MIDDLESBROUGH'S URBAN DESIGN

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

ADOPTED JANUARY 2013
URBAN DESIGN SPD

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Good design is important in all communities, it is not solely a visual concern; it has important economic, social and environmental consequences too. Good design helps people feel good about places and take pride in their town, it can attract interest and investment to an area, which is important for the continued development of an area as a town where people want to live, work and invest.

The town has seen significant changes over recent years, and there has been a raising of aspirations for the future of its’ fabric and character. The Council is committed to improving the standard of new development to ensure the long-term sustainability of Middlesbrough.

Councillor Charles Rooney
(Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development)

Introduction
1.1 This Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced to provide guidance for all development across Middlesbrough. This document will also be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications across the town.

1.2 This document sets out the standards Middlesbrough Council require to ensure improvements to the quality of development continues, whilst also promoting innovation and creativity. This SPD aims to help all parties from householders to large-scale developers to achieve a higher standard of design.

What is Urban Design and why it is important?
1.3 Design is not just about the architecture or style of a building. It is also about the spaces in and around the development, the quality of the relationships between the development and surrounding areas and the appropriateness of the function.

1.4 Good design does not have to cost more to develop but it can add real economic value to the buildings we live, work and play in. It can also help to enhance economic performance by making the area more attractive to investors and visitors.

1.5 It is hoped that the guidance contained within this document will provide sufficient clarity and information for Middlesbrough to continue to develop a town that is attractive, easy to use, distinctive, safe and sustainable.

Middlesbrough Council’s Objective: One Planet Living
1.6 Middlesbrough Council has adopted the principles of One Planet Living into the way it plans and delivers its services and was accredited as a One Planet Living region by BioRegional in 2011. The Council’s One Planet Living Action plan sets out Middlesbrough’s pathway to achieving sustainability by 2025. Further information and a copy of the Council’s Action Plan can be found at www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/oneplanetliving and www.bioregional.com

1.7 For Middlesbrough sustainability goes beyond just the construction of the building and/or outside space. It is about bringing together the environmental, social, economic and physical elements for a successful development at all scales and throughout the lifespan of the development. Sustainability is not just an after thought; it informs and underpins all of the guidance within this document, therefore the principles of One Planet Living, and these principles should be considered throughout all aspects of development to ensure Middlesbrough becomes a more sustainable town.

The Planning Policy Context
1.8 This SPD forms part of the package of Middlesbrough’s Local Development Framework Documents. It will assist the Council in delivering national and local planning policy objectives in respect of design and sustainable development. It has been prepared in accordance with the

1.9 The aim of the SPD is to add value to the policies in the Development Plan (Local Plan). In doing so, it will also add value to the quality of development within the town, thereby creating a place where people will want to live, want to visit, and want to invest in.

1.10 The Government places design quality at the forefront of its agenda for planning. This is clearly demonstrated within the Design section of the NPPF, which emphasises the importance of good design by stating:

“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.”

Further the NPPF sets down the following design criteria to ensure that all development:

a) “will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;

c) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;

d) create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and,

e) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.

1.11 The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) ‘By Design’ guidance also promotes higher standards in urban design, and is relevant to all aspects of the built environment, including the design of buildings and spaces, landscapes and transport systems.

1.12 The Council’s own Core Strategy design policy CS5, requires that “all development proposals will be required to demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character and appearance of the area”. Policy CS5 further seeks the “enhancement of the best characteristics of Middlesbrough’s built environment to create a positive identity for the town and improve the quality of life of its population”.

1.13 For important development sites, or large scale regeneration projects, separate Supplementary Planning Documents will be produced, where appropriate to define the project specific aims of how the Council would like these areas to be developed. This guidance document is more generic as a guide for development in Middlesbrough as a whole.

Highways Design Guide

1.14 It should be noted that whilst this SPD provides guidance on urban design issues developments that require works to be carried out that effect the highway network this guidance can be found in the Middlesbrough Design Guide and Specification document, which is available on the Council’s website.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

1.15 SUDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on or near a site as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible.

1.16 SUDS involve a range of techniques including soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, green roofs, ponds and wetlands, where appropriate and
1.16 Among the new responsibilities assumed by the Council as a result of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 is the establishment of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDs) Approval Body (SAB) which has the role of approving all drainage plans and adopting and maintaining SuDs connecting more than one property. It is proposed that this Body will be in place in 2013.

1.17 The SAB will also be responsible for providing approval before connection to the public sewerage system can be made. The SAB will also insect, adopt and maintain sustainable drainage systems for new developments exceeding one property. Where the proposed drainage system affects only one property it need not be adopted or maintained, but will have to be approved. SuDs) consent must be provided before construction can begin where there are drainage implications.

**How to use this Guide**

1.18 This guide is broken down into three main sections relating to the different types of development likely in Middlesbrough. Section One relates to general design principles for larger scale developments of more than one dwelling. Section Two is much more specific and details guidance for smaller scale developments such as a domestic extension. Section Three explains the planning application process.

1.19 This document will be used when determining most planning applications and failure to comply with the guidance set out in this document will be resisted.
SECTION ONE
General Design Principles

2. Designing for Context

2.1 Urban design is about place making, but it is important to create the right places in the right settings. Context incorporates the physical, social and functional character as well as the natural and built environment setting of the area surrounding the proposed development. All new developments must understand and sit comfortably within their proposed context, if they do, adjacent development will relate to one another and the spaces and streets connect with each other. Often this is about making the most of and considering the resources and infrastructure of the locality in order to reinforce a sense of place. Where a departure from the prevailing characteristics of the area is desired it should be made clear why it is a positive change.

A successful development should:

a) relate well to the surrounding geography and history of the land, and contribute to the wider environmental benefits for the town;
b) be of a density that is appropriate to the locality;
c) respond to the natural patterns of movement in and around the site and encourage connectivity;
d) respect and exploit already established important local and strategic views and vistas;
e) relate to the scale (height and massing) of the surrounding buildings;
f) consider the diversity and pattern of the already established surrounding urban grain, block and plot size;
g) consider the current building line;
h) ensure satisfactory measures are incorporated in the design and location of the development to minimise the effects of noise from any existing or potential sources nearby;
i) create a site with identity;
j) act as a visual focus, or complement the open spaces that already exist;
k) utilise high quality materials that fit with surrounding building materials; and,
l) re-enforce local distinctiveness.

Secured By Design

2.2 In addition, in order to create successful and popular places, people must feel safe and secure in their environment. Crime, or a fear of crime, can radically undermine community cohesion and/or quality of life.

2.3 The layout and design of developments can have a great impact on levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. By incorporating Designing out Crime principles from the beginning of a project, secure and successful places can be created, at minimal additional cost, which can immeasurably reduce the lifetime social and economic costs of crime for communities. Such developments can create a positive legacy of places where people want to live, work and enjoy themselves in the knowledge that they can do so safely.

2.4 Middlesbrough Council’s commitment to reducing crime and the fear of crime means that all Planning Applications should incorporate within their design the principles of Secured by Design. In using these principles the Design and Access Statement should explain how the design of the proposed development has taken account of:-

a) Spaces: has a clear distinction been made between public and private space;
b) Access and movement: is there well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security;

c) Structure: has the proposal been structured so that different uses do not cause conflict;

d) Surveillance: does the proposal promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community, and avoid the creation of ‘hiding places’;

e) Physical protection: does the proposal include necessary, well-designed security features;

f) Activity: is the proposal designed where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times

g) Management and maintenance: is the proposal designed with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present and the future.

2.5 Further advice on the Secured by Design principles and security measures can be obtained from the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Middlesbrough Police Station or by accessing: www.securebydesign.com

Building on Local Character

2.6 It is important that development is not seen as an entity in itself, but as a part of the existing settlement and landscape. All buildings contribute to shaping places. The character of a townscape depends on how the individual buildings contribute to a harmonious townscape. New development should look to strengthen and reinforce the locally distinctive identity, create places to be proud of and avoid bland, contextless design that may lead to ‘anywhere’ developments whilst avoiding promoting pastiche development. There is no reason why character and innovative design cannot coexist if well designed.

Development should:-

a) ensure existing features of interest including buildings of historic or architectural interest, trees and hedgerows, are retained as features where possible;

b) where feasible, use local building materials, methods and detailing; and,

c) make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood environment.

Infill

2.7 Where appropriate, designs for infill sites must take account of their immediate neighbours in terms of building scale and height, proportions of openings, floor to floor heights, materials, and their relationship to plot boundaries/size. This is especially true in a terrace situation, or on any street with a regular pattern of development.

Inappropriate infill and building line issues

2.8 Any new infill development should normally respect any existing distinct building lines, and should not project forward from, or sit back from this line to ensure the new development sits comfortably within its surroundings and reflects the character of the immediate landscape. When joining on to existing terraces, the pitch of any new roofs should be matched.

Development in sensitive locations

2.9 Developing for the context is more difficult in areas that may be sensitive to development, most commonly due to a prevalent historic environment. There are ongoing debates over the desire to preserve such an environment at all costs versus a complete break from the past in terms of scale, material and methods.
2.10 Preserving the historic environment at all costs often leads to superficial echoing of historic features which can erode the character just as much as inappropriate modern developments with no regard for the context. A balance must therefore be struck. Good quality contemporary design, which is sensitive to its location and utilises sympathetic detailing that references the historic context will nearly always make a positive contribution to an area and is therefore, welcomed.

2.11 Middlesbrough has many character areas. The more historic parts of Middlesbrough (Town Centre, Linthorpe Road, Linthorpe etc), are predominantly of a red brick late Victorian/early Edwardian architectural style, whilst the majority of the other large residential areas are nearly all post war and show a variety of styles. The chosen style of a development will greatly influence the suitability of a new development to a particular location.

2.12 The Council will not consider an application for planning permission for development within a Conservation Area unless it includes full details of the proposal, supported by a Design and Access statement, which must include a full analysis of the surrounding area. New development should not detract from the character and appearance of a Conservation Area and should seek to:-

a) preserve and enhance the distinctive pattern of historic development;
b) maintain key views and vistas;
c) reinforce the architectural character of the area through a thorough understanding of the existing forms, styles and features; and

d) reinforce the scale and massing of surrounding buildings.

2.13 The character of a conservation area is partly established by the pattern of past development. Proposals for re-development should normally maintain the ratio of built-form (footprint and volume) to plot size that is typical of the area. The Council will resist proposals that would result in the significant loss of gardens and trees to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area.

2.14 The traditional materials used for the external walls of the buildings are significant components in establishing the appearance of a Conservation Area. In Middlesbrough these are primarily brick and render. It is important to retain the consistency and unity of buildings that were designed as either a pair or terrace by resisting proposals to render, paint or otherwise alter parts of a designed group, if these components do not already exist.

2.15 Other restrictions within Conservation areas are listed below, and will require consent to ensure developments are appropriate:-

a) aerials and antenna: advice on location and scale;
b) streetscape: advice on standards of design in the public realm, including paving and street furniture; and,
c) boundary treatment.

2.16 Further information can be obtained from the Conservation Team’s ‘Conservation Areas in Middlesbrough – Guidance for Householders’ booklet.

**Article 4 Direction**

2.17 An Article 4 Direction serves to restrict Permitted Development rights, which means that a lot of alterations people do to their land or houses without planning permission, are brought into the realms of planning consent. It does not in itself prohibit any action but means that a landowner is required to seek planning consent whereas without the Direction this would not be necessary. The Direction seeks to encourage the retention of high quality architectural features and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of an area.

**Listed Buildings**

2.18 Listed Building Consent is required if you wish to alter, extend or demolish any part of a listed building. This includes internal as well as external work and can include repairs. For further information please consult the Conservation Team direct.

**Enhancement Opportunities**

2.19 Proposals for the enhancement of the character and appearance of a Conservation Area should be aimed at reinforcing those qualities and characteristics that provide the special interest that warrants designation.

Enhancement can take two forms:-

a) sympathetic redevelopment of sites defined in the character appraisal detracting from the character of the area; or
b) pro-active proposals, which involve various measures to improve the built environment such as street clutter removal and reinstatement of original architectural features.

**3. Urban Design Principles**

**Sustainable Communities**

3.1 All development needs to be sustainable, as well as the One Planet Living criteria, there is another strand of sustainability – the creation of sustainable communities. All development should be designed to encourage the formation of a successful, inclusive place where people want to live, work and invest. Developments should consider the flexibility for future uses to try and guarantee the future success of the development.

**Mix (size/type/affordability)**

3.2 The potential mixture that may be viable for a development will depend upon the location of the development in relation to a number of factors, including public transport networks, town centre and/or other commercial centres, existing infrastructure and development requirements.

3.3 With regard to residential development, a mix of housing type/size/affordability will provide a much more sustainable community and is therefore much more desirable than a development of identical units.

**Mixture of uses**

3.4 In order to be enjoyable and stimulating, places must provide variety. They must meet the demands and requirements of the widest possible
range of users, in bringing together various building forms, uses, tenures, densities, spaces and linkages. The creation of sustainable communities is supported by mixed uses of buildings.

3.5 Developments should be carefully designed in order to permit varied uses and aid the creation of viable and successful urban developments. This will allow residents to meet their day-to-day needs with minimal use of a car. All sites should be considered on their own merits. In different locations, different mixes are not always appropriate due to accessibility, surrounding land-uses and available space etc.

3.6 In a larger development, uses that require more ‘passing trade’ should be located where the footfall is greatest and therefore best connected to the surrounding street structure. A well-mixed and balanced development should create an environment that attracts a wide variety of users to make successful and vibrant places that encourage social interaction and increase diversity.

3.7 Mixed use developments can be incorporated in to individual buildings and active ground floor uses (e.g. commercial units) with perhaps non front-line offices or residential uses above is a good way of making the most of space in central areas without damaging the streetscape. Flexibility should be built into development from the start, in order that buildings might be adapted over time as requirements change.

Active street frontages

3.8 Streets and their spaces can be defined by the buildings that create them and more specifically by the frontages that surround them. Active frontages on to public spaces should be encouraged where feasible, and can add interest through increasing the articulation of façades and minimal blank walls. In particular, lively and active internal uses, visible externally, provide interest to pedestrians outside and make a building’s function obvious. Buildings should also be situated sympathetically within their environmental context.

3.9 Whilst views on to the street (from inside) at least imply that people are present, it is best to use transparent glass where privacy permits in order to encourage passive surveillance on the overlooked spaces. Where possible, one further step would be to encourage the enlivening of the frontages with projections that enable users to emerge on to the street e.g. awnings etc which may help to soften weather impact on uses or prolong activity through the day.

3.10 Where appropriate, and where private space comes into close contact with public space, suitable boundary treatments may help the creation of defensible spaces. In particular, windowless and blank elevations can be magnets for vandalism and anti-social behaviour and should be discouraged where possible, especially where the elevation faces a street or public space.

Legibility, clear definition of public/private realm

3.11 Buildings and the spaces between them should work together to create key recognisable events and places that are easy to navigate through. Spaces are most successful when it is easy to identify who is meant to use them. Development can be designed to ensure that places are easily understood by:-

a) creating or redefining a clear hierarchy of routes, streets and spaces;
b) locating activity and mixes of uses along key transport corridors;
c) relating building heights to streets and spaces to reinforce their relative importance;
d) supporting a hierarchy of open spaces whose function and importance can easily be understood through their design;
e) relating development to the visual connections between it and the surroundings;
f) protecting and enhancing existing locally distinctive landmarks;
ADOPTED VERSION

g) creating new landmark buildings and spaces where appropriate e.g. gateway sites;
h) incorporating memorable public art at landmark locations;
i) reinforcing visual connections along routes with appropriate landscaping, lighting and signage;
j) designing developments so that their intended functions are clear, and the access to entrances are visible and appropriately located; and,
k) forming easily recognisable and clear delineation between private and public land through the use of boundary treatments where appropriate.

Ease of Movement

3.12 Well-designed places should respond to the movement through them, providing continuity both from the surroundings and within the development both physically and visually. Connections must be considered for pedestrians, bicycles, public transport and cars, giving people the maximum choice for their journey and meet the needs of all. Where possible, the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport should be considered equally, if not above, those of car users. Desire lines are important in the consideration of pedestrian and cycle routes, and where possible routes should be direct, safe and easy.

Accessibility

3.14 Accessibility relates to both the physical and visual permeability of a route. All areas of the public realm should be accessible for all, including the visually impaired, prams and wheelchairs. Incorporations of adaptations such as tactile surface treatments, dropped kerbs and ramps should be encouraged in all developments. Street furniture should be kept to a minimum within active pedestrian spaces in order to open spaces up to those with mobility issues.

3.15 Access routes should be clear and easy to follow visually. Signage should be used where necessary to provide direction and location guidance (see also legibility).

3.16 When designing for pedestrians or cyclists, some requirements are common to both:

a) routes should form a coherent network, and be of an appropriate scale;
b) in general, networks should allow people to go where they want, unrestricted by street furniture and other obstructions or barriers;
c) routes need to be safe – this applies to both traffic safety and crime; and
d) the environment should be attractive, interesting and free from graffiti and litter, etc.

3.17 Parking provision and its design should be integrated into housing layouts and not all placed together in a single bank. Parking standards for different types of development can be obtained from the Council’s Highways Department.

Cycling Movement

3.18 Cycling movement and provision throughout the town is fundamental to the provision of sustainable transport. All developers
are required to make space available for cycle parking and storage and where possible to provide for changing and shower facilities. Where necessary developers are also required to contribute to cycleway provision or for improvements to the existing cycleway network.

3.19 Cyclists should have clear and direct routes, without difficult junctions or obstacles. On low speed streets it is appropriate for them to mix with the traffic, although on busier streets a clearly defined cycle lane should be provided.

### Design of Public Spaces

3.20 Public spaces comprise any areas between buildings, streets, public gardens, parks and purpose made spaces of residential or commercial character and function. They contribute to healthy lifestyles as venues for active and passive leisure activities and should be designed to accommodate formal and informal variety in uses. As the intended end user, public perception is very important in the creation of successful spaces, and therefore consultation, where feasible, should be a large part of the design process, in order to attain attractive and functional spaces.

3.21 Spaces should be designed to be comfortable and not intimidating, stimulating and not boring, legible, attractive, uncluttered, and safe, and should accommodate the accessibility requirements of all. Design of such spaces should involve all related bodies (e.g. Landscape Design, Highways, Community Protection, Environment and Statutory Service Bodies) early on to ensure a co-ordinated approach. Open space requirements are considered in the Council's Open Spaces Needs Assessment.

3.22 The success of public spaces depends upon arrangement of its paving treatment, planting and landscaping, lighting, orientation, shelter, signage, furniture, the surrounding development and in turn the way in which it is used. The functional aspects of spaces, for example the car parking and services, should be hidden away to minimise the visual impact. Access for emergency and supply vehicles should be carefully considered, especially for pedestrian only spaces.

3.23 Open space has the ability to provide useful movement corridors, as they can allow the movement of both pedestrians and cyclists in the same spaces. Such corridors can also provide a valuable asset for nature and wildlife and vegetation.

3.24 All open spaces have a benefit to developments, yet so often they turn their back to
it. Public realm is a community facility to be enjoyed by all and so should be incorporated into development, whether new or re-development. All open spaces should include consideration of surveillance, passive where feasible, but defensible spaces, visibility, lighting and security measures should also be taken into account where necessary.

### Materials

3.25 Paving and street surfaces form the foreground context to all built environments, and can add enormously to the character of an area. Choices of materials should be carefully considered and should be appropriate for their location and use. Materials used for public realm works should be of a high quality as well as durable and environmentally sustainable.

3.26 Lighting can greatly impact on the appearance and atmosphere of a space, especially at night. All lighting should complement and enhance the appearance of the area, but should not be to the detriment of residential amenity.

3.27 Lighting to public realm should be provided to BS-EN standards, preferably white light and should be designed to minimise light pollution. Whole-life costs of a lighting design should be considered, and low energy fittings should be used wherever possible.

3.28 Where appropriate, illumination of landmarks, prominent buildings etc at night can aid way-finding and can increase the legibility of an area and should be considered.

3.29 Lighting levels should be designed to suit the use of a space. Under provision can increase fear of crime or create a lack of clarity for users, over provision can lead to light pollution or clutter. Lighting columns can often be successfully combined with other items of street furniture such as benches, which can minimise the appearance of street clutter.

3.30 Light fixtures should be appropriate to their context in material, scale and design. Conservation areas do not necessarily require
pastiche copies of period style lighting, but in sensitive areas, the choice of fitting is especially important.

Street Clutter

3.31 Street furniture incorporates seats, fences, shelters, lights, bollards, signage (for multiple users) etc. Over cluttering should be avoided at all costs as it is confusing and misleading, especially as the majority of signage on streets is directed towards vehicle users rather than pedestrians.

Street furniture should:

a) where possible, be integrated or combined to reduce clutter;
b) consider the surrounding development to provide a unified and coherent public realm;
c) not be positioned to obstruct movement through the public realm;
d) use materials that enhance the environment and relate to their setting;
e) consider maintenance requirements throughout its lifetime as well as resistance to vandalism; and,
f) consider all users of the spaces in which they are positioned i.e. vehicles, pedestrians (varying abilities) and cycles.

Landscaping

3.32 The term ‘Landscaping’ refers to grassed areas, trees, shrubs and all other planting e.g. bulbs. Landscaping can be used to ‘soften’ spaces, and help to form very attractive places and streets for people to enjoy using.

Landscaping within developments should wherever possible be included within the curtilage of individual plots, to ensure a well-maintained setting.

3.33 Landscaping can be very effective in reducing the extremes of urban climates, made worse by climate change, by reducing ‘glare’ lowering temperatures, helping to clean the air, reduce wind speeds, and providing habitats for wildlife.

3.34 Landscaping schemes should be appropriate to the location, they should:-

a) not be introduced where it has no defined purpose;
b) select species and design schemes that do not cause litter traps or excessive maintenance liabilities, or hazards for people with disabilities or other users of the area e.g. thorns;
c) not obscure key views, vistas, lighting, signs or block thoroughfares;
d) select species to suit the location. Many native species will grow too large or not be ornamental enough for the location. Consider local examples, what is growing well; and,
e) take account of potential growth and therefore future maintenance.

Trees

3.35 Trees play an important part in softening the appearance of buildings and streets, creating a visual focus, adding wildlife and colour to the urban landscape and helping to moderate the extremes of urban climates. The intention should be to create long term sustainable planting. The Council therefore supports the principles of attaining sustainable tree planting and where necessary seeks the retention of appropriate trees within development sites.

3.36 In choosing the species of tree will depend on the design outcomes intended, the space available for growth, the considerations of future maintenance and the effects of climate
change. Many trees are removed because the wrong species was planted in the wrong place. Narrower, more confined spaces common in urban areas usually requires smaller, upright trees. Where space allows, larger growing trees should always be specified.

3.37 A range of different species is desirable, including both native and ornamental, as a safeguard against future pests and diseases that may be introduced into the country or that can survive due to climate change.

3.38 Many urban trees are unhealthy and short-lived due to poor ground conditions. To create sustainable conditions, it is essential that trees in hard surfaced areas have proper tree pits constructed with drainage, root cells, root directors etc and that suitable surfaces like tree grills or permeable paving are used around the trees. Trees need a lot of suitable soil to root into otherwise they will not grow properly or provide the design function required.

3.39 The proximity of trees to buildings and services needs to be carefully considered so that roots and canopies do not cause damage to foundations or services including overhead cables. Adequate foundations must be specified and services protected. Further advice on landscaping and trees, please contact the Council's Landscape Design Service.

Public Art

3.40 Art in public places can increase the distinctiveness of a place and enhance the public spaces as part of a development. Public spaces form a major part of people's experiences of a place and therefore can have lasting impressions.

3.41 Public art cannot create quality public realm on its own, but should seek to inform, distract or stimulate by contributing to the overall streetscape.

3.42 Art may be related to the local area through its history, geography or culture. However, this is not necessary and public art should always seek to attract further inward investment, and encourage interest and pride in the local environment. Where necessary interpretation boards should be provided to help the community gain a better understanding of installations.
SECTION TWO
Development Specific Guidance

4. Residential Development Guidance

(Designing for Multiple Dwellings)

4.1 The design of some large-scale residential developments can give the impression of “anywhere estates” that are not representative of the character of a given area or lack any individual identity. To avoid this type of development it is important that proposals for new residential development, or redevelopment for residential uses, should include a range of house types to meet the needs of all sectors of the community.

Proposals should incorporate:

a) the type and colour of materials to be used, design and layout details to reflect scale, character and appearance of the surrounding area information, access, landscaping and massing aspects;

b) that the development is of a scale and density appropriate to the locality/surrounding area; and,

c) evidence that larger scale developments are designed in such a manner as to provide smaller groupings or neighbourhoods of similar character, to encourage variety and diversity in layout.

4.2 The use of repetitive design should be limited. Thoughtful consideration of layouts, housing mix and façade treatments should be employed so that all units within a development have individual characteristics and differ from their neighbouring properties.

Leftover spaces

4.3 Residential layouts should avoid leftover space, which typically provides little benefit or relevance to the residential area. The test of relevance should focus on the positive contribution a space makes to the neighbourhood.

4.4 A space which does not make a positive contribution, such as behind rear gardens, inaccessible corners, over-enclosed corridors should be avoided. The costs of maintenance are not balanced by the benefits, they are frequently under-used and may become prone to anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping. Appropriately designed and integrated open space would eliminate leftover space and optimise resources for the provision of good quality open spaces.

4.5 Developers are strongly encouraged to discuss (early on in the process) their proposals with the Planning Department before submission of a planning application (see Section Three – Pre-application advice).

Residential street design and Designing streets for all

4.6 Vehicles should not necessarily always have priority on roads, especially within residential areas, and safe passage should be provided for
all users. The aim should be to achieve a harmonious mix of user types.

4.7 One way of harmonising user types is to incorporate shared surfaces. In a street with a shared surface, the kerb is absent and pedestrians and vehicles share the same surface. Shared surfaces can:

a) encourage low vehicle speeds;
b) create an environment in which pedestrians can walk without feeling intimidated by traffic;

c) make it easier for people to move around; and,
d) promote social interaction.

4.8 In developments that must have separate pavements for pedestrians, the minimum pavement width should generally be 2m. Additional width should be considered between the footway and a heavily used carriageway, or adjacent to gathering places, such as schools and shops. If highway landscaping or trees are to be incorporated, consideration should be given to how they will be maintained.

Privacy Standards
4.9 In new housing layouts, the following minimum distances will normally be required to safeguard privacy and outlook of primary room windows*:

a) a minimum unobstructed distance of 21m between principal room windows which face each other where buildings exceed single storey;
b) a minimum unobstructed distance of 14m between principal room windows where buildings are single storey; and,
c) where proposed dwellings adjoin developable land, a minimum of half these distances will be required between any principal window and the site boundary, to maintain spacing standards.

4.10 The minimum distance between facing primary windows may be relaxed from these standards where there is no overlooking and adequate levels of daylight and sunlight can be achieved. “No overlooking” means that in one or both facing elevations:

a) there are no windows; or,
b) any windows are of a type normally obscured, such as a bathroom or wc and are likely to remain so as a result of use, planning condition or covenant; or,
c) any facing windows are above eye-level, i.e. at least 1.8m to sills.

4.11 Primary windows facing each other across a public highway may not be required to meet these standards when to do so would be a significant departure from the established built character of the immediate surroundings which it is desirable to maintain.

*A primary room window is defined as the main window in the room of a dwelling where that room is used for considerable periods of relaxation. It can include living and dining rooms, sometimes kitchens but never bedrooms. Secondary rooms are for instance halls, landings, bathrooms, toilets etc.
Flats/Higher Density Development

4.12 Designs for flatted developments are sometimes less successful than designs for individual houses, largely due to their repetitive nature. If part of a mixed-use well-designed and maintained scheme the outcome can be completely different. Particular attention must also be paid to higher density development so that the quality of the design is not lost; this is especially the case for flatted accommodation.

4.13 Designs should relate to an area, and should reflect the context of the development site. The grouping, size and proportion of openings, changes in materials, the form of the roof, detail to the main entrance and articulation of the plan to provide relief to the elevation can all help to add interest and variation to the appearance of a development. See corners (7.2), entrances (7.8), openings (7.10), roof design (7.12), chimneys (7.14), detail and decoration (7.16) for further guidance.

4.14 A maximum 2½ storeys is the general acceptable scale throughout Middlesbrough. There are however, some situations where development in excess of 2½ storeys would be more appropriate, e.g. prominent locations where it is desirable to make an architectural statement. In these cases proposals for buildings over this height will require further detailed supporting information. See corners and tall buildings paragraphs 7.2-7 for further information.

4.15 Parking can often be problematic with flatted or higher density developments. Parking should be carefully integrated to avoid cars dominating the public realm. Rear parking courts can prove unpopular as opposed to on-plot and on-street parking. The use of rear courtyards should support on-plot and on-street parking not replace it.

4.16 Where cars are parked in traditional rear courtyards or squares they should be small ideally not exceeding 10 no. spaces, avoid a sterile appearance, and be easily supervised from adjacent housing, street or courtyard. Further advice on parking can be obtained from the Council’s Environment Services.

4.17 The long-term success of higher density developments often relates to the management of the scheme, an effective ongoing management programme should be in place for all flatted accommodation.

5. Householder / Domestic Development

5.1 It is highly likely in most residents’ lifetime that they will want to modify their house. This is usually in response to changing circumstances, such as additional children, or a desire to generally improve the property.

5.2 Most properties have ‘permitted development’ rights. These rights allow for certain small extensions and alterations to a dwelling without the need to apply for planning permission. These will depend on the type of house, where it is in the town and what kind of development is proposed.

5.3 Not all properties have permitted development rights, it is therefore important that the advice of the Planning Service is sought before undertaking any works to a dwelling.

5.4 Whether planning permission is required or not, certain basic principles should be applied to all types of extension. They are:-

a) Consistent design, so that window styles and proportions and the pitch and design of the roofs match the existing. The inclusion of similar design features, such as bay windows, is encouraged where appropriate. The extension should not look out of place in the
site or in the street and should enhance, not detract, from the character of the area.

b) Consistent materials, ensuring that the same type of brick or roof covering are used. In addition brick features, such as brick banding or brick soldier courses above windows should be consistent.

c) Subservience, all extensions should be of a scale that is appropriate to the existing building and not of an overbearing nature. Development, which would dominate the street scene, is likely to be resisted. Oversized extensions can completely change the character of an area and should be avoided.

d) Consideration of neighbouring properties so that their windows do not become dominated by any extensions and their daylight is not obstructed.

e) The inclusion of all parts of the extension, including gutters, and all other rain water goods, fascia boards, drains and foundations, within your boundary unless you have agreement with your neighbour to do otherwise. Bear in mind that boundary disputes of this nature are civil matters that the Council cannot get involved in.

f) Consider access to the extension to enable it to be built and maintained from your own land. Creation of extensions with elements that are only accessible from neighbouring properties should be avoided, as permission may not always be given for use of their land.

g) Over-sailing (a surface/canopy etc that projects beyond the general face of the main building or wall below) a neighbour’s property or highway should be avoided. Porch roofs, awnings, garage doors, bay windows, balconies or other building elements should not over-sail footways at a height of less than 2.6m. Please note that bay windows are considered an extension of the floor area of the property and may therefore require planning permission.

h) Flat roofs should be avoided, as they are usually inappropriate in design terms. Where the enlarged part of the house has more than one storey, the roof pitch shall, as much as possible, be the same as the original house.

i) Extensions at the front of houses are generally unacceptable in principle as they assume an extremely conspicuous and inappropriate appearance. A limited form of well-designed extension may be acceptable in certain circumstances.

j) Corner plots occupying sensitive locations within streetscenes will require careful attention to design, in order to preserve building lines, appropriate areas of open space and include a level of detailing to avoid blank facades. Also see Corners paras 7.2-3.

k) Privacy is an important principle and is of particular note in relation to first floor extensions, which may overlook primary windows in the neighbouring property. The minimum privacy standards and separation distances detailed in the previous section also apply to extensions.

l) An overbearing impact caused by the presence of an expanse of proposed brickwork is to be avoided, particularly where it impacts on a neighbour’s primary room windows.
m) Borrowing - when designing your extension do not assume that you can take aspect or light from across another person's property or land. They may decide to construct a building or fence, which does not need planning permission and will prejudice that window. You should design your extension with its primary room windows facing over your own land and only secondary room windows facing another person's land (w.c. or hall windows for instance). Primary rooms are where the resident enjoys most of the day for leisure, eating or activity.

5.5 In summary, extensions should not negatively affect neighbouring properties and should not stand out from the main house.

Single Storey Extensions to Rear

5.6 This is the most common type of extension to a house, including conservatories, sunrooms and the like. The smaller examples may not necessarily need planning permission, however, the differing types of extension bring with them, different impacts:-

a) Ground floor extensions can create a particular impact on attached neighbours if located on the shared boundary. This may affect the neighbour's adjoining and principal room window.

b) The solution is to reduce the projection from the house to 3m. If the proposed extension is in excess of this dimension, it will need to be inset from the boundary by a sufficient distance, which is dependent on the roof type (hip or gable), the orientation of the property and the distance the neighbour's principal windows are from the common boundary. Twinning with the neighbour's extension can also solve the problem.

c) Windows on the side elevation of the extension or conservatory, facing onto the neighbour should be discouraged. This will avoid loss of privacy for the adjoining occupier. If the windows are essential, then high level windows or obscure glazing should be considered.

d) On detached houses the same principles apply, though these may be relaxed because there are greater margins around the proposed extension and adjacent neighbours.

e) On terraced houses the logical form of ground floor extension is the stretching of the original offshoot to the rear alleyway boundary. The consequence is the adjoining occupier extends in a back-to-back manner.

Two-Storey Extensions to Rear

5.7 Two storey rear extensions to houses will, more often than not, require planning permission, especially when they are close to a boundary. The greater bulk of these extensions mean that even more care should be taken over their design with particular consideration for the neighbour.

a) Two-storey extensions on semi-detached houses, alongside a common boundary should be discouraged, due to their impact on the neighbour's primary rear room windows. However, the impact can be reduced by the existence of ground floor extensions on the neighbour's house or if they intend to extend in the same way.

b) Two-storey extensions on mid-terraced properties will rarely be acceptable due to the overbearing impact on the adjoining property's windows, where light is often already limited.

c) If excessive in length, a two-storey extension can have a wider impact and therefore should be restricted to no more than 3m in length set off the common boundary by 2.5m.

d) First floor extensions over the footprint of the original kitchen offshoot should be restricted to the original projection of the offshoot, which are generally 3m in length.

e) Windows at first floor level should look down the garden and not be on side elevations, unless they are opaque glazed. In addition, the privacy criteria set out earlier apply.
Side Extensions

5.8 Single storey extensions to the side of houses do not always require planning permission. Where they do, the main consideration is the height and design relative to the neighbour’s windows across the drive. On a corner plot the design is a fundamental issue as the extension is often very prominent.

a) Two-storey or first floor only extensions at the side give rise to issues of overbearing impact on the street scene and the need to prevent terracing between pairs of semi-detached houses.

b) This should be prevented by setting the first floor section of the extension back from the building line by 1m with an associated reduction in the height of the extension relative to the original roof or introducing a personal side access path 1m wide.

c) The extension should be no more than half the width of the original dwelling, this prevents the property becoming out of proportion.

d) Two-storey side extensions to dormer bungalows pose a very difficult design problem, as the stretching of the dormer to the side boundary can ruin the design of the building. The solution is to inset the dormer from the front building line.

Loft Conversions & Dormer Extensions

5.9 Planning permission is not normally required for loft conversions, if the works are entirely internal, however it will be necessary to apply for Building Regulations approval.

5.10 Planning permission is likely to be required where you extend or alter the roof space and it exceeds permitted development limits.

5.11 Dormer extensions to the roof of a house can drastically alter the appearance of the property. Particular care is necessary in their design.

a) Front dormers facing a road will always require planning permission.

b) Rear dormers may not need planning permission depending on whether they meet the restrictions of the permitted development regulations.

c) The general rule is to attempt to minimise the visual impact of the dormer by reducing its scale to that of a roof window, with a pitched roof and the cheeks of the dormer set in from the edge of the roof. Full width flat roofed extensions are to be avoided.

The standard criteria for dormer extensions are:

a) the use of matching materials where appropriate;

b) should be set below the ridge line;
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c) the dormer should not dominate or overtake the rooftopscape of the property.

d) should be set back from the eaves line by an appropriate dimension sufficient to achieve a subordinate appearance; and,

e) any side facing windows in the dormer should be obscure glazed.

Dormer extensions should respect the character of the existing house and the streetscape

Hip to Gable Extensions

5.12 Where a property has a hipped roof, proposals to create a gabled roof will be required to include original materials and design details, such as decorative ridge tiles, wherever possible.

5.13 The extensions should not impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or the uniformity of the street scene. If all properties in the area have hipped roofs a hip to gable extension may not be appropriate.

Roof Windows/Openings

5.14 This applies to velux-type windows and solar panels, where these require planning permission they should meet the following criteria:-

a) they protrude no more than 150mm in height from the roof plane;

b) not above the ridge line;

c) they are positioned in the least intrusive location possible, usually to the rear;

d) they are of an appropriate scale and layout; and,

e) windows on side elevations or in hip to gable extensions will have obscure glazed windows.

Porches

5.15 The addition of porches to properties can substantially affect the character of a street given they are most often to the front; it is therefore important that the design of such additions is appropriate.

5.16 Where a porch needs planning permission it should not be of an excessive size and should not equate to an extension to front primary rooms (e.g. living room). Porches should meet the following design criteria:-

a) should not be of such a size to disrupt an established building line;

b) should not be higher than 3m;

c) positioned at least 2m from the highway; and,

d) should not exceed 3m².

5.17 Where a porch is proposed, which exceeds a 1.5m projection from the front wall of the house, the Council will generally discourage such dimensions. Beyond this dimension, a porch will normally assume a prominent and discordant feature in the building line.

Garages

5.18 Variations in the design and location of domestic garages are too many to be able to describe and advice from the Planning Department should be sought about the need for permission. Where permission is required the following guidelines apply:-
a) If in a detached position away from the house, the garage can impact on the adjoining residents. Consideration should be given to setting the building off the boundary, using hipped not gable roofs and keeping the overall height to a minimum.

b) In a position attached to the house, the same principles apply but care needs to be taken to be able to achieve a workable car hardstanding at least 6m long in association with the garage.

c) The type of materials for the garage is important. Garages should normally have a pitched roof and be constructed of materials to match the adjacent home; prefabricated garages will therefore be discouraged in specific parts of the town, especially in the newer estates or conservation areas.

b) The provision of two car-parking spaces on the plot must be achieved to compensate for the loss of the garage.

**Garage Conversions**

5.19 The conversion of an integral or attached garage to a habitable room needs planning permission in specific parts of the town. It is essential to check with the Planning Department whether this applies to your property before starting work.

5.20 Whether planning permission applies or just a building regulations application, common principles apply:-

a) Matching window details and materials are essential, the windows should be of the same style, form and appearance as the main house and any sills or lintels should be replicated;

b) Appropriate drainage can accommodate rainwater without flooding the highway or using the existing rainwater drains;

b) The layout of the front garden is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area with soft landscaping as well as hardstanding;

c) The advice of the Conservation Team should be sought for alterations to the front of properties in a Conservation Area;

d) Planning permission may be required for a creation of a drive, however even if this is not the case, the consent of the Council’s Highways Department will always be required and they should be contacted directly for further information.

**Parking**

5.22 Parking should be provided within the building curtilage, ideally with cars parked at the side of the house rather than the front. Where the parking is to take place on the frontage, it should be set within a landscaped area. Parking spaces can be provided to the rear of properties within the garden behind the front building line. Parking provided in the form of courtyards or lay-bys will not be acceptable unless specific justification can be provided

5.23 Where parking courtyards or squares are provided they should be an integral part of the design and must not detract from the quality of a development. Their design and layout should be small ideally not exceeding 10 no. spaces, they should avoid a sterile appearance, and ensure that they are overlooked by adjoining buildings. Further advice on parking provision can be obtained from the Council’s Environment Services.
Fences/Walls

5.24 Fences, walls, railings or gates may require planning permission depending on their height or whether there are restrictions in place in a particular area.

Wall, fence and hedging forming a boundary

5.25 Some parts of the town are classed as 'open plan' and this means boundary enclosures are not allowed to the front of the property to ensure an open and uncluttered appearance to the street scene.

5.26 In these cases permission will always be required for a built enclosure such as a fence or wall but this does not apply to planting such as a hedge.

5.27 Special consideration will be given to corner plots where trespass is a problem, however in the middle of a street permanent structures are inappropriate as they detract from the openness. Planting is instead encouraged as an alternative that does not require permission.

Mallowdale, Nunthorpe showing 'open plan' street scene

5.28 In a particularly prominent or open location, such as an open plan estate, railings are often the most appropriate style of boundary treatment as they still allow for views to be achieved. In any case, the most appropriate option will be the least intrusive and should be in keeping with the surrounding area.

5.29 Fences or walls should not obstruct sight lines for moving vehicles; it is therefore advised that fences along the side of a property are reduced in height as they approach the highway. This will also prevent the boundary treatment becoming an overbearing presence in the street scene.

5.30 The advice of the Conservation Team should be sought before any new walls or gates are constructed or original walls removed in a conservation area.

Wind Turbines and Solar Panels

5.31 Some types of wind turbine and solar panel may not require a planning application, depending on their size, position on the roof and/or area. All other types will require planning permission and will need to deal with the following issues:

a) visual impact;
b) noise;
c) vibration;
d) interference (with TV); and,
e) safety.

5.32 It is essential to check with the Planning Service whether planning permission is required before starting any work.

Prominent Wind Turbine

Satellite Antenna

5.33 Satellite dishes or antenna are often required for television coverage, and although a common feature in modern households, in some
circumstances planning permission is required and it is best when they are inconspicuous.

5.34 Applications for satellite antenna should meet the following requirement:-

a) they should be located at the rear of the property, as far as reasonably practicable or alternatively in the least visible location possible;

b) where located at the front of the property no satellite antenna should exceed 100cm in length;

c) there should be no more than two satellite dishes on the front elevation of a property;

d) no satellite equipment should be higher than the ridge height of the building; and,

e) flats have different permitted development rights in relation to satellite dishes; multiple occupiers in one building should make use of shared equipment wherever possible.

6. Non-Residential Development

Retail Development

6.1 The desire to achieve a cohesive or corporate look to a development can often lead to compromises to the fine urban grain of an area, especially for larger scale buildings. It is essential that all development is appropriate to its location; this is especially critical where it abuts an existing property or where it forms part of a wider streetscape. Particular attention should be paid to storey heights, number, size and proportion of openings, positioning of entrances and materials.

Shop fronts

6.2 Planning permission is usually required for developments that materially affect the external appearance of a building. Some minor works will not require planning permission.

6.3 High quality design helps make shops and town centres attractive, lively and commercially successful. Careful design that is sympathetic to the building and well executed in good quality materials will help create a frontage that improves not only the individual shop, but also the town as a whole. Individual design is important, but so is harmony with its surroundings and the appropriateness of the shop front in relation to the building. Individual shop front features should not dominate. The shop front design needs to be seen as part of the building, street and wider area.

6.4 Where an original or period replacement shop front exists, serious consideration should be given to repair and enhancement rather than replacement. Important or traditional architectural features on buildings should not be destroyed or concealed by the installation of new shop fronts wherever possible.
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Fascias

6.5 Fascia boards that are disproportionate in size, or obscure other elements, detract from the quality of the building and should be avoided. Where possible and appropriate, adjacent fascias should line through with neighbouring premises. Fascias should not obscure first floor windows.

6.6 If a shop occupies more than one building, the shop front should emphasise the individual buildings, rather than force a common shop front across very different façades.

Security Shutters

6.8 Security shutters can have a negative impact on how a street looks, especially when premises are closed at night. Internal meshes are preferred, as they provide security but allow window-shopping without blanking the shop front. External solid metal shutters are only acceptable in exceptional circumstances, and existing solid shutters in a locality will not be seen as justification for more. Shutter boxes should be incorporated within the fabric of the building to minimise visual impact.

Stallrisers

6.7 Shop fronts should incorporate a stallriser to form a plinth at ground level. This not only provides a visual base for the building, but also generally improves the proportions of the shop front and compliments the fascia.

Security Bars

6.9 External security bars are not acceptable. If there is a requirement to secure a window opening, internal bars are more appropriate (providing they meet Building Regulations and escape requirements) as they have less impact on the appearance of the street.

Advertising hoardings

6.10 Hoardings and posters are only acceptable when:

a) they respect the scale of their surroundings;

b) they are in scale with other street furniture;

c) they do not impede pedestrians;

d) they have regard to symmetry and architectural features of their location; and,

e) they are smaller in size than 12m by 3m.

For further information on appropriate advertisements, please see Section 8. Advertisement Display.

Industrial/Commercial Development

6.11 Large retail and industrial buildings can sometimes look like large utilitarian buildings of little architectural merit. While functional
requirements are important, the use of appropriate materials and breaking up the scale, massing and roof of the building can reduce the impact of such buildings.

6.12 A well-designed front building elevation can reduce the need for lengths of fencing along frontages and will not only improve the quality of the public realm, but also can improve security.

6.13 New landscaping or the retention of existing trees or hedgerows can also help to screen these large developments and soften their appearance.

7. Detailed Design

7.1 The details of buildings can have a significant impact on its usability, overall appearance and aesthetic quality. A good design can be ruined by poor attention to detail, whereas carefully considered detailing, can add a real sense of quality to a relatively simple design.

Corners

7.2 Buildings that form corners have the opportunity to strengthen a town’s legibility. The design of a building’s corner should relate to its position and the importance of the street on which the plot sits. A prominent building corner can become a landmark/gateway in the town and should be encouraged where appropriate as they offer two active street frontages.

7.3 If the street corner is prominent, it may be appropriate to increase the height of the development to emphasise the junction. On less prominent streets where landmark developments are not so suitable, a strong corner can still help with way finding and definition of streets and routes and should also be exploited where possible. Blank gables should be discouraged as they limit opportunities for natural surveillance and prevent active frontages.

Building height / Tall buildings

7.4 Tall buildings by virtue of their size and prominence have a large impact on a townscape. Tall buildings in the right place, which are sensitively designed can make a positive contribution to an urban area, and can in the right situation act as a beacon of regeneration, stimulate further investment and aid with a town’s legibility. Tall buildings are either buildings that are substantially taller than neighbouring development, or buildings that will have a significant impact on the skyline.
7.5 Any tall development will require a detailed design and access statement to accompany its application, and the information presented must show the proposals in context to demonstrate the impact the proposals will have on the wider area. A physical or 3D model will often be helpful to better demonstrate the affect the introduction or remodelling of a tall building within the town would have.

7.6 Tall buildings should be located in areas that are well connected to public transport due to their intensity of use. Any proposals for tall buildings must consider the wider context, including urban grain, significant views and skylines as well as the local character and context, including the location and setting of any significant buildings or spaces within the town. The design for any tall building must exhibit architectural quality. The design of the base of the tower will be important in terms of streetscape and pedestrian scale, and the development should interact well with its surroundings and make a positive contribution to the associated public realm.

7.7 The environmental affects of a tall building should be assessed, including microclimates, overshadowing etc. The design of the top of the building will be especially important for developments, which will impact on the skyline.

Also see section 4.12 Flats / Higher Density Development.

**Entrances**

7.8 All primary entrances to development should face and be accessed from the primary street or road adjoining the development to increase natural surveillance and overall legibility. Access from rear alleyways should be avoided.

7.9 On public buildings, the entrance should be obvious and easily readable to visitors. Increased proportions, detailing or a change in material can emphasise the location of the main entrance, which will ease movement into the building. Canopies and porches can also emphasise entrances, or provide welcome shelter at front doors (see over hanging note). Provision for signs, advertising, building names etc should be considered as part of the design of a building.

**Openings**

7.10 The openings of a façade greatly affect the appearance of a building. The size, proportion and number of windows will largely depend on the area in which the development will sit.

7.11 In traditional areas, the solid to void ratio or 3:1 would be most appropriate, and as a general rule, openings should reduce in size the higher up a building they are. Dormer windows or bay windows are a useful way of breaking up long elevations if terraces of houses are being proposed.

**Roof Design**

7.12 The size, shape, pitch, detail and materials of a roof can radically impact the design of a development, especially when forming part of a streetscape. Roofs that are overbearing will be
discouraged, and pitched roofs are preferable to flat roofs. Dormer windows and gables can be used to break up long rooflines, and can be used to generate some interest especially along long buildings lines. Details such as chimneys, coping stones, eaves decoration and bargeboards can also add interest where applicable.

7.13 Rooftop plant should be placed away from the perimeter of the building, to minimise its’ impact from the street. The topography of the land should be followed by the rooflines. Roofs should step up or down in accordance with the fall of the land.

Chimneys
7.14 As well as their purpose as a vent for fireplaces or modern gas fires, chimney stacks and their pots can add character to a property and visual interest to the roofscape.

7.15 Where they exist they should be retained when alterations are proposed and in some cases, where extensions are proposed, new ones included.

Detail and Decoration
7.16 Detail and decoration are encouraged in all developments as it can set developments apart and provides added interest to buildings. The list of detail and decoration is enormous, from public art contributions, to string courses and brick specials, and if done in a considered manner can add value to any scheme design.

Materials
7.17 The specification of external materials should be carefully considered, as they will have a major impact on the design of a building. Brick and concrete or slate roof tiles are the prevalent material in Middlesbrough, but other materials such as timber cladding or rendered block work may be welcomed if appropriate.

7.18 A base course of a resilient material may be appropriate in public areas, especially if render is specified as the external finish as this tends to stain. Unfinished concrete or concrete cladding is not acceptable as an external finish. Recycled materials or materials from renewable sources should be considered where possible.

Decking / raised platforms
7.19 Installing decking, or other raised platforms, in your garden may be allowed under permitted development, and would not need an application for planning permission, providing:-

a) the finished floor level is no more than 30cm above the ground; and,

b) together with other extensions, outbuildings etc, the decking or platform cover no more than 50 per cent of the garden area.

7.20 If you are considering installing a raised platform you should consider a possible loss of privacy to neighbours if this provides a potential vantage-point.
Telecommunications

7.21 Permission is not normally required for standard TV equipment, but specialised masts, poles or flag advertisements will need permission.

7.22 Although it is important to make sure your antenna provides adequate reception, it is also important to consider the visual effect of your antenna, for example:

a) an antenna mounted on the roof will be less noticeable than one mounted on a wall;

b) antennas on a wall at the back of the building will usually be less noticeable than on the front of the building;

c) antennas mounted close to the ground in the back garden will be less noticeable to neighbours than ones mounted on poles; and,

d) antennas hidden behind a parapet or a chimney stack may be less noticeable than one mounted on the wall.

Services / AC units / Flues

7.23 Air conditioning units and flues on non-residential buildings will generally be given planning permission so long as they:

a) do not materially change the appearance of the building;

b) avoid oversized mechanical equipment;

c) are installed on secondary elevations or roofs (whichever is least visible) preferably to the rear;

d) avoid excessive projections beyond ridge lines;

e) use matching colours/materials; and,

f) avoid proximity to buildings.

7.24 The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a house is not permitted if:

a) the height of the chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe would exceed the highest part of the roof by 1 metre or more; or,

b) in the case of a house in a conservation area or site of special scientific importance (SSSI), the chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe would be installed on a wall or roof slope which:

o fronts a highway, and

o forms either the principal elevation or a side elevation of the house.

8. Advertisement Display

8.1 A specific area of planning law, the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 deals with advertisement display in its many different forms. The Regulations allow for the display of certain types of minor advertisements, without needing formal consent from the Council. However, these specified classes of advertisements are varied and complex and advice is always available from the Council’s Planning Service.

8.2 As a general guide the Advertisement Regulations requires permission be sought for:

a) The majority of illuminated signs.

b) Advertisements using specialised structures for their display e.g. poster hoardings, free standing panel signs, or advance directional signs (not Council highways signs).

c) High level signs (generally above first floor window sills).
8.3 Separate legislation and consideration applies to advertisements and signs on listed buildings and those in Conservation Areas.

8.4 The Government has given all Councils guidance on the way they must deal with all applications for advertisement consent. Two main factors must be primarily considered and they are:

a) Public amenity, this generally deals with the appearance of advertisement either on the building or in the street scene. For example, the advertisement could be overlarge or located poorly, they could clutter the building or be directly opposite houses. In the appearance of the street, the advertisements could be out of place.

b) Public safety, this generally refers to highways and is concerned with advertisements that may obscure visibility splays at junctions, be a distraction to drivers at specific road junctions or if illuminated may conflict with traffic lights.

8.5 The Council’s own policy on advertisements will also be a material consideration when advertisement applications are being processed.

**General Principles**

8.6 Whether the advertisement is one of the exempt types or needs specific consent, certain principles hold good:

a) It should respect the building on which it is to be displayed. Often simplicity is the key, as the advertisement is an intrinsic part of the overall design of the building.

b) The design and features of the building should be retained and the advertisement should relate to the design, rather than obliterating design features or dominating the building.

c) Proliferation of signs is to be avoided. This clutter makes the building look untidy and out of place in any group of buildings.

d) Unsightly and over-sized, mass produced box signs are generally inappropriate, they are not tailored to the building and often impose upon the building.

e) Purely commercial advertisements, which do not fulfil a functional role (the name of the shop) are often unnecessary and in conjunction with other advertisements lead to clutter.

f) A much more elegant advertisement can be created by using individual lettering and thus reveal the original brickwork or stonework on the building. This is particularly relevant to historic buildings.

**General Policy Approach**

8.7 The context within which an advertisement is displayed is the starting point for the Council’s policy:

a) Within shopping areas, shop signs are an accepted feature and these contribute to the vitality of the area. Such areas can also contain signs not related to individual building such as bus shelters and litterbins and these also add to the vitality of the area.

b) Within commercial office and industrial areas, advertisements are also appropriate in order to identify the functions of the buildings. The signs here will be expected to be more reserved since they are not intended to ‘compete’ with other neighbours, as they do shop signs in shopping areas.

c) In residential areas, certain advertisements can be inappropriate, especially when illuminated. Such advertisements would affect the amenity of occupiers who, for example, live opposite.

**Specific Policy Approach**

**Shops and Offices**

8.8 Fascia signs on shops and offices (i.e. Building Societies, Estate Agents, etc.) are the
commonest types of advertisement. These signs should generally:

a) Be only on the front elevation;
b) Be below the first floor window sills;
c) Align with fascia signs on the adjoining properties unless original architecture dictates otherwise;
d) Be lettered in proportion to the fascia itself;
e) Have appropriate illumination with fixings that are discreet in nature;
f) Include individually applied letters wherever possible;
g) Not include excessive illumination, which may cause a loss of amenity or risk to public safety.

8.9 Signs on uses operating above the ground floor shop/office should generally be located as close to the ground floor fascia level as possible.

8.10 Projecting Signs should generally:

a) Be located at fascia level;
b) Relate in scale and design to the premises on which they are displayed;
c) Not exceed 1m projection from the face of the building; and,
d) Maintain an adequate clearance above the highway (2.45m).

Industrial and Warehouse Premises

8.11 Signs on Industrial and Warehouse premises should:

a) Relate in scale and design to the building; and,
b) Not include unnecessary illumination or moving parts.

Petrol Filling Stations and Car Dealerships

8.12 Fascia signs on petrol filling stations and car dealerships should:

a) Relate in scale and design to the building;
b) Be no larger than existing fascias;
c) Be lettered in proportion to the fascia itself;
d) If illuminated should be to a level considered acceptable by the Council in the interests of highway safety and public amenity; and,
e) Not include unnecessary illumination or moving parts.

8.13 Projecting signs should generally:

a) Not exceed 1m projection from the façade of the building;
b) Maintain an adequate clearance above the highway;
c) If illuminated should be to a level considered acceptable by the Local Planning Authority in the interests of highway safety and public amenity.

8.14 Freestanding signs should be:

a) Carefully sited in relation to the development itself and to nearby housing to avoid compromising the amenities of surrounding residential occupiers; and,
b) Of a reasonable size and scale to avoid dominating the street scene (pylon signs should be no higher than the fascias of canopies).

Over cluttered forecourt advertisement display

Street Furniture

8.15 Advertisements on street furniture, and bus shelters within shopping areas are
appropriate, in principle. They should however be:-

a) In scale with the structure on which it is located.
b) In shopping centres and on major roads only and not in residential areas.

**Hoardings, Posters and Freestanding Poster Adverts**

8.16 These are only acceptable when they:-

a) do not assume a prominent appearance;
b) respect the scale of their surroundings;
c) are in scale with other street furniture;
d) do not impede pedestrians;
e) have regard to symmetry and architectural features of their location; and,
f) in the case of super hoardings such as the 96 sheet large hoarding adverts these are not of a scale in keeping with the urban environment of Middlesbrough.

**Flag and Balloon Adverts**

8.17 These are only acceptable when they:-

a) are located in shopping, commercial or industrial areas;
b) are on a site of sufficient size to allow display without an impact on adjoining premises; and,
c) in the case of balloons, they are not a permanent display.
SECTION THREE
Making an Application

9. The Application Process

Pre-application Advice

9.1 If you are not sure whether your plans require planning permission, an informal discussion with a planning officer from the Development Control Team can often help. However, the complexity of planning regulations often prevent officers giving definitive answers over the phone, particularly if you do not have set dimensions or details to hand. Sending a sketch of the works you propose is usually the best way to gain advice, particularly as you will receive written confirmation of the Council’s position.

9.2 For larger more complex projects, pre-application meetings are strongly encouraged to try and establish a measure of agreement on design issues and principles for any development.

9.3 Pre-application discussions will help you better understand what the Council’s aspirations for the site/building are, the potential issues that will need to be addressed and what is likely to be approved or refused in a given location. Successful pre-application discussions can often ease the application process, help the Council in dealing with an application in a timely manner and can save on design fees by limiting the need to change a scheme during the course of an application. There is no charge for this planning advice; meetings can be booked by calling the Development Control Team on 01642 729377.

Public Inspection of Applications

9.4 All information submitted in a planning application is open to inspection and will be used in publicly available reports. The Freedom of information Act 2005 allows access to this information.

Community Involvement

9.5 Public involvement is a key element in a vibrant, open and participatory democracy and leads to outcomes that better reflect the views and aspirations of, and meet the needs of, the wider community.

9.6 Middlesbrough Council’s Statement of Community Involvement sets out the degree of involvement that the community and other stakeholders can expect in the taking of decisions on development proposals and future planning strategy.

9.7 Middlesbrough Council will notify neighbours of the submission of planning applications adjacent to them; wider notification
will be required for larger scale developments, or in sensitive areas. Proposals that are likely to be controversial will also require additional consultation. Comments received from the public will be fed into the planning process.

Siting of Public Notices

9.8 For further details, Middlesbrough's Statement of Community Involvement can be downloaded from the Council's web-site at:

www.middlesbrough.gov.uk

Design and Access Statement

9.9 Clause 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications have a statement about the design principles and concepts that have been applied to it (excluding householder, change of use, tree and advertisement applications). The larger and more complex the development, the more information will be required.

9.10 Applications for planning permission for larger scale developments should be able to show that they have taken account of the need for good design in their proposals, and have had regard to the relevant development plan design policies and guidance. A design statement is a written and illustrated explanation of how you have taken account of these considerations. Statements should include a written description and justification of the proposals.

9.11 As the name suggests, the statement should describe details of the design and the accessibility of the proposals. The ‘Design’ requirement should cover details of proposed use, site coverage, layout, scale, landscaping, and appearance. ‘Access’ should cover both vehicular and transport links, as well as inclusive access; i.e. a description of how users can get to and move through the development regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.

Building Regulations

9.12 Applicants should check whether they need Building Regulations approval for any proposal. Where required, this is an entirely separate application process, governed by separate legislation, from the Planning system.

Further advice about Building Regulations can be obtained by contacting the Council’s Building Control Service on 01642 729485.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) Approval Body

9.13 This is a parallel process to planning permission, rather like a consent under the Building Regulations, the SAB will become a statutory consultee to the Local Planning Authority.

9.14 Further advice about the SuDs Approval Body can be obtained by contacting the Council’s Sustainable Development officer on 01642 728156
10. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Standards

For up-to-date advice and information on car parking standards please contact the Council’s Transport and Design Services on tel: 01642 728175.

Building for Life

Building for Life promotes design excellence and creates best practice in the house building industry. There are 20 criteria against which a development is assessed; development in Middlesbrough should be aiming to achieve a silver standard as a minimum (i.e 14/20) to ensure homes and neighbourhoods are well designed.

For further information see Building for Life website:
www.buildingforlife.org

Lifetime Homes

Houses built to Lifetime Homes standards provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, from young families to older people and individuals with a temporary or permanent physical impairment.

What makes a Lifetime Home is the incorporation of 16 design features that together create a flexible blueprint for accessible and adaptable housing in any setting. The Lifetime Homes concept increases choice, independence and longevity of tenure, vital to individual and community well being.

For further information see Lifetime Homes website:
http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk

Space standards

English Partnership minimum internal floor areas in relation to bedrooms and occupancy are:
- 1 Bedroom / 2 person homes 51m²
- 2 Bedroom / 3 person homes 66m²
- 2 Bedroom / 4 person homes 77m²
- 3 Bedroom / 5 person homes 93m²
- 4 Bedroom / 6 person homes 106m²

For further information see English Partnership’s website:
www.englishpartnerships.co.uk

BRE Standards

Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is the most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings and sets the standard for best practice in sustainable design. There are specific BREEAM versions for buildings types, e.g. BREEAM Industrial, or BREEAM Healthcare. All development in Middlesbrough should achieve a BREEAM rating of good or excellent (unless it is covered by a Code for Sustainable home rating).

For further information see BREEAM website:
www.breeam.org

Code for Sustainable Homes

Code for sustainable homes are standards set out to ensure the UK’s housing stock becomes more energy and water efficient, produces few carbon emissions and are better for the environment. The code uses a 1 to 6 star rating to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a new home. A home achieving 6 stars will have achieved the highest sustainability rating. Current legislation states that by 2016, all new homes will have to be zero carbon rated (level 6). There are intermediate targets to meet before then, but all new residential development should achieve a minimum level 3 by 2010, whilst aiming for levels 4/5/6.

Sustainable Sourcing and Manufacture of materials

Greenbook guide to specification published by BRE A* to C ratings for sustainable sourcing and manufacture of materials

For further information, see BRE website:
Middlesbrough’s Open Spaces Needs Assessment (MOSNA)
The MOSNA provides an audit of the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the town, and tries to predict future requirements.

For further details contact the Council’s Landscape Design Service on tel: 01642 729334

One Planet Living
Middlesbrough Council and the Middlesbrough Partnership have adopted the One Planet Living sustainability model following a year long public consultation process. In November 2011, Middlesbrough was endorsed as a One Planet Living town. The supporting Action Plan with useful information can be found on the Council’s webpage: www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/oneplanetliving

Middlesbrough’s approach to One Planet Living will make the town more sustainable and help improve the local environment and well-being of local people. The framework is built around 10 principles, which help translate the concept of sustainability into practical actions that should bring benefits to participating partners and developers. For more information about One Planet Living please contact the Council’s Environmental Sustainability Team on tel: 01642 243183 (Mon-Tues) or 01642 728731 (Wed-Fri).

References

CABE
The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), which has been merged with the Design Council, is the Government’s advisor on architecture, urban design and public space. It provides advice and guidance on many aspects of the built environment most of which is available online.

For further information see CABE’s website: www.cabe.org.uk

Urban Design Compendium
The Urban Design Compendiums provide guidance on urban design, the principles of it, how they can be applied and the processes, which lead to successful places.

For further information see the website: www.urbandesigncompendium.co.uk

Manual for Streets
The Manual for Streets is a joint publication produced by the Department for Transport, and Communities and Local Government. It aims to assist in the creation of high quality residential streets where people want to live and spend time in, and are not just transport corridors. It gives a high priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport.

For further information, see the DFT website: www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets

Building in context – New development in historic areas
This publication has been produced CABE and English Heritage. Its purpose is to stimulate a high standard of design when development takes place in historically sensitive contexts. It aims to do this by example, showing a series of case studies in which achievement is far above the ordinary and trying to draw some lessons both about design and about the development and planning process.

For further information this document can be downloaded from English Heritage at www.helm.org.uk
**Glossary**

**Accessibility**
The ease with which a building, place or facility can be reached / entered by people of all ages and levels of disability.

**Active Frontage**
A frontage to a development that contains windows, entrance doors, shop fronts etc; openings that allow views in and out of buildings to form a connection between the life inside a building and the street it faces. Active frontages bring streets to life and vitality to a street as well as encouraging natural surveillance.

**Adaptability**
The capacity of a building or space to respond to changing social, technological, and economical or market conditions. An adaptable space can often be more sustainable, as it can respond to changes in use and changing circumstances of the user.

**Biodiversity**
A measure of the number and range of species of plants and wildlife and their relative abundance in a location. Environments that support a range of wildlife are more sustainable than areas that only support a few species and collectively can create green corridors through urban areas.

**Building Control**
A Council service, which ensures building works, are in compliance with current building regulations.

**Building line**
The line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street.

**Built environment**
The entire compilation of buildings, neighbourhoods and towns/cities with their infrastructure.

**Context**
The setting of a site or area.

**Curtilage**
Usually identified as the property boundary/area immediately surrounding a house or dwelling.

**Defensible space**
A public and semi-public space that is deemed ‘defensible’ through surveillance and maintenance.

**Density**
The floorspace of a building or buildings or some other unit measure in relation to a given area of land.

**Design and access statement**
The statement submitted to the local authority as part of a planning application setting out the design principles adopted in relation to the site and its wider context.

**Desire line**
An imaginary line linking facilities or places which people would find it convenient to travel between easily.

**Development control**
The service within the local authority, which controls whether (and with what conditions) a proposal for development, should be granted planning permission.

**Façade**
The principal elevation or frontage of a building.

**Fenestration**
The positioning of windows on a façade.

**Legibility**
The degree to which a place can be easily understood and moved through by its users.

**Mixed use**
A mix of complementary uses within a building, a site or within a particular area.

**Natural surveillance**
The opportunity for spaces to be overlooked from inside a building. The presence of windows on elevations addressing open spaces and streets, discourages anti-social behaviour and makes streets and spaces feel safer.

**Permeability**
The degree to which a place has the variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.
The more permeable a place is, the easier it is to move through.

**Public Realm**
Parts of the built environment (whether public or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are Council produced guidance, which sit below the local development framework and provide more detailed information on specific aspects of development. The contents of an SPD will be taken into account when considering any planning applications relevant to it.

**Sustainable Development**
Defined by the Brundtland Commission (1987) as ‘Development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations’.

**Street Furniture**
Structures placed within the built environment such as bus shelters, litter bins, seating, lighting and signs. The design and appearance of these structures can have a marked effect on the ambience of any street scene.

**Topography**
A description or representation of artificial or natural features on or off the ground.

**Urban Design**
The art of making places. Urban design involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks and processes, which facilitate successful development.

**Urban Grain**
The pattern of the arrangement and 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, or large and infrequent.

**Vernacular**
The original method of construction of a building which used locally available resources and traditions to address local needs.

**View**
What is visible from a particular point.

**Vista**
An enclosed view, usually a long and narrow one.

**Visual Clutter**
The uncoordinated arrangement of street furniture, signs and other features.
Contacts

✈ For further details on planning applications, please contact Development Control:
T: 01642 729377
E: developmentcontrol@middlesbrough.gov.uk

✈ For further details on Building Regulations, please contact Building Control:
T: 01642 729485
E: buildingcontrol@middlesbrough.gov.uk

✈ For further details on planning policy and the Local Development Framework, please contact Planning Policy:
T: 01642 729065
E: planningpolicy@middlesbrough.gov.uk

✈ For further details on highway design and specification, car parking and SuDs drainage, please contact Traffic Engineering:
T: 01642 728175/728156
E: Trafficmanagement@middlesbrough.gov.uk

✈ For further details on landscaping standards and the Open Spaces Needs Assessment, please contact Landscape Design Services:
T: 01642 729334

For general planning information please contact:

Planning Services,
PO Box 504,
Civic Centre,
Middlesbrough,
TS1 9FY
www.middlesbrough.gov.uk
ADOPTED VERSION

We will try to make a summary of this document available in other languages. Braille or large print on request.

سوف نحاول أن نجعل ملخص هذه الوثيقة متوفرًا بلغات أخرى الأولى والثانية. كبيرة عند الطلب.

تم تقديم كتب التكنولوجيا الفائقة، وذلك في مركز معمال الفنون الإبداعية، كما يمكن الحصول عليها من خلال طلبها.

أيضاً، قد يتم توفير نسخة باللغة الفرنسية أو الإنجليزية، أو النسخة الأصلية باللغة العربية.