



POTTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Annex E Design Guide

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide design guidance for any new development or extension/alteration to existing properties within the Parish of Potton. It is to sit alongside the Central Bedfordshire Council Design Guide together with all its Supplements, 'A guide for Designing High Quality Developments' produced by Central Bedfordshire Council in September 2014. This Potton Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide together with its annex and any supporting documents also requires all new developments to have regard to the Potton Town Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment in relation to height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings in order to achieve high quality design and to ensure buildings and places reflect local identity, create a sense of pride and work well for people's needs now and into the future.



2 Aims and Objectives

Potton is unique in many ways but perhaps one of its main features is the fact that it has retained much of the gradual historical development which has evolved over many centuries. The vision of the people who live and work in the Parish is to preserve the essence of a Market Town by ensuring that it retains its core appearance by establishing and maintaining the highest quality of future building development. We shall judge a design using the following criteria:

- The kind of place that people want
- The physical, economic and social aspirations for the area
- How much change may be needed, of what type and over what time
- Realistic outcomes for development
- Examples of good practice from local or neighbouring towns and villages
- Demonstration that the development design integrates into the existing landscape, maximizing aesthetic and biodiversity benefit at the outset, together with the existing topography, hydrology and landscape structure, to deliver a high-quality development.



3 Design Principles

3.1 General

Good design in relation to building and spaces means solutions which put people first by addressing the way building or space functions, namely what it is used for and how it is used thus ensuring that it is designed to last and be valued by those who use it. We want good design which will add value, reduce long-term costs and improve quality of life, and provide well-designed energy efficient buildings and places. Innovative multifunctional design helps meet statutory requirements and provide many socio-economic and environmental objectives required by Potton Town Council and its community. Potton demands a holistic approach to planning which integrates green infrastructure, biodiversity, sustainability, and climate resilience which contributes towards a development fit for purpose with multiple benefits.

3.2 Specific Aims

The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of design with other traditional buildings in the surrounding areas providing examples and inspiration, and with the built form kept simple and designed in a similar manner to the local vernacular and be optimized for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions and reducing water usage/waste. Specific design aims and standards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Siting and orientation to optimize solar gain.
- The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials.
- Installation of energy efficient measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing.
- Non-residential developments should aim to meet The Building Research Establishment BREAM building standard 'excellent'.
- The incorporation of on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels, to at least the extent required NS core strategy policy CS2.
- The retrofit of heritage properties/assets is encouraged to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy where appropriate, providing it safeguards historic characteristics and development is done with engagement and permissions of relevant organizations.
- Alterations to existing buildings must be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with sustainable design and construction standards.



- Collection and reuse of grey water to reduce water consumption.

When considering good design any scheme should be able to show how it meets the following design criteria by:

- Its functionality.
- Support a mix of uses and tenures.
- Be adaptable and resilient.
- Have a distinctive character.
- Be attractive.
- Encourage ease of movement.
- Proximity to affordable good quality shops.
- Access to safe streets, parks and public spaces.
- Sharing the benefits of the Town's natural environment -the Brook, open sky and open views.
- Encompassing the guidance on green infrastructure as found in the Potton Neighbourhood Plan – Annex F Green Infrastructure Design Guide.
- Building on history and identity, through linking with the past and seeking common threads between peoples as well as cultural distinctiveness.

We also promote the use of Building for Life 12 (BfL12) as a standard tool for assessing the quality of homes and neighbourhoods using principles of good urban and rural design. Whilst it is typically used to assess the quality of schemes not yet built, it can be used to guide a discussion around the quality of an existing neighbourhood or recently completed developments by addressing both urban and rural design.

3.3 Specific Themes

We should like to see the following fundamental themes addressed in any new development:

- The development shall have obvious character, to create a space with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive, acceptable design based either on contemporary architecture or local traditions in building materials and landscaping.
- Car parking shall be adequate, with a minimum of two parking spaces per dwelling, and located where it is accessible and likely to be well used, with sufficient and well-integrated space to provide



resident and visitor with secure areas which do not dominate the street.

- Footways and paths shall always be located in places where homes overlook them, so no-one feels at risk when using them, especially after dark, and shall be attractive, well managed and safe.
- Bus stops and car parking shall not be placed remotely where a lack of overlooking might make crime easier to get away with. Closer bus stops also encourage shifts to more sustainable forms of transport.
- Properties shall have clear indications of what is privately owned space and what is shared public realm, so that passers-by respect the boundaries and residents feel their personal space is protected.
- Homes shall have appropriate external storage, in particular for bins and bicycles, so that neither is left in the open.
- The scheme is to integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site particularly where wildlife habitats and watercourses exist.
- The development shall provide (or is it close to?) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes.
- The scheme shall have good access to public transport to avoid the dependency on car use.
- The development shall have a mix of housing types and tenures which suit local requirements.
- The scheme shall include a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which shall set out the appropriateness of SuDS to manage surface water run-off and provision of maintenance for the lifetime of the development which they serve.
- Improve footways, footpaths and cycle ways to link with the proposed Green Wheel and to promote the use of walking, bicycles or other sustainable transport instead of cars within the Town.