within Beckington parish, has a single heritage asset, named Trees Farmhouse. Despite this, most of the buildings in the hamlet use traditional materials such as stone brick and painted render.

KEYS

- Neighbourhood Area
- Roads
- Woodland
- Built form
- Listed buildings

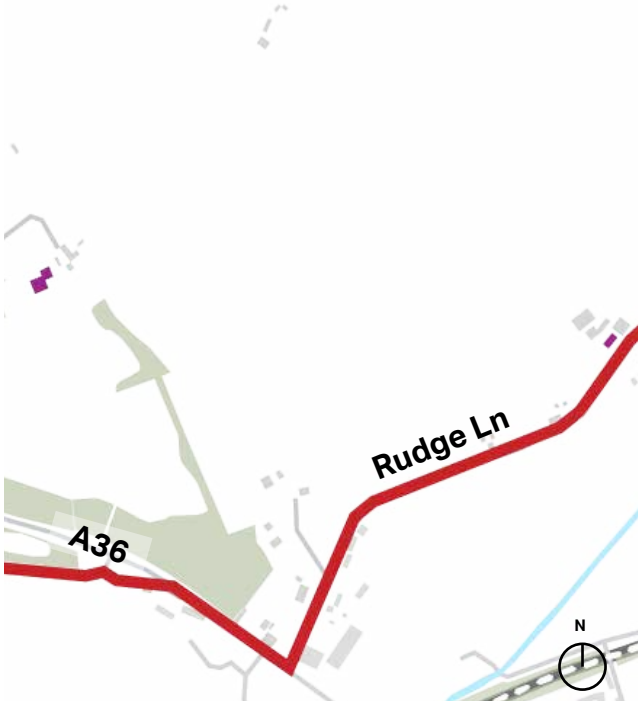


Figure 13: Standerwick heritage assets.

2.2 MOVEMENT NETWORK

Going through the centre of the parish are the major routes of the A36 and the A361 which connect the area with the towns of Frome, Bath and Trowbridge. The A36 is a hard barrier between Beckington village and the eastern part of the neighbourhood area .

Beckington

Bath Road, Goose Street, Frome Road and Warminster Road are shown by historic maps to have been the original routes through the village and are therefore where many of the listed buildings are found. Since then, several estate and cul-de-sac developments have sprawled off these streets which are often winding and quite narrow. The narrow winding roads create an enclosed experience to the streetscape.

The village is also linked up by a network of public footpaths, which encourages active transport and tourism. The most popular walking route is The Macmillan Way. Beckington Loop is also well used.

Public transport is also encouraged by the bus stops on Bath Road and Frome Road which provide regular services towards Frome, Bath, Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham.

Figure 14: Example of the streetscape on Bath Road.

Figure 15: Public footpath off Frome Road.

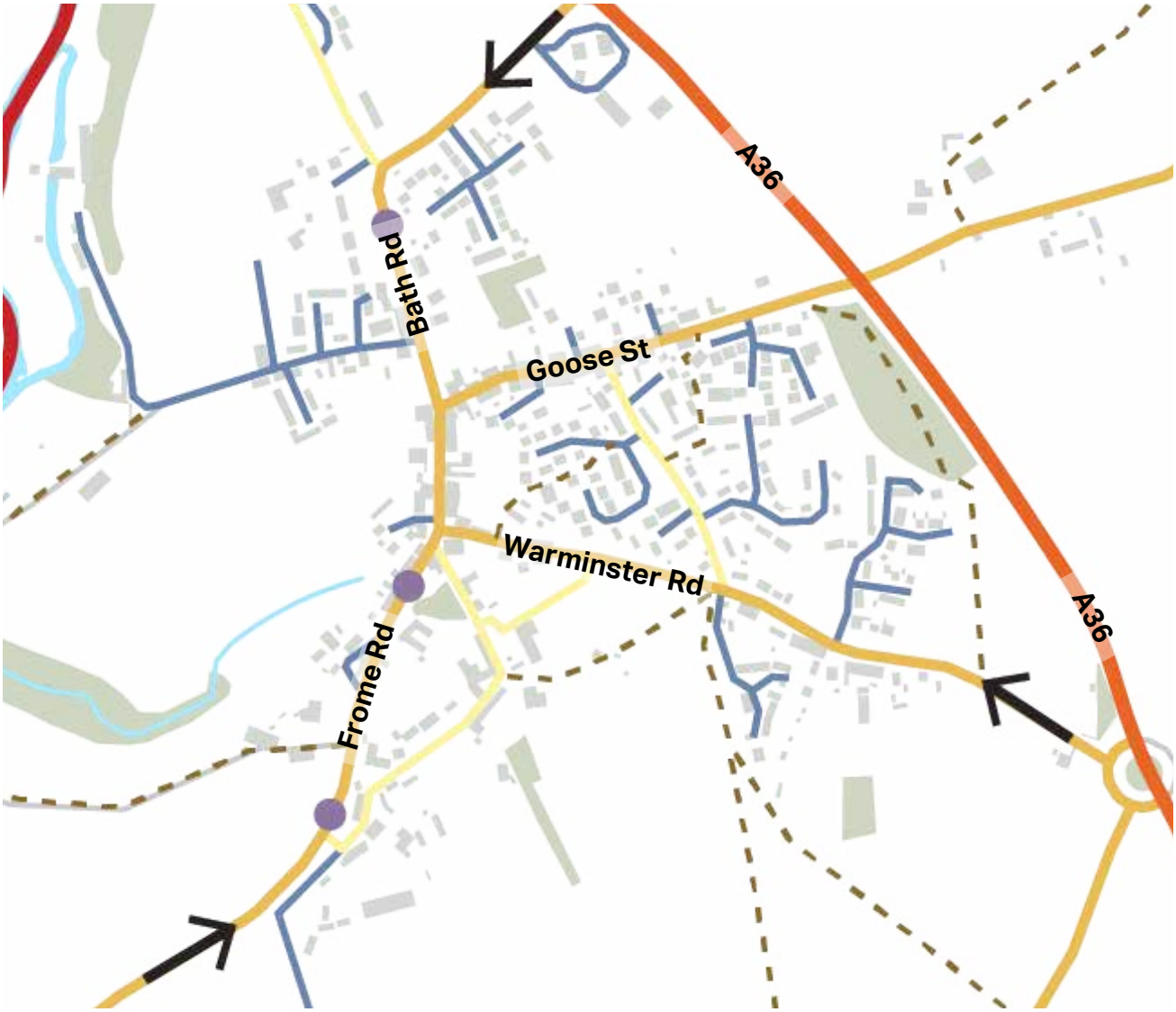


Figure 16: Beckington village movement network map.

KEYS

- Woodland
- Built form
- Existing water body
- Primary roads
- Secondary roads
- Tertiary roads
- Cul-de-sacs
- PRoW
- Bus stops
- Settlement approaches

Rudge

The roads that lead out to and through Rudge have a much more rural feel. This character is created by the narrow lanes with tall hedgerows and grass verges on either side. As well as this, there are several public right of ways that connect Rudge with the surrounding countryside and other nearby settlements.

KEYS

- Neighbourhood area
- Woodland
- Built form
- Secondary roads
- Tertiary roads
- Cul-de-sacs
- PRoW

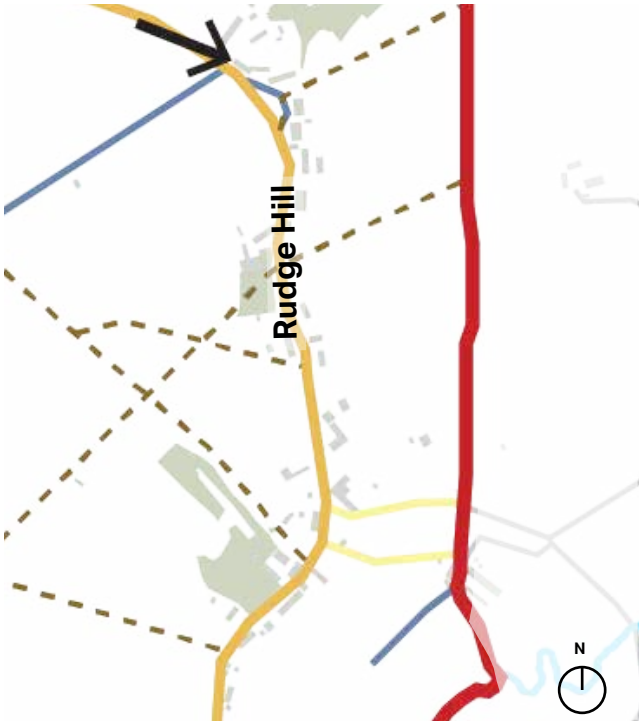


Figure 17: Rudge movement network.

Standerwick

Rudge Lane is the route that runs through Standerwick, and is narrow with tall hedges lining either side of the road. Gaps in the vegetation provide panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. This countryside is easily accessable from public right of ways located to the north of Rudge Lane.

KEYS

- Neighbourhood area
- Woodland
- Built form
- Primary roads
- Secondary roads
- Cul-de-sacs
- PRoW

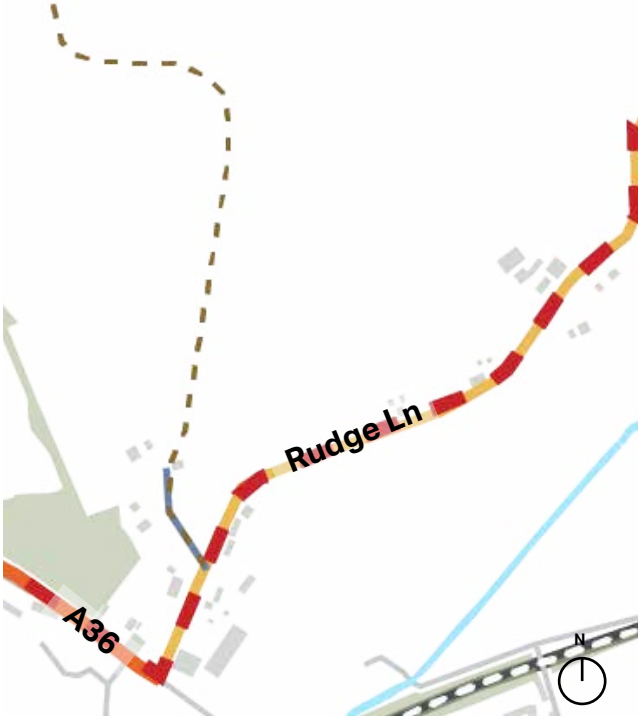


Figure 18: Standerwick movement network.

2.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AND VIEWS

2.3.1 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Beckington Parish is a largely rural area, with the historic centre surrounded by arable farmland. These arable fields are often divided by ancient hedgerows and woodland which adds to interest to the views across the countryside from elevated parts of the neighbourhood area. As well as this there are small areas of deciduous and ancient woodland scattered across the Parish, adding further value to the surrounding countryside.

The historic village core comprises narrow streets and lanes some of which are void of trees or other planting. Nevertheless the village offers a relatively rich green character which is offered by the mature trees and tall hedge planting along the boundaries of the private properties which line the streets. This is particularly evident along the ends of Bath Road and Warminster Road. There is a large recreation ground to the north of the village along Bath Road which is associated with the local community centre.

2.3.2 BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

The River Frome runs along the western boundary of the Parish and is a great asset of the Parish. Surrounding the river is an area of flood risk, as shown in Figure 19, however this seems to have little impact on the village itself. There is potential risk of flooding identified to the south of Rudge which seems to impact existing fields.

2.3.3 VIEWS AND VISTAS

There are a variety of important views in the Parish, a selection of which are displayed in figures 19-25. These views are considered valuable because they contain distinctive buildings or land features.

The area is set in rolling hills which means that there are several examples of long distance rural views which should be protected. One such example of this is towards the Westbury White Horse.

The historic Conservation Area in Beckington and the views towards landmark buildings such as the church and castle are also key contributors to the character of area.

In addition to those displayed in the following pages, the Beckington Neighbourhood Plan, contains a view analysis and provides a comprehensive list of protected views in Beckington, Rudge and Standerwick.

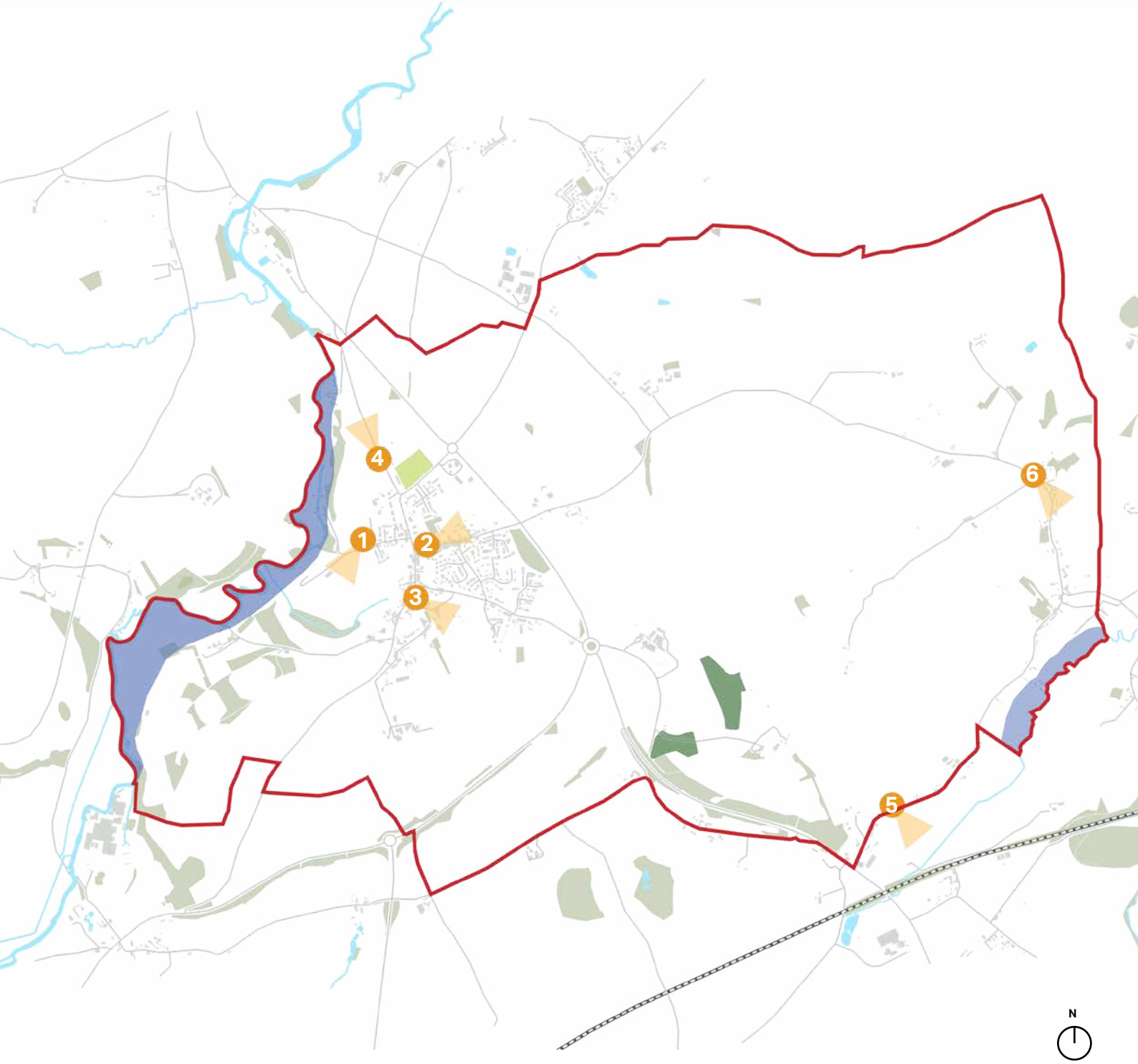


Figure 19: Beckington green and blue infrastructure map.

KEYS

- Neighbourhood Area
- Roads
- Railway
- Woodland
- Buildings
- Water
- Contours (5m interval)
- Flood risk zone
- Ancient woodland
- Recreation ground
- Important views

Figure 20: Looking north from the McMillan Way to the fields between it and Mill Lane.

Figure 21: View of historic streetscape down Goose Street.

Figure 22: View of St George's Church and graveyard.

Figure 23: View north of the village on Bath Road.

Figure 24: Countryside to the south of Rudge Lane.

Figure 25: View from the top of Rudge to Lower Rudge.

2.4 LAND USE AND BUILT FORM

2.4.1 LAND USE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The historic part of Beckington village demonstrate a linear growth pattern. The more recent developments are large estate areas generally with a single access and internal movement comprising cul-de-sacs. Despite being largely rural settlements, Beckington, Rudge and Standerwick are well serviced by a range of community and retail facilities. Beckington being the larger settlement includes; two churches, two primary schools, and a children's' nursery. There are two pubs and a cafe within the village core and in the surrounding area. The service station at the village entrance on the A36 includes a Starbucks and a hotel.

Other facilities such as supermarkets and a railway station are located in Frome which is just a 10 minute drive from Beckington or accessible by bus.

2.4.2 BUILT FORM

Beckington Parish built form varies significantly depending on the era of the development. It ranges from linear streets lined with historic properties with varying setbacks from the street in the Conservation Area, to higher density estate style development in the Shepherds Way development. Detached, semi-detached and terraced buildings can all be found in the neighbourhood area with most of them being two storeys in height, allowing woodland to dominate the skyline.

Conservation Area

The Conservation Area is densely populated with terraced houses with pitched roofs and stone and brick facades. In the core of the village the historic streets are typically defined by housing frontages on the back edge of a generally narrow footpath, e.g. Goose Street. Building lines are generally consistent and follow the meandering form of the street.

20th Century and later

In the more recent development that has come to the east of the Conservation Area, there is a mix of detached and semi-detached housing with a range of architectural details depending on the era in which they were built. Furthermore, houses have generous setbacks from the street, making space for front gardens and grass verges, creating an open more leafy feel to these areas.

Figure 26: Example of the tight urban grain on Goose Street.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

03

3. DESIGN OBJECTIVES

This section outlines the design objectives, which were influenced by the contextual analysis, character study and community engagement process.

The three design objectives provide holistic and high level guidance and apply to development in the whole Neighbourhood Area. The design codes in the next chapter, are broken into topics based on the design objectives and provide specific guidance for Beckington parish.

3.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In April 2024 the BNPSG held a public consultation whereby local residents were asked a series of questions to help understand what about the parish was valuable to them and what sort of development they would like to see in the future.

One of the exercises was geared towards finding out what sort of housing design residents of the parish liked. This was done by providing images of houses, both local and elsewhere in the UK, and providing the attendees with thumbs up and thumbs down stickers to display if they liked the design or not. As can be seen by the figures opposite, the local community are enthusiastic about the use of traditional materials such as local stone and details such as window surrounds are also important.

Figure 27: Example of building design (within the parish) that is not desirable.

Figure 28: Example of recent development in the parish that the community feel is in keeping with the historic styles elsewhere in the parish.

The BNPSG also conducted a survey where one of the questions was 'what three things do you value most about living in the parish?'. There was a list of examples as well as space to specify others. Figure 29 is from the BNPSG and shows visually, by the size of the words, what things local people value the most about living in the parish and therefore what the objectives and design guidance and codes should be taken into consideration.

Figure 29: Visual from Beckington Parish Steering Group showing the 2024 community survey results to question 1.

The views in Beckington are the feature that is most valued. They were mentioned by 47% of the respondents. As well as this 41.8% valued the Parish's rural setting and 40.2% of people said that Beckington's easy access to the open countryside is prized by them.

While the Conservation Area was not offered as an option in the multiple choice examples, the qualitative comments suggested that is also highly valued amongst the local community and therefore should be protected and enhanced.

Given these findings the following design objectives have been derived:

O1: Contribute to the rural village character and lifestyle.

02: Protect and enhance the landscape setting.

O3: Integrate development with the historical architecture.

O4: Promote sustainable design.

3.2 O1: CONTRIBUTE TO THE RURAL VILLAGE CHARACTER AND LIFESTYLE

The historic, rural settlement layout of Beckington village is defined by narrow plots with varied building types along Bath Road and the majority of Frome Road. Goose Street has continuous frontages creating an enclosed built form, which becomes dispersed creating a rural sense of character when approaching the bridge and Rudge Lane. The edges of the settlement are more dispersed, where buildings behind hedgerows, hedges and trees blend in with the surrounding landscape.

The village has expanded mainly eastwards, where cul-de-sac developments were introduced from the 1930s.

Built form in Rudge and Standerwick is comparatively more fragmented and streets are characterised by high hedgerows creating a more rural feel.

Views towards the historic assets, quaint streetscape and the surrounding countryside are key contributors to the character of the parish and should be protected and enhanced. Development should contribute positively to the existing sense of community in the village and encourage active travel and well-being. Connecting new development to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and open countryside are important as these are an integral part of Beckington Parish's lifestyle.

Figure 30: Rural character within the Rudge streetscape with the surrounding countryside in the background.

3.3 O2: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE LANDSCAPE SETTING

Beckington's landscape setting is formed by open countryside, mature trees, hedgerows and the River Frome which provide a sense of enclosure and a rural character.

Views to these open spaces and landscape features, and roads confined by hedgerows, make an important contribution to the landscape setting of the settlements.

3.4 O3: INTEGRATE DEVELOPMENT WITH THE HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE

The historic features of Beckington Parish's built character, include traditional building materials and vernacular, varied setbacks, enclosed streetscape and integrated vegetation. This mix provides architectural interest along Bath Road, Frome Road, Goose Street and the residential streets. There are certain unifying elements, such as the consistent material palette, roofline, building line and building scale, which combine to create a varied but complementary built character. Some newer developments consist of uniform buildings with a limited architectural material palette, which is not characteristic of the Parish as a whole.

Figure 31: Historic core of Beckington Conservation Area.

3.5 O4: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Beckington Parish is keen to encourage modern technologies in new homes as they see it as imperative to both limit their contribution to global warming and to adapt to climate change extremes. This was supported in the community survey where 68% of people highlighted the importance of Energy efficiency and 58% said that homes should be designed with renewable low carbon energy credentials.

Figure 32: Example of Sustainable Drainage Systems that has been implemented in the Shepherds Way development.

DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES

04

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES

This section sets out the design guidance and codes that should be used to improve the design quality of development coming forwards in the Neighbourhood Area. This design guide supplements the Neighbourhood Plan, local and national planning policy and guidance on design.

Development in the Neighbourhood Area should demonstrate how best practice design guidance contained in national and local policy and guidance documents, including this design guide, has been considered in the layout, architectural and landscape design.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section identifies design guidance and codes for development in the Neighbourhood Area. These are organised under the four design objectives for the Neighbourhood Area.

- **RV:** Rural Village
- **LD:** Landscape Design
- **LA:** Local Architecture
- **SU:** Sustainable Design

The design guidance and codes apply to the whole Neighbourhood Area. In some instances, guidance and codes may be more relevant to certain character areas.

4.1.2.1 WHEN TO USE THE CODES

The table overleaf identifies when guidance and codes for each theme should be considered by those promoting development. A prefix has been created for each theme to allow simple application and referencing of the design guidance and codes.

Code	Prefix	When to use the code
Rural Village (RV)	RV.1	**Village streets.** Code to be applied to development that proposes new streets in the Neighbourhood Area.
	RV.2	**Plot and building layout.** Code to be applied to development that proposes new plots, new buildings or extensions in the Neighbourhood Area.
	RV.3	**Respect views and vistas.** Code to be applied to development within the Neighbourhood Area to ensure that important views and vistas are preserved.
	RV.4	**Parking.** Code to be applied to any development that requires car parking in the Neighbourhood Area.
Landscape Design (LD)	LD.1	**Landscaping.** Code to be applied to development in the Neighbourhood Area to ensure locally distinctive and wildlife friendly landscape design.
	LD.2	**Boundary treatments.** Code to be applied to development in the Neighbourhood Area to ensure locally distinctive boundary treatments.
Local Architecture (LA)	LA.1	**Building height, scale and roofscape.** Code to be applied when determining the height and roofscape of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	LA.2	**Fenestration and architectural details.** Code to be applied when determining the fenestration and architectural details of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	LA.3	**Architectural materials and colour palette.** Code to be applied when determining the architectural materials and colour palette of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	LA.4	**Building modifications, extensions, and plot infills.** Code to be applied when determining the building of infills, modifications and extensions in the Neighbourhood Area.
Sustainability (SU)	SU.1	**Building fabric thermal mass**. Code to be applied when determining the thermal mass of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	SU.2	**Insulation.** Code to be applied when determining the insulation of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	SU.3	**Airtightness.** Code to be applied to ensure airtightness of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	SU.4	**Permeable pavement.** Code to be applied to ensure permeable pavement for development in the Neighbourhood Area.

Table 02: Application of design guidance and codes to development

RV - RURAL VILLAGE

The layout of new development should maintain the rural character of Beckington, which contributes to its friendly, village feel.

Connection and access to the rural landscape, particularly towards the hamlets, open countryside and the Public Rights of Way, are an important and highly valued part of the Beckington Parish setting and lifestyle.

Figure 33: Rural street scene in Rudge.

The guidance in this section should be read alongside Mendip Local Plan Part 1. In particular, the policy in 'DP1: Local identity and distinctiveness' and 'DP10: Parking solutions' are relevant to this topic.

RV.1 VILLAGE STREETS

Safe, attractive and integrated movement networks are based on streets that are connected, legible, accessible and comfortable. Development should deliver a street network that demonstrates best practice design principles in addition to considering how to enhance Beckington's rural lifestyle.

Streets and lanes within the parish vary from more informal layout with open drains and swales, and tarmac or gravel surface material (in Rudge and Standerwick) to a typical secondary connection and or with cul-de-sac, characterised by tarmac and footpaths (in the more recent developments to the east of Bath Road and Warminster Road). The Conservation Area is characterised by a historic tight urban grain, however trees and other vegetation are still incorporated into the street scene.

The following principles should be considered by development to ensure streets are locally distinctive:

01. Ensure streets are laid out to encourage connectivity, including direct access to key destinations such as the Bath Road, the school and church. Designers should collaborate with adjacent landowners and provide

connections to existing and future development areas, particularly via walking and cycling routes;

02. Encourage public access to community facilities, green space and the countryside by ensuring publicly accessible streets are adjacent, and provide direct access and views, to these places;

03. Design streets to have the appearance of a rural village by incorporating:

    03.01. Gently, curving network of streets rather than rigid layouts;

    03.02. Narrow geometric street layouts that encourage active frontages, slow traffic and avoid large impervious areas;

    03.03. Minimal street furniture and road markings. The limited use of timber bollards and wayfinding signs that are already present in the Neighbourhood Area may be appropriate;

04. Landscaping along streets in the Neighbourhood Area, particularly with woodland, hedges and hedgerows, is a defining characteristic. Refer to Section LD Landscape Design for guidance.

Figure 34: Views from upper Rudge down into the countryside.

Figure 35: Grass verges and other vegetation integrated into the streetscape of Beckington.

Figure 36: Street trees framing Frome Road.

RV.2 PLOT AND BUILDING LAYOUT

Part of Beckington's unique charm is the varied plot size and building types, creating a diverse street scene. The historic core has sections of continuous, active frontages with narrow plot widths and enclosed layout. The more recent housing developments to the east of the Conservation Area such as The Lays and Shepherds Way have more of an estate feel with front gardens and winding cul-de-sac roads. The various housing developments that have occurred over time are interconnected by a network of public footpaths.

The edges of the settlement, including Rudge and Standerwick are more dispersed, where buildings behind hedgerows, hedges and trees blend in with the surrounding landscape. Open countryside separate areas of development, which dilutes the density of the Neighbourhood Area. Views to these open spaces and landscape features make an important contribution to the sense of place.

The following principles should be considered by development to ensure the layout of plots and buildings are locally distinctive:

01. Layout plots and buildings to reinforce the small scale, historic character that provides the village feel of Beckington, Rudge and Standerwick;
02. Vary plot widths to allow for a mix of housing types along the street, which encourages a diverse community and creates visual interest;
03. Orientate buildings generally parallel to and overlooking the street and/or public space;
04. Establish a consistent building line, with subtle variations for visual interest. Infill development should be consistent with the existing prevailing building line of the street;
05. Plot and building layouts should allow for large spacious gardens that feature mature landscaping to filter buildings and car parking;
06. New development should reflect the diversity and informality of the settlements taking inspiration from the character of the surrounding area and avoiding pastiche and replica;
07. New development should be contemporary and sympathetic to the character of the village in terms of scale, density, form, siting and proportion;
08. New development should incorporate open views from and to the countryside and local landmarks;
09. Soft edges should be incorporated at the interface with the countryside;
10. Scenic values and tranquillity of the countryside views should be retained and enhanced in future development. In addition to this, in case of large-scale developments, a further investigation of long-distance views needs to be conducted to make sure other views towards Ancient Woodlands and open fields are protected;

11. Short-distance views towards landmark buildings, listed buildings or non-designated buildings of historic importance that act as focal points for Beckington village, should not be blocked by any new development. For that reason, the proposed scale and massing of any new building or development should make sure that it preserves those important views;

12. Gaps between buildings, open views and vistas could help demonstrate the significance of a landmark asset, either listed or unlisted, or even a community building or a preserved tree. In general, new development should aim to create both short and long-distance views. Short-distance views broken by buildings, trees or landmarks create memorable routes and help people navigate around, whilst long-distance views and vistas allow to visually link places and admire the surrounding landscape; and

13. Development densities should allow for spaces between buildings to preserve the views towards the countryside setting and maintain the perceived openness of the settlements. Any proposal that is visually intrusive and out of scale compared with the surrounding context must be avoided.

Figure 37: View down the hill in the Conservation Area towards historic architecture.

Figure 38: Larger gaps between buildings providing views towards the countryside.

RV.3 RESPECT VIEWS AND VISTAS

Views and vistas towards the countryside from the village and landmarks within Beckington are fundamental to the village's landscape and historic setting. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies some of the significant vistas of the village to be conserved.

The following principles should be considered by development:

01. Ensure the scale and design of development, and including landscape screening where appropriate, is not visually intrusive;
02. Respect the existing elements of the village by protecting and enhancing the setting and views of notable and listed buildings and features;
03. Where appropriate, incorporate landscape and built features to create and strengthen views and vistas or create landmarks, helping with legibility. For example, mature trees and other landscape features at entrances to the development provide visual sequences of experience for pedestrians;
04. Maintain existing visual connections to the surrounding countryside and long views out of the settlement; and
05. Create short-distance views broken by buildings, trees or landmarks to help create memorable routes and places, and easily intelligible links between places. Orientate buildings to maximise the opportunities for memorable views and visual connectivity.

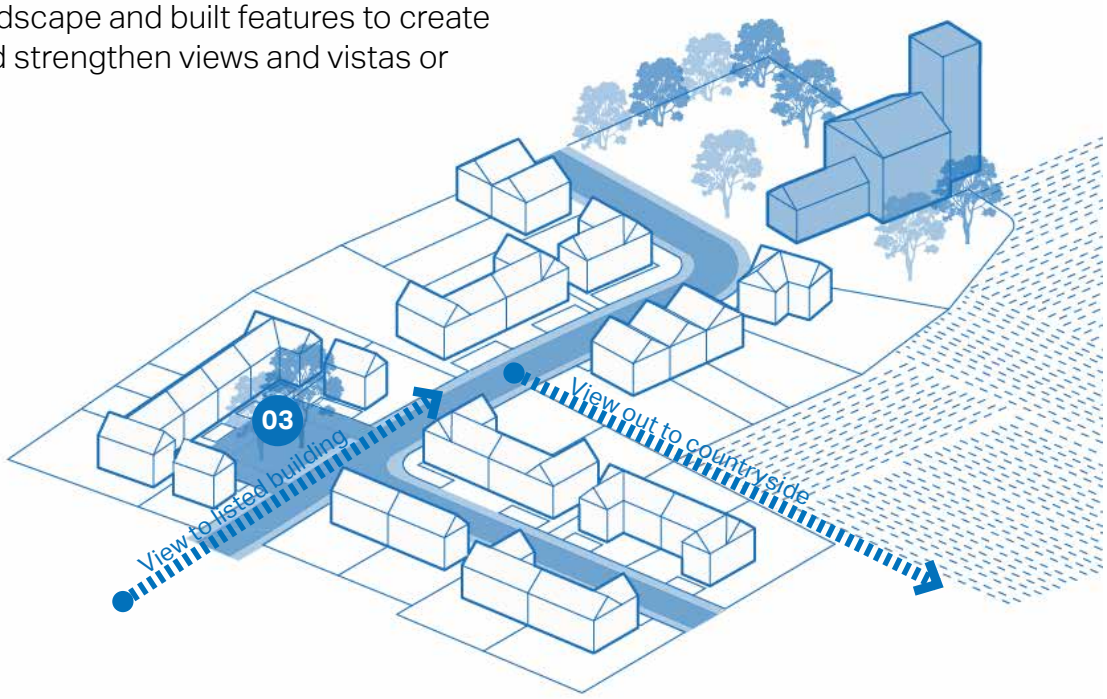


Figure 39: An indicative diagram highlighting the design principles respecting views and vistas (above)

RV.4 PARKING

Parking areas are a necessity of modern development. However, they do not need to be unsightly or dominate views towards the house. Parking provision should be undertaken as an exercise of placemaking. Any development including parking must conform with local policy and should follow the below guidance:

01. When placing parking at the front of a property, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings. This can be achieved by means of walls, hedging, planting, and the use of quality paving materials;
02. When needed, residential car parking can be translated into a mix of on-plot side, front, garage, and courtyard parking, with minimal on-street parking;
03. For family homes, cars should be placed at the side (preferably) or front of the property. For small pockets of housing, a rear court is acceptable;
04. New development should look to allocate at least one parking space per bedroom in the house; and
05. Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles.

Figure 40: Side of plot garage car parking.

Figure 41: Side of plot parking on Warminster Road.

LD - LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Beckington's landscape setting is formed by open countryside, mature trees, hedges and hedgerows, which provide a sense of enclosure and a rural character to the Neighbourhood Area.

The guidance in this section should be read alongside that in the Mendip Greenspace SPD. In addition, Mendip Local Plan Part 1 must be adherd to, in particular Development Policy 4 which sets out to protect and enhance 'Mendip's Landscapes'.

The relationship between the settlements and the countryside is of a great value for the community and it is based on the following main aspects:

- The views to the countryside from Beckington and the hamlets;

- The strategic topographical position of the parish and the surrounding arable farmland allows for long distance views towards significant landscape features such as the Westbury White Horse from Rudge;

- The presence of tall mature trees, hedgerows and planting within the built environment of Beckington (for example on Warminster Road and Frome Road);

The landscape setting has an important visual relationship with the built environment and helps the transition from village to countryside.

LD.1 LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be considered at the outset of development to ensure planting areas and species achieve good development outcomes.

The following principles are recommended for the landscape design of development:

01. Provide landscape areas of a sufficient size to support the establishment and growth of healthy vegetation. Avoid an over reliance on planting strips;
02. Utilise landscaping to mitigate impacts of development (i.e. visual, noise, urban heat island) on adjacent areas;
03. Encourage planting of new large trees and hedgerows in new development to contribute to the richness of the rural village;
04. Preserve existing vegetation (i.e. mature tall trees, hedges and hedgerows) as part of the landscape design to reinforce Beckington's rural landscape character. If any trees are removed they should be replaced within new development;
05. Incorporate wildlife friendly features that support movement and habitat. For example, holes in fencings/walls, gaps beneath gates, temporary houses and native planting;

06. Limit night pollution and protect night darkness, especially at the fringes of the built up area as well as within the countryside to protect wildlife;

07. Consider how the development layout can create wildlife corridors. For example, the layout of roads, ditches, front and back gardens, and green spaces;

08. Enhance road verges within residential areas by planting large tree species and hedgerows;

09. Encourage the use of trees, hedgerows and rural shrubs to frame a soft transition between the built environment and the open countryside;

10. Consider climate change and promote use of local species to ensure that new trees are selected to be resilient in the long term;

11. Protect and enhance the existing views from within the village to the open countryside; and

12. New development should retain existing boundary ditches, hedgerows and trees and include a buffer area around the existing development to ensure the countryside feeling is maintained.

Figure 42: Stone wall with moss and various other forms of vegetation that have been allowed to grow, softening the feel of the boundary..

Figure 43: Beckington House, which is set back from Frome Road with a large front garden.

Figure 44: Generous front gardens and grass verges integrated into the street scene on Sandy Lane.

LD.2 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

Boundary treatments are a significant feature in Beckington. Mature hedgerows provide spatial enclosure and screening as well as enhancing privacy. They vary from tall to medium heights. The rural landscapes of the Neighbourhood Area incorporate hedgerows alongside the front gardens of some of the properties as well as large mature trees where the front gardens are wide enough to incorporate them. This greenery is often set behind stone walling which is typical of the Mendip area of Somerset.

The following principles are recommended for the boundary treatment of development:

01. Boundary treatments should primarily consist of stone walling and hedgerows;

02. Landscaping of front and back gardens should be in accordance with the surrounding streetscape:

02.01. The Conservation Area contains stone walls and some examples of hedgerows. As well as this, in many cases the building fronts directly onto the street which helps create an enclosed feel to this part of the parish.

02.02. The housing estates to the east of Bath Road contain hedgerows and timber fencing that conceal housing and car parking areas from the street; and

02.03. Rudge and Standerwick contains large landscaped gardens with hedgerows and trees that conceal buildings and car parking areas from the street. This creates a much more rural feel to these areas.

Figure 45: Stone wall combined with a hedge within the Conservation Area.

Figure 46: Dense vegetation being used as a boundary treatment in Rudge, adding to the rural feel of the area.

LA - LOCAL ARCHITECTURE

Development, whether traditional or contemporary, should integrate well with Beckington Parish's historical architectural character, particularly within the Conservation Area. All designs should be high-quality and sustainable.

Development proposals should provide specification on the architectural design, including materials, fenestration and detailing. Proposals should also demonstrate how the character of the local context, has been considered.

The guidance in this section should be read alongside the Mendip Design and Amenity of New Development SPD and the Self and Custom-build single plot exception sites SPD. As well as this Mendip Local Plan Part 1 must be adhered to, in particular Development Policy 3 on 'Heritage Conservation'.

LA.1 BUILDING HEIGHT, SCALE AND ROOFSCAPE

Creating variety and interest in the roofscape is an important element in the design of attractive buildings and places.

Rooflines in Beckington are varied, with maximum two storeys and a mix of gable and hipped roofs. There are some small clusters of consistent roofline, but this is not commonplace.

Roof materials and detailing features are also varied, and include stone tiles, clay and concrete pantiles. Chimneys create a consistent feature of the skyline, but they are simple in form.

The varied building height and roof elements make an important contribution to defining the character of the Neighbourhood Area, particularly within the Beckington Conservation Area. Guiding principles for development to consider in order to achieve a well-designed roofscape include:

03. Ensure the height of development responds to the surrounding buildings, street width and sense of enclosure, topography and mature vegetation while preserving views towards the countryside;

04. The heights of buildings should follow the existing heights and be lower than the mature tall trees;

05. Ensure the roof design integrates with the surrounding development or creates a new roofscape;

06. Design the scale and pitch of the roof to be in proportion with the dimensions of the building.

07. Deliver a locally distinctive roof design by including:

07.01. Variety in form along the street, including hipped and front facing gable roofs, and dormers;

07.02. Simple chimneys and decorative features for visual interest;

07.03. Subtle changes in rooflines, avoiding stark transitions; and

07.04. Locally distinctive roof materials.

Figure 47: Roofline in the Conservation Area broken up by tall chimney stacks and dormers.

Figure 48: Terraced houses with pitched roofs, with chimneys breaking up the roofline.

Figure 49: Traditional pitched roof with chimneys on gable ends on single detached dwellings

LA.2 FENESTRATION AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

There are a range of architectural features and detailing in the Neighbourhood Area. For example, stone walling, casements windows, porches, tall chimneys and gazebos.

The intricacies of the architectural features and detailing in the Neighbourhood Area are locally distinctive. They provide visual interest and reduce the scale and bulk of buildings. The use of architectural features and detailing is more prominent in the Conservation Area and is of particular importance given the discrete architectural material palette that is distinctive of the Neighbourhood Area. In particular, door and window surrounds are commonly used.

Fenestration is generally timber painted white. However, there are examples of french grey accents.

Guiding principles for development to consider to achieve locally distinctive design include:

01. Locally distinctive fenestration and detailing in the design of new development, drawing on examples of listed buildings within the Neighbourhood Area. However, avoid mixing historic styles;
02. Development involving multiple houses should ensure a variety of detailing is utilised across the development to provide visual interest along the street and avoid homogeneous building designs; and
03. Detailing on roofs and facades to minimise the bulk and scale of buildings, for example ornate brickwork around fenestration and across walls.

Figure 50: Stone walls defining property boundaries down Frome Road looking towards the village centre.

Figure 51: Modern house that uses traditional materials and styles.

LA.3 ARCHITECTURAL MATERIALS AND COLOUR PALETTE

There are a range of materials used within the Neighbourhood Area. However, the historic palette is fairly restrained, with strong roots in the typical articular vernacular for Somerset.

Common wall materials in the Neighbourhood Area are local stone brick, light grey and creamy-white render, some of which have exposed timber frames. The prominent building material in the Conservation Area is forest marble, a limestone that is dressed for features such as corner quoins and door and window surrounds. Some more recent developments such as Longmeadow (see Figure 48) use timber to create more of an agricultural style facade. Some buildings have used more colourful tone of render, one of which is The Castle. Some timber weatherboard, usually white or light grey, is also notable in the parish, particularly in development from the 70s and 80s.

The discrete material palette, alongside locally distinctive landscape designs that employ hedgerows and open countryside, is locally distinctive.

Guiding principles for development to respond to the local character include:

01. Demonstrate that the material palette reflects the local character of the Neighbourhood Area.
02. The stone used on the historic buildings in the parish is likely to have been dug from within the property boundary or a nearby quarry. For this reason as well as the reduced carbon footprint, where possible materials should be sourced from the local area.

Figure 52: Detached building using traditional materials in Beckington.

Figure 53: Longmeadow development.

Roof Materials

Plain tiles

Red tiles

Grey slates

Red clay pantiles

Mossy slate tiles

Stonework and Wall Materials

Stone brick

White render

Timber panels

Painted render

yellow/cream brick

Painted Wood Colours

White

Red clay

Cream

French grey

Figure 54: Locally distinctive materials and colour palette

LA.4 BUILDING MODIFICATIONS, EXTENSIONS, AND PLOT INFILLS

There are a number of principles that residential extensions and conversions should follow to maintain character:

01. Certain additions and/or alterations can be carried out without needing to obtain formal planning permission. They benefit from deemed consent, more commonly known as permitted development. However, many of these do not apply in certain circumstances, such as in a Conservation Area;

02. The original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless of the scale or number of extensions. The newly built extension should not overwhelm the building from any given viewpoint;

03. Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling or neighbouring dwellings;

04. Designs that wrap around the existing building and involve overly complicated roof forms should be avoided;

05. The pitch and form of the roof used

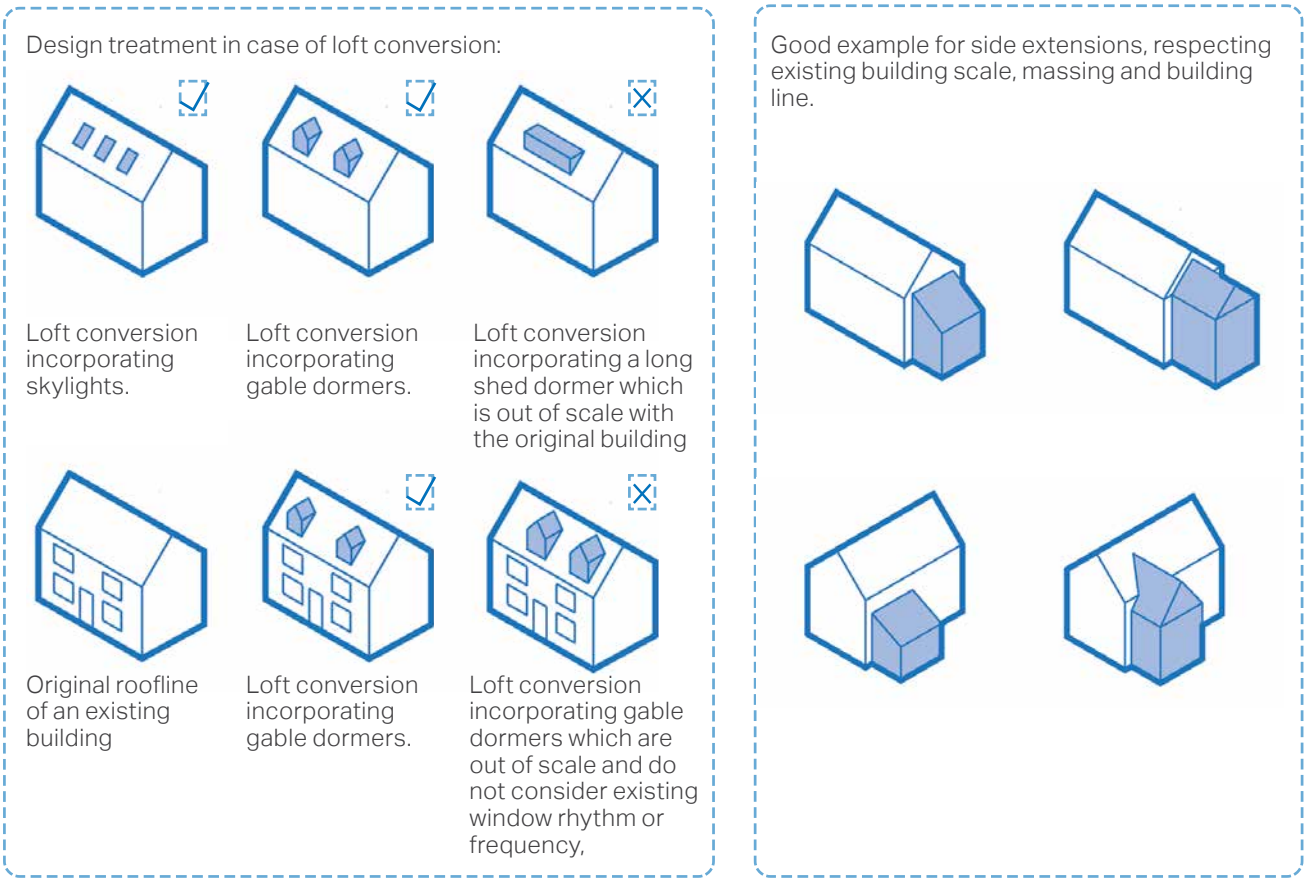


Figure 55: Some examples for different type of building extensions

on the building adds to its character and extensions should respond to this where appropriate.

06. Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions of the existing building and respect these elements to design an extension that matches and complements the existing building;

07. In the case of side extensions, the new part should be set back from the front of the main building and retain the proportions of the original building. This is in order to reduce any visual impact of the join between existing and new;

08. In the case of rear extensions, the new part should not have a harmful effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing, overlooking or privacy issues;

09. Any housing conversions should respect and preserve the building's original form and character;

10. Where possible, reuse as much of the original materials as possible, or alternatively, use like-for-like materials. Any new materials should be sustainable and be used on less prominent building parts;

11. Any new infill development should ensure that the spacing requirements set out within this code are met and that the density, scale and appearance of the development reflects its immediate context and reduces impacts to the amenity of existing properties;

12. Infill developments within the Conservation Area should carefully consider setback distances and building lines to ensure that there is no overlook between the existing property and the new infill.

13. Existing locally valued views and vistas should not be impeded by any form of extension.

SU - SUSTAINABILITY

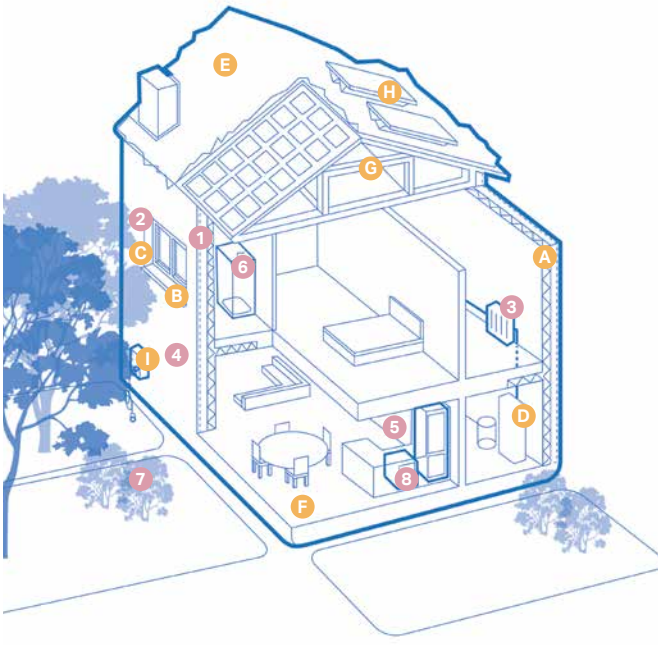
The following section elaborates on energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated into both existing and new buildings. Use of such principles and design tools should be encouraged in order to contribute towards a more sustainable environment.

The guidance in this chapter should be read in accordance with the Mendip Local Plan Part 1. 'DP5 Biodiversity and Ecological Networks' and 'DP8: Environmental Protection' are of particular relevance.

SU.1 BUILDING FABRIC THERMAL MASS

Thermal mass describes the ability of a material to absorb, store and release heat energy. Thermal mass can be used to even out variations in internal and external conditions, absorbing heat as temperatures rise and releasing it as they fall. Thermal mass can be used to store high thermal loads by absorbing heat introduced by external conditions, such as solar radiation, or by internal sources such as appliances and lighting, to be released when conditions are cooler. This can be beneficial both during the summer and the winter.

Thermal storage in construction elements can be provided, such as a trombe wall placed in front of a south facing window or concrete floor slabs that will absorb solar radiation and then slowly re-release it into the enclosed space. Mass can be combined with suitable ventilation strategies.



Existing homes

1. **Insulation** in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)
2. **Double or triple glazing with shading** (e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)
3. **Low- carbon heating** with heat pumps or connections to district heat network
4. **Draught proofing** of floors, windows and doors
5. **Highly energy-efficient appliances** (e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)
6. **Highly water-efficient devices** with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats
7. **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)** to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating
8. **Flood resilience and resistance** with removable air back covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors

Existing and new build homes

A. **High levels of airtightness**

B. **Triple glazed windows and external shading** especially on south and west faces

C. **Low-carbon heating** and no new homes on the gas grid by 2025 at the latest

D. **More fresh air** with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling

E. **Water management and cooling** more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs and reflective walls

F. **Flood resilience and resistance** e.g. raised electrical, concrete floors and greening your garden

G. **Construction and site planning** timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)

H. **Solar panels**

I. **Electric car charging point**

Figure 56: Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

SU.2 INSULATION

Thermal insulation can be provided for any wall or roof on the exterior of a building to prevent heat loss. Particular attention should be paid to heat bridges around corners and openings at the design stage.

Provide acoustic insulation to prevent the transmission of sound between active (i.e. living room) and passive spaces (i.e. bedroom). Provide insulation and electrical insulation to prevent the passage of fire between spaces or components and to contain and separate electrical conductors.

SU.3 AIRTIGHTNESS

Airtight constructions help reduce heat loss, improving comfort and protecting the building fabric. Airtightness is achieved by sealing a building to reduce infiltration- which is sometimes called uncontrolled ventilation. Simplicity is key for airtight design. The fewer junctions the simpler and more efficient the airtightness design will be.

An airtight layer should be formed in the floor, walls and roof. Doors, windows and roof lights to the adjacent walls or roof should be sealed. Interfaces between walls and floor and between walls and roof, including around the perimeter of any intermediate floor should be linked. Water pipes and soil pipes, ventilation ducts, incoming water, gas, oil, electricity, data and district heating, chimneys and flues, including air supplies to wood burning stoves, connections to external services, such as entry phones, outside lights, external taps and sockets, security cameras and satellite dishes should be considered.

The diagram below illustrates some of these key considerations.

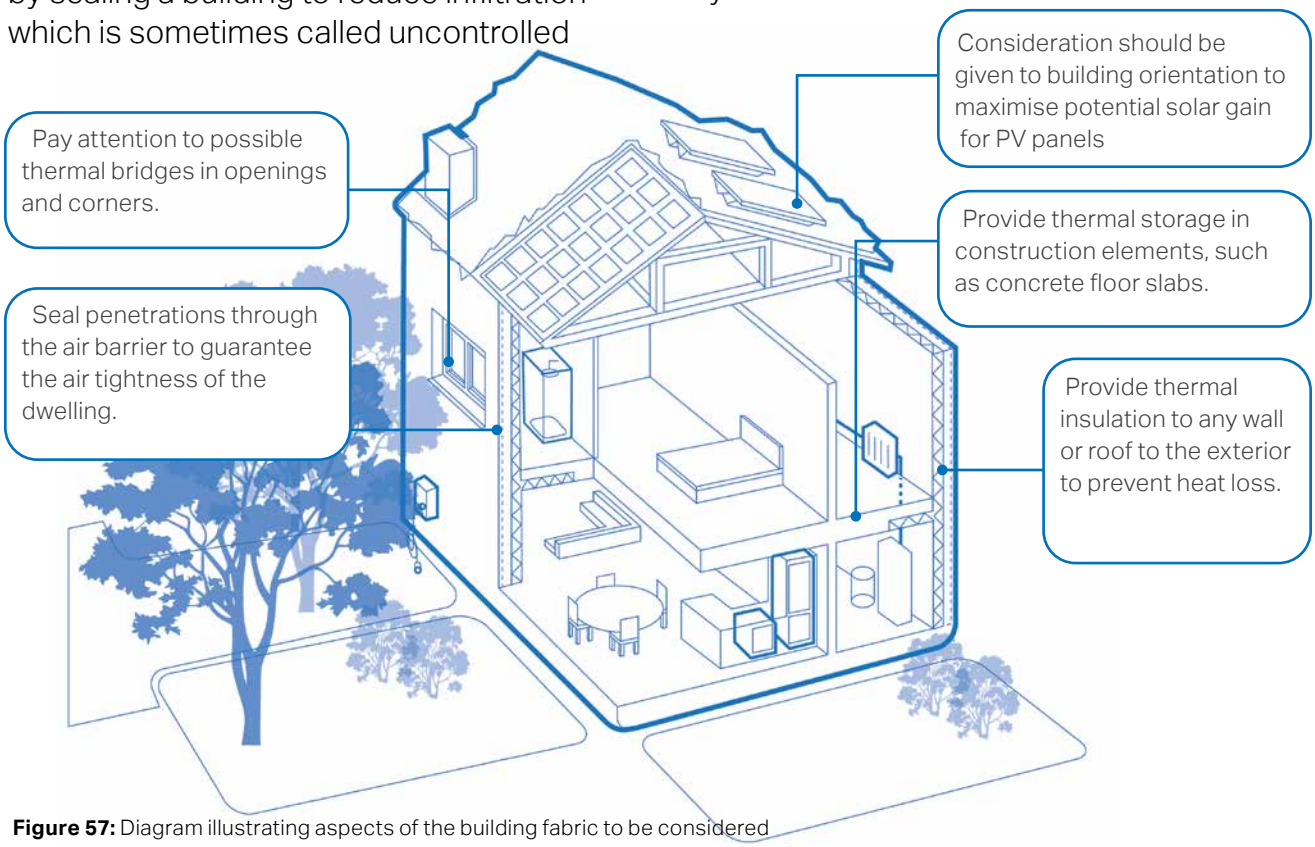


Figure 57: Diagram illustrating aspects of the building fabric to be considered

SU.4 PERMEABLE PAVEMENTS

Most built-up areas, including roads and driveways, increase impervious surfaces and reduce the capacity of the ground to absorb runoff water. This in turn increases the risks of surface water flooding. Permeable pavements offer a solution to maintain soil permeability while performing the function of conventional paving. The choice of permeable paving units must be made depending on the local context; the units may take the form of unbound gravel, clay pavers, or stone setts.

Permeable paving can be used where appropriate on footpaths, public squares, private access roads, driveways, and private areas within the individual development boundaries.

It is recommended that the majority of the unbuilt areas in the plot (i.e. gardens) are permeable by means of landscape such as grass or earth as well as permeable and filtrating pavements. As a rule of thumb the % permeable area should be between 30% to 70% of the unbuilt areas.

In addition, permeable pavement must also comply with:

i. Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Schedule 3;

ii. The Building Regulations Part H – Drainage and Waste Disposal;

iii. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015;

Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage are listed below:

iv. Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;

v. The SuDS Manual (C753);

vi. BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites;

vii. BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers; and

viii. Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens.

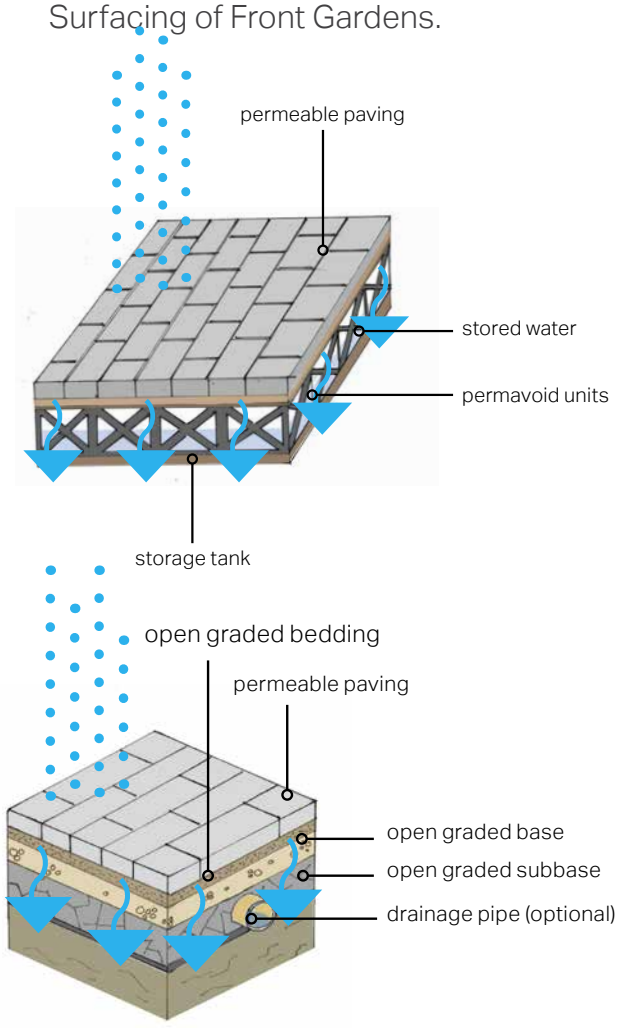


Figure 58: Diagrams illustrating the functioning of a soak away

CHECKLIST

05

5. CHECKLIST

As the design Guidelines and Codes in this section cannot cover all development scenarios, this concluding section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

The checklist can be used to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under 'General design guidelines for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views and vistas;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Positively integrate green infrastructure in accordance with national design guidance to positively contribute to liveability, biodiversity and climate change resilience;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views and vistas in general?

3

Green infrastrucre, views & character:

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views/vistas which are important to the area and how are these views and vistas incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views/vistas be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

3

Green infrastructure, views & character:

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What is the typical built pattern of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

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Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

6. GLOSSARY

Building line: The line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street.

Built form: Buildings and structures.

Enclosure: The use of buildings and structures to create a sense of defined space.

Gateway: The design of a building, site or landscape to symbolise an entrance or arrival to a specific location.

Land Cover: The surface cover of the land, usually expressed in terms of vegetation cover or lack of it. Related to but not the same as land use.

Land Use: What land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as urban and industrial use and the different types of agriculture and forestry.

Landscape: An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/ or human factors.

Landscape Character: A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Listed Building: A listed building is one that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are three categories of listed buildings in the United Kingdom:

Grade I buildings, which are of exceptional interest and make up 2.5% of all listed buildings in the United Kingdom.

Grade II* buildings, which are particularly important buildings of more than special interest and make up 5.5% of all listed buildings in the United Kingdom.

Grade II buildings, which are of special interest and make up 92% of all listed buildings in the United Kingdom.

Rural: Relating to, or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town.

Setting: The context or environment in which something sits.

SuDS: Sustainable Drainage System. Used to slowdown the passage of water and often improve water quality.

Vernacular: The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

Views: Views that can be seen from an observation point to an object (s) particularly a landscape or building.

Permeability: The permeable and interconnected street network provides people with a choice of different routes allowing traffic to be distributed more evenly across the network. A permeable layout generates a higher level of pedestrian activity, which makes social interactions more likely, and increases the level of security.

Legibility: legible and well signposted places are easier for the public to understand, therefore likely to both function well and be pleasant to live in or visit. It is easier for people to orient themselves when the routes are direct and visual landmarks clearly emphasise the hierarchy of the place.

About AECOM

AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivalled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a *Fortune 500* firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of $13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at aecom.com and @AECOM.

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