



Nursery with green roof, Mader, Austria

The Council is committed to setting new standards of quality. Development proposals will therefore be assessed according to the following urban design principles. These are intended to encourage and guide high quality design, rather than stifle the creativity of the designer, and provide a framework for more detailed Masterplans and Development Briefs.

6. 1 Sustainable development

6.1.1

Wellingborough East is set to become a model of sustainable town expansion. Sustainable development is therefore an overarching theme covering landscape, transport and building design considerations. Detailed advice on how it is achieved is contained in "Building Better Places: A guide to sustainable development" (public consultation draft published May 2002). This includes a sustainable materials and product specification checklist.

6.1.2

Developers will be strongly encouraged to achieve a 'very good' or 'excellent' standard of environmental design with regard to the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) across the entire development. This requires:

- reducing CO₂ emissions, with solar efficient layouts that maximise solar gain to principal habitable rooms and highly insulated buildings;
- using sustainable materials, such as well-managed timber or other non-polluting materials and minimising the waste from construction;

- water conservation, by incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), including storm run-off water management systems, and by using water saving appliances;
- promoting more recycling – a neighbourhood recycling centre will be required, and individual properties designed to accommodate refuse storage large enough to accommodate sorting and recycling.

6.1.3

Within the site there are particular opportunities for maximising solar orientation (often whilst capturing stunning southerly views). There may also be viable opportunities to harness other energy sources – by using Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems and by potentially using wind turbines for large industrial users or groups of public buildings.

6.1.4

Planting species should be selected to provide the basis for a diverse network of interconnected habitats.



Limestone/ironstone 'banding'; Collyweston slate roof. (Croyland Abbey, Tithe Barn Road)



Decorative brickstone window heads and string coursing; Welling



Dormers with plain tiles; terracotta pinnacles (Church Street).



Traditional dormers; stone 'keystone' window heads; decorative contrasting brick features (Market Street).

6.2 Local identity

6.2.1

Wellingborough has an identity of its own. Eastern expansion needs to be designed so that there is a clear continuation of the town, whilst also being somewhere distinct in its own right.

6.2.2

Developers will be expected to demonstrate how they have drawn on Wellingborough's traditions and enhanced the local identity. This means:

Making it read

6.2.3

Within all parts of the area care must be taken to create a legible structure that is easy for people to orientate themselves within. This requires a clear hierarchy of places and spaces, with framed views and vistas relating to existing and new landmarks and gateways.

6.2.4

It is important that each neighbourhood has its own identity. Average sizes of residential neighbourhoods (or urban wards) of approximately 600 dwellings might be conceived, each with a distinct character – with names perhaps relating to its topography such as 'Hillside' or 'Riverside'. The urban design detailing of each neighbourhood character area will be set out in forthcoming Development Briefs covering density, street form, massing, materials, colour co-ordination, landscape treatment etc.

6.2.5

Particular attention should be paid to corners. Their landmark status should be recognised – especially where buildings terminate vistas or articulate changes of grid direction.

6.2.6

Of key concern is the need to create a vivid skyline that adds visual interest to the ridge-top, but also that conveys particular activities and concentrations of uses.

6.2.7

The design of infrastructure – particularly any new bridges set to cross the river valleys – need to be very carefully handled, ensuring that they are elegant additions to the urban fabric.

6.2.8

There is significant potential for local interpretation of past use of the site in relation to some of the quality farm buildings, the routes of old tramways, the proposed new Ise Valley Town Park and the close proximity of the old Roman Town to the south-east.

Working with the natural landscape

6.2.9

So much of Wellingborough East's sense of place will be borne of its relationship to the natural landscape. Wherever possible, align building footprints, streets, sewers and other SUDS watercourses to follow slope contours. This will require a series of terraced platforms, which will enhance views, minimise cut and fill and enable natural gravity-flow drainage to be utilised.



Cantilevered bay window with moulding details to timber; sash windows (Market Street).



Contrasting quoining/window surrounds in stone (High Street).



Free standing walling: predominantly ironstone; half-round stone capping. (Church Street)



Free standing walling, with iron railings. (Market Place/All Hallows Church).



Traditional shop front: moulded frames/glazing bars, stall risers, oil-painted fascia. (Silver Street)

Respecting local building traditions

6.2.10

Building and landscape design should respect and relate to local building traditions and construction techniques. This does not imply 'pastiche'. Weak imitation is to be avoided. Moreover, design concepts that apply principles of energy conservation and re-use and use of locally sourced materials are actively encouraged, and may well shape a very distinct new aesthetic.

6.2.11

However, in all instances developers and their design teams will be required to demonstrate that in shaping the character of detailed proposals they have drawn influence from the local vernacular and traditional building techniques. Design cues relating to the local character of Wellingborough include:

- **Walling**

A variety of walling is in evidence, including ironstone, limestone, ironstone/limestone banding, ashlar and white, off-white or pastel stucco/render. There is a variety of Wellingborough red brick treatments and patterning, often with attractive detailed features relating to cornices, plinths, canopies and parapets for example.

- **Roofs**

Traditional roof covering is natural Welsh slate, occasionally Collyweston slate. Plain tiles are also used, with red clay ridge tiles on slate, including decorative upstand. Distinctive chimneys and chimney pots.

- **Windows**

Traditionally sash, casement and leaded casement. At first floor cantilevered bays with canted sides are found locally. Other features include stone mullions, gabled dormers with pebble-dash cheeks and pediments and a variety of dormer treatments.

- **Shop fronts**

Stall risers are much in evidence, along with timber window mullions/transforms, moulded features, fascias, heavy cornices, cast iron pillars and yellow/green glazed ceramic tiles.

- **Free-standing stone walling**

This is seen in surrounding churchyards and vicarages, comprising regular coursed limestone with either stone or engineering brick coping, sometimes with cast iron railings on top.

Place-making with art, materials and street furniture

6.2.12

Adding emphasis to key open spaces with public art and bespoke street furniture is strongly encouraged. A specially designed range of street furniture would reinforce local identity, with coordinated: seats; lighting; bus stops; signage and interpretation boards; bollards; kerbs and paving details; walls and railings. Design quality will be assessed on both its aesthetic merits and durability.



BedZed, Sutton (mixed residential and workspace)



Brindley Place, Birmingham (mixed workspace, cafes, restaurants etc.)



Centaur Street, London (mixed residential and workspace)

6.3 Creating a mixed community

Clustering facilities

6.3.1

Successful communities are built around a full range of local services and facilities including commercial, educational, health, spiritual and civic uses. These facilities will be clustered at conveniently sited locations that benefit from passing trade and are well linked to surrounding residential and employment areas via safe and comfortable routes.

Mixing it up

6.3.2

Both vertical and horizontal mixing of uses will be required to add vitality, interest and minimise the need to travel. This includes the accommodation of small-scale employment spaces into predominantly residential areas (including offices, studios, workshops, live-work units).

6.3.3

Where non-residential uses are provided, the change of use should occur along the rear boundary line of development parcels / plots, rather than the street frontage to provide a compatible use transition. The same principle applies to changes from one developer to another – ensure that back-of-plot divisions are applied to ensure a harmonious streetscape.

Mixed tenures

6.3.4

To ensure social diversity, a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures will be promoted. This includes social/affordable housing fully integrated or ‘pepper-potted’ throughout the area – with invisible joins to adjacent private housing. This can be expressed as individual or groups of buildings of different tenures or else mixing them within one building. The affordable housing provision will be provided in small clusters. Further detailed requirements and guidance will be included in the forthcoming Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance report.



Changing uses and developer sub-divisions should occur at the mid-line of the block

6.4 Quality public realm

Positive open space

6.4.1

Developer Masterplans will be required to incorporate a public realm strategy. All unbuilt areas should be designed as positive open space. This means that all spaces must have a clearly defined purpose – whether parkland, gardens, playgrounds, streets, squares, crescents or mews – and that close attention be given to how these spaces interface with adjacent buildings.

6.4.2

Open space design should relate to local character, enhance existing landscape features and promote connections to the wider area.

Face up to streets and parks

6.4.3

All public spaces, including streets and parkland, should be faced by buildings with front doors and windows opening onto the public realm – providing animation and enabling spaces to be overlooked. This applies equally to housing, employment and other non-residential uses, and follows good practice in designing-out crime.

6.4.4

In designing public spaces, attention should also be paid to solar orientation, so that benches or pavement cafes, for instance, are placed in locations that enjoy direct sunshine.

Focus on the edge

6.4.5

The threshold or interface between public and private spaces is of crucial importance. Buildings should be designed to maximise windows, doors and balconies on principal elevations. They should also project a wide range of uses onto the street to create lively frontages.

6.4.6

Highly stimulating frontages ensure a vibrant street scene and contribute to a feeling of security as well as genuine safety. The most active frontages have:

- More than 15 premises every 100m
- No blank or exposed rear elevations
- Doors less than 15m apart
- Much depth and relief in the building surface
- A large range of functions, allowed to spill-out onto the street at local centres
- High quality materials and refined details.

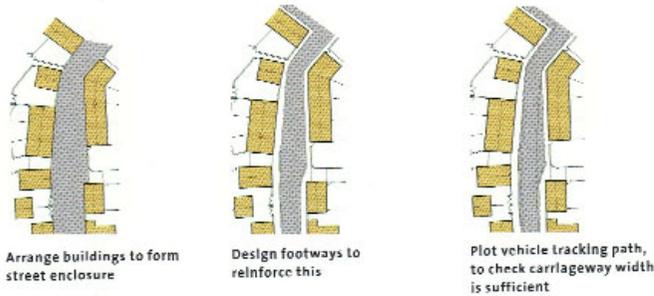
6.4.7

Blank walls, especially end gables, must not face onto the public realm – whether streets or parkland.

Create enclosure and definition

6.4.8

Clear building lines must be designed to positively address the public realm. Elevations and street cross-sections should be designed to provide a sense of enclosure, containment and intimacy. Careful placement of buildings and trees can also help to reduce vehicle speeds. Rear elevations and fencing will not be exposed and private back spaces sited securely to the rear.



Street should be designed to accommodate turning movements and vehicle tracking, not dictated by them

6.5 Ease of movement

6.5.1

A flexible and variable grid of public routes will be created through the area - ranging from hierarchy of streets to cycleways and footpaths.

A network of spaces

6.5.2

The approach sought to street design follows advice contained in "Places, Streets and Movement: A companion guide to DB32." (DETR, 1998). This moves away from the conventional post-war highway engineering approach to street classification designed in two dimensions and based solely on vehicular capacity and safety. Instead, streets are to be designed as three-dimensional multi-functional spaces lined with buildings and landscaping. As this guide puts it, to create "a network of spaces rather than a hierarchy of roads; a layout of development in which roads play their part but are not dominant."

6.5.3

Highway adoption requirements and guidance contained in the NCC Design Guide for Residential Roads will need to be evaluated in the light of this context, to ensure that the approach to urban design takes its cue from acknowledged contemporary best practice (see, for instance, "Paving the Way", CABE 2002).

6.5.4

This means following the principles of 'tracking' – with spaces designed to accommodate turning movements but not being dictated by them.

6.5.5

The street hierarchy will range from wide boulevards or avenues, to more local streets or mews, as illustrated in para. 4.1.

Designing-in traffic calming

6.5.6

Internal streets within Wellingborough East will be designed to a maximum of 20 mph or in some instances as 5 mph 'home zones'. Traffic calming measures will be employed that work by affecting the driver's perception of the street environment. Perceptive measures include: buildings positioned close to the pavement edge, tight turning radii at corners and junctions, trees, fences, railings and bollards by the road-side. These should be used in preference to speed humps or chicanes.

6.5.7

On-street parking and residential driveways with direct access from main traffic routes will also contribute to traffic calming. There are many other imaginative solutions that still adhere to minimum required highway standards.

Junctions that put pedestrians and cyclists first

6.5.8

The focus on creating "liveable streets" requires that crossroads be designed as focal places – with conditions made as convenient and comfortable as possible for pedestrians and cyclists and spaces well-defined by buildings. Crossroads will therefore be favoured instead of roundabouts, which will be signalised at busy main streets.

A focus on public transport

6.5.9

Discussions with operators of bus and rail services and Network Rail should be carried out at each stage to ensure that public transport becomes an integral part of the scheme and woven into its layout.

6.5.10

Pedestrian and cycle links to bus stops and the railway station should be made as convenient and attractive as possible, with comfortable and safe shelters and easy-to-use integrated timetable information.

Reducing car parking

6.5.11

The philosophy of encouraging more sustainable modes of travel – walking, cycling and public transport means that car use is to be kept as low as possible.

6.5.12

In determining the approach to parking provision reference is to be made to the standards for off-street car parking and minimum standards for cycle parking set out in the 'Supplementary Planning Guidance: Parking' document prepared by Northamptonshire County Council (consultation draft, May 2002).

6.5.13

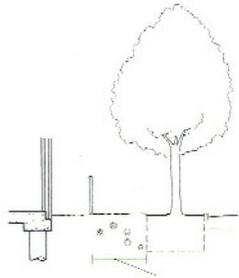
For residential properties, parking will be limited to a maximum of 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling. This threshold will be applied as an average on a site by site basis.

6.5.14

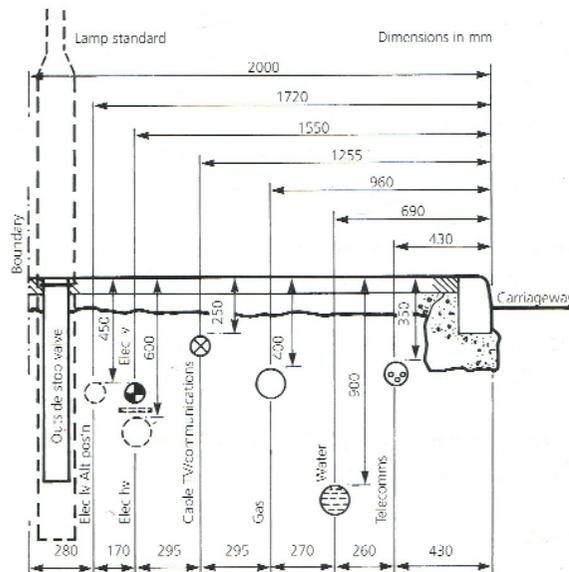
This complies with guidance contained in PPG3, which states: *"Car parking standards that result, on average, in development with more than 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling are unlikely to reflect the Government's emphasis on securing sustainable residential environments. Policies which would result in higher levels of off-street parking, especially in urban areas, should not be adopted."*

6.5.15

On-street visitor parking must be provided on the streets surrounding the block for which the parking is intended. Stand alone surface parking situated at a distance from the block will not be permitted.



Locally grouping services in trenches helps avoid features such as trees



Where a narrow footway than 2000mm is preferable, services can be bunched

6.5.16

There are five options for the placement of parking spaces:

- on the street
- small car parks incorporated into squares in the public realm
- in garages situated at the rear property line, set-back from the front elevation
- undercroft parking, which will be encouraged where semi-basements can be designed to work with natural slope contours
- in secure rear courtyards or "parking barns" designed to be private and not public space

6.5.17

On-plot parking in front of buildings on land that would otherwise be front gardens is discouraged as this can seriously undermine the quality of the streetscape.

6.5.18

Parking for non-residential uses will also be required to not exceed the maximum standards set out in the 'Supplementary Planning Guidance: Parking policy document. The table provided on page 18 of this report has a breakdown of car and cycle parking standards by use class. This also establishes lorry parking standards.

6.5.19

Shared car parks are to be promoted as part of the transport interchange focused around the railway station, within the station island site and within the neighbourhood centres to make efficient use of these facilities.

Accommodate the cyclist

6.5.20

Cyclist provision within Wellingborough East should be accommodated into street and junction designs, which will be kept to a maximum 20mph speed limit. Consideration should be given as to how this links into the surrounding cycle network.

6.5.21

Cycle parking in the public realm needs to be sited in well-overlooked places to avoid vandalism.

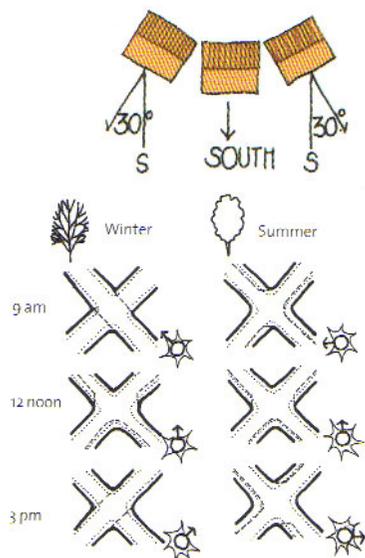
6.5.22

All developments will be required to incorporate private cycle parking provision. Showers for cyclists will be encouraged at employment sites.

Attending to services

6.5.23

Efforts must be taken to ensure that services planning is co-ordinated – both in terms of urban design and in liaising with the various utility providers - from the outset. Shared service strips will be required. The Council also strongly encourages developers to liaise with the relevant service providers to establish IT infrastructure, with broadband capability, throughout the development area from the outset. It is highly desirable that this is put in place at the start of each phase.



Wherever possible, buildings should be orientated for solar gain

6.6 Building form

Vary building height

6.6.1

Density, height and massing should vary according to the different character areas, and arranged to emphasise key points and frame public spaces.

6.6.2

The height of most buildings in the area will be 2–3 storeys. High floor to ceiling heights will be encouraged, particularly in large townhouses placed along key routes, to emphasise the feeling of grandeur.

6.6.3

Within the neighbourhood centres buildings will be expected to be generally 3–4 storeys and incorporate vertical mixing. Some landmark buildings, rising to 5 or 6 storeys, will be encouraged at the high-density node centred on the railway station.

Create flexible buildings

6.6.4

Building design and layout should be flexible enough to cater for the needs of present and future generations of users at all ages of life and with varying degrees of mobility. Changing demographics and live-work arrangements require robust layouts that facilitate changes of use, and enable buildings to enlarge and adapt.

6.6.5

This requires a shallow plan depth, with attention paid to positioning of circulation cores, a positive building-street relationship and internal divisions designed to create flexible forms in which changes of use can occur over time. This form also enables the building to be naturally lighted and ventilated.

Design for solar gain

6.6.6

A series of techniques should be employed to optimise solar gain. The key to this is orientating buildings as far as possible within 30 degrees of due south. This tends to result in an east-west block pattern.

6.6.7

Buildings should be designed for passive solar gain whilst still providing active street frontage. This requires windows and conservatories on south-facing aspects, with reduced glazing on north-facing aspects to restrict heat loss. Opportunities to incorporate solar photovoltaic panels or solar tiles on the south-facing roof pitches should also be investigated. Future retrofitting should not be overly constrained.

6.6.8

Exemplar commercial, community and residential buildings using innovative solar design technology will be actively encouraged.

6.6.9

Developers will also be encouraged to identify demonstration areas for innovative environmental design, such as self-build or eco housing.



Often mews buildings demonstrate an ability to adapt to changing needs