

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
Urban Design

SPG 1a Design Guidance (Adopted 2006)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In assessing the urban design elements of schemes for new development, alterations and extensions, the Council will have particular regard to the following: adopted Haringey UDP (2006) Policies UD1, UD2, UD3 and UD4, SPG 1c and this supplementary guidance.

2. URBAN DESIGN GUIDANCE

- 2.1. Guidance, in this section, is provided below on the following aspects of urban design, many of which are inter-related:
- A. Context
 - B. Urban grain and enclosure
 - C. Building lines
 - D. Form, rhythm and massing
 - E. Layout
 - F. Height and scale
 - G. Landform, landscaping, trees and biodiversity
 - H. Fenestration
 - I. Architectural style, detailing and materials
 - J. Historic heritage
 - K. Living frontages
 - L. Public realm
 - i. Design of Public Open Space
 - ii. Public Open Spaces
 - iii. Corners
 - iv. Public Art
 - v. Mixed Uses
 - vi. Safety and Security
 - vii. Street Furniture
 - viii. Street Trees
 - M. Strategic views
 - N. Access to and around the site and mobility needs

- O. Privacy and amenity of occupants of neighbouring buildings
- P. Design and Access Statements
- Q. Other Design Guidance
- R. Additional Sources of Design Information

A. **Context**

- A.1. Any scheme needs to have regard to the physical and cultural context of the local area within which it is situated.
- A.2. New development should aim to respect and not undermine the form, structure and urban grain of the locality, taking into account local distinctiveness (including materials and features), and should contribute to creating attractive and functional places.
- A.3. Context, according to the "Urban Design Compendium"¹ prepared by Llewelyn Davies for English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, is an area's "natural as well as human history; the forms of the settlements, buildings and spaces; is ecology and archaeology; its location, and the routes that pass through it. Context also includes people, the individuals living or near an area and how communities are organised so that citizens become real participants in the projected development".
- A.4. It also involves being aware of a schemes potential inter-relationship with the public realm so that, for example, the scheme provides for adequate refuse storage and collection facilities at the design stage so as to avoid rubbish being stacked or spilling onto pavements. (See also the "Public Realm" section below and also SPG 8a: Waste and Recycling).

B. **Urban Grain and Enclosure**

- B.1. New development should take into account the pattern of arrangement and size of buildings and their plots and the size of street blocks and junctions.
- B.2. In general new development and infill buildings should create, preserve or enhance enclosure to the street scene and create enclosed overlooked urban spaces. Developments should aim to create or follow either an urban form of enclosure in which buildings dominate, or a rural form of enclosure dominated by trees and planting.
- B.3. Where a wooded or rural form of enclosure to the street (and also off road spaces such as the Parkland Walk) survives, this will almost always be of

¹ "Urban Design Compendium", prepared by Llewelyn Davies for English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation (available from English Partnerships at 110 Buckingham Palace Road SW1W 9SA Tel: 020 7881 1600)

great value and should be carefully protected, in particular by limiting any increase in the dominance of built form over trees and planting.

C. Building Lines

- C.1 New buildings should generally follow the front and rear building lines of adjacent properties. Where a number of properties share common front building lines, undue projection is likely to undermine the uniformity regularity and coherence of the street scene.

D. Form, Rhythm and Massing

- D.1. The form, rhythm and massing of the buildings should reflect important features in the surrounding buildings. Strong elements such as gable roofs or bay windows may be very important to the townscape of an area and may offer a basis for a good design solution which fits in to the neighbourhood.
- D.2. Developing sites on a piecemeal basis with little regard for the form of surrounding development has, in many cases, led to a loss of defined character and a fragmented urban form.

E. Layout

- E.1. Developments should not prejudice the satisfactory development or redevelopment of adjoining or nearby land, or fail to make optimum use of the land available, leaving as a result, small or isolated pieces of land. Proposals should also not prevent the satisfactory development of adjoining or nearby land by restricting suitable access, building too close to the boundary, or prejudice the complete development of the site.

F. Height and Scale

- F.1. Development should be in scale with the adjoining buildings, and in proportion to the average street width as defined by building frontages. Where uniform building height is part of the character of a street it will not normally be appropriate to permit abrupt variations in the general roof line or eaves line, while in other areas irregular building height might be acceptable.
- F.2. Extensions or alterations to buildings should be subordinate in scale to the original building and should respect its architectural character. Thus the alteration or extension should either fit in to the character of the house, or if in contrasting design, should by its independence and smallness of scale not undermine the architectural effect of the whole. The development should not undermine existing uniformity of the building or row, and should

not over balance or dominate existing features important to the building. For example, to ensure subordination, full width rear extensions are not normally considered acceptable and they should not extend more than two thirds the width of the rear of the house and should remain at least one storey below eaves level. In terms of depth of rear extension, they should not normally extend beyond 3 metres (10 ft.) for terraced houses and 4 metres (13 ft.) for semi-detached or detached houses from the rear wall of the house.

- F.3. In terms of dormers, a dormer should not undermine the sweep of a roof. Dormer windows or roof extensions projecting above ridge height and 'wrap around' roof extensions will normally not be acceptable.
- F.4. Schemes that include tall buildings will be required to demonstrate that unacceptable wind corridors/turbulence would not be created. Large or tall buildings can create problems of high wind speed or turbulence at ground or walkway level which results in unpleasant conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. Where it is considered a scheme may result in these conditions a wind tunnel assessment will be required and it may be necessary to amend the form of the building to minimise any adverse effects or to take measures to protect the affected areas.

G. Landform, Landscaping, Trees and Biodiversity

- G.1. The relative land levels and other landform features need to be taken into account in the design of the development. Landscaping to a large extent can have a significant impact on the visual success or failure of a building, and its subsequent enjoyment by its occupants, owes much to the setting provided by soft and hard landscaping. The greening effect can also have a health impact in that trees absorb CO² during the day.
- G.2. Landscaping schemes should provide a suitable and pleasant setting for the proposed development, and contribute to the street scene. Schemes should normally include details of:
- Tree planting and protection of existing trees (including street trees).
 - Ground and shrub cover, hard surface and paving, grass verges.
 - Adequate lighting (without causing light pollution) and continuity of fencing or walling.
 - Boundary treatments comprised of materials or finishes which reduce the likelihood of graffiti.
 - Adherence to the principles of designing out crime.
 - Landscaping of parking areas.
 - Opportunities for nature conservation and habitat creation
 - Provision of amenity space.
 - Pedestrian linkages with surrounding landscape features of natural or ecological interest.

- Maintenance details
(See also SPG 8d: Biodiversity, Landscaping and Trees).

G.3 Large areas of parking or servicing uninterrupted by landscaping should be avoided.

H. Fenestration

H.1. Fenestration pattern (including window size, proportion, shape, positioning, glazing bar detailing and cill depth) can be a critical element in the appearance of a building.

H.2. In terms of alterations to existing buildings, new windows (particularly as part of roof extensions), should normally be subordinate in size to the main windows, whilst following vertical window positioning. They should be constructed of materials to match those existing (e.g. timber sashes) and thus normally those constructed of UPVC, aluminium or other non-traditional materials or of a design out of character with the building in question will not be acceptable. Additional or enlarged windows may be appropriate providing that they do not harm the architectural integrity of the building, they follow the original pattern and materials and they do not create problems of overlooking. See also section in this document on Privacy.

H.3. Double glazed sash windows require the use of thicker glazing bars which detract from the appearance of traditional buildings and are thus unlikely to be acceptable. (Similar, and often more economical, solutions to heat loss can be achieved through installing secondary glazing).

H.4. Dormer windows should have regard to the building's fenestration pattern and detailing below. They should be subordinate to the roof, being small enough to preserve the dominance of the main pitch and its silhouette and be in keeping with the character size and scale of the building as a whole. They should be set well within the slope of the roof away from the eaves and ridge, the flanks should be set well in from any gables or party walls and the dormer should not straddle any hip line. They should not be located on the front elevation except where front dormer windows are an original feature on neighbouring properties.

I. Architectural Style, Detailing and Materials

I.1 Design detail is especially important where it enables the building to conform to the distinctive character of the local area, or to the success of the building within its setting. Details may include small projections, the degree of ornamentation, brickwork, the linking of special features with those of adjoining buildings, or the continuation of brick walls and fences.

- I.2 In areas where certain materials predominate, such as a certain colour of brick or slated roofs, it would normally be expected that new development would use similar materials. In less defined areas with more diverse materials a strong building can use sensitive materials to integrate an area giving new definition and strength.
- I.3 Materials ideally should be from sustainable sources and be environmentally friendly in other respects. (For further details see SPG 8b: Materials).

J. **Historic Heritage**

- J.1. All developments which involve a listed building or its setting or locally listed buildings or properties within a conservation area or an area of archaeological interest will need to take special account of this heritage factor. (For details see Chapter 11, Conservation, of the adopted Haringey UDP (2006) and SPG 2: Conservation and Archaeology).

K. **Active Frontages**

- K.1. All development should create an active public face at ground floor, street frontage level. Designing for active frontage helps create varied, safe, lively places with their own vitality. Active frontages also provide plenty of natural surveillance.

The following elements should be considered when creating active frontage;

- Frequent doors and windows, with few blank walls;
- Narrow frontage buildings, giving vertical rhythm to the street scene;
- Articulation of facades, with projections such as bays and porches incorporated, providing a welcoming feeling; and on occasion,
- Lively internal uses visible from the outside, or spilling onto the street

(Source: Urban Design Compendium)

- K.2. Dead frontages, such as uninterrupted brick flank elevations, can also become targets for graffiti.
- K.3. Secluded niches in ground floor street elevations should be avoided as they provide opportunities for crime.

L. **Public Realm**

- i. ***Design of Public Space*** - Where development affects the character of public spaces (including principal facades, potential alterations to street furniture, or other publicly visible development) it should preserve and enhance the character of the public space and form of enclosure of the

street-scene. New development should aim to respect the form, structure and grain of the locality, and create a new and interesting public face. The following matters should be taken into account:

- ii. **Public open spaces** - Public spaces should be retained, enhanced and create overlooked pedestrian public spaces, such as squares and pocket parks. In proposals for extensive development, opportunities should be taken to create such new public spaces. New development to existing squares should enhance the sense of enclosure filling any gaps and maintain established rhythms in the perimeter such as height, fenestration pattern, roof line and style, materials and colour.
- iii. **Corners** - Corner sites can often provide an opportunity for defining streetscape and area character. Buildings in corner locations should be designed to respond their location and, where appropriate, create a landmark.
- iv. **Public Art** - in new or existing schemes (in consultation with the community) adds diversity to the Borough and to individual developments, whether on site or in the immediate vicinity. Careful integration of art within a development and linking it to the public realm has advantages for the developer, users of the facility and for passers by. Public art can enhance a building and its environs by promoting local character and identity, and can help promote further improvements to environmental quality and assist long term urban regeneration.
- vi. **Mixed Uses** - The Council will encourage variety and appropriate mixed land use, where this contributes to the vitality of areas and is not contrary to other policies protecting area character and amenity.
- vii. **Safety and Security** – this can be enhanced by providing 'defensible space'. Good practice will increase overlooking of public areas, prevent creation of dark or secluded areas, provide and maintain adequate lighting, avoid creating enclaves which do not contribute to the security of the area as a whole, make houses and flats secure and increase the vitality and use of public areas by encouraging mixed land use. (See also SPG 5: Safety by Design).
- viii. **Street Furniture** - The design and placing of street lighting, traffic signs and other items of street furniture should be high quality and appropriate to the character of the area. Public lighting needs to address the issue of light pollution and where possible take into account opportunities for renewable energy. Continuing maintenance of the street furniture will be expected to be safeguarded and subject to a maintenance management plan. Clutter should be minimised. New street furniture and alterations to existing street furniture should be placed to allow clear and safe passage for people with sensory

and mobility difficulties. In Conservation Areas original street furniture should usually be retained and refurbished. New street furniture should be sensitively sited and of a traditional design compatible with the character of the area. To ensure that the surfaces of roads and pavements are appropriate to the character and period of townscape, the Council will aim to preserve historic street furniture, street materials such as flagstones and cobbles where they survive and other structures if they contribute to local character. The Council will have regard to the advice and policy guidance of English Heritage and others and in particular to the guidelines "Street Improvement in Historic Areas". See also the Haringey Streetscape Manual.

- ix. **Street Trees** - The Council will protect street trees and trees in public places. We will look very carefully at any proposal which would result in the loss of any street trees or trees in public places.

M. **Strategic Views**

- M.1. Development which falls within the designated zones where the strategic view and its setting is protected will need to ensure that the view is not adversely affected. (See SPG 1 c: Strategic Views).
- M.2. The Council would wish to see photographic evidence to show the impact in the form of photographs and or drawings showing the precise impact using a view taken from a specified height and location.

N. **Access to and Around the Site and Mobility Needs**

- N.1. The design of buildings and their surrounds should be inclusive and take into account the need to ensure that people are not excluded access because of physical restrictions. Detailed guidance on this matter is provided in SPG 4: Access for All – Mobility Standards and the strategy employed to ensure inclusive design should be set out in a design and access statement.

O. **Privacy and Amenity of Occupants of Neighbouring buildings**

- O.1. Detailed guidance on privacy, overshadowing, aspect is provided in SPG 3b. Guidance on light, noise, fumes and air pollution is provided within SPG 6c and SPG 9.

P. **Design and Access Statements**

- P.1 Circular 01/2006 Design and Access Statements which came into effect on 10 August 2006 requires that most types of planning applications must include a design and access statement. For further information see "Design and access statements: How to write, read and use them" CABE 2006. www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/8073.pdf

Q. Other Design Guidance

Q.1. From time to time the Council may produce planning briefs, area strategies, neighbourhood plans or other guidance for individual sites or areas which cover design matters.

R. Additional Sources of Design Information

R.1. Further information on context and other aspects of design can be found in a number of publications including "Urban Design Compendium" prepared by Llewelyn Davies for English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation (mentioned above), "By Design - Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice" CABE 2000 and "Better Places to Live: By Design" prepared by Llewelyn-Davis in association with Alan Baxter and Associates.²

² "Better Places to Live: By Design" prepared by Llewelyn-Davis in association with Alan Baxter and Associates (available from The Customer Services Department, Thomas Telford Ltd, Units I/K, Paddock Wood Distribution Centre, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 6UU Telephone No 0207665 2464 ISBN 0 7277 3037 1