

Residential Development: Principles for Good Design



September 2013 - DRAFT



This supplementary guidance was produced by Planning and Building Standards and should be read in conjunction with the approved Local Development Plan.

**Further copies of this guide can be downloaded at:
www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/planning-and-the-environment/planning-and-building-standards/**

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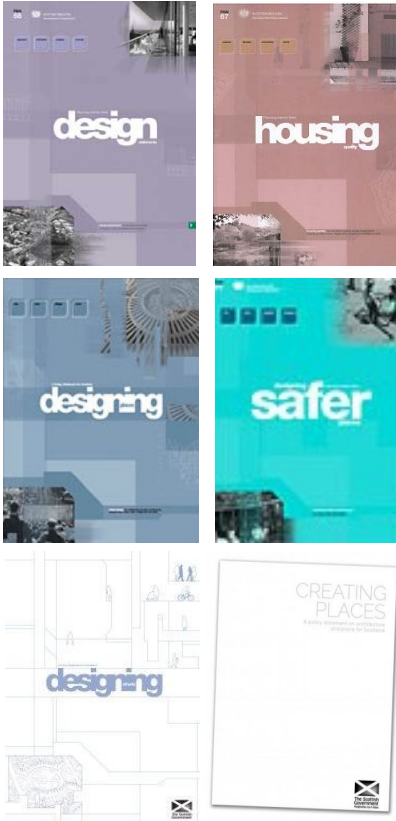
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1. Introduction



Background

Since the early 2000s there has been an emphasis on good design in the planning process from government policy documents and mainstream thinking. Design is a material consideration in determining planning applications and there is a growing recognition of the added value that design contributes to development. Many exemplar schemes now exist in Scotland to put theory into practice.

Fundamentally the key policy documents from Scottish Government advocate a design-led approach rather than a standards-based approach and the use of supplementary planning guides (SPGs) are recommended to local authorities to set out their requirements to developers.

About this Guide

This SPG applies to housing developments from 3 units to 300+ units. It seeks to inform developers of the standards of development required and the criteria used by planners to assess such proposals. It seeks to inform and is **a flexible document designed to create innovative and context sensitive designs**.

This guide complements the local development plan (LDP) and reference should be made to it prior to submitting an application. It should be noted that this guide is a draft and part of the consultation and review process of the LDP.

How to Use this Document

Page five sets out what fundamental principles all schemes should demonstrate. There are then six sections which cover:

Character and Setting
Layout and Plot Sizes
House Design
Landscaping, Open Spaces and Play Areas
Roads and Parking
Community Safety

Each section includes a checklist of the criteria to be considered. The final section summarises the planning application process.

Getting the Fundamentals Right

The fundamentals of any development should be that it:

- gives importance to the **local context**;
- is **design-led**, not standards-led;
- promotes the **six qualities** of good design; and
- is accompanied by appropriate **supporting documents**.

Local Context

West Dunbartonshire is made up of a number of towns and villages within a broadly urban area but which are in close proximity to the Local Landscape Area. Historically, settlement patterns and town growth have varied resulting in areas having their own local character. Consideration of the local context is fundamental to bringing forward a successful scheme and any housing project should start with an assessment of what is there.

Design-Led

All schemes should be design-led where the final proposal is based on a systematic assessment of the site and not the imposition of standards on a site. Street design should consider place before movement.

Six Qualities

The six qualities originate from “Designing Places” (2001) and was the first national policy statement which subsequent design documents refer to. These six qualities, shown in inset Box 1, are at the heart of good design and all schemes are required to promote them.

local context
design-led
six qualities
supporting documents

Supporting Documents

All national and major developments should include a **Design and Access Statement** and they are strongly encouraged for local developments within/ near sensitive sites. The Design Statement will be assessed against the criteria set out in PAN 68 “Design Statements” and it is therefore prudent to carefully consider the requirements and checklists set out in PAN 68.

The requirement for EIAs, Transportation Assessments, Flood Risk Assessments, Site Investigative Reports, Tree Survey Reports, etc, should be discussed with Development Management prior to submission of an application. These **pre-application meetings** are also encouraged to discuss/resolve issues at an early stage.



Box 1 Six qualities of good design

2. Character and Setting

“Does the proposal display character, identity and variety?”

All new proposals for housing should seek to create areas which have a **distinctive character** related to the local setting - areas which will give people pride and a sense of community and belonging. It is essential to understand the setting of a site so that the resulting layout and design is informed.

The starting point is to appraise the features of the site and surrounding area to determine the natural and built environment. **Design and Access Statements** should be used to enable a full and considered assessment of the site.

Natural features can help give shape to a development and integrate with its surrounds. The emphasis should be on conserving and enhancing the site's features whether it be open watercourses, retaining trees or avoiding large-scale levelling. These features can often form the focal point of the development.

Every element of the **streetscape** contributes to a sense of place—not just the house but the hard standing, the landscaping, the street pattern, parking layout, boundary treatment, public/private space—it all comes together to create a unique development.

Street patterns represent the history and connections of an area and reflecting them in the new development can help integrate a site as well as improving movement.



Where there are established **building lines** continuity is maintained by integrating new buildings with existing buildings and structures.

Buildings that relate to a common building line reinforce and define the street. Projections and setbacks are useful in certain locations to add emphasis, provided continuity is not lost.



[Building lines—line drawing similar to above but of local street
Eg Dumbarton Rd, Glasgow Rd]

The **scale, massing** and **height** of new buildings should be considered in relation to adjoining buildings. It may be appropriate to use a variety of **densities** within a site, for example, as focal points, at natural low points within a site or to complement outlooks from the site and frame natural/man-made features.

Consideration should be given to any **listed buildings** or conservation areas within the vicinity.

Distinctive areas can be created using local building forms and the use of **local materials** and architectural detailing is encouraged.



A site needs to be **legible**—a place that is easy for users to understand and navigate. Users need to be able to see important routes and landmarks and a site should seek to maintain and enhance existing views and create new ones.



The use of good signage, lighting and public art can all aid legibility and help create a unique and distinctive character.

CHARACTER & SETTING



Is there an appraisal of the local area/history ?

**Are there natural features or trees on the site which can be incorporated into the layout?
Are there any natural assets which can be enhanced?**

Does the development face any watercourses or canals?

Does the housing fit into the landscape or is it visually dominating?

Is the streetscape well integrated with its surrounds?

Are the existing street patterns being used to form connections into site and set block sizes?

Are established building lines being used?

Does the new proposal relate well to the scale, massing and height of adjacent buildings?

Can local building forms and local materials be used to create distinctiveness?

Is there variety of building form?

Is the site legible for users? Does it need to be complemented with signs/lighting/public art at key points?



“Plots need to relate well to the houses being built on them, to each other and to the surrounding area.”

3. Layout and Plot Sizes

One of the main concerns with the current house building market is the dissatisfaction with the layout of modern estates with their loss of front gardens to the car, small rear gardens, buildings too close together and general lack of public open space and adequate playing facilities.

Plots need to relate well to the houses being built on them, to each other and to the surrounding area. If consideration is given to each of these three levels then the result will be a well-designed and attractive development.

LEVEL ONE—SITE LAYOUT

Site layout considers the bigger scale of how a site functions within and relates outwith. **Local patterns of development** should be used as a basis for residential proposals as they inform how new housing can integrate into existing patterns of streets and paths and what appropriate density, scale and massing might be.

Densities should reflect the context of the site and layouts can incorporate different densities within the one site to provide interest and variety.

The **massing and proportion** of developments needs to be right to ensure development looks right in its setting and has a “human scale” to it. In gap sites modern design materials can be used to great effect if the new buildings have the same massing and proportion.

Important to how a site functions is its **permeability**. Places need to be easy to get to and move through for pedestrians and cyclists. New routes should connect into existing routes, creating small blocks of development, and move away from the cul-de-sac arrangement, common in many house developments.

Layouts should have well-connected streets and active road frontages where the front elevation of the building faces the street not the rear elevation. Buildings should frame public spaces with direct access to the street. Layouts should incorporate a network of spaces and streets with these spaces used to create identifying features.

Public transport facilities should be designed in and layouts sought which minimise walking distances to local facilities. They need to be designed to be able to be served (see Roads and Parking).



Houses should be **orientated** to take into account corner plots, any natural features on the site and existing streets. Buildings orientated away from streets often leads to high fences and walls on the street. Instead buildings should be positioned to face one another to allow natural surveillance. Care needs to be taken with houses on corner plots—they should be set back or angled to face features on a site rather than L-shaped and tight to the road. If this is not possible then double frontage dwellings may work.

[diagram illustrating this]

Natural and built features on a site should be emphasized and any views in/out of a site should be maximised. Entrances to places need to give a good first impression. On sloping sites buildings should step up making use of the contours of the site and avoid under building.

Public and private space needs to be clearly defined. Gates and overlooking windows should be used to control access to private areas and the extent of private ownership around a building e.g. railings, paving, walls, help define the boundary between public and private space.



Large residential developments should consider the introduction of areas set aside for future amenity provision such as shops, nurseries, leisure facilities, community halls, etc. Introducing a **mix of uses** may be appropriate for some sites provided those uses are compatible and house densities enable these uses to be viable.

SITE LAYOUT



Are local patterns of development being used to inform layout?

Are uniform densities being avoided?

Does the massing and proportion of the component buildings relate to the setting?

Is the site easy to get to and move through for pedestrians and cyclists?

Do new routes connect into existing routes and have meaningful destinations?

Is the principle of active frontage being employed?

Is the public transport network easily accessible?

Does the orientation of buildings reflect the street patterns/other features on the site?

Are there natural/built features or views to be protected or enhanced?

Does open space have a clearly defined public/private edge?

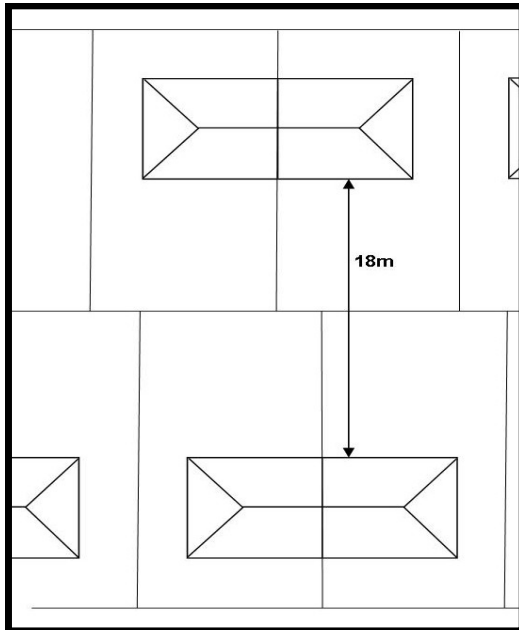
Is there opportunity for introducing appropriate alternative uses into a purely residential site?

LEVEL TWO—HOUSE-TO-HOUSE

This level considers how well houses **relate to each other**. There is no set **minimum distance** between house gables—the gap will depend on the house type, setting, the provision of driveways and ensuring that plots allow for future expansion. In general detached houses should have a more generous gap and it is suggested that 3m would allow a driveway to be formed at one side.



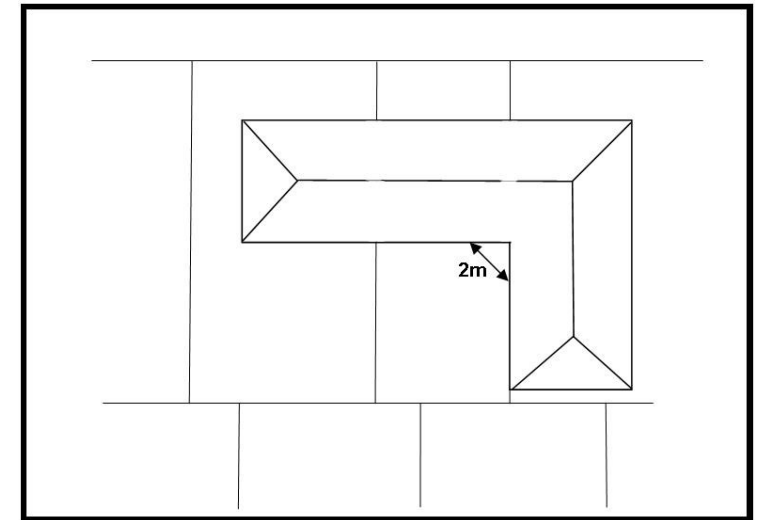
Properties should not look into other properties. Walls, fencing and landscaping can be useful means of screening within a site to prevent **overlooking or loss of privacy**.



Box 2: Window-to-window distances

To ensure that adequate levels of privacy are maintained for new and existing occupiers, window to window distances should be applied. The **18m rule** is a recognised and useful tool and requires the distance between windows of directly facing habitable rooms (living rooms, dining rooms and bedrooms) to be 18m as shown below.

Where properties are angled the distance can be reduced and in the scenario of a corner window they should be at least 2m apart.



Box 3: Window-to-window distances for corner windows

HOUSE to HOUSE



Does the gap between houses reflect the house type and setting/context of site?

Do the distances between properties allow for driveways and/or future extensions?

Has privacy been assessed using window-to-window distances?

Are walls, fencing or landscaping required to prevent overlooking within/outwith site?

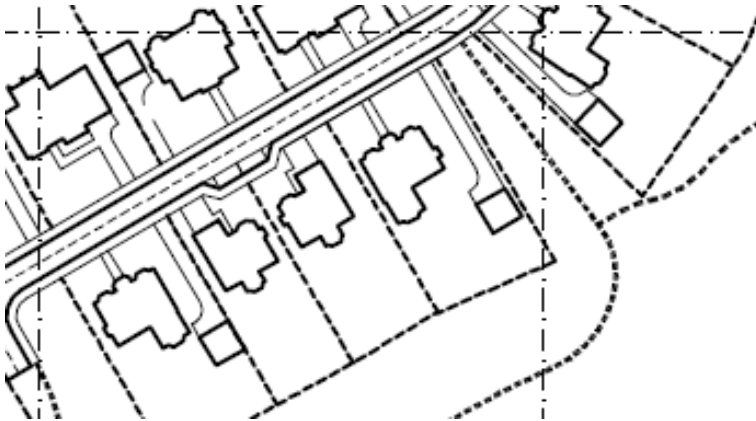
How do plot ratios relate to parking areas?

LEVEL THREE—HOUSE AND PLOT

At a basic level is the relationship between the **house and the plot**. A useful tool for defining what minimum sizes should be is **plot ratios**. Plot ratios link the footprint of the building with the garden size:

Detached and semi-detached—30:70
Terraced properties— 40:60

So, for example, if a terraced property has a footprint of 80m^2 then the garden ground (front and rear combined) should be at least 120m^2 .



[need drawing to relate to above example]

These ratios are minimum requirements and surrounding plot sizes will be taken into account. Higher/lower ratios may be appropriate and these should be explored in the design statement. The extent of usable garden ground is just as important as size.

Plot ratios are not used for flatted developments but they should have amenity open space to provide a setting for the development as well as outdoor drying areas, bin stores and private seating areas.



Narrow plot widths can promote more active frontages and allow higher densities. This can be appropriate on some sites where it reflects existing densities or where active frontages are required but front gardens shouldn't be used solely for parking.

Driveways must be accommodated to the side of the building for detached, semi-detached and end-terraced buildings. Mid-terraced properties should only have driveways in the front garden where it can be demonstrated that they cannot be accommodated elsewhere on the street or to rear of property. This should not be at the expense of the garden or lead to cars dominating the streetscape.

The Council operates a separate-at-source policy for domestic waste and adequate provision needs to be made for the different **bins** required. Lane access may be required for mid-terraced properties.



HOUSE AND PLOT

Does the house and garden comply with the plot ratios?

Does the plot provide private usable garden ground?

Are there separate spaces for bin stores and drying greens? (flats and houses)

Can a driveway be provided that is not in the front garden?

Is there adequate provision for the storage of sorted waste and can this be accessed easily by residents and uplift service providers?

“There is a need to move away from the standard house types commonly found in West Dunbartonshire towards a more innovative and context-led house design.”

4. House Design

House design is all about the **external constituent parts** that make up the building—the roof, elevations, windows, doors, chimneys, porches, garages and sun-rooms. It considers things such as pitch, height, massing and scale, and the finishing materials are what brings everything together.



Careful consideration needs to be given to **roof lines**. The **pitch** (the angle of the roof) is important: shallow pitches should generally be avoided as should a bulky or “top-heavy” roof. There can be a variety of roof styles and pitches within larger housing sites but this is not always necessary elsewhere.

The individual parts of a building should be in **proportion** to each other, for example, window sizes and number, roof height to wallhead height ratio.

Windows need to look good from the outside but also provide light and views from the inside. The number, proportion, alignment and type all have an important part to play in the overall look of a building. Neighbouring buildings can give clues as to window proportions. Multiple windows are preferable to large “picture windows”. **Door** style should compliment house design.

Elevations - interest to a plain wall or a large flatted block can be achieved using bays and gables and changes in finishing materials.

Features such as chimneys, porches, dormers, sun-rooms can all add interest to a design but should relate to local design features and not be overly fussy.

Garages can be integral i.e. part of the house or detached. Detached garages should be set back from the front building line and not sit forward except where the house occupies a corner plot.

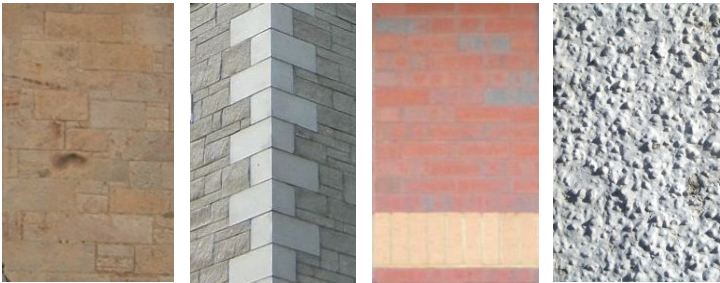
[Line drawing of two storey house with arrow pointing to constituent parts]

There are a wide variety of house **materials** found in the West Dunbartonshire area: red and blonde sandstone, brick, render, wet dash, natural slates and concrete tiles. Some areas are constructed of local materials where other areas do not identify with a local style. Use of local materials will be encouraged.

The Design and Access Statement should explain the context of the site and justify the materials used. The materials proposed should either:

- enhance the traditional building character; or
- where there is no local style, strengthen the quality of the existing urban make-up.

Poor quality materials can spoil a good design. There should be a coordination of materials, colour and proportions. The submission of a palette of materials is encouraged during the processing of the application.



Corner buildings need careful design detail.

They can help people find places or create an impression of an entrance into a site. In some locations they need to integrate with an existing building in terms of height and building lines.



The **primary access** to a building should be from the street. There should be clearly identifiable entrances which help create activity on the street as well as allowing a building's function to be "read". The fronts and backs of buildings can be used in different ways and their design should reflect this.

HOUSE DESIGN



Is the design of the house influenced by the local context?

Is there an appropriate diversity of form within the site e.g. different house sizes and types?

Are the individual parts of the building in proportion to each other?

Is careful consideration being given to the positioning, size and alignment of windows and doors?

Are bays/gables/dormers used to add interest to principal elevations?

Do additional features such as chimneys and porches relate to local features?

Are detached garages set back from the front building line?

Do the finishing materials add quality to the design? Are local materials proposed?

Are there key locations e.g. corner sites, which would merit a different design solution in terms of density/height/style?

Is the primary access to the building from the street and easily accessible for pedestrians?

5. Landscaping, Open Spaces and Play Areas

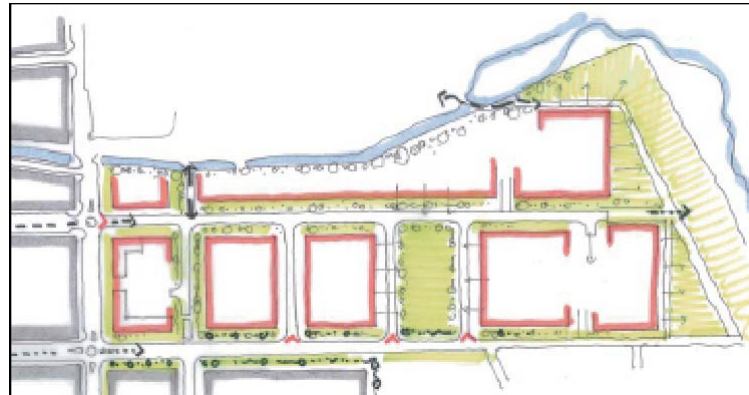
“The green network is a network of open spaces such as play areas, playing fields, sports pitches, allotments and cemeteries linked by paths which stretch into the countryside.”

[need permission]

[Use Dalquhurn Lade as example]

The provision of landscaping, open spaces and play areas should not be an afterthought but be included as part of the design process for a site and provided imaginatively.

The Council has a vision for a more extensive, functional and better connected network of open and green spaces, and residential developments should demonstrate that they will enhance and integrate into the **green network**. Green networks provide attractive opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to move around and developments should seek to complete missing links and improve the environmental quality of existing links.



The Council also supports the concept of **green infrastructure**—“the use of ecosystems, green spaces and water in strategic land use planning” where different elements are linked together. These elements include water management, habitats, access, green and open spaces.

There are a number of ways in which green infrastructure can contribute to a quality residential environment and create pleasant places to live.

Entrance and gateways can have formal landscaping, feature trees, or avenues. **Existing landforms**, boundary hedges and trees should be integrated into the development rather than removed.



Structural planting, shelter belts, green wedges and green corridors can all assist in integrating the development into the existing landscape. Street design should aim to integrate natural landscape features and planting helps to soften the street scene while creating visual interest.

Watercourses which run through a site should not be culverted but used as a key feature of the site and enhanced with appropriate planting.

Other physical features should be retained and enhanced to form local landmarks or **enhance local views and features**, enabling people to navigate around the larger sites.

The key to creating successful open spaces is to make them **multi-functional** so that they can be a play park but also provide SUDS or be a wildlife corridor and a pedestrian link to local amenities. Open spaces can be formal such as squares, or more informal such as grassed areas and SUDS ponds. All public spaces should be designed with a purpose in mind to ensure they are **fit for purpose** and avoid abuse, vandalism and security issues.

They should be overlooked by windows and doors opening onto the street and by use of bay and corner windows to give views in different directions. Blank gable walls facing onto public spaces should be avoided. This all helps to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Play areas should also follow these principles. They need to be fit for purpose and make use of natural surveillance. The requirements for play areas are set out in separate supplementary guidance.

SUDS details should be submitted as part of any planning application and consideration should be given to integrate the **design of SUDS** with the layout for the green network. SUDS should be designed as an attractive integral feature within the development and work on the following principles:

- managing surface water run-off on-site as near to source as possible;
- slowing down run-off;
- treating it naturally; and
- releasing good quality surface water to watercourses or groundwater.

Early discussions on the form of landscaping, where play areas might go and what boundary treatments are expected are essential.

LANDSCAPING



Does the layout include an integrated network of landscaping, open spaces and play areas?

Does the layout link into the existing green network?

Is the concept of green infrastructure evident?

Does planting integrate natural features and soften the street scene?

Are watercourse and other physical features on the site enhanced?

Is an attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists proposed?

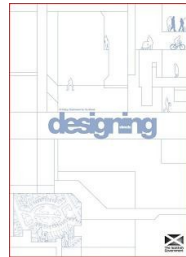
Are spaces multi-functional and public spaces and play areas fit for purpose?

Are SUDS used to form part of the green infrastructure of the site?



6. Roads & Parking

In the past **road engineering standards** often dictated the layout of housing developments. Roads were designed to accommodate the movement of vehicles but were not always attractive or pleasant to walk, cycle or play in.



The publication of “**Designing Streets**” (2010) marks a fundamental shift in the way that roads and streets are to be viewed. Street design must consider “**place before movement**” so that successful streets can be created which have a sense of place.

West Dunbartonshire Council embraces the concepts behind “Designing Streets” and this chapter outlines the principles that new residential developments will have to display. Planning and Road Services will work closely together to ensure collaboration between the planning application and Road Construction Consent processes. It is recommended that early contact be made with both to discuss how a scheme might comply with the new roads requirements.

what is a sense of place?

locally distinctive streets
visual quality
social/economic activity

Streets need to have other functions as well as movement of vehicles. They are there to facilitate the passage of people and cyclists and to contribute to creating a sense of place. A street might contribute by being locally distinctive, have a high visual quality and encourage meeting and playing spaces.

Movement and place considerations are important in determining the appropriate speed designs, speed

limits and urban structure along with levels of adjacent development and traffic composition.

The **place and movement matrix** is useful in determining the importance of a street and helps inform design choices about that street. Most residential sites will have a low movement but high place function.



Source: Designing Streets: Scottish Government 2010

Six Qualities and Street Design

As a starting point the six qualities (see p5) should be borne in mind when devising street design.



Streets need to be **distinctive** by responding to the local context of the site. Block structure should have a distinctive form with landmarks and vistas that provide good orientation and navigation of an area. The historic elements of a site should be responded to, to create distinctive places.

Streets should be designed to be **safe & pleasant** places. Pedestrians should be considered first and private motor vehicles last. Street design should be inclusive. Appropriate traffic speeds should be designed into a layout to help drivers reduce their speeds to levels appropriate for the context, leading to safer streets for all.

Signs and street markings should be kept to a minimum to help reduce clutter. Street lighting should be as discrete as possible and street furniture should be located for maximum benefit and to reduce pedestrian obstruction. Natural surveillance should be maximised when considering orientation of streets/paths. All roads and paths should have meaningful destinations.

Streets need to be **easy to move around** for all users and connect well to existing networks. This can be achieved by providing good connectivity, planning public transport links at an early stage and designing the urban form with pedestrians in mind e.g. junction types.

Streets need to be **welcoming** for all users in the community. They should provide opportunities for social interaction and allow walkable access to local amenities for all street users. Direct access to the street will be encouraged.

Street networks should be designed to be **adaptable**— to accommodate future changes in the built and social environment. For example, parking should be provided by a variety of means to provide flexibility as well as lessening visual impact.

To enable streets to become **resource-efficient** street design should consider orientation, drainage, utilities, planting and materials.

STREET DESIGN

Does the street design demonstrate “place before movement”?

Are the six qualities of good design inherent in the street design?

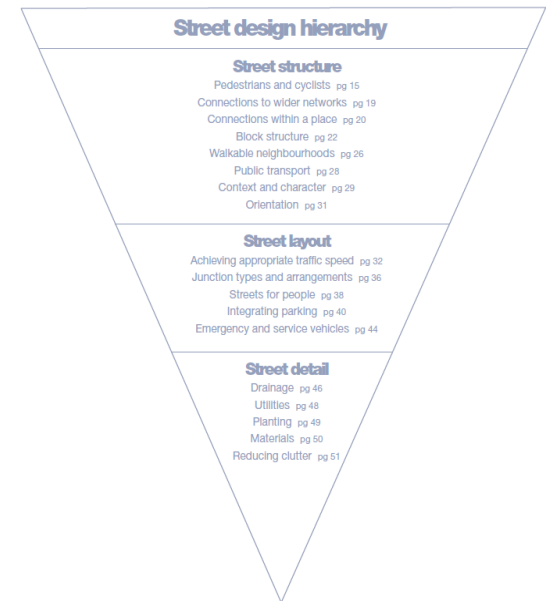
The Street Design Hierarchy

The street design hierarchy (right) provides an important way of thinking about street design from macro to micro scales.

Street Structure

The street structure of any residential scheme should put **pedestrians first and vehicles last**. The street should be designed to actively encourage walking and this will have implications for the design of street crossings, corner radii, etc. Cyclists should generally be accommodated on the carriageway except where traffic volumes and speed is high.

The street structure should have **connections to its surroundings**. Streets need to be connected to existing street patterns to make a site permeable. This will have a positive influence on other modes of transport such as cycling and walking.



Source: Designing Streets: Scottish Government 2010

“Street typology is a classification of different street types by their function for pedestrians, cyclists and cars as well as the adjacent land use. It looks at the balance between the functional use and competing travel modes.”



The site should have **connections within**. Good connectivity can be achieved by creating a walkable and compact layout. One-way streets should be avoided and a mix of uses encouraged as opposed to single zoned uses.

Consideration should be given to the **block structure** of a site. A site's network of streets should have regard to context and external factors such as topography, building lines and vistas. The perimeter block works well in most circumstances in that it provides direct access to routes which are overlooked and populated. The perimeter block also makes efficient use of land and can help create private spaces within.

There are many options for street patterns and the ones which work best tend to be short, straight streets, irregular patterns which can contribute to variety and “sense of place” and those with direct routes. Long cul-de-sacs should be minimised. On some sites links to future developments on neighbouring sites may be required. Block structure should also look at: width between frontages, ratio of height and width, and location / positioning of public space.

Walkable neighbourhoods—these are neighbourhoods which have a range of facilities within 5 minutes. Pedestrian routes should match desire lines as closely as possible.

Public transport should be considered at an early stage in the design process. Bus routes and bus stops should form key elements of the walkable neighbourhood or if not viable there should be layouts with strong direct links to existing public transport.

In determining the street structure it is important to create distinctive environments which have regard to the **context and character** of the place. Street typologies are a useful means of creating these or design codes might be used to set out and control the character of important streets.

The **orientation** of streets can have an impact on whether a street is bright and sunny and whether solar gain to buildings can be maximised. Prevailing wind conditions should also be considered.

STREET STRUCTURE



Are the streets connected to the surrounding street pattern to make site permeable?

Does the block structure have short, straight streets rather than winding streets and cul-de-sacs?

Does the site have access to facilities within a 5 min walk radius?

Are there strong, direct links to public transport nodes?

Street Layout

The street layout should be designed to influence driver behaviour so that **appropriate traffic speeds** are achieved. For residential streets a maximum design speed of 20mph should normally be sought.

“Designing Streets” and the “Roads Development Guidelines” provide technical and geometrical details on how this can be achieved using traffic calming measures, stopping site distances and visibility requirements.

There are a range of **traffic calming measures** which can be combined to ensure effective control of speed without compromising the attractiveness of the environment.

edge markings that visually narrow road
buildings close to the street
reduced carriageway width
physical features e.g. trees, cushions, humps,
in carriageway
on-street parking in blocks
landscaping
keeping straight lengths of road short
reductions in forward visibility
changes/no priority at junctions
change in materials

Visibility requirements at junctions and along the street will be based on “Designing Streets” and the “Roads Development Guidelines”.

Infill development sites will require to consider the built environment and layout of existing street character to ensure innovative street layouts do not conflict with the existing built character.

Junction types should be designed with pedestrians in mind and to suit the urban form of the local context. Junctions that should be used in residential areas include: crossroads and staggered junctions, T and Y junctions, formal and informal squares and mini roundabouts. Crossroads are the most convenient for pedestrians and mini roundabouts have some use as they cause less deviation than conventional roundabouts.

There should be less requirement for **turning areas** where a layout can demonstrate well-connected streets. Where they are required they need to relate to their environment and not specifically vehicle movement.

Frontage access is an important means of creating a street environment. It allows direct access to buildings and helps generate activity and a relationship between the street and its environment. Direct vehicular access will be encouraged within residential streets.

Streets for people is about creating streets where vehicular traffic does not dominate and social interaction is encouraged. Shared Spaces may be used to reduce vehicular priority and encourage pedestrians to move more freely in a street. Such areas should have minimal traffic signs, road markings and other traffic management features. Level surfaces, where there is no segregation between road and pavement, are commonly used and are often constructed from paviors or coloured/textured asphalt to provide effective delineation. Parking can provide permeable surfacing for drainage.



Sites should have **integrated parking** whereby parking is provided flexibly by a variety of means with minimal impact on the visual character of an area. There should be a design-led approach to the provision of car parking spaces and modal shift should be encouraged through good connections with public transport, cycle parking facilities and attractive, meaningful footpaths.

Parking can be a combination of on-street and off-street parking. On-street parking can be rigidly designed but informally arranged e.g. by widening a street, using end-on angled parking. Breaking up the visual impact can be achieved by limiting on-street parking to small groups of around five spaces.

Off-street parking comes in various forms and can include driveways and courtyards. Where parking is proposed within the plot it should not generally be in the front garden where it breaks up the frontage, is unsightly and restricts street surveillance. Garages will not be taken into account when assessing off-street parking provision if there is a permitted development opportunity to convert them to living space. They should be able to accommodate current vehicle sizes. Car ports may be a good alternative.

Dimensions for car parking spaces and manoeuvring space are provided in “Designing Streets” and the Roads Development Guidelines.

New developments must make sufficient provision to ensure that **waste collection** and **winter gritting vehicles** can be routed along the streets. They should also promote the integration of waste management facilities without adverse impact on the street scene.

STREET LAYOUT



Are appropriate traffic speeds achieved through physical and perceptive measures?

Does the site comply with SSD, visibility requirements and have suitable junction types?

Does the development have direct frontages to the main road?

Are shared spaces appropriate?

Are different methods of parking employed to provide the standards set out in the Roads Development Guidelines?

Can waste collection and winter gritting vehicles be routed?

Does the development provide for a community grit bin?

Street Detail

The **materials** used for streets, footpaths and parking courtyards need to be distinctive, easily maintained and prove to be durable and provide clear street and parking definition.



The use of alternative materials to those normally approved will be considered in conjunction with Road Services especially in areas proposed to be adopted by the Council. Road Construction Consent (RCC) will be required from Road Services for all adoptable areas.

Regard should be had to the number of **signs and street markings** which can have an impact on the visual environment. Signs are most effective when used sparingly.



The number of posts on a footway should be minimised either by post sharing or lighting columns.

The use of centre lines may not be a requirement and some streets are best suited to no lines which can encourage drivers to drive at lower speeds.

Guard railings should not be provided unless in exceptional circumstances where a clear need has been identified. In such instances high quality railings should be installed.

Lighting should illuminate the carriageway and footway and should be sympathetic to the context. The scale of lighting should be relative to the width of the street and surrounding buildings and be energy efficient.

Early advice should be sought with the planners and the road engineers involved in the RCC process. Planning Services will ensure the co-ordination of this process. It is also recommended that planning applications and RCC be submitted concurrently to ensure the effective coordination of the process.

STREET DETAIL



Are materials for roads and pavements distinctive, durable and easily maintained?

Is there a minimalist approach to signs, street markings and guard railings?

Is lighting appropriate?

7. Community Safety

The planning system has a role to play in the design of safer environments for residents and visitors. There are a number of ways in which schemes can be enhanced by considering carefully the end users and likely behaviour. PAN 77 “Designing Safer Places” and the Secured by Design initiative provide further examples of this.

Natural surveillance should be designed into every scheme. Buildings should front onto streets, squares and play areas as active frontages play an important role in natural surveillance. Pedestrian and cycle routes should also have as much natural surveillance as possible.

[Photo/drawing of natural surveillance]

If places are distinctive and built to a high standard, a **sense of ownership** will be promoted. Public/private space should be clearly defined. The uncertainty of ownership of an area can reduce responsibility. **Defensible space** should be defined using design features. Access can be limited by a change of road surface, rumble strips, pillars, brick piers, narrowing of the carriageway, etc, to give the impression the area beyond is private.

There is a conflict between creating **permeable sites** and creating “getaway routes”. The solution needs to be a compromise where areas at risk from crime/anti-social behaviour should have fewer direct routes. All routes should have meaningful destinations and adhere to other “secured by design” principles. This will avoid cul-de-sacs.

Boundaries need to be clearly defined and Secure By Design New Homes 2011 provides details of types of fencing and construction which may be appropriate.



Cars parked in remote, unsupervised or out of sight parking areas are at increased risk of theft or damage. **Car parks** should be located where they are unobtrusive but can be seen by owners. Locked garages or to the side of the dwelling behind a gate is best for single cars, and courtyard parking which is well lit and locked can also work well.

Planting can be used creatively and not just to green a space or creating attractive areas. For example, to prevent graffiti on gable walls, discourage loitering and to enhance perimeter security. There is a need to avoid creating hiding places.

The location of **play areas** requires careful consideration as they have the potential to attract anti-social behaviour if poorly sited. They need to have:

- supervision from nearby dwellings
- safe routes to/from for users
- clearly defined public/private boundaries
- features to prevent unauthorised vehicle access
- management

Care is needed to ensure that individual dwellings are not affected by play areas and they should be positioned to the front not rear of dwellings. Toddler play areas could be secured at night.

Adequate provision should be made for informal association spaces for young people which are subject to natural surveillance but sited so as not to cause noise pollution. **Youth shelters** should be sited not too close to footpaths to avoid intimidation by users. Facilities and fittings should be suitable for their intended use and robust.

Footpath design should ensure that different users are not segregated and where possible they should not be located to the rear of gardens/dwellings. Footpaths should be:

- As straight as possible to give clear lines of sight
- Wide, at least 2-3m with a verge either side
- Well-lit
- Devoid of potential hiding places
- Overlooked
- Not right next to windows/doors—need buffer zones

Planting along footpaths should begin 2m beyond the edge of the path with low growing plants to the front and tall shrubs/trees to the back.

Good lighting should be combined with good natural surveillance. There is no point in being well-lit if no-one is there to look out.

Signage along footpaths may be appropriate to help direct pedestrians/cyclists to the most appropriate route and increasing confidence /security of users.

COMMUNITY SAFETY



Is natural surveillance being promoted?

Are public spaces high quality to encourage a sense of ownership?

Are public/private spaces clearly defined?

Are cars parked in well-lit areas in view of owners?

Can planting be used creatively to enhance community safety?

Are play areas suitably located and provision made for young people?

Are footpaths well-designed and perceived to be safe to use?

Do signage and lighting complement the development?

8. Planning Application Process

Planning and Building Standards strongly encourages **pre-application discussions**. The submission of a planning application should be seen as the end result of a process of fact-finding, analysis, revision, discussion and consultation and not necessarily just the start of the road towards gaining planning permission.

Development Management is split into two **area teams** and the initial point of contact should be the lead planner for that area.

Dumbarton & Vale	Bernard Darroch 01389 738208
Clydebank, Old Kilpatrick, Bowling & Milton	Karen McChesney 01389 738571

Pre-application discussions are free of charge and benefit the developer by allowing potential problems and issues to be “ironed out” before the formal submission. This reduces time spent during the planning application stage, helps reduce objections and makes applicants aware of exactly what information is required so that this can be factored into the project.

For more complex sites, **processing agreements** may be used to help establish the timescales for submitting information and key processes with the planning application process.

Consultations with statutory consultees and departmental discussions will form part of the pre-application process.



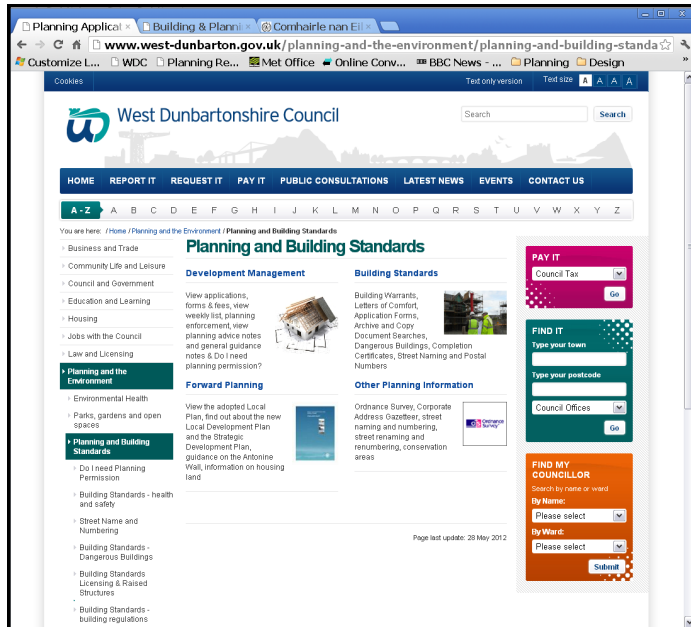
Where the proposal is a **major development** (as defined in SSI 2009 No.51) a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) will be required. Circular 4/2009 provides more details on this and there is also a note on the Council website (General Advice Note 4). A PAN must be submitted at least 12 weeks prior to submitting a planning application and community consultation carried out.

Planning applications can now be submitted **online** which reduces the need for large number of paper copies of plans and allows easier exchange of information with consultees. Click on the link below:

<https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

ePLANNING
A STREAMLINED PROCESS

The **Council website** publishes all planning applications online so that interested parties can view the plans, correspondence and progress of the application. The website also provides information on application fees.

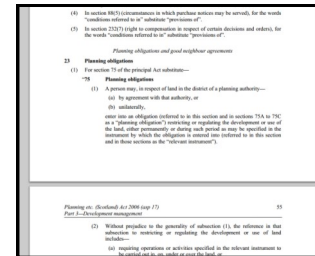


Most **local developments** are decided by planning officials under 'delegated powers'. The case officer prepares a report and recommendation, and the application is decided by a senior officer.

For all major developments and developments where approval would be subject to a high number of objections, contrary to policy or would be otherwise contentious, applications are decided by the **Planning Committee**. The case officer prepares a report and recommendation but the Committee makes the final decision, having weighed up all matters.

If an application is to be decided by the Committee the applicant and any objectors will be advised in advance of the time and venue. Where there are objections, the applicant or an objector can request a **hearing** so that they can address the Committee before the decision is made. Hearings are designed to be fair, with both the objectors and the applicant being given a chance to speak, usually limited to 5 minutes each.

For some proposals it may be necessary to enter into **planning obligations** (under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended). Such requirements will be flagged up early on in the process to reduce delays.





Residential Development: Principles for Good Design

September 2013