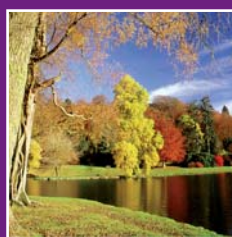


Topic Paper 14



Design



Design and the Public Realm

1. INTRODUCTION

1.01 This document attempts to summarise relevant research, policy, guidance and legislation on the issue of design in planning and specifically as it relates to Salisbury District. Should more detailed or technical information be required regarding the legislation or guidance, it is recommended that the original sources be reviewed. Details of these sources are available in the reference list at the end of this document.

1.02 **What is Design/ Urban Design and the Public Realm?**

1.03 Urban design is the art of making places for people. It includes the way places work and matters such as community safety, as well as how they look. It concerns the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric, and the processes for ensuring successful villages, towns and cities.¹ Good urban design can help create lively places with distinctive character; streets and public spaces that are safe, accessible, pleasant to use and human in scale; and places that inspire because of the imagination and sensitivity of their designers.

1.04 'Public realm' refers to publicly-owned areas: streets, footpaths, parks, publicly-accessible open spaces and public and civic buildings and facilities. Therefore design has a large degree of influence over the quality of the public realm, which has subsequent implications for the community, the environment and quality of life.

1.05 **Why is high quality design important?**

1.06 Good design ensures attractive usable, durable and adaptable places, and is a key element in achieving sustainable development². Promoting urban regeneration can contribute towards improving the well being of communities. CABI sees well-designed homes, streets, offices, schools and hospitals as everyone's fundamental right³.

1.07 **Assessing the local need - Why are we developing policies on design?**

1.08 The need for good design is not so much local as universal. Successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have characteristics in common. These factors have been analysed to produce principles or objectives of good urban design. They help to remind us what should be sought to create a successful place. There is considerable overlap between the objectives and they are mutually reinforcing. However, the first principle reinforces the fact that urban design still needs to be applied and interpreted in a way which responds to the particular character and context of a place in order to create unique and distinctive places.

¹ By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System: towards better practice, CABI, 2000

² Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, ODPM, 2005

³ 'Who we are. What we do. Why it matters: an introduction to CABI', CABI, January 2006, www.cabi.org.uk/AssetLibrary/2657.pdf

1.09 The fundamental principles of good urban design are:

Character	<i>A place with its own identity</i>
Continuity and enclosure	<i>A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished</i>
Quality of the public realm	<i>A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas</i>
Ease of movement	<i>A place that is easy to get to and move through</i>
Legibility	<i>A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand</i>
Adaptability	<i>A place that can change easily</i>
Diversity	<i>A place with variety and choice</i>

1.10 In addition to the list above, incorporating **inclusive design** principles, applying **sustainable design and construction** measures and designing to **deter crime and anti-social activity** are now also recognised as being integral to good urban design.

2. POLICY, GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

2.01 National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

2.02 Planning Policy Statement 1 makes it clear that good design, including consideration of access issues, is crucial to the delivery of sustainable development, not separate from it. Planning therefore has a significant role to play in protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment and character of the countryside, and ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design.

2.03 PPS1 reinforces the need for planning authorities to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, and at all scales (including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider development schemes), and over the lifetime of the development, rather than just the short term. The guidance provides some details as to what LPA's might look to address in securing 'good design', including addressing the connections between people and places by considering their access needs; integrating design into the existing urban form and the natural and built environments; creating an environment where everyone can benefit from a full range of opportunities; creating safe environments; considering both the function and the impact of buildings etc.

2.04 Policies on design and access must be robust, and be based on stated objectives for the future of an area and an understanding and evaluation of its present defining characteristics. Of particular note is the need to ensure that developments respond to their local context, and create or reinforce local distinctiveness. Design policy should also seek to capitalize on opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

2.05 PPS3 is specifically concerned with housing and goes into more detail on design than PPS1. It promotes sustainable homes, suggests the use of the 'Code for Sustainable Homes' as a tool, and calls for 'innovative' designs to help create better places. It also lists things to consider when assessing design quality. These are similar, but not identical, to the criteria set out in the 'Building for Life' assessment scheme. The statement also mentions the need for open space, both private and public, particularly for family housing and children in recognition that many new housing developments just don't allow people to 'breathe', socialise or exercise. It also advises Local Planning Authorities to, '*draw on relevant guidance and standards and promote the use of appropriate tools and techniques, such as Design Coding alongside urban design guidelines, detailed masterplans, village design statements, site briefs and community participation techniques*'.

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

- 2.06 PPS6 reflects the Government's key objective for town centres, of promoting vitality and viability. PPS6 also aims to:
- Encourage investment to regenerate deprived areas and improve the physical environment
 - Deliver more sustainable patterns of development (reduce the need to travel etc.)
 - Promote high quality and inclusive design
 - Improve the quality of the public realm and open space
 - Protect and enhance the architectural and historic heritage of centres
 - Provide a sense of place etc.
- 2.07 These aims translate to a number of recommendations for implementation by LPA's, including the focussing of development (i.e. a mix of town centre uses) within existing centres. The guidance addresses the importance of design, recognising the role of well-designed public spaces and buildings in improving health, vitality and economic potential of town centres. Thus, policies for the design of development (of main town centre uses) should promote high quality and inclusive design in order to improve the character and quality of the area in which it is located, and its function. PPS6 presents a number of considerations for town centre planning and development, including encouraging the efficient use of land, the diversification of uses, and the creation and maintenance of environments that are safe, attractive, accessible and durable.

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

- 2.08 The majority of the District is rural which means that advice contained in PPS7 will often be pertinent in the assessment of proposals states that special justification.
- 2.09 PPS7 advises that, '*Very occasionally the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house may provide [this] special justification for granting planning permission.*'⁴ It also advises Planning Authorities to take a positive approach to innovative, high-quality contemporary designs that are sensitive to their immediate setting and help to make country towns and villages better places for people to live and work.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks

- 2.10 PPS12 requires that local development documents include policies that set out strategic design and access objectives, in accordance with PPS1 and relevant good practice contained within the *By Design Good Practice Guide*⁵.
- 2.11 The statement also recognises that local development documents relating to specific areas could usefully inform the implementation of strategic design policies, by including design policies that relate to local conditions and objectives. This is particularly relevant in the context of area action plans, which can make notable contributions to the implementation of design policy contained within the Core Strategy document, relating specifically to the area upon which they are based.
- 2.12 PPS12 makes it clear that policies relating to the delivery of site specific allocations (including broad design principles) should not form part of the Core Strategy. Detailed policy requirements are more appropriate for area action plans, or supplementary planning documents (such as design briefs).

⁴ PPS7, paragraph 11

⁵ By Design, Safer Places the Planning System and Crime Prevention and Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide, ODPM, 2003

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport

- 2.13 This advises LPAs to actively manage the pattern of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport...and seek by the design and layout of developments and areas, to secure community safety and road safety.' It continues, *'When thinking about new development, and in adapting existing development, the needs and safety of all in the community should be considered from the outset...taking account of the importance of good design.'* (para 29)

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment

- 2.14 The district contains over 3000 Listed buildings and 70 Conservation Areas both of which are well over the national average for a Local Authority. With regard to the design of new buildings in historic context PPG15 advises that *'The design of new buildings intended to stand alongside historic buildings needs very careful consideration. In general it is better that old buildings are not set apart, but are woven into the fabric of the living and working community.'* (para 2.11) It also says that new buildings do not have to copy their older neighbours in detail but that *'some of the most interesting streets include a variety of building styles, materials and forms of construction, of many different periods, but together forming a harmonious group.'* (para 2.14)

Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space

- 2.15 PPG17 makes the point that, *'Local networks of high quality and well-managed open space help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe and can play a major part in improving people's sense of well being.'* (page 2) It says that LPA's should audit open space facilities, particularly noting their quality, to allow them to identify potential for increased use through better design, management and maintenance. It also states that, *'New open spaces should improve the quality of the public realm through good design.'* (page 20)

2.16 **Regional Planning Policy**

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West

- 2.17 The Southwest Regional Spatial Strategy (SWRSS) contains 2 strategic policies on design. Policy E calls on LPA's to ensure that all development is designed to the highest possible standards, both in terms of urban form and sustainability criteria and for all new or refurbished public buildings to be designed to have multiple uses (as far as possible).
- 2.18 Policy F advises that a masterplan and phasing regime should form the basis for the development of areas outlined for major development, including urban extensions. It calls for new development to include a good mix of dwelling types and tenures and sufficient new infrastructure in the form of cycling, walking and public transport links, local cultural and retail facilities, and health care and education facilities to serve and support the new community. The policy also stresses the need for sufficient amenity space and green infrastructure to enhance the living environment and support improved biodiversity while maintaining that dwelling densities in excess of 50 per hectare should be considered in areas where good public transport infrastructure already exists.
- 2.19 A third policy, Policy G, is primarily concerned with raising standards of sustainable design and construction in the Southwest. The key message of this policy has been examined as part of another background topic paper dealing specifically with this issue in the context of Salisbury district.

2.20 **Strategic Policy**

The Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan 2006-2016

- 2.21 This strategic plan forms part of the development plan for Wiltshire for a period of three years or until it is replaced by the new Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West. However, the WSP contains little design-related guidance, as the plan applies across the whole County of Wiltshire, and design guidance is more relevant (and more readily applied) at the local level,

particularly given that design priorities and objectives vary across local environments. Policy DP3 which sets out the broad development strategy for the County states simply that development will be of a high standard of design and protect or enhance landscape and biodiversity.

2.22 **Local Policies and Strategies**

Community Strategy 2005-2009

2.23 Crime, or perhaps more specifically the fear of crime, is one of four primary areas for action identified in the Community Strategy and is a common theme running through most, if not all, of the District's Local Community Plans. As such there would appear to be some justification for including a more explicit and ambitious policy for ensuring that proposals for new development take the issue of security and community safety fully into account in their layout and design. *Secured By Design* is a nationally recognised award scheme and the standards required from new development for accreditation could be pursued through an appropriate policy or policies in the LDF.

Link : http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/community_strategy.pdf

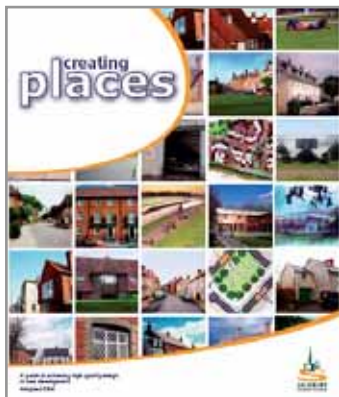
Salisbury District Local Plan 2003

2.24 The issue of design occupies a chapter in its own right in the current local development plan. Policies D1, D2 and D3 are concerned with the design of extensive development, infill development and extensions respectively. Policies D4, D5 and D6 are concerned with aspects of Salisbury's townscape. D4 seeks to ensure that new development respects the continuity and building line of Salisbury's medieval 'chequers' district. Policy D5 seeks to protect the existing open space network in the city and policy D6 restricts the height of new development within the Salisbury Central Area to 12.2m in order to protect the pre-eminence of Salisbury cathedral and views of it. Policy D7 demands all proposals on large and/or sensitive sites to be accompanied by a thorough site analysis and policy D8 supports the inclusion of high quality public art in new and refurbished buildings and open spaces.

2.25 Policy CN8 confirms the Council's commitment to ensuring that development proposals at least preserve, if not enhance the character of the Conservation Area in which they would be located by demonstrating that the form, scale, design and materials of the development respond to and reinforce the area's character.

'Creating Places' Design Guide SPG

2.26 This is arguably the Council's most important document in terms of helping to improve the design quality of all new development proposed in the district. It introduces the district's special landscape character and goes on to provide detailed guidance for a wide variety development forms and circumstances, for example, large-scale housing developments, town infill scenarios, individual dwellings and commercial and industrial development.



In accordance with national planning policy it does not seek to impose particular architectural styles and tastes but rather advocates that new buildings should be informed by a thorough knowledge of the local architecture of the past and not simply mimic older buildings. It identifies that inappropriate low-quality parodies of nearby older buildings is a particular problem in the historic cores of Salisbury city and the surrounding towns and villages. As such, its central message echoes that of PPG15 and that of English Heritage and CABI in their joint 2001 publication, 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas', i.e., that while respecting the existing local character and context is important, the superficial (and often inaccurate) echoing of

historical features creating, in effect, a pastiche⁶, causes the erosion of character just as much as might an iconic contemporary design which completely ignores its local setting. This is discussed in more detail below.

2.27 **Other Design Guidance and Considerations**

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

2.27 CABE was established in 1999, and aims to influence and inspire the people making decisions about the built environment, so that they choose good design, which results in well-designed buildings and public space. The commission works directly with planners, designers, clients and architects in offering guidance on projects.

2.28 CABE encourages policy makers to create places that are safe, beautiful and efficient to run; having regard to the way buildings work, as well as the way they look. A number of CABE publications provide guidance to design practitioners, and influence planning policy. These include: -

'By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System: towards better practice', 2000

2.29 This publication is intended as a companion to PPS1, and seeks (through the provision of design guidance) to encourage better urban design. The guide outlines the tools available to local authorities (within the planning system) to help deliver better design. The development plan is identified as the most important 'tool', and should set out the design policies against which development proposals will be assessed.

2.30 The guide outlines principles of good design, relating to elements such as character, continuity and enclosure, quality of the public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability and diversity. These principles or objectives translate into various aspects of development form, which is referred to by the guide as 'the physical expression of urban design'. Aspects of urban form includes layout: urban structure and urban grain, landscape, density and mix, scale: height and appearance: details and materials. The guidance encourages policy writers to think in terms of objectives and form, when deciding how to put advice into practice, within their respective local areas.

2.31 CABE have provided a series of detailed considerations relating to the abovementioned urban design objectives, to which they recommend be tailored to the locality. Indeed, the guidance reinforces the need for planning policies and supplementary planning guidance to reflect local needs and opportunities.

2.32 The carrying out of appraisals is identified as a useful technique for understanding the local context, and the guidance provides a series of checklists to assist with understanding an area in terms of its urban design.

'By Design: Better Places to Live' (Companion Guide to PPG 3), 2001

2.33 This publication builds on the above guidance for better design, by focussing on the attributes that underlie well-designed, successful residential environments. In acknowledging that PPG3 requires new development of the highest quality, the guide aims to encourage greater attention to the principles of good design.

2.34 The guidance recognises the successful integration of new housing within its surrounding context as a key design objective, regardless of site location. The first step to achieving this is developing a thorough understanding of the context within which the new housing will be

⁶ Pastiche is routinely used by advocates of modern architectural styles to disparage new architecture which reflects traditional styles, the mere invocation of the word often being considered sufficient to condemn a design as unworthy of further consideration. The original meaning of the word as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary is 'a medley of various ingredients; a hotchpotch, farrago, jumble'

located, as this informs a range of subsequent design decisions. Emphasis needs to be given to the linkages between new housing and other key services and facilities, public transport, and walking and cycling routes; and the subsequent level of connectivity. The guidance outlines a number of planning and design considerations for housing development, ranging from housing mix to housing layout (including elements such as space around dwellings, car parking and landscaping etc.).

'From Design Policy to Design Quality' Carmona, Punter and Chapman, RTPI, 2002

2.35 This publication was the result of research into the treatment of design in community Strategies and planning policies, examining examples of best practice. It advocates that polices should systematically cover the urban design agenda setting broad design objectives and getting away from “motherhood” policies that only refer to high quality design. It advocates objectives that are closely derived from the Principles and Aspects set out in “By Design.” It indicates that objectives related to urban design components such as urban form, public realm, mixed use, layout, movement, landscape, etc., should be the cornerstone of design policies.

Urban Renaissance

2.36 Urban renaissance is a government led response to creating a better quality of life in towns and cities that will make more people wish to spend time and live in them. Focussing development within urban areas, and the renaissance of these areas, ensures that best use is made of land, and represents more sustainable patterns of living. There is a need to ensure that new development in urban areas is of a high quality, and is appropriate to its surroundings, to ensure that towns and cities are places where people choose to live, work and spend time. Urban renaissance has a significant role to play in planning and design, particularly given the increased emphasis on locating development within urban areas. As such, the concept continues to receive heightened awareness.

2.37 Over recent years the Council has produced a number of design and development briefs which have been adopted as supplementary planning guidance (Land at Old Sarum, the Old Manor Hospital site, land south of Boscombe Road, etc.) that have sought to promote good design in major developments. These documents are all available to view on the Council's website.



Design and Access Statements

2.38 Design and Access Statements are produced (in accordance with national policy guidance) as the rational behind the design of a proposal, and assists in explaining how a proposal relates to its context. They are aimed at encouraging agents and designers to think about a development and test the rational of the design. The General Permitted Development

Order⁷ requires that applications for planning permission be accompanied by a DAS, explaining: -

- a) The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
- b) How issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

- 2.39 The statement must explain the design principles and concepts applied to the amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance of the development, and demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development, and how the design of the development takes that context into account. The Statements play a useful role in ensuring that design accords with its context, and that decisions on planning applications are more likely to yield high quality development outcomes.
- 2.40 The Core Strategy needs to reinforce the importance of ensuring that development is designed having regard to, and responding positively to its context. This ensures that elements of local character and distinctiveness are reinforced, the historic environment is protected and enhanced etc.

3. CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS AND FUTURE TRENDS

3.01 How do our existing policies perform ?

- 3.02 The core message in the introductory text to the current design policies is still as valid as ever. However there are aspects of the policies on design that could be improved. Moreover it is suggested that there are more significant areas where there is a 'policy void'.
- 3.03 Policy D1, aimed at extensive development, could be improved upon in many ways. Parts of the policy are not clearly written and are confusing. It does not define what is meant by extensive development or otherwise describe the type of proposals at which the policy is aimed. It essentially lists elements of built form and townscape character and simply requires new development to improve upon or at least be compatible with these. The way the policy is written with a list of seven criteria means that the policy largely hinges upon the interpretation of the word 'compatible'. This is a very vague term which could be interpreted as calling upon new development to replicate what surrounds it regardless of whether this is good or bad design. The policy could be considered as being unduly regressive and perhaps stifling innovation on occasion. *By Design* quotes PPG1 (now cancelled) in its attempt to explain how such superficial policies were derived;
- 3.04 *'A plan's design policies, "should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally" (PPG1). Too many plans cover all these factors in a single policy, which simply specifies that development must be 'acceptable' in terms of these matters, or that the scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of development must be 'appropriate'. Such policies are generally focussed on the objective of promoting or protecting an area's character, with the other urban design objectives too often neglected. Such phrases by themselves, however, offer no more guidance to a developer than is already contained in PPG1.'*
- 3.05 The policy fails to refer to the principles of good urban design as set out in *By Design*, i.e., character, continuity and enclosure, quality of the public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability and diversity. The lack of such references mean that the policy is concerned with simply respecting and improving the built fabric rather than recognising the social benefits of

⁷ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (updated to 2002)

good design, in terms of people's personal well-being and quality of life and thereby helping to also achieve these aims.

- 3.06 *'In the recent past, there has been a tendency to view design as solely a visual concern – just about what things look like and what style they are. This fails to consider the important social or environmental dimension of design, such as the potential of a high-quality public realm to contribute to public health, a more inclusive environment, quality of life and the sustainability agenda.'*⁸
- 3.07 Other increasingly important cross-cutting issues which help to determine the quality of design are the extent to which inclusive assessment is provided to and within buildings and public spaces, the extent to which a development is designed and constructed to be as sustainable as possible and the extent to which it provides a safe environment where people feel secure in the knowledge that opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour have been minimised. These important determinants of design quality are not included resulting in a weak policy whose vague principal aim is solely to preserve the character of the area.

D1 – Extensive development

New development will be permitted where the proposals are compatible with or improve their surroundings in terms of the following criteria:

- (i) the layout and form of existing and the proposed development, and where appropriate the historic pattern of the layout;*
- (ii) any features or open spaces, buildings and/or structures of character on or adjoining the site;*
- (iii) the scale and character of the existing townscape in terms of building heights, building line, plot size, density, elevational design and materials ;*
- (iv) the scale and use of spaces between buildings;*
- (v) views/vistas afforded from within, over and out of the site; and*
- (vi) any existing important landscape features and the nature and scope of new landscaping proposed within and around the edges of the site; and*
- (vii) the roofscape/skyline long or medium distance views.*

D2 - Infill Development

Proposals for street and infill development will be permitted where proposals respect or enhance the character of appearance of an area in terms of the following criteria:

- (i) the building line, scale of the area, heights and massing of adjoining buildings and the characteristic building plot widths;*
- (ii) the architectural characteristics and the type, colour of the materials of adjoining buildings; and*
- (iii) the complexity and richness of materials, form and detailing of existing buildings where the character of the area is enhanced by such buildings and the new development proposes to replicate such richness.*

- 3.08 Policy D2 is similar in many respects to Policy D1 in the way it is written and its emphasis on respecting or enhancing the character of an area. It does strike an appropriate balance in terms of its degree of prescription, i.e., emphasising the importance of elements which define the character of the area without suggesting a particular style of architecture or setting any specific requirements. There is perhaps a case for saying that policies D1 and D2 in their current form could be amalgamated as there is little to distinguish between them. In fact, valid

⁸ Making Design Policy Work (CABE, June 2005)

considerations in policy D1 could apply equally to D2. However, each of the design policies are highly unlikely to be the only relevant policy needing to be considered in the determination of a planning application, therefore the phrase 'development will be permitted where' is misleadingly presumptuous, a better alternative might be to simply state, 'development will be expected to'. The lack of reference to principles of good urban design, sustainable design and construction, designing out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour and inclusive access are causes for concern as they were in policy D1.

- 3.09 Policy D3 seems also to lack other significant considerations in the determination of whether an extension is acceptable. For example, no reference is made to the issue of the size of garden area that would remain for the extended dwelling (this is not always relevant however, e.g., loft conversions). There are no references to issues of loss of daylight and loss of privacy to neighbouring properties and the need to avoid the loss of significant trees within the curtilage. Again, as with policies D1 and D2 there are also no references to other relevant issues such as sustainability in design and construction and inclusive access.
- 3.10 Policies D4 (Development proposals within the Mediaeval Chequers), D5 (Open space within Salisbury Central Area) and D6 (40' building height limit within Salisbury Central Area) are all quite prescriptive policies concerned with Salisbury's townscape and seeking to achieve very definite ends. They provide a clear framework, almost a masterplan, guiding development proposals in the centre of the town. They are good functional policies in their own right and have stood the test of time to date. As with policies D1-D3 however, it is considered that they would also benefit from references to other relevant design issues.
- 3.11 It is suggested that now is an opportune moment to review Policy D6 which restricts the maximum height of new buildings in the Salisbury Central Area to 40' or 12.2m. With the government's emphasis on brownfield redevelopment, increasing the density of development in sustainable locations and directing the majority of development (in absolute floorspace area and numbers of dwellings) to existing larger settlements (such as Salisbury) this policy could become increasingly hard to justify in terms of its contribution to meeting sustainability objectives over the plan period.
- 3.12 Policy D7 (Public Realm) states that a full site analysis will be required for development proposals on all large and / or sensitive sites. There are four principal issues arising from this statement. Firstly, should the relevance of a site analysis apply more widely to all forms of development, e.g., small-medium proposals, new dwellings and even extensions. In some cases the statutory requirement for a Design and Access statement (which came into effect on 10th August 2006) has diminished the relevance of this policy. Secondly, ideally an analysis of the surrounding area should be just that and therefore it should not be suggested that an analysis of the site alone will be sufficient. Thirdly, the policy could provide more definition or guidance on the circumstances or locations where the policy will be relevant. Fourthly, with regard to the phrase, 'on all large (and / or sensitive) sites', the actual quantity of development may vary significantly according to the density proposed and therefore site area by itself is not always a good indication of when a full site analysis is appropriate.
- 3.13 Policy D8 seeks to encourage proposals for public art, of a high standard and quality, in the provision and enhancement of buildings and open spaces, where appropriate. This policy is extremely commendable in what it seeks to achieve. Unfortunately however, it could be judged by some as a hopeful but tired expression which lacks detail or a form or wording that could better ensure the actual delivery of public art rather than just 'encouraging' it. The unresolved nature of the policy generates uncertainty and could leave some developers with the perception that the policy is not relevant to their proposal. More advice could be given on the likely circumstances in which public art will be sought, the reasons for seeking it (i.e., justification in the form of local need) and an outline of the process involved.

3.14 In conclusion, it is suggested that the following broad design issues are lacking adequate representation in the current suite of design policies;

- 7 principles of good urban design:
 - character
 - continuity and enclosure
 - quality of the public realm
 - ease of movement
 - legibility
 - adaptability
 - diversity
- Sustainable Design and Construction (including ecology)
- Inclusive Access
- Designing to deter crime and anti-social behaviour

3.15 It is suggested that the best means of incorporating these fundamental aspects of good design into future design policy is by devising an appropriate high-level or strategic policy (within the Core Strategy) focussed on design (or simply the built environment) which could then apply to all forms of new development. This would represent the simplest approach. It would allow more detailed development control (site planning) policies to concentrate on area-specific design issues without having to repeat the fundamental and universal principles of good design and place-making. Other policies in the LDF will need to be 'design-proofed' to ensure that they are compatible with the design policies and it is suggested that where appropriate suitable caveats should be inserted to ensure that no conflict arises between policies.

Local Plan design policies – What's missing?

- Insufficient guidance on the issues of internal and external space standards for residential development and more practical guidance on the layout of residential development generally.
- Lack of reference to key urban design objectives, for example, providing links to surrounding neighbourhoods and shops, walkable neighbourhoods, etc.
- Insufficient emphasis on inclusive design within and between buildings
- Insufficient emphasis on building flexible, multi-use buildings or buildings with the potential to change their use easily to reflect changing economic circumstances.
- Insufficient emphasis and guidance on sustainable design and construction.
- Weak policy on public art
- No policy/guidance on gated entrances to residential development – a persistent phenomenon.
- No reference to the use of lighting as a design feature
- No references to latest best practice documents such as the 'Manual for Streets', 'Code for Sustainable Homes', etc.
- Little guidance on issues surrounding 'back-land' development
- Insufficient emphasis on retaining trees and providing high-quality landscaping
- No presumption against cul-de-sac layouts

3.16 **Problems and challenges for design policy in the district**

3.17 While the current local plan policies have served a purpose, the new planning system provides a fresh opportunity to reassess the future challenges that the district faces today and in the future. The agenda has moved on and the government's and, perhaps more importantly, the public's expectations of what planning can and should seek to achieve have risen dramatically in the few years since the adoption of the current local plan. However, the rise in expectations has only been matched by the rise in the scale and urgency of the challenge ahead. Against this background, the following is a preliminary list of critical issues which will inform the direction of future design policy for Salisbury's Local Development Framework.

3.18 **KEY ISSUE: The design of buildings and spaces must address the causes and impacts of global warming but in a way that still respects local heritage and character**

3.19 National planning guidance in PPS1 and PPS22 have established a clear need for Local Authorities to take an active role in addressing both the causes and impacts of climate change at the local level. This is echoed in policies SD1 and SD2 of the draft Southwest Regional Spatial Strategy (SWRSS) and is also supported in the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan 2016 which the SWRSS will eventually replace. These policies herald a sea-change in attitude towards climate change.

3.20 The Council recognises the urgency of the challenge, our responsibility to act on this important issue and our critical role in co-ordinating the district's response. We are firmly committed to requiring proposals for new development to do more to reduce their impact upon climate change. However, we are also aware that many features at the forefront of sustainable design and construction technology, particularly those involved in the generation of renewable energy, could have a significant impact upon the design and appearance of new buildings and spaces and, in turn, upon the character of existing towns and villages. Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), solar panels for the generation of hot water and electricity, wind turbines and roof-mounted wind cowls to allow natural ventilation all have the potential to alter the appearance of individual buildings and the character of the local area.

3.21 Future policy on sustainable construction and design will therefore need to acknowledge and reconcile the possibility of conflict with the Council's other important planning responsibilities, not least the need to uphold the character and integrity of the district's numerous Listed Buildings, the need to preserve and enhance the unique character of our towns and villages, the need to protect special areas of countryside such as the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and the need to protect important local wildlife and their habitats. It is still recognised however that the appropriate location of development and the existence and proximity of good public transport infrastructure is a pre-requisite to achieving truly sustainable development.

Should new development be required to conserve water, energy or both?

Should new development be required to generate a proportion of the energy it will use through on-site renewable technology?

What types and scales of development should be required to generate a proportion of their energy from renewable energy sources?

What proportion of energy as a percentage of a development's total requirement should come from on-site renewable sources? Should this be increased in even stages over the lifetime of LDF? Could the percentage increase in proportion to the scale of the development?

3.22 KEY ISSUE: The Cathedral, the Local Economy and building heights in central Salisbury.

3.23 The Cathedral is Salisbury's finest heritage asset, its main tourist attraction and the pre-eminent man-made landmark in the city. Rising 404 feet (or 123 metres) it is Britain's tallest church and the highest medieval structure in the world. Salisbury Cathedral catches your eye long before you reach the city and is your first clue that you are approaching a special city. The Council has long sought to protect views of the Cathedral and this is enshrined as a distinct policy in the current local plan.

3.24 However, Salisbury is also a working city and the primary economic centre for south Wiltshire. Like any city of its size it needs to continue to accommodate a certain amount of new housing, new business space and new shops and services. National planning policy also dictates that land be used as efficiently as possible and that the majority of new development is built on sites which have been developed previously, i.e., 'brownfield land'. This emphasis has led to developers seeking to make the best use of limited land by increasing the number of storeys and thereby the overall height of the buildings they propose. Higher densities can bring many benefits to the town or city where they are proposed. They can, for example, help to support more sustainable non-car methods of travel such as bus and rail services, give a boost to the local economy and generally increase the vitality and liveliness of the area in which they are located.

3.25 The current local plan policy which safeguards views of the cathedral by restricting buildings to a maximum height of 12.2 metres could be considered a rather blunt approach which fails to take proper account of the individual circumstances of each case and could be invisibly damaging to the economy of the city and the region. It could also be considered unduly low as at 123 metres tall, 12.2 metres is less than a tenth of the height of the cathedral. With this in mind, one of the key issues now facing both the city and the council is whether, in the interests of supporting the local economy and providing sufficient numbers of new homes in the city, a more sophisticated assessment of development proposals on a case-by-case basis is warranted and should be adopted.

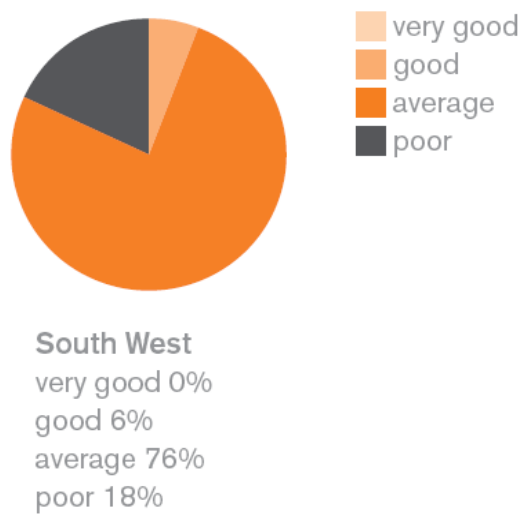
Should the Council;

- *Maintain the current policy of a 12.2m height limit across the Salisbury Central Area?*
- *Raise the height limit across the Salisbury Central Area to a higher maximum limit – What height do you think would be acceptable?*
- *Maintain 12.2m height limit but allow the consideration of exceptions on a case by case basis where the proposal is accompanied by a thorough analysis of its impact on immediate and wider views of the cathedral?*
- *Replace the current height limit policy with a case-by-case approach for all new development supported only by an emphasis upon existing townscape character and supplementary planning guidance contained in the Council's design guide 'Creating Places'?*

3.26 KEY ISSUE: Too many new housing developments are still not meeting basic design standards.

3.27 The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) recently undertook an audit of around 100 new housing developments over an area which included the East and West Midlands and the Southwest region. It concluded that the design quality of new homes is 'disappointingly low'. Looking at England as a whole it stated that there were 'a substantial minority of schemes whose quality was so low that they should not have been given planning consent'.

3.28 The pie-chart below shows that of the 33 schemes assessed in the Southwest region alone none were considered to be 'very good' (the equivalent of a Building for Life Gold standard). Only 6% (or 2 out of 33) were 'good' (the equivalent of a Building for Life Silver standard) with the remaining 94% (31 out of 33) only managing to attain either an 'average' or a 'poor' rating.



3.29 The following specific conclusions were reached:

- Higher quality housing developments tend to be located in more affluent areas, while poorer-performing schemes tend to be located in less affluent areas.
- Lower-quality schemes are more likely to be found in suburban areas rather than in an urban or rural setting
- Low-scoring schemes performed consistently worse than high-scoring ones with regard to character, site specific design, the design and management of public space and the design of car parking.

3.30 The key messages arising from CABE's audit are;

1. While residents living in high-quality schemes value the benefits that good design can bring there is still far too much development that is not up to standard.
2. Not enough new housing developments adequately address the design standards set out in Building for Life, which have been agreed with the industry and which are consistent with the new PPS3.

Do you agree with CABE's view that the Building for Life criteria are an appropriate method for assessing the design quality of new housing developments?

Should the Council integrate the criteria into a future policy against which the design quality of new housing developments would be assessed?

- 3.31 According to the first CABE housing audit; *Housing Audit: Assessing the design quality of new homes (2004)*⁹ 'Despite all the stress on improved design, exemplar high density schemes are rare'. This audit, the first of its kind, assessed the design standards of 100 schemes completed by volume house builders between 2001 and 2003. The main criteria used were character, roads, parking and pedestrianisation, design and construction and environment and community. The main findings were that of the 100 schemes audited, the overwhelming majority (61%) were assessed as 'Average'. Almost a fifth (17%) were judged as 'Good' or 'Very Good' and a further fifth (22%) were judged as being 'Poor'. The great majority of the 'Average' or 'Poor' schemes in the audit had poor highways and car parking design as a key contributor. The main criticism is that many schemes failed to adequately address the key issue of highway design which has resulted in car dominated environments where the layout of the roads does not promote the use of the streets by pedestrians. These problems are compounded by attempts to incorporate off-street parking into a dense development when an on-street solution would enable an enhanced design solution overall.
- 3.32 A key issue identified is that overall quality related to density. At densities 25-30 dwellings per hectare it is easier to deal with the number of cars present, as it is a high densities (100 dwellings per hectare plus) when parking is often underground or in basements. At the middle ground of 30 – 80 dwellings per hectare, however, development economics dictate surface parking and sheer number can lead to a dominance of parking areas and parked cars.
- 3.33 The study found that residents have strong positive and negative associations with density. Positive attributes include shopping facilities, accessibility to public transport, parks and open spaces and vibrancy. Negative attributes include parking problems, crime and vandalism, pollution and living in smaller living spaces. On balance, the study ascertained that there is no direct correlation between levels of density and levels of satisfaction, as residents make clear choices involving trade-offs when living in higher density areas, which is often affected by the amount of time they spend in their neighbourhood.
- 3.34 However, certain attributes can make higher density living more or less desirable. The lack of car parking and congestion was considered to be the most negative attribute associated with higher density living. It is interesting to note even in areas with good public transport connections, lack of parking is still considered to be a major problem. The study revealed that this is more apparent in more affluent areas where the car is not a 'necessity' but is used for leisure purposes and an important means of escape for evenings and weekends. This suggests that urban locations with good public transport links will not necessarily result in reduced car ownership, particularly in more affluent areas.
- 3.35 This is an important consideration as one key aspect of the acceptability of higher density environments is the ability to 'escape' which acts as a coping mechanism. Rates of satisfaction are higher among people who make more frequent trips out of London, either on holiday or weekend breaks.
- 3.36 The presence of green open spaces was one of the key attributes that make people in higher density neighbourhoods more satisfied with their local area. However, satisfaction levels are dependent on the size of the areas of open space, their maintenance and sense of safety. The study revealed that the size of an open space determines how people use it. Smaller green spaces (under 10 hectares) prove suitable for brief events like lunch breaks but they do not seem to be the natural place for residents to spend more extensive periods over holidays

⁹ This publication was the first phase of a nationwide audit of new build housing. It covered London, the South East and East of England and has assessed 100 recent housing developments for quality in terms of layout, urban design and place-making and uncovered the processes that helped shape them.

or weekends. Spatial patterns emerged that the more successful wards have access to large, coherent pieces of well-landscaped and well-maintained open space within 10-15 minutes walk from most properties within the area. Where small (under 10 hectares) areas of open space are nearby, they do not offer residents the same sense of openness that could act as a counterpoint for the densely built fabric.

- 3.37 With regard to design, the research found that people made negative associations with higher density in those areas where housing estates were formed in large clusters that interrupted the prevailing urban grain. In areas where smaller groups of housing blocks blend in with surrounding fabric, the negative associations were not so pronounced.
- 3.38 One of the key limitations of the above research is that the high density areas assessed are not recently completed schemes, but are well established neighbourhoods dating back to the early 20th century. Therefore, the effectiveness of modern, plan led, high-density schemes is not included. Additionally, the areas selected in the inner suburbs of London have a far greater provision of public transport and local facilities than one would find in smaller cities and towns located within the UK and as such, the positive attributes of density and accessibility to local facilities and public transport is skewed.
- 3.39 CABE's recently published research '*What It's Like to Live There: the views of residents on the design of new housing*' (2005b) provides a more relevant study. This study surveyed 241 residents from 11 recently completed schemes in rural, suburban, urban and inner city locations on what is was like to live within the development. The findings pose a real challenge to the assumptions of urban designers about what good practice is.
- 3.40 The most controversial aspect of new development was the design of the streets and the provision of car parking. Fewer than half of the residents surveyed thought the layout of the development for car use was quite easy or very easy to navigate. Residents preferred developments where there was an absence of through traffic and some welcomed the creation of cul-de-sacs, which runs counter to most prevailing urban design thinking. Attitudes towards the provision of car parking and the use of public transport are particularly interesting. Over 50% of the residents surveyed were dissatisfied with the level of provision of parking, which was felt by most to be inadequate for the scale of car ownership and demands for visitor parking. Attempts to restrict parking spaces as a means of curbing car ownership were felt to be unrealistic and to have little or no impact on the number of cars a household would require.
- 3.41 With regard to public transport, most adult residents said they use a car for most or all of their journeys from home. Some admitted to never having walked out of the housing estate. Despite the proximity of bus services to some of the developments, use of public transport was low. Bus travel has a poor image for most residents, based on lack of reliability and infrequency, which contributed to a preference for using the car. It is also considered that bus travel did not equate with a modern, upmarket lifestyle. The implications of this are that simply making public transport accessible will not encourage people to use it.
- 3.42 Resident's attitudes to questions on the building of a sense of community again pose some challenges to the assumptions of urban designers. Policy makers are resolutely committed to creating places that are socially sustainable with access to local services and facilities and creating spaces for social encounter. However, shopping and leisure needs tended not to be met locally and the survey reveals that many residents preferred to visit outlets or urban centres rather than use local facilities. For some, the limited choice or down market character of local facilities presented a real barrier to use. The study also revealed that there is limited social interaction amongst neighbours. Many residents felt they had busy lives with work and family and did not seek to make friends or socialise within the development.

3.43 KEY ISSUE: There is a need to sustain local identity through the sensitive design and appearance of new development.

- 3.44 The world is becoming ever more homogenous through the pervasive influence of globalisation and the drive to achieve greater economies of scale in the face of stiff competition. We therefore cannot afford to become complacent about the need to guard against the gradual erosion of these aspects of our local culture as they are fundamentally important in giving us a sense of who we are and where we have come from. The use of local building styles, materials and craftsmanship particular to Salisbury and South Wiltshire are a large part of what makes our district so special. Urban design guidance in *By Design* suggests that it is entirely reasonable for a place which values the protection of its heritage particularly highly to emphasise the objective of promoting distinctive character¹⁰.
- 3.45 Conservation is already playing a vital role in protecting and enhancing special buildings which are part of our local heritage. However, the design of new development can build upon this, not by producing literal copies of older architectural styles in an often insincere way but rather by creating a marriage between innovation, quality, modern-day needs and a healthy appreciation of the special history and character of a particular place.
- 3.46 The district faces a constant battle against standard estate-type layouts with bland ‘highway’s standards’ roads. It is unfortunate that the perception still remains among most house-builders that the most profitable approach is to adopt standard designs. In addition to this economic argument, standard designs and layouts, while unimaginative and bearing no relevance to a particular place, also provide greater financial certainty for the developer both in the calculation of revenue and forecasting of profit and in the knowledge that the scheme ‘ticks all the boxes’ in terms of minimum standards which are perceived as non-negotiable, e.g., highways and parking standards.
- 3.47 However, a study by Ball¹¹ in 1983 indicated that design is an important component of the development process because, if used appropriately, it can enhance revenue from a site considerably. He argued that while distinctive designs and non-estate site layouts may improve marketability, it tends to raise construction costs and may lower densities with corresponding increases in land costs. Housebuilders try to minimise this potential conflict through particular design solutions, a limited use of standard house types, and with individuality achieved by cosmetic variation of external elevations. Subsequent research has confirmed that the use of standard house types has become prevalent among large and medium housebuilding companies. Despite this, it is asserted that a robust design policy framework and guidance does make a positive impact, not only in creating a development that looks and works better but in creating a product with enhanced sales values and in achieving development at higher densities.



Local distinctiveness erodes gradually if left unchecked and can easily be taken for granted.

¹⁰ Ibid. p42

¹¹ Ball, M. (1983) Housing policy and economic power: the political economy of owner occupation, London, Methuen.

Should the Council's local design guide 'Creating Places' be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document?

Is there anything else the Council could do to ensure that the district's locally distinct vernacular is celebrated in the design of new buildings?

3.48 KEY ISSUE: Design policy must take account of the district's unique population profile

3.49 The population profiles of the Southwest region in general and Salisbury district in particular are both characterised by a higher than average proportion of elderly people, i.e., of retirement age and above, with these numbers expected to rise. This also reflects a national trend of people living longer. Design policy in the LDF has the potential to make a real difference by addressing the specific needs of elderly people in all forms of development but particularly with regard to better housing standards, e.g. Lifetime Homes, and access to public and community buildings.

3.50 Another demographic trend which design policy will need to address is the widely accepted need for more smaller units owing to the fragmentation of the traditional nuclear family unit. In the 1950's there were only 1.5 million single occupants, whereas today there are over 8 million. The need to provide suitable accommodation for young, single professionals wanting to get on the housing ladder and to enable more divorced/separated couples to own and maintain their own house is becoming ever more important.

Should there be a policy in the Core Strategy to make new development address the needs of everyone, but particularly the elderly and disabled, to be able to access buildings and spaces with ease and dignity?

3.51 KEY ISSUE: The district has a large number of built heritage assets.

3.52 The district has a deserved high profile for built heritage as a consequence of the above-average number of listed buildings it contains, the presence of Salisbury cathedral and Stonehenge World Heritage Site. In addition, the size and predominantly rural nature of the district means that it also has extensive archeological assets. From a certain design perspective this could be looked upon as a disadvantage as some developers might take the view that unapologetically modern design would struggle to sit comfortably in its surroundings or would be unduly constrained. On the other hand, it can be seen as offering a rich contextual tapestry from which new development can take inspiration. Design policy must be fully integrated with the Council's objectives and responsibilities for conservation and heritage protection.

3.53 KEY ISSUE: The design of buildings and spaces must respect important landscape settings within the district.

3.54 The Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan states that; *'There is a definite visual relationship between certain historic towns and topographical features, such as escarpments, hills and valleys which provide important views.'* The 'landscape settings' of Salisbury and the many smaller outlying settlements within its hinterland are unique, fundamental to their historic character and help us understand their origins. Together, they contribute significantly to the history of the Plan area. Inappropriate development would have a detrimental effect on this relationship. Careful consideration of development proposals within these areas is needed in order to conserve the historic character of the towns, which is due in part to their fine landscape settings.

- 3.55 **KEY ISSUE: Increasing numbers of proposed housing developments are cramped and arguably over-developed.**
- 3.56 Many proposed developments continue to exhibit inadequate standards for both internal and external space. In an effort to cram the maximum amount of development onto the site some dwellings and flats have rooms which are too small or too awkwardly shaped to be of practical use, particularly where dwellings are marketed at young families. Some flats have unduly long and difficult means of access and others include rooms which would be poorly lit and ventilated. Garden sizes for family-sized dwellings are increasingly small, cramped and likely to suffer from noise, and being overlooked and overshadowed. Many flatted developments similarly either fail to provide garden space at all or do not provide enough.
- 3.57 Developers sometimes try to justify this approach by pointing out the urgency and extent of the demand for new housing in the Southwest, particularly where more affordable forms of housing are also required in accordance with national planning policy. A study on behalf of London Councils and the London Housing Federation identified the desire to maximise land value and a lack of clarity in local planning policy requirements as two key reasons for a lack of affordable family-sized dwellings in new developments. While the study was concerned with London where this problem is particularly acute, it is clear that wherever dwelling sizes and space standards in general are inadequate Local Authorities can only properly address this by writing clearer, more robust policies.
- 3.58 In accordance with PPS3's emphasis on external amenity space as a key indicator of design quality, it would seem an opportune moment to establish some minimum space standards in respect of, for example, room sizes, private garden/amenity space (i.e., flats, balconies, communal, private, children's play areas, HMO's, residential homes), internal storage space in dwellings (see Building for Life), space requirements for refuse and recycling.

Do you think the Council should set out minimum space standards for residential development in a Supplementary Planning Document?

4. POLICY ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

- 4.1 Existing policies in the local plan, and higher-level policies, frame their wording in terms of achieving high quality design. However, they do not define or explain what high quality design is or how it is assessed. This has become a fundamental weakness of design policies. It often, or even usually, results in a subjective assessment of the design of a scheme based on a small number of aspects design. Elsewhere, the wording of other existing design policies appears overly concerned with how development should appear rather than how it should work for people in accordance with the fundamental principles of good urban design. If Salisbury district is to ensure high quality design as demanded by its Vision, there is a need to include a high level policy in the Core Strategy that actually seeks to define the key aspects of good design that will need to be promoted.
- 4.2 It is clear that government guidance supports "By Design" as providing a recommended approach to design and urban design. Salisbury District Council development and design briefs have generally approached the design of sites on the basis of the principles and aspects set out in "By Design". As pointed out in the background literature such as the Carmona, Punter Chapman publication of the RTP1¹², it is evident that good design needs to have regard to those urban design principles and aspects both in terms of preparing designs for a site and in assessing proposals for the site. It is therefore suggested that an effective core strategy design policy should have regard to the principles and aspects set out in "By Design." The principles and elements of By Design appear to provide a solid foundation for considering design in all locations within the District.

¹² Carmona, Punter and Chapman. 'From Design Policy to Design Quality', , RTP1, 2002

5. CORE STRATEGY OPTIONS

- 5.01 Based on the issues identified and the policy framework in place the remainder of this document sets out possible policy options and considers the implications of each option in some detail below. A further brief analysis of the four options is then set out in the table below.
- 5.02 OPTION 1 - Business as Usual
- 5.03 This approach involves continued reliance upon the existing Local Plan and Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan provisions. Urban design guidance contained in the Structure Plan is high level (based on its regional application) It does not introduce urban design objectives for local areas, nor promote the consideration of the various components of development form. Policies forming part of the Local Plan seek to ensure that all types of development exhibit a high standard of design.
- 5.04 As mentioned earlier the existing local plan policies suffer from an overly narrow focus upon the aesthetics and external appearance of new development at the expense of the fundamental principles of urban design aimed at creating attractive places which are designed around the needs of people. However, including clear urban design objectives and considerations is likely to be a more effective way of encouraging and attaining high quality outcomes, rather than the application of general design standards that apply across all types of development (as is the case with the current Local Plan). Further, the Local Plan fails to recognise the significance of fundamental design considerations, such as the incorporation of sustainable design features/ techniques, and the need to ensure that design takes into account the context of the development (as now addressed through Design and Access Statements). A business-as-usual approach would also involve reliance upon existing development briefs, village design statements site and area-specific urban design briefs/ frameworks, which are effective in targeting local issues and characteristics. In this way, this approach would be effective in promoting high quality design outcomes in the relevant areas.
- 5.05 OPTION 2 - Do Nothing/ No Policy
- 5.06 Reliance upon national and regional guidance only would be somewhat effective, as design guidance essentially seeks to achieve outcomes consistent with the Council's objectives. However, difficulty is likely to be experienced in applying high level guidance locally, particularly given that design is often unique to the location, and subsequently, different approaches and processes are required across various locations, and objectives are also likely to vary, according to factors such as context, sensitivity etc. This approach also rules out local design frameworks and briefs, which are often useful in tailoring requirements to the character, pressures and opportunities presented by an area. Given the need to ensure that DPD's do not reiterate national policy, the absence of local planning policy would make it difficult for planning authorities to communicate design objectives and guidelines applying to their specific locality.
- 5.07 The option of providing no design policy in the Core Strategy is likely to produce seriously weak and often unresolved sustainability appraisal results. In the absence of a strong policy framework, there is no way of ensuring that development contributes to a range of sustainability objectives.

- 5.08 OPTION 3 - Inclusion of a high level strategic policy, which seeks only to ensure that development exhibits high quality design
- 5.09 This approach is likely to hinder the Council in delivering high quality neighbourhoods and places, due to its lack of prescription. A broad high level policy such as this one, leaves the definition of high quality design open to interpretation, which has the potential for negative outcomes, or outcomes that do not maximise opportunities. This approach ignores relevant guidance, which indicates that policies should be based on, and have regard to, aspects of development form, and seek to achieve set urban design objectives. Indeed, these objectives are what help to define 'high quality design', and guide planners in making decisions on development proposals. Therefore, this approach has considerably less capacity to achieve high quality design. Furthermore, such a policy would not strive to achieve essential outcomes (such as local distinctiveness and diversity) nor recognise the significance of 'context', and would therefore fail to meet the requirements of national guidance. Like the alternative of 'No Policy', this alternative is likely to produce seriously weak and often unresolved appraisal results. A weak policy framework, based on "motherhood" statements, will fail to ensure that development contributes to a significant proportion of sustainability objectives.
- 5.10 OPTION 4 - Inclusion of a design policy to apply to all development proposals which sets out the various elements of development form and prescribes the fundamental principles of good urban design (as set out in By Design), and reinforces the need for safe and accessible environments, the importance of context and local distinctiveness and the need for development to be visually attractive.
- 5.11 From the above findings, it is clear that good design relies upon a clear framework provided by development plans and supplementary planning guidance, delivered consistently through development control. There are many factors influencing design. High quality design requires a sensitive response to the local context; recognising elements of distinctiveness/ diversity, maintaining and enhancing the historic environment, creating safe and accessible environments, and addressing the needs of all in society. Successful accomplishment of these objectives is likely to yield visually attractive, high quality outcomes, which add value to the public realm. A high quality public realm, in turn, has the potential to make substantial contributions to urban areas and their communities. This highlights the additional need to consider the social and environmental dimensions of design. Good design is increasingly important, particularly as densities continue to increase, and development intensifies.
- 5.12 Decisions about design need to be based on a clear policy framework, which specifies design principles and criteria. These principles act as a basis for developing more extensive area and site-specific guidance, such as urban design guidance for the Salisbury and Wilton Action Area Plan (to be contained within the SWAAP). A design policy/s will be required to control and maintain the quality of development across the Borough, and set the standard and quality of development required by the Council.
- 5.13 The Council recognises the role of design in shaping overall form of development. The quality of development is to be prioritised by the Core Strategy, and should be reflected by the strategy's vision, and through the inclusion of a policy dealing with design matters. Given its strategic nature, the need for policy outlining detailed design considerations (such as building form and materials) has been identified, and it is anticipated that this will form part of the Council's DPD containing development control policies. However, design policies are likely to feature across a range of the LDF's development plan documents, including the Core Strategy, site-specific allocations and area action plans.

Option No.	1	2	3	4
Nature of the Option	Business as Usual Continue to rely upon existing design policies in the local plan and the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Plan until superseded by the SWRSS.	Do nothing/No policy i.e., rely upon national and regional planning policy to assess the design quality of new development (including structure plan policy while if still relevant)	Vague design policy Inclusion of a high level strategic policy but without any description or definition of what actually constitutes high quality design.	Develop a more prescriptive core strategy policy on design in accordance with established principles of good urban design that would apply to all development proposals
Key Drivers	Perception of a risk-free strategy and complacency	Lack of time and resources	Perception of a risk-free strategy and complacency	The desire to increase the design quality of new development in the district.
Positive Impacts	Some sustainability objectives likely to be achieved – but actual performance against criteria would be poorer	None	Some sustainability objectives likely to be achieved – but actual performance against criteria would be poorer	Would positively address a range of sustainability objectives
Negative Impacts	Poor and mediocre design could be easier to approve, general design standards would therefore not improve over current levels. More reliance on national and regional planning policy may occur in order to try to secure good design. Appeals on design grounds may be harder to defend leading to poorer performance and less support from central government in the form of lower or no Planning Delivery Grant.	Poor and mediocre design could be easier to approve, general design standards would therefore not improve over current levels. More reliance on national and regional planning policy may occur in order to try to secure good design. Appeals on design grounds may be harder to defend leading to poorer performance and less support from central government in the form of lower or no Planning Delivery Grant.	Lack of real progress, delivery of high quality well-designed developments and places would be compromised, planning performance would not improve	None identified
Viability of proceeding with the option?	Low - Could be in conflict with the design policies in the RSS	Low - Could be in conflict with elements of RSS design policy	Medium	High
How will success be measured	Sustainability Appraisal Annual Monitoring Report National, Regional and Local design awards Residents surveys No. of appeals upheld on design grounds	Sustainability Appraisal Annual Monitoring Report National, Regional and Local design awards Residents surveys No. of appeals upheld on design grounds	Sustainability Appraisal Annual Monitoring Report National, Regional and Local design awards Residents surveys No. of appeals upheld on design grounds	Sustainability Appraisal Annual Monitoring Report National, Regional and Local design awards Residents surveys No. of appeals upheld on design grounds
Where is the option best pursued?	Core Strategy	Core Strategy	Core Strategy	Core Strategy

APPENDIX A: Other Sources of Guidance

In addition to National Planning Policy the following guidance underpins this topic paper:

- *Active Design: promoting opportunities for sport and physical activity through good design* (Sport England, March 2007)
- *Better places to live by design: a companion guide to PPG3* (ODPM/CABE, 2001)
- *Better Streets, Better Places: Delivering Sustainable Residential Environments* (ODPM, July 2003)
- *By Design: Urban design in the planning system - Towards a better practice* (DETR and CABE, May 2000)
- *Car Parking: what works where* (English Partnerships, 2006)
- *Design Bulletin 32, Residential Roads and Footpaths - Layout Considerations*, (DOE, DoT 1992, 2nd edition).
- *Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism* (May 2006)
- *IHT Guidelines for providing journeys on foot*
- *IHIE Home Zone Design Guidelines*
- *Manual for Streets* (DCLG, DfT)
- *Making Design Policy Work: how to deliver good design through your local development framework* (CABE, June 2005)
- *Paving the Way: How we achieve clean, safe and attractive streets* (ODPM & CABE 2002)
- *Places, Streets & Movement: a companion guide to Design Bulletin 32 - Residential roads and footpaths* (DETR, September 1998)
- *Planning and access for disabled people: a good practice guide* (ODPM)
- *Traffic Advisory Leaflet 6/02, Inclusive Mobility*
- *The principles of inclusive design: (They include you)*. (CABE, 2006)
- The Housing Corporation - Scheme Development Standards (2003)
- *Urban Design Compendium* (English Partnerships & The Housing Corporation, August 2000)

APPENDIX B: - Summary of existing design policies in the Local Plan

- D1** Extensive Development
- D2** Infill Development
- D3** Extensions
- D4** Development proposals within the Mediaeval Chequers
- D5** Open space within Salisbury Central Area
- D6** 40' building height limit within Salisbury Central Area
- D7** Full site analysis with significant/sensitive proposals
- D8** Encouragement of public art

APPENDIX C: - Glossary

Active Frontage

Refers to that part of a building which overlooks and provides activity onto the street or open space. Includes entrances and exits, windows, arcades, balconies and seating areas.

Amenity

Relates to the immediate environment around new development. Safeguarding residential amenity means that existing levels of privacy, degree of overlooking, and quality of environment are not compromised by adjacent or surrounding development.

Boundary Treatment

Refers to various methods of defining boundaries (e.g. front and back gardens, open spaces, car parks and service areas). Boundary treatments can include walls, railings, hedges and fences, tree and shrub planting. Of particular relevance to urban design is the use of robust boundary treatments defining the boundary between public and private space.

Building Line

The extent of the built component of a development (external walls/arcades). Usually refers to the front elevation of a building.

Continuity of Frontage

Refers to the use of continuous or "joined up" building frontages and built forms to reinforce the perceived degree of enclosure. This can be achieved by the use of buildings, boundary treatments (e.g. walls/fences/railings) or landscaping.

Connectivity

The degree to which a place, street or series of buildings is connected to its surroundings. Connections may be visual or physical, and usually relate to sight lines or movement (vehicular/cycle/pedestrian).

Defensible Space

Refers to space that is overlooked, demarcated or maintained by someone. The degree to which a space is defensible is dependent upon the existence of escape routes and the level of anonymity which can be anticipated by the usual users of the space.

Density

A measure of the average number of persons, households or units of accommodation per area of land.

Design Speed

Refers to the maximum vehicular speed which governs the detailed design of the highway.

Design and Access Statement

A statement that explains the design thinking behind a planning application setting out the design principles and concepts that have informed the proposal and how access issues for all members of the community have been taken into account.

Design Guide

A document which provides guidance for developers on the type and nature of development, usually related to the detailed design of streets, buildings and open spaces.

Design Rationale

The explanation for the way in which a development, space or building has been designed. This often includes diagrams and illustrations to explain the thinking behind the preferred design.

Desire Line

The ideal route for movement, usually the most direct route between two destinations. Usually referring to pedestrian movement; desire lines often do not relate to existing streets.

Development Brief

A document which sets out requirements for development, in terms of quantum and location of land use, character of development and detailed design. Developers are usually expected to adhere to these requirements.

Development Framework

A document or plan which provides a broad 'framework' or 'structure', within which individual development proposals will sit.

Elevation

Scale drawing showing the vertical projection of one side of a building.

Enclosure

The use of buildings to create a sense of defined space. Enclosure is achieved where the buildings form a strong continuous edge and where the ratio of the width of the space or street to the height of the buildings enclosing it is sufficient for the observer to feel that they are in an enclosed rather than an open space.

Façade

The face of a building, especially its principal front.

Formal Open Space

Usually refers to areas of open space which are permanently laid out or enclosed for certain sports activities (e.g. sports pitches, courts, greens).

Frontage

That part of a building/group of buildings which significantly contributes to the character of an area and defines the street.

Gateway

A gateway is a point on a key route which creates a sense of arrival, often through the enclosure of existing buildings, or through techniques such as changes in surfacing or tree planting.

Hard Landscaping

Refers to the use of building materials for landscaping purposes. Usually incorporates the use of paving, street furniture, public art, and water features.

Homezone

Defined as a residential street where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles share the whole of the road space safely and on equal terms. Quality of life for residents takes precedence over ease of traffic movement. The Homezone concept was first developed in the late 1960s in the Netherlands, where the term 'Woonerf' is used - literally translated as 'living yard'.

Horizontal Mixed Use

Refers to mixed use development (see below) which incorporates different land uses located next to each other (either in adjacent buildings or adjacent parts of the same building).

Human Scale

'At an appropriate scale' refers to development being in proportion to its surroundings. Development which is in proportion to the size of an average person is referred to as 'human scale'.

Informal Open Space

Usually refers to areas of open space which are laid out for informal activity (e.g. parkland, village greens, lakeside areas, 'kickabout' areas).

Landmark

A memorable building or structure which stands out from its background by virtue of its height, size or some other aspect of design. Often significantly contributes to the character of an area. Landmarks are often used as orientation points within the local environment, and aid legibility (see below).

Legibility

The degree to which a place (its structure, form and function) can be easily understood and communicated by users.

Live-Work Unit

A building that incorporates flexibility to accommodate and combine both work and living space. Work space can include studio space above a garage/outbuilding, or be located within the main building with a separate entrance.

Master Plan

A plan or illustration which sets out the overall structure or layout of new development. Often used to convey a development concept or image of the development rather than specify detailed design issues.

Mixed Use Development

Development which encompasses a variety of different land uses within close proximity. Can refer to adjacent buildings which accommodate different land uses, or different land uses which are accommodated within a single building or group of buildings. (see also 'Horizontal Mixed Use' and 'Vertical Mixed Use')

Natural Surveillance

The discouragement to wrong-doing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen from surrounding windows/balconies. Also known as passive surveillance or supervision.

On-Plot

Refers to activities located within the curtilage of a building, usually in private ownership (e.g. on-plot parking, on-plot landscaping).

On-Street

Refers to activities located within the public highway, usually in public ownership (eg. on-street parking).

Perimeter Block

All buildings need two faces: a 'front' onto public space (for entrances and the most public activities) and a 'back' where the most private activities occur. Applied consistently, designing development with a 'front' facing outwards onto the public space (street, square or park) and a 'back' which faces inwards to the centre of the block (with private outdoor space), leads to the creation of 'perimeter block' development.

Permeability

The degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.

Plot Ratio

A measurement of density generally expressed as gross floor area divided by the net site area, expressed as a ratio of the square metres or square feet (e.g. a plot ratio of 0.5:1 indicates that the amount of built floorspace covers 0.5, or 50%, of the site).

Primary Street

A street which by its design can be identified as the most important and connected route through an area. Often accommodating public transport, street planting and higher levels of public activity, primary streets can define and contribute greatly to the character of an area.

Public Realm

Streets and spaces available for use by everyone without charge - shaped by buildings, landscaping, structures and activities alongside or within them.

Secondary Street

A street which by its design can be identified as a lower key route than the primary street (see above), whilst still providing important connections through the development. Secondary streets have lower levels of public activity, and tend to provide a second (alternative) route between destinations. Secondary streets can also contribute greatly to the character of an area, particularly in creating a sense of enclosure and human scale.

Sense of Place

A person's perception of a location's indigenous characteristics, based on the mix of uses, appearance and context. That which makes a place memorable.

Shared Surface

These are streets within which a single surface treatment is employed. Vehicular movement, parking and pedestrian areas are integrated with no segregation of movement/space.

Soft Landscaping

Refers to the use of planting and vegetation for landscaping purposes.

Street Furniture

Objects desired or required as part of the laying out of a street. Includes seating, lighting, bins, cycle storage, signage, boundary treatments and planters. Street furniture can also incorporate public art.

Streetscape

Streetscape is the term used to describe the visual impact and composition of a street, usually comprising building frontages, boundary treatments, spaces, views and vistas, landscaping, street furniture and materials.

Storey Height

Can be expressed as the number of floors of a building (e.g. 3 storey), or as a specific measurement (e.g. storey height equating to a minimum of 7.5 metres façade height). Specifying minimum storey height can assist in creating a sense of enclosure.

Sustainable Development

Can be summarised as development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations.

Topography

The arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area.

Townscape

As the urban equivalent of the rural landscape, townscape is the visible impact and composition of urban elements such as streets, spaces, façades, enclosures, views and vistas, landscaping, vegetation and materials.

Traditional Urban Forms

A generic term used to convey a character of development found in more traditional urban places. Characterised by higher density development with front doors onto the street, robust boundary treatments, variety and/or cohesion of building design, and not dominated by vehicular traffic/parking.

Traffic Calming

Measures employed in the design of streets to slow traffic speeds. Implemented as part of the street design or added retrospectively, traffic calming measures can be physical (eg. 'pinch-points' or 'chicanes' in the carriageway, raised tables and cushions, changes in road surface), or perceptual (eg. narrowing the street width by bringing forward the building line, or using street furniture and planting to vary the streetscape along any given length).

Urban Grain

The pattern of the arrangement of size of buildings and their plots in a settlement, and the degree to which an area's pattern of street blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent ('fine grained'), or large and infrequent ('coarse grained').

Variety

Varying the size, qualities and intensity of development or open space in order to accommodate the diverse range of needs that exist within communities.

Vertical Mixed Use

Refers to mixed use development which incorporates different land uses located on top of each other (on different floors of the same building, or in the basement/additional storeys of existing buildings).

View

The direct, prominent and unobstructed lines of sight within the public realm visible from a particular point and contributing to the legibility of the area.



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