



Chapter 7: Designing new development

7. Designing new development

The aims of this chapter

- To explain what is expected in the design of new development.
- To explain how to use the assessment of context to inform design.
- To define “poor design” in the context of National Policy.
- To provide guidance on how to design development that cannot fully reflect local context.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with:

- Local Distinctiveness – Chapter 3.
- Understanding Significance – Chapter 4.
- Understanding Context – Chapter 6.
- Examples of Best Practice – Appendix L.

“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively for people”.

National Planning Policy Framework

Introduction

- 7.1 In order to secure good quality, well-designed and sustainable places, design should be informed by an understanding of the overall character of an area, particularly the elements that contribute to local distinctiveness, and also an understanding of the significance of heritage assets of all types and the importance of their setting.
- 7.2 The following design guidance does not aim to be comprehensive, because some developments by their nature cannot conform to this general guidance, such as wind farms or other power generating plant (because their design and scale is influenced by functional and highly engineered requirements). Also there will be buildings that similarly are of a scale so great that they could not reflect local distinctiveness. If the function of these developments is of such great public benefit that it outweighs the harm caused to their natural and built environment, development could be acceptable providing adequate mitigation is provided. This may include landscape screening in addition to ensuring the design is of the highest quality that is possible.
- 7.3 In accordance with national planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the design of development should:
- a) Ensure places function well and are fit for purpose;
 - b) Create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses;
 - c) Create safe and accessible environments;
 - d) Add to the overall quality of an area.

- e) Respond to local character and reflect the identity of local surroundings.
- f) Reinforce local distinctiveness and or establish a strong sense of place.
- g) Be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and landscape design.

Sensitive Locations

7.4 In line with the NPPF, this guidance does not impose architectural styles or prescribe detail for certain elements of design. In the determination of applications in all locations, the council will rigorously assess scale, density, massing, height, materials, landscape, layout and access. In addition for development in sensitive locations, detailed issues of style and construction will be carefully considered. Only development of the highest quality will be accepted in sensitive locations.

7.5 Locations that are considered “sensitive” include the following:

- a) Within the World Heritage Site, its Buffer Zone or otherwise affecting the setting of the World Heritage Site;
- b) On the site of, or affecting the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- c) Within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of a Listed Building;
- d) Within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area;
- e) Within or affecting the setting of a Historic Park and Garden;
- f) On the site of, or affecting the setting of a Registered Battlefield;
- g) Within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- h) On the site of, or affecting the setting of a Non-designated Heritage Asset;
- i) Within Special Landscape Areas;
- j) At countryside edges, and particularly on the approach to the main settlements of the district by road, waterway and strategic footpaths.

7.6 Details of the implications of these designations are included briefly in the introduction, and discussed further in Appendix C – Designation Types.

Design Objectives

7.7 Once an analysis of constraints and opportunities has been undertaken, as discussed in Chapter 6 – Understanding Context (which draws on the assessment of the site; its environmental context; and the planning context),



Listed buildings in Knaresborough Conservation Area – a sensitive location.

the designer should set out design objectives in consideration of the developer’s requirements.

7.8 These objectives may be fairly obvious, and in many cases all that is needed is the preparation of a Design and Access Statement, in which the following elements of design should be addressed: Use; Amount; Layout; Scale; Appearance; Landscape; and Access.

7.9 Where the development is of a large or complex site, the urban design objectives that were set out in the guidance entitled ‘By Design – Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice’ which remains a useful template.

1. Character – a place with its own identity. Respond to landform and existing character.
2. Continuity and enclosure – a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished. Development to define streets and public spaces.
3. Quality of the Public Realm – a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas. Development to provide connected functional and attractive open and green spaces, well designed street furniture or public art, streets and spaces that are overlooked.
4. Ease of movement – a place that is easy to get to and move through. Layout to provide a network of connected spaces and routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, and to increase accessibility to public transport.

5. Legibility – a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand. To use buildings or features to reinforce the character of routes and at corners to enhance legibility, to maintain or enhance views or vistas.
6. Adaptability – a place that can change easily. To have flexible layouts and building design.
7. Diversity – a place with variety and choice. To create a mix of uses, diversity of housing types and tenure.

Components of Design

- 7.10 Whether there is a formally laid out set of Design Objectives, or a few short paragraphs in a Design and Access Statement, the following Components of Design must be carefully considered in all cases, and design of development should meet the objectives set out below.

Layout

- 7.11 The layout is to take account of the Constraints and Opportunities as appraised in the survey of the site, for example, the retention of existing buildings of interest or merit, important trees, hedges, walls, spaces, views, water courses or features, and make provision for overhead wires, drains or easements across the site.
- 7.12 The siting of new buildings should respect the “grain” of the existing settlement, which comprises building lines, orientation, the pattern of buildings and spaces between them, and the ratio of building to plot size.
- 7.13 Landscape design is integral to the development of most sites. Large developments, particularly at the edges of settlements, might require landscape mitigation to make the development acceptable. (This would usually be determined through a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment). Even if in a non-sensitive area it is important to ensure that a landscape strategy for a large site is set out at an early stage of design. With the exception of very tight infill developments or minor development works, it is imperative to integrate landscape design into the layout. Retro-fitting planting into the spaces left over is usually unsuccessful, particularly as often those spaces may not be capable of accommodating vegetation of a scale appropriate to the scheme or location.
- 7.14 For more information, see the council’s Landscape Design Guide, particularly Chapter LDG2.1.



Area of mainly detached houses of generous proportions. Houses set behind deep front gardens, which in conjunction with spaces between houses accommodate the large trees and shrubs that contribute to the essential quality of the Duchy. Potential scope for dwelling designed to reflect coach house set well back and retain trees.



Properties typical to this part of the conservation area.



Gardens to side of houses are often generous in this part of the conservation area.



Buildings glimpsed through openings in frontage planting common to the area.

7.15 The council recognises the importance of green infrastructure, which is defined as a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life. Proposals for development should make the most of opportunities to improve existing and create new green infrastructure. Open space on a development site has the opportunity to provide many functions, if careful consideration is given early in the design process. Reference should be made to the council's Green Infrastructure Guide.



Avenue of large street trees, grass verges and front boundary hedges contribute to the character and quality of the environment.

7.16 Highway design has in the past all too often dictated the layout of developments. Recognising this, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) produced the documents 'Manual for Streets 1 and 2, '(MfS). MfS1 does not set out new legislation, but is written to show how the design of residential streets can be enhanced. It also advises on how street design can help create better places – places with local distinctiveness and identity. In designing new developments, the buildings, spaces and landscape should be arranged to form good urban design and the roads then fitted between them. Streets should be designed to create places of good quality, they should form attractive and well-connected permeable street networks.



An existing highway with strong identity: Westgate, a narrow enclosed street curving gently uphill, which opens out to Ripon Market Place.

- 7.17 The layout of an area can have a significant impact on crime against property (buildings and cars) and pedestrians. Prevention of crime and enhancement of community safety is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Home Office in conjunction with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published a very useful document entitled *Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention (2004)*, which gives guidance on how to design out crime and make places safer. A safe urban structure has few sides of the buildings exposed to the public realm, provides “active frontages” of overlooked routes and focuses people onto a small number of well-used routes. Spaces must have a function and a sense of ownership to be successful neighbourhoods.
- 7.18 The layout of development should protect the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets. It may not be immediately apparent that development would affect the setting of a heritage asset, although the research for understanding context should indicate the presence of important heritage assets. More information can be found in Chapter 2 – Identifying the Setting of Heritage Assets and Chapter 4 – Understanding Significance. The understanding of the asset affected should set the constraints for new development. Specialist advice may be required.
- 7.19 The spa waters of the district are an economic asset, although water itself is not a heritage asset, its existence is intrinsic to the development of Harrogate and Ripon as spa towns. Without the waters there would be no associated

heritage assets, and consequently it is important that they are protected. The extraction of the waters is encouraged, provided there is no adverse effect on the environment and any development conforms to government and Local planning policy. The design of the layout of new development should not prejudice the use of the district’s spa waters. A map showing known springs and wells is included in Appendix N – Archaeological interest in the Harrogate district.

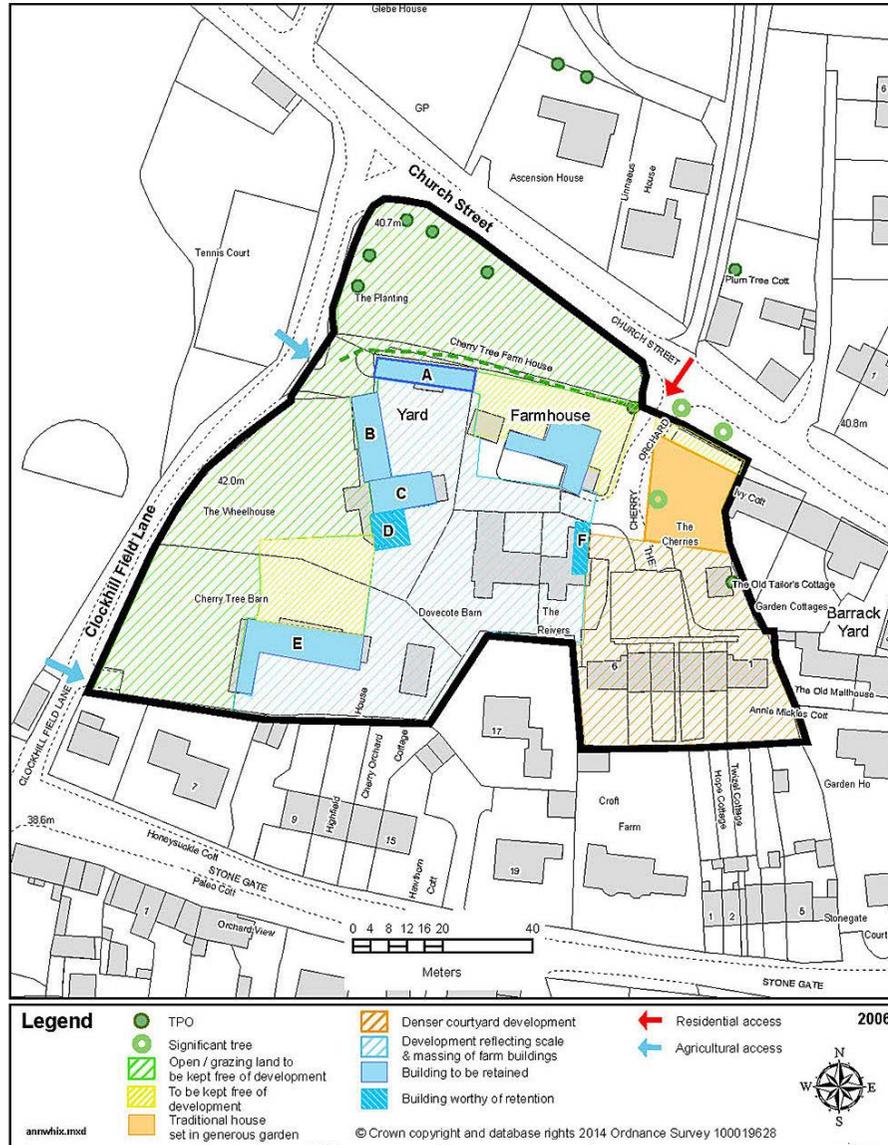


St. John's Well on The Stray.

Responding to Local Character

- 7.20 In order to respond to local character and reinforce local distinctiveness, the layout of new development should be designed to:
- Conserve heritage assets on the site, protect and enhance their setting, and the setting of heritage assets outside the site that would be affected by the proposals;
 - Reflect the landscape character, the landscape setting and context of the locality;
 - Preserve trees, or other landscape features that contribute to local character;
 - Protect important views within the confines of the settlement;
 - Reflect the regularity and density of existing street pattern, including passages and courts;
 - Reflect the size and frequency of open space;
 - Reflect traditional plot sizes and position buildings in the plots to reflect existing development;
 - Respect the scale and density of buildings in relation to the street width;
 - Reflect the alignment and spacing of surrounding buildings;
 - Arrange properties to reflect buildings locally, for example in rows, terraces, or detached buildings.

CONCEPT PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT AT CHERRY TREE FARM AND WEST FARM, WHITLEY



First stage in the design process before in depth consideration of urban design including individual building locations and forms.

- k) Arrange buildings to relate to the topography similar to other buildings in the settlement;
- l) Reflect the orientation of existing locally distinctive buildings.
- m) Ensure that new spaces reflect the character of those in the context of the site, whether formal public places, streets, gaps between buildings, or gardens;
- n) Reflect the shape of existing spaces – open, narrow, winding, or straight;
- o) Enclose space either with buildings, boundary walls, railings or hedges to reflect local tradition;
- p) Maintain the tranquillity of an area by placing development that would generate noise away from sensitive receptors, or by mitigation through shielding with trees, mounds or built form.

Designing Sustainable Places

- 7.21 In addition to responding to local character, or where local character is of poor quality, in order to create a place of good quality, the layout should be designed to:
- a) Maximise the benefit of existing key open spaces and create linkages to and between them;
 - b) Maximise the landscape, visual and wildlife amenity of a water course;
 - c) Minimise the potential for flooding and maximise the opportunities of Sustainable Drainage Systems;
 - d) Provide focal points, buildings or landscape features, as visual stops to vistas;
 - e) Create views to reflect those in the existing settlement, or in a new place, create a variety of views, long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled or wide as appropriate;
 - f) Maximise the views resulting from topography, or out of the settlement;
 - g) In a rural location, consider how the site relates to open countryside;
 - h) Minimise the impact of nearby communications including roads, railways or canals that would affect the amenity of occupants;
 - i) Maintain or enhance the amenity of neighbours. Place buildings so that they do not overshadow or overbear, and maintain privacy levels;

- j) Provide good amenity standards for the occupants of the proposed development;
- k) Ensure safe places by providing active frontages to streets, paths and public spaces, and defensible private space;
- l) Create links to strategic pedestrian and cycle routes;
- m) Ensure that vehicles will not dominate spaces, put pedestrians and cyclists first, and place parking in safe, but not visually dominant, locations;
- n) On larger sites, create a hierarchy of roads;
- o) Minimise traffic or industrial noise by careful placing and orientation of development, and through shielding with trees or mounds.

Building Forms

- 7.22 The form of buildings is integral to the design of the layout, and to ensure that the layout results in locally distinctive design. The designer should consider not just the form of an individual building, but how it relates to neighbouring buildings and the composition they jointly create.
- 7.23 It is important to ensure that the overall massing (the height and bulk) of built form is appropriate to the context, and that the proportions of the buildings (height, depth and frontage width) reflect those in its immediate context, are locally distinct, and where this is impracticable or undesirable are pleasing in their own right.
- 7.24 Whilst they may appear to be matters of detail, chimneys, parapets, overhanging eaves and so on, can make a substantial difference to a scheme. These elements of form contribute to local distinctiveness and add to the interest of the sky line.
- 7.25 Whilst generally, building massing and form should reflect local distinctiveness, there are occasions where it is appropriate to make a statement in order to contribute to good urban design, or where there is adequate area to provide a setting to a particularly grand building. Only in exceptional circumstances where a building cannot for example be constructed in smaller parts to reflect local distinctiveness, but provides such a substantial public benefit, would incongruity in building mass and form be acceptable. In such cases, it is important to engage in pre-application discussions with the council's planning service.



Building form and proportions reflect those adjacent. Building materials traditional to the area are used, but design of elevations is contemporary. Overall the development is a positive contribution to the streetscene.

- 7.26 Buildings should be designed to:
- a) Contribute to the spatial character of the area;
 - b) Reflect the scale and size of similar types in the area. Or where there are no matching types, as appropriate reflect local buildings that result from particular economic activities, or historic land ownerships;
 - c) Respect existing uniformity of scale and size. Or where there is a high degree of variation of height for example, new buildings should offer the same degree of articulation in the street scene. However, where there is an atypical building in the street, this should not be mimicked unless it would contribute to good urban form;
 - d) Be of a scale necessary to provide a landmark, give prominence to an important corner or as a stop to a designed vista, where beneficial to urban design;

- e) Reflect the property arrangement of the area, for example arrange properties in rows having some variation, or in terraces all of the same size, or form multiple properties as detached buildings;
- f) Reflect the variation of building forms and grouping. For example in a rural village the grouping of two storey buildings and single storey buildings of varying size contribute to the richness of urban grain;
- g) Reflect the traditional form of buildings, derived from their plan form and roof shapes. Use simple forms where buildings are of basic rectangular plan form with dual pitched roofs. Or where existing buildings exhibit projecting gables or other prominent features, reflect that complexity of form;
- h) Reflect the local orientation to the street, eaves or gable on;
- i) Provide interest in the skyline to reflect local distinctiveness.

7.27 The council encourages good contemporary design. In non-sensitive locations, if the position of a building, its mass and scale, and additionally the spaces about it respect local character, new building form could deviate from traditional form. For example a new detached house set sufficiently away from its neighbours could be of linked mono-pitched or flat roofed blocks, or introduce curved facades, provided its overall mass and scale were appropriate to context.



Contemporary house of massing that respects its context in a suburban area that has considerable variety of form, building materials and style.

External Appearance of Buildings

- 7.28 The study of the context of new development will illustrate what materials, architectural styles and features contribute to local distinctiveness. In sensitive locations the external treatment of a building should reflect, not necessarily mimic, features of existing traditional buildings that contribute to the character of the area.
- 7.29 Good contemporary design is encouraged in sensitive areas. If the position of a building, and its mass and scale reflect local character, the designer can take the opportunity to deviate from certain aspects of local distinctiveness. It is important to ensure that the development respects local character sufficiently to ensure that it does not become incongruous in its context. This therefore relies on sensitive design.
- 7.30 For example, provided the palette of materials is appropriate to the surroundings, the arrangement of fenestration need not reflect the traditional symmetrical placement of windows of the same size. Or different materials could be used together on one building to provide an interesting composition, provided each material is appropriate to context.
- 7.31 The function of the building should be expressed in its external appearance even if of a similar scale and form to other building types. For example an office block should appear differently to residential buildings. The ratio of glazing to solid will be different, the use of brise soleil (external sun shading) may be necessary to regulate temperature, the entrance is likely to be wider and focus on a reception point, and so on.
- 7.32 In order to respond to local character and reinforce local distinctiveness, the external appearance of new buildings should be designed to:
- a) Be sympathetic to its surroundings, whether reflecting neighbouring buildings, the vernacular or incorporating contemporary design;
 - b) Use materials that reflect and reinforce local character;
 - c) Utilise building materials in a similar ratio to context. For example where the majority of buildings are of brick and only few are of render, brick should be the dominant material in the new development;
 - d) Reflect the uniformity of appearance, or provide variety where there exists a high degree of variation. Pay regard to the differing use of

materials for different building types, outbuildings for example may be of field cobbles with pantile roofs, whilst houses are of dressed stone with slate roofs;

- e) Apply materials in a manner that respects local techniques and traditions. The vernacular stems from the materials and techniques available to the builders of the past;
- f) Ensure construction details including roof overhangs, gable treatment or chimneys, reflect local distinctiveness, but in all cases they should be consistent with the building style and proportions;
- g) Represent a confident and well resolved design;
- h) Have well-balanced elevations, using consistent proportions and style throughout;
- i) Accurately reflect the predominant architectural styles in terms of proportions of openings, ratio of opening to wall, general arrangement of elevations, particularly the position of the main entrance door, where contemporary treatment is not appropriate;
- j) Reflect traditional building orientation, where ratio of window to wall is highest on the southern front and very limited on the northern side and gables;
- k) Ensure that architectural features and proportions are used consistently where historic styles are emulated. Too often a lack of understanding of architectural history results in a combination of features from different eras (commonly referred to as pastiche, lacking the essential design qualities);
- l) Use a style consistent with the scale and standing of the building. For example a small cottage should not have windows suited to a more pretentious villa;
- m) Utilise particular features to provide interest and articulation to the street scene to reflect local character. For example in Harrogate, a bay or tower at street corners, or half timbering to gables;
- n) Orientate the buildings to overlook open space.

- 7.33 All of these elements are critical to the provision of high quality architecture. Unsuitable choice and application of materials, inconsistent use of proportions, displeasing arrangement of openings and inappropriate detailing can all result in development of poor design, which would not be acceptable. There are some building types for which many of the above points are not relevant, however in all cases the quality of the materials and detailing, and the composition of the elevations should be to the highest possible standards.



Building set back from pavement edge and having very horizontal emphasis and clad in non-traditional materials at upper level. All elements result in a building incongruous in its context.

At the corner of the same street, a new development designed to reflect local distinctiveness.

Landscape Design – Hard and Soft

- 7.34 As noted above, landscape design is integral to the development of most sites, and it is very important to assimilate space for landscape design into the layout. This is particularly important when landscape mitigation is required to ensure the development does not detrimentally impact on landscape character. Landscape design should respect and build on local landscape distinctiveness and help to address any relevant existing issues in the landscape. The following advice relates to study of context, and the constraints and opportunities as appraised in the survey of the site. For detailed advice on design see the council's Landscape Design Guide.

- 7.35 In order to respond to local character and reinforce local distinctiveness, the landscape design for new development should be designed to:
- Reflect the characteristics of the landscape within the context of development. Respond to the contribution of vegetation to the character of the settlement, whether this comprises small woodlands, tree groups, hedgerows, planted avenues or just incidental and isolated trees;
 - Ensure trees on and adjacent to the site, which contribute to local amenity are retained and protected during construction works. In addition to visual amenity, their presence will add maturity to the development and also contribute to biodiversity;
 - Provide new tree planting to reflect the character of existing vegetation. Trees should be of a species that is of similar ultimate size and having the same shape and density of canopy. Generally, the new trees should be deciduous, unless coniferous trees are chosen for special reason;
 - Respond to the contribution that other vegetation makes to the character of settlement. For example incorporate grass verges, hedges or ornamental garden plants as seen locally, and if appropriate;
 - Integrate existing water features, rivers, becks and ponds. Or incorporate open areas of water, potentially as part of a sustainable drainage scheme with swales and basins in rural areas or edge of settlement locations. Or in urban areas in a formal setting, fountains or other designed water features;
 - Maximise the benefit of the scenic value of the landscape by protecting and enhancing views, vistas or skylines. Trees can be used to soften or frame views, or an avenue of trees can create a vista to a new or existing feature;
 - Maximise the benefits of falls across the site to create visual interest and enhance areas of different character;
 - Minimise impact on wildlife and enhance opportunities for biodiversity;
 - Reflect locally distinctive boundary features, whether they are hedgerows, manicured hedges, dry-stone, cobble or brick walls, ha-has, railings or fences, including gates and posts;
 - Use materials for ground surfaces that reflect and reinforce local character. Apply materials in a manner that respects local techniques and traditions of construction, pattern and layout;

- Reflect locally distinctive street furniture. Minimise signage, and place seats and bins with care, and avoid over cluttering;
- Provide lighting levels to ensure safe places whilst maintaining local character. Lighting columns should be appropriate to the scale and character of the area; it is preferable to use more short columns in historic town centres than fewer tall ones. Use low level lighting bollards, uplighting and building mounted lighting where possible to avoid the visual clutter of columns. Street lighting design should take account of street trees;
- Where CCTV cameras are required, they should take account of existing and proposed trees. The use of CCTV should not result in a sterile area, but more cameras should be used to ensure unrestricted views. The use of CCTV should not result in levels of lighting that are inappropriate to the character of the area.



Kidneystones (or cobbles) used in conjunction with York stone paving.



Partially rebuilt and new wall in local materials provide visual interest. Simple bitmac path and grass verge protected by granite stones maintain rural character.

- 7.36 Appendix L contains examples of best practice and links to websites where details are held.

Replacement Dwellings

- 7.37 In order to protect the landscape character of the district, there are a number of restrictions with regard to replacement dwellings. Abandoned or derelict buildings in the countryside will not be appropriate for replacement. Dwellings that are of landscape or heritage value should be conserved, these include both designated assets (listed buildings) and non-designated assets of local interest and merit. Chapter 5 – Selection Criteria for Non-Designated Heritage Assets provides guidance on whether a house or associated outbuilding would be considered a non-designated heritage asset .
- 7.38 In order to prevent traditionally sized cottages and houses that contribute to the character of the landscape, the setting of settlements and protected assets, being replaced with large immodest houses, policy seeks to ensure that the new building is of similar size and scale to the existing building.
- 7.39 It is important to ensure the character of the replacement dwelling is similar in character in terms of type, for example a small worker's cottage, modest farmhouse to a small farm, a modest country residence, or a substantial farmhouse appropriate to a large arable (or mixed) land holding. For this reason, the scale of the new dwelling should be similar to the scale of the original dwelling, not including extensions or, if not already extended, the area of extension that could be built under permitted development.
- 7.40 The new dwelling should better reflect the local vernacular in terms of form and mass, materials and general proportions than the existing dwelling. For example a sprawling bungalow would not reflect the vernacular, and where not deliberately screened or required to be diminutive in height, its replacement with a two storey dwelling that is more compact would in most cases be visually beneficial because it would better reflect local distinctiveness. Sometimes a low building reflecting a pair of cottages could be more appropriate than a taller house if that might be detrimental to the openness of the green belt. Consequently it should not be assumed that a two storey house is always preferable to a bungalow. In all areas, a low two storey agricultural worker's cottage (or even a pair linked in the past to create a house) should not be replaced with a grandiose two storey house of generous proportions.
- 7.41 The new dwelling should be built on the site of the existing dwelling, unless there is any public benefit in placing it otherwise, in which case a condition or legal obligation will be attached to ensure the demolition of the existing dwelling. In all cases permitted development rights would be withdrawn

by condition. Where existing attached outbuildings are to be demolished in favour of a larger dwelling, any later application for a new garage or other ancillary building would be resisted.

- 7.42 Key principles of replacement dwellings are:
- Dwellings that are of landscape or heritage value should be conserved;
 - The new building should be of similar size and scale to the existing building (not including extensions or the area of extension that could be built under permitted development);
 - The replacement dwelling should be of similar character to the original, or if the original is a large bungalow the new dwelling should better reflect traditional forms;
 - The new dwelling should reflect the local vernacular in terms of form and mass, materials and general proportions;
 - The new dwelling should be built on the site of the existing dwelling, except in exceptional cases;
 - Where existing attached outbuildings are to be demolished in favour of a larger dwelling, there should be provision for garaging, or as a minimum, external storage.



Floor area of conservatory is large in comparison to original house, and not used to justify a much larger replacement dwelling.

Building Conversions

- 7.43 The re-use of buildings is encouraged because it is generally more sustainable to re-use than demolish and redevelop the site. Additionally, it enables the conservation of heritage assets. These include both designated assets (listed buildings) and non-designated assets of local interest and merit. Buildings that are of landscape or heritage value should be conserved, however derelict buildings outside settlement limits will not be appropriate for conversion. Chapter 5 – Selection Criteria for Non-Designated Heritage Assets provides guidance on whether a building would be considered a non-designated heritage asset.
- 7.44 Buildings that are in employment, or that provide community facilities should not be converted to a new use without substantial public benefit that outweighs the harm of the loss of that facility.
- 7.45 In order to protect the landscape character of the district, the re-use and adaption of rural buildings has to be carefully managed. The proposed re-use by virtue of any physical changes to the building fabric, access or servicing arrangements should not harm the character or appearance of the building or its setting. More information can be found within Chapter 8 – Alterations to historic buildings.



Redundant mill buildings more readily convert to business use to maintain the industrial character of their setting. Conversion to residential requires very sensitive design for amenity space.

- 7.46 Outside development limits, any building that is not of permanent or substantial construction, or is not a type capable of conversion without extensive alteration, extension or rebuildings works, would not be appropriate for re-use. A condition survey by a suitably qualified person should be provided with any planning application, and where alterations to the fabric are required, a method statement to preserve the original fabric should be provided. See the validation criteria on the council's website.



Typical of many agricultural buildings, roofs of smaller buildings are lost and the corner of the main barn needs rebuilding. Unique to this barn, the "chapel" window is missing its mullion.

- 7.47 The council supports the conversion of rural buildings into an employment use, and if that is not practicable, for sustainable tourism, which has public benefits and is likely to impact on the setting of buildings less than residential use.
- 7.48 Poor design of conversion can destroy the character of a building and suburbanise its appearance such that it is incongruous in its landscape setting, or such that it is difficult to see what the original purpose of the building was. The council has guidance on the Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings, which is to be updated, but remains particularly relevant.
- 7.49 English Heritage (EH) to be known as Historic England has produced a series of guides for converting buildings into other uses, see *New Uses for Former Places of Worship* (2010) and *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice* (2006). Further EH (or HE) publications on farm buildings can be found on the HELM website at helm.org.uk/farmbuildings. See Bibliography.

7.50 The Nidderdale AONB team has commenced a survey of traditional farm buildings, and together with English Heritage have produced “Traditional Farmsteads and their Buildings in the Nidderdale AONB”, which provides guidance on understanding the significance of these heritage assets.

[<Link to AONB landing page>](#)

7.51 In towns, the variety of building types is a major contribution to the interest and character of a place, and although they may be redundant, individual buildings contribute strongly to the sense of place. Many are of particular historic or architectural interest and are consequently heritage assets. For these reasons, the council will encourage the conversion of buildings into viable uses to ensure their long-term preservation.



This unique shopfront well away from the primary shopping area contributes strongly to sense of place and should be retained if the building is converted.

7.52 The key principles of conversion are:

- a) The character of the building and its setting are to be retained. This requires sensitive design in order to maintain the essential features of the building and its contribution to existing sense of place;
- b) Conserve as much of the original fabric as possible, wherever practicable, repairs should be on a like for like basis, conjectural restoration should be avoided;
- c) New openings or alterations to an existing opening, particularly on principal elevations, are likely to substantially harm the character and appearance of the building. It is particularly important that historic openings are re-used as far as possible and that any new openings, including openings on secondary buildings or elements, follow the character of the original building;
- d) Design of extensions to converted buildings, or those that are to be converted, should follow guidance on new development (see below under Design of Minor Development).

7.53 A poorly designed conversion, which destroys the character of a building and alters its appearance such that it is incongruous in its setting, or such that it is difficult to see what the original purpose of the building was, will not be accepted.

Design of Minor Development

Domestic Extensions and Outbuildings

7.54 The council has separate guidance on house extensions and construction of garages or other outbuildings.

7.55 Also, Chapter 8 of this guidance is useful in regard to alterations and extensions to historic buildings.

7.56 The design of any new extension should respond sensitively to the characteristics of the existing building and its surroundings. Similar to the design of other new development, the design of building extensions should preserve and enhance heritage assets; enhance local character and reinforce local distinctiveness; protect neighbours' amenity; maintain a safe environment, and be of good design quality. The principle aim should be for the new extension to achieve visual harmony with the old regardless of whether the new work is 'traditional' or 'contemporary' in style.



Extension to St. Peter's Church.

7.57 Key principles of siting new extensions are:

- a) The siting of an extension should not be detrimental to the pattern of buildings and the spacing between them;
- b) Consideration should be given to the opportunity of preserving and enhancing heritage assets. An extension should not detrimentally impact on the setting of a heritage asset, and should where possible preserve original outbuildings, walls or other features that contribute to the character of the area;
- c) Ideally extensions should be to the rear of existing buildings. Extensions to the side may be appropriate in the context of the particular development; however extensions to the front of existing buildings, or set forward of them are rarely acceptable;
- d) An extension should be sited away from existing trees, which contribute to the amenity and character of the area;
- e) An extension should not overbear or overshadow its neighbour particularly where the neighbouring building is a sensitive receptor (such as a house or a care home). Wherever possible buildings should be placed away from the southern aspects of neighbouring buildings or amenity space;
- f) An extension should not be sighted where it would prevent existing natural surveillance, which reduces the opportunities for crime.

7.58 Key principles of form and massing of new extensions are:

- a) Extensions should respect the form of the existing building. In most cases the original footprint and form of the existing building should be clearly legible and should be the most dominant part of the building by virtue of its scale, bulk, height and massing in relation to later additions;
- b) The roof shapes, for example dual pitched or hipped roofs, of the existing building should generally be replicated in extensions, or a small extension to traditional building could be a lean-to against the taller existing building;
- c) The roof form of an extension should be the same as or less complex than the original roof of the building in order to achieve harmony;
- d) The pitches of new roofs should in general match, or be broadly similar, to those of the existing building. Roofing materials can often dictate the pitches of roofs. The form of the building should be appropriate to the roofing materials used;
- e) There may be instances where an alternative roof form can be of merit, for example a mono pitch or flat roof to an appropriately designed contemporary extension or as a means of reducing the overall mass and bulk of an otherwise coherent extension;
- f) Buildings with a simple built form can have their character harmed by small scale extensions like porches, or dormer windows that disrupt the simplicity of the building's mass and form. Extensions to all buildings, no matter the scale of building, should be of appropriate mass and proportion relative to the host building;
- g) Buildings that are characterised by complex forms, or vernacular buildings that have undergone several organic extensions, can be harmed by adding bulky simple forms;
- h) It is rarely acceptable for extensions of a building to be so numerous that the historic fabric is dominated by later work. Extensions that wrap around corners will conceal and distort the original extent of the building and could potentially dominate the historic building;
- i) In most cases the upward extension of a traditional building, for example by adding an additional storey is likely to harm the building's character and appearance. The addition of an extra storey on an existing flat roof can however sometimes provide a strong top to a building that appears weak in comparison to pitched roofed buildings in the vicinity;

- j) The mass of a new extension should not overbear or overshadow neighbouring buildings, particularly if a neighbouring building is a sensitive receptor;
- k) An extension should not restrict existing natural surveillance, or create tight publicly accessible spaces that cannot be overlooked.



Proportions of extension respect the original house.

7.59 Key principles of external appearance of new extensions are:

- a) The palette or materials and the manner in which they are applied should respect the character of the existing building. The aim should be for either a close match where a 'traditional' approach is used, or the use of materials that harmonise with traditional materials where a contemporary approach is used;
- b) The external appearance of an extension should be well-proportioned with fenestration well-balanced in the elevations that respect the character of the existing building;
- c) The proportions of openings should generally reflect those of the original building, and the horizontal or vertical emphasis of the original building should be respected;

- d) The ratio of opening to solid in the existing building should not be exceeded in the extension unless the function of the extension requires considerable areas of glazing and is of contemporary design to provide contrast (unless it is a conservatory, which could be traditional);
- e) The building itself will provide the clearest guide as to how new work should be styled. Imposing the style of a different era or building type will almost certainly harm the character and appearance of the host building. An extension should never be of a style historically older than the host building, and in most cases should appear of later date or be modern. There is often merit in using simpler details than the principal building. This would in its own way help the extension to read as subservient to the original building;
- f) Details should be appropriate to the building type; agricultural, industrial or commercial buildings should be detailed in a manner that reflects their historic or original use and character;
- g) Details should respect the part of the building concerned; principal elevations may be differently detailed than secondary elevations or later extensions might have been executed in a slightly different way to the original building. The detailing of new work should respect these differences;
- h) Whether building in a contemporary or traditional style, details can make a big difference as to how successfully the new complements the old. Such details include: whether there is a pronounced overhang to the eaves or a deep, projecting cornice at the top of a wall; how far doors and windows are recessed into the wall; whether the roof is interrupted by chimneys and dormers, or; if materials have been applied in a particular manner. A successful extension might echo these features of the host building in a contemporary manner without necessarily copying every detail of the original building;
- i) Windows should not be placed in an extension where they would reduce the amenity of neighbouring residents, unless obscured glass is practicable for the function of the new room;
- j) Windows should be used to provide natural surveillance of public or defensible space.

Statutory Undertakers

7.60 Minor development also includes works that may not require planning consent, or may be carried out by statutory undertakers under separate legislation, such as street lighting, street signs, road markings and anti-skid finishes. These works should be in accord with the guidance entitled “Streets for All” Yorkshire and the Humber. <LINK?>



Subtle light wash, and neon strips emphasising the iconic architectural features of the Odeon.

Illumination of Buildings

7.61 Illumination of buildings can contribute to the richness of an urban area, when buildings of particular historic and architectural interest are given prominence. The illumination of a historic building provides an added dimension and can enhance the key architectural features and its social and historic significance. Also enhancing night-time orientation could potentially benefit the local economy; however illumination of individual commercial premises would rarely be acceptable.

7.62 Principles for illumination are:

- a) Lighting of historic buildings requires sensitivity to ensure that architectural detail can be seen whilst the whole is not so brightly lit that the remaining street scape is too dark in comparison;

- b) Buildings should be washed with light overall to low levels, with perhaps stronger flood lighting of particular features, to ensure that there are not strong patches of brightly lit elevation whilst the rest is in darkness;
- c) Light spillage contributes to light pollution and is to be avoided.

Shopfronts and Advertisements

7.63 Harrogate Borough Council has separate guidance about shopfronts, which is held on the council’s website.

7.64 Poorly designed or poorly sited signage can harm the character and quality of an area, the amenity of neighbours, the character, appearance or setting of heritage assets, and the scenic and cultural value of landscapes and townscapes. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 sets out those types of signage that need consent. See Appendix F, which sets out which types of sign require advertisement consent.

7.65 There are different requirements for land or buildings in conservation areas and within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The regulations give local planning authorities the ability to designate ‘Areas of Special Control of Advertisements’ in rural areas or areas that require ‘special protection on the grounds of amenity’. The Area of Special Control in Harrogate district covers all rural areas, the AONB, Boroughbridge and Pateley Bridge plus the historic parts of Harrogate such as the Stray and Valley Gardens, Knaresborough riverside and Castle grounds and the Cathedral precinct of Ripon. The Area of Special Control excludes the town and city centres of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon. A map will be made available in Appendix F following a review (the current map is to be updated).

7.66 In addition to the above, advertisements affecting a listed building would require listed building consent, and any signage attached to a scheduled ancient monument would require scheduled ancient monument consent.

7.67 The council’s Shopfronts Design Guide contains helpful advice on the design, scale, siting and illumination of commercial signage in the district. New signage should not be inspired by inappropriately designed, sited or illuminated signage that was erected at a time when the existing regulations, policies and guidance were not in place.

- 7.68 The council remains committed to exercising strict control over illuminated signs. Any illumination to signage should be discreet and should avoid adding clutter to the elevation; illumination should not be a prominent 'feature' of the building.
- 7.69 The key principles of new and replacement signs are as follows:
- Signs should not dominate the host building or the site by virtue of their location, scale, number, bright colour or method of illumination.
 - In rural areas, villages and small towns, illuminated signage should be avoided or achieved in such a way that the lighting does not intrude on the rural character of the area or settlement;
 - Internally illuminated signage is unacceptable in most parts of the district. Where illumination is acceptable, signs should be externally illuminated, or ideally individual letters or logos lit from behind to provide a halo effect, or where circumstances allow, letters might be internally illuminated;
 - Where a building forms part of a group such as a shopping street or square, the design and illumination of signage should be informed by the existing context;
 - Signs above first floor window cill level are rarely acceptable;
 - Signs on gables or other non-principal elevations are rarely acceptable;
 - Signage, particularly fascia signage should be in proportion with the shopfront and/or the rest of the elevation of the building. Fascias should not dominate the building by being overly deep;
 - Signs that act as a 'belt' or 'band' extending along the full width of an elevation and cutting the elevation in two are rarely acceptable;
 - Lettering, logos and symbols should fit comfortably within the boundaries of the sign and should not appear 'squashed in';
 - Simplicity is preferable to signs that are cluttered by a proliferation of text, symbols, logos and contrasting colours;
 - In historic areas such as conservation areas, listed buildings and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the general traditional character and appearance of these areas may preclude certain methods of illumination, garish colours or corporate colour schemes with bright or strongly contrasting colours;

- In historic areas or on historic buildings, care should be taken to ensure that materials and details of signage respect the traditional character and appearance of the building or area;
- Shopfront fascia signs should normally be framed by a protective projecting cornice along the top and projecting consoles to the left and right hand ends;
- On traditional shopfronts with shallow fascias, it would be preferable for additional signage to be fixed to the shop window rather than to deepen the fascia;
- On buildings that have been converted to new commercial or public uses, fascia or banner signage is unlikely to be acceptable, as it could harm the appearance of the building. Any new signage should respond to the building's architecture and character, which may mean the use of more discreet signage such as individual letters fixed to the elevation or signs fixed to glazing;



Variety of shopfronts and signs in Ripon. The barber's pole is still an effective sign. The sign above the arched windows would have been better as individual letters.

- p) Any hanging or projecting signs should be in proportion with the principal signage and should not clutter the elevation of the building;
- q) Rigid ‘bus stop’ style hanging signs are unacceptable. Rather hanging signs should be hung from decorative or elegant brackets and have the ability to ‘swing’ or at least the appearance of being able to do so;
- r) Signs should not have an adverse effect on public safety.

What is Poor Design?

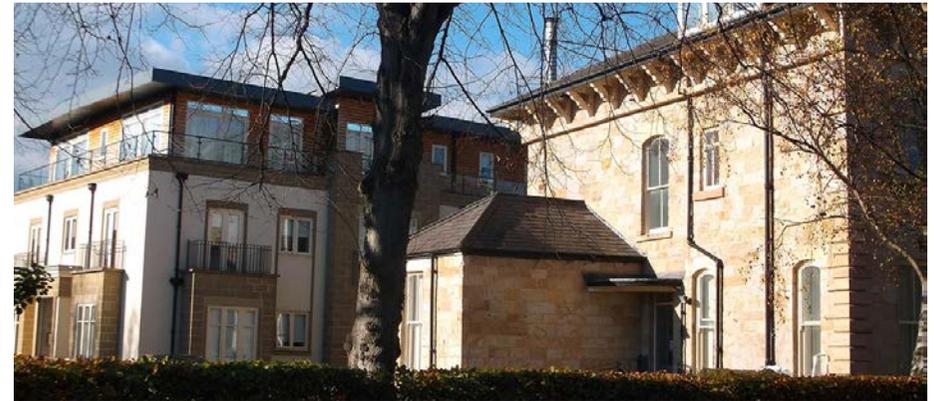
7.70 National planning policy states at paragraph 64 of the NPPF that “Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.”

7.71 Unfortunately, the NPPF does not define poor design. Arguably, design quality is subjective, but this is generally not so in regard to the built environment, although it is human nature to have certain preferences. The following paragraphs explain what the council regards as “poor design” in the context of the NPPF in order that decisions are made on the basis of objective consideration:

7.72 The national Planning Practice Guide (PPG) explains that well designed new or changing places should:

- a) Be functional;
- b) Support mixed uses and tenures;
- c) Include successful public spaces
- d) Be adaptable and resilient;
- e) Have a distinctive character;
- f) Be attractive, and;
- g) Encourage ease of movement

7.73 **“Poor design” is design of development that is inappropriate in its context and would be detrimental to its setting. In places that themselves detract from the overall high quality of the Harrogate district, “poor design” is design of development that fails to improve the appearance and amenity of its immediate environment.**



Contemporary interpretation of strong eaves cornice, whilst overall massing of building reflects its neighbours.

7.74 “Poor design” is also unsustainable in other ways, it:

- a) Creates unsafe environments, which attract criminal or anti-social behaviour and increases the fear of crime;
- b) Does not put the needs of the pedestrian and cyclist before those of the car, or would not meet required standards of highway safety;
- c) Fails to protect the amenity of existing residents, or provide adequate levels of amenity for future occupants of new development;
- d) Fails to provide equality, by discriminating against disabled, young or elderly people, those of different race or religion, or by preventing or discouraging fully inclusive communities;
- e) Does not protect wildlife, particularly endangered species, and diminishes biodiversity;
- f) Would result in flooding or unacceptable levels of pollution;
- g) Would not seek to minimise energy consumption.

7.75 To conclude, design of development that is “poor,” as described above, would be rejected in accordance with the NPPF, unless there are substantial public benefits that weigh in favour of the proposed development.

Further Reading:

- See Appendix P – Bibliography

