

PLACEMAKING & DESIGN

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE
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The quality of what we build in our towns and villages impacts on everyone and everything. Successful, well-designed places are better for residents to live in and are more appealing to visitors. It is also an undoubted fact that pleasing and well designed places attract economic development which makes our communities more sustainable.

In the Scottish Borders we have distinctive communities and a tremendous surrounding landscape. Where we have new buildings we want to see that those buildings add to, rather than detract from, the attractiveness of our towns and villages. We want new buildings to enhance our unrivalled landscapes.

The primary aim of this Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is to ensure that the Scottish Borders will be a quality place in which to live, providing attractive, sustainable towns and villages that are distinct and diverse.

COUNCILLOR CAROLYN RIDDELL-CARRE,

Scottish Borders Council Executive Member for Planning and Environment.



In 2006 the Council commenced a range of new initiatives to further improve the design quality of new developments in the Scottish Borders.

New Local Plan policies, Landscape and Urban Capacity assessments all direct development to more appropriate sites; site-specific Planning Briefs have been published for all key development sites; pioneering Supplementary Policy has been approved on 'Timber in Sustainable Construction;' together with new policy for 'Designing out Crime;' 'Landscape and Development;' 'Trees and Development;' 'Renewable Energy' and 'Replacement Windows.' Additional design training has been run for both Council Officers and Councillors. Design Awards raise awareness of, encourage and celebrate good design practice in the Borders, whilst a multi-skilled Design Forum helps to drive up the quality of developments.

This Urban Design Guidance is a further and critical element of this work and marks a new era that will help all parties to prepare for and to deliver quality developments which are fit for our wonderful Scottish Borders towns and countryside, both today and in the future.

IAN LINDLEY

Director of Planning & Economic Development
Scottish Borders Council



This guidance is structured round the process of placemaking and design. It is intended for use by all who are involved in new development in the Borders as a point of reference and as a basis for the planning, design and communication of new development proposals, no matter how large or small, and will be used as a material consideration in assessing planning applications.

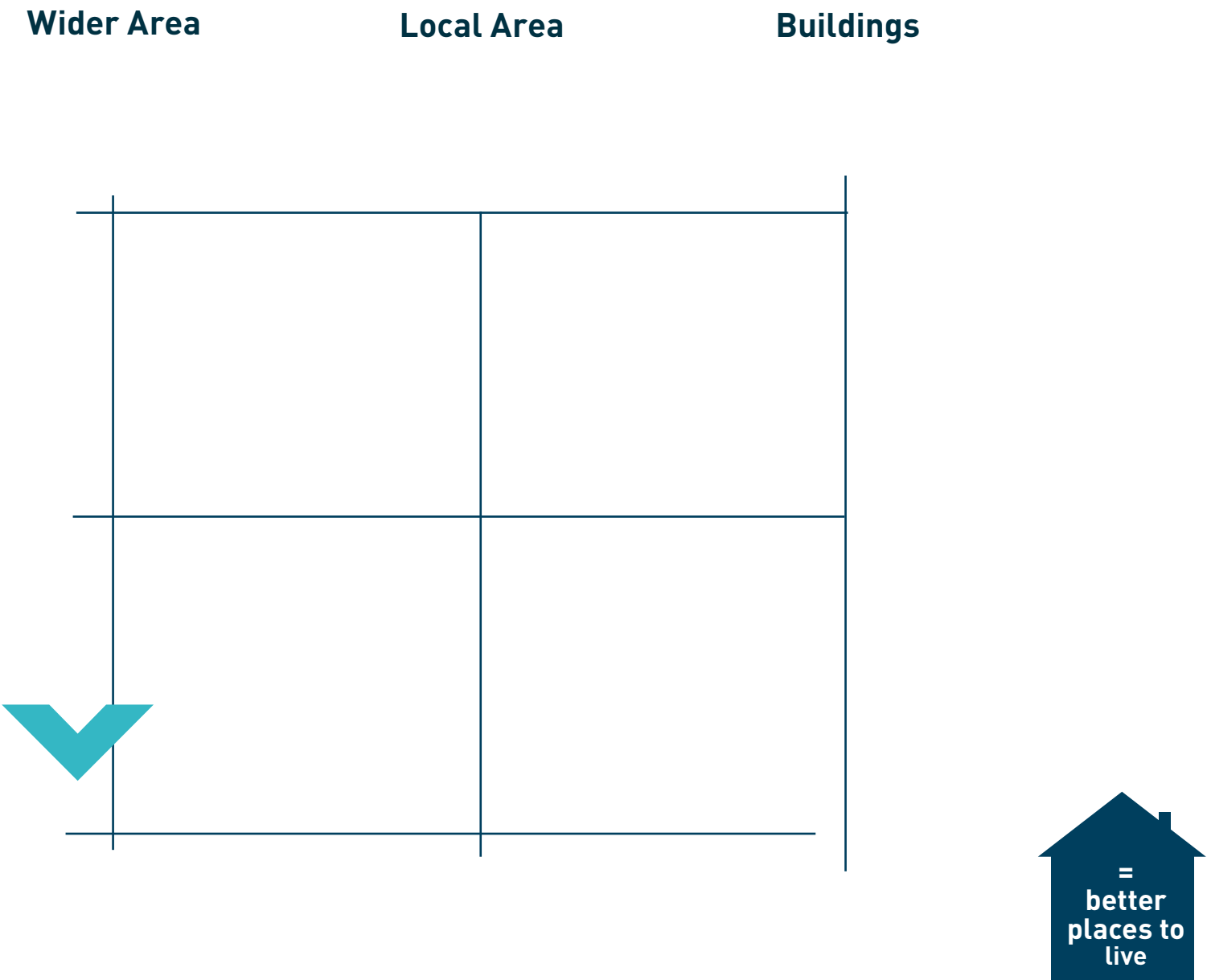
This is an interactive document designed to be used online or on CD. The document does not require to be read from front to back—each section provides guidance on specific topics that can be accessed as needed, and tailored to fit a specific development type.

How to achieve good design

The design process

This document seeks to provide helpful guidance and promote the creation of high quality buildings and places.

In summary, the key considerations in the process can be outlined in 9 steps:



Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Sustainable Places

'We cannot afford not to invest in good design. Good design is not just about the aesthetic improvement of our environment, it is as much about improved quality of life, equality of opportunity and economic growth. If we want to be a successful and sustainable society we have to overcome our ignorance about the importance of design and depart from our culturally-ingrained notion that a poor quality environment is the norm and all we can expect from British builders, developers, planners and politicians.'

**The Value of Good Design, CENTRE FOR
ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Good design is at the heart of sustainable communities. They are places that acknowledge:

- the social function of the built environment
- the cultural context of our communities
- the need to be long-lasting and adaptable in our ever changing environment
- the importance of local distinctiveness to creating places that will be valued and cared for
- the most efficient way to use our resources

THE VALUE OF PLACEMAKING AND DESIGN TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

"Nearly 9 out of 10 people say that better quality buildings and public spaces improve their quality of life" (CABE, 2009) - therefore we cannot afford to ignore the importance of well-designed places to live to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of our communities.

THE VALUE OF PLACEMAKING AND DESIGN TO THE HOUSEBUILDER/DEVELOPER

In addition, good design adds value. As stated by CABE, 'it is possible for developers to add value to their operations by adopting new and distinctive design practices. If design.... can create, or help to create, a desirable environment and one in which people will want to live, then developers have the power to increase the value not only in their own interests but possibly those of surrounding landowners too.'

The added value of considering design from the outset is therefore many-fold. The positive impacts of this are increasingly being recognised by national policy and guidance.

In considering new development in the Scottish Borders it is essential to face the challenge of creating sustainable, well designed places that are produced from a deep understanding of the social, physical and historic context of the Borders. This guide forms a starting point in that process.

1.2 Introduction

The purpose of this guide

DESIGN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Design in new development is a [material consideration](#) within the planning process. At the national level, there is increasing awareness of the importance of successful [placemaking](#) and design to the social and economic wellbeing of our communities and the environment at large.

DESIGN AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In 2001, the Scottish Government published Designing Places, an overarching policy document to raise the standards of design in our built environment. This recognised the over-riding importance that good place-making has in providing the “conservation areas of tomorrow”.

THE ROLE OF THIS GUIDE

This Supplementary Planning Guidance highlights the strategic importance of well-designed places in the Scottish Borders, reflecting national policy and the policies within the Development Plan. It should be used as a tool to aid the design and development management process, to produce the highest quality of new development. It sets out the key sustainable [placemaking](#) objectives that any new development in the Scottish Borders should strive to achieve, as an aid to all stages in the complex process of new housing development.

[This guide seeks to assist the delivery of places that fit within the Borders of the future, while respecting the Borders of the past.](#)

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

From identifying appropriate sites for development to writing a brief or design statement and delivering new housing, design decisions are integral to all stages of the development process; therefore this guidance is relevant to all involved. This includes:

[Developers/Householders](#) and their agents wishing to build in the Borders

[Officers/Planners](#) working within the Scottish Borders

[Designers/Consultants](#) working on new development in the Borders

[Community members](#) interested in the quality of places where they live

[Elected members](#) representing their communities within the planning process



Design Policy

2.1 Design Policy

Policy Statement

The Council requires that development proposals demonstrate how the following criteria have been addressed:

Impact of the development on the wider area context in terms of:

Landscape Character

Views

Settlement pattern

Infrastructure

Impact of the development on the local area context in terms of:

Built character

Siting of development

Sustainable development

Density & use

Open space

Layout & legibility

Building design:

Energy efficient design

Relating to the site

Relating to the townscape

Scale, massing & form

Proportion

Materials & colour

Details

Proposals will only be approved if the above criteria have been successfully addressed.

Justification

The SPG is a material consideration in assessing planning applications. Policy G1 in the Local Plan lays out the quality standards for new development. This SPG therefore reinforces and further develops the criteria put forward by Policy G1 which are key policy requirements against which development proposals will be assessed and can be used by the Planning Authority to refuse applications where the requirements set out in this SPG are not met —the Policy G1 requirements are set out in detail at the end of this guide.

Further detailed explanation on how the design principles can be met is set out within the Placemaking toolkit and supporting guidance.



New development in Skirling



Yetholm set within the Cheviot Hills

Achieving Good Design

3.1 | ACHIEVING GOOD DESIGN: THE PROCESS

3.2 | SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO BETTER PLACES

3.1 Achieving good design

The process

INTRODUCTION

The successful creation of good quality and well designed places is dependent on commitment to quality at every stage in the planning, design and development process. The delivery of quality places is dependent on three key requirements:

Aspiration: shared vision of clients, developers and planners alike

Skills: appropriately skilled professionals involved in the design process (architects/engineers/landscape architects/urban designers)

Working together: clear communication and collaboration between developers/agents and the Local Planning Authority

The delivery of quality places is not dependent on additional cost or expensive design solutions – by ensuring these three elements are in place, the process of delivery can be both effective and efficient. At every stage in the process, it is vital that those involved seek to understand the challenge and engage in early dialogue with the relevant parties.

THE PROCESS

There are many stages in considering new development, whether as a commercial housebuilder or an individual wishing to build in the Scottish Borders. The following sets out some of the key steps in this process:

01 Identifying/appraising a site for development

Is the site appropriate for the scale and nature of development envisaged? Consult the development plan and familiarise yourself with local/national planning policy and best practice (the Sourcebook provides a starting point)

02 Appoint the appropriate skills

Ensuring that a development proposal meets the requirements set out in this SPG will often require professional advice.

Significant developments should seek to involve a range of skills and expertise within a design team. Early advice on key issues should be sought on issues such as architecture, landscaping and road layout.

Development of a small building group or single house may require an architect preferably with a proven track record in delivering similar projects in the Borders.

Appointing design professionals: this can be done through referrals, looking at portfolios etc. By appointing appropriately skilled and able professional(s), the likelihood of getting proposals that meet policy requirements and can be given consent is increased, thus representing long term efficiency savings by reducing the risk of lengthy negotiations and/or refusal.

03 Discuss early with planners/ local community

Applicants/developers should seek to engage with the Council at an early stage in the process. This will provide them with guidance on all the key planning opportunities and constraints and prevent any abortive work being undertaken.

Arrange an early meeting to get advice how to engage with the key stakeholders and produce a proposal that will be supported through the application process. This is even more important if development proposals are in an area of particular sensitivity such as biodiversity value or historic character. The Council will be able to provide advice on other requirements like a Transport or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Check the status of the site in the Development Plan and whether there is a planning brief.

Establish whether the site is classed as 'national', 'major' or 'local' development.

3.1 Achieving good design

The Process

04 The design process

Ensure your design team have a clear brief based on appropriate scale and nature of development for the site.

Seek to record the process of design as it evolves in a Design Statement.

a	Site and area appraisal Carry out initial appraisal of site and context
b	Identify the design principles Establish/refine the development vision based on the appraisal of site and surrounding context. Make clear aspirations about how the proposed development can contribute to the local character and form a sustainable place to live
c	Site analysis Carry out detailed analysis of site conditions covering aspects such as: <u>microclimate</u> , views, drainage, <u>topography</u> , <u>landcover</u> , access, historic land use, archaeology and contamination. Commission surveys as appropriate. Check for any statutory designations relating to built or natural heritage
d	Design concept(s) Establish design concept for the site: create a <u>concept plan</u> that sets out clear vision, based on site and context appraisal. Consider pre-application dialogue with planning officer at this stage to enhance awareness of early design decisions
e	Design development Refine design and detailed resolution of issues: translating the <u>concept plan</u> to a design layout, including options where appropriate
f	Design Solution Production of sufficient information to communicate design process, key decisions made and final product including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Plans/visualisationsSite photos: showing visual impactDesign Statement

05 Drawings & illustrations

Clear and accurate drawings and illustrations must be submitted as part of any proposal. These should be unambiguous, easy to read and demonstrate all aspects relating to the development including the immediate surroundings. Appropriate judgements can then be made as to how the development fits into its locale.

06 Design Statements

Design statements (incorporating energy statements) are a key tool in ensuring clarity in communicating the design process and promoting design awareness. The Scottish Government Policy Statement, Designing Places, and the subsequent PAN 68: Design Statements encourage the use of Design Statements as an integral part of the development process. The recent change in planning legislation now requires major development proposals to produce a design statement as part of the planning application process. A Design Statement provides a mechanism for demonstrating the quality of a design response and how it relates to its context and the principles of sustainable placemaking. Applicants can demonstrate a thorough approach to design by providing a comprehensive and well-structured design statement.

3.2 Achieving good design

SBC's commitment to better places

The following sets out the tools that Scottish Borders Council will seek to use to achieve well-designed places.

DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS

Development briefs will often be Council-led. Applicants/developers will therefore be required to respond to the brief. A development brief will provide information regarding:

- The vision and aspiration for the development area.
- Initial urban design analysis, including descriptions of the site, its surroundings and any constraints or sensitivities within the area
- Key objectives of the design – these should be aimed at achieving the highest possible design quality and provide clarity on what the aspiration is for the site
- Concept proposals – indicative demonstration of how the objectives could successfully be achieved

This can be through diagrams, photographs of sketch illustrations. Development briefs can form an invaluable tool in establishing best-practice principles at the outset and can help inform a better quality, more efficient design and planning application process.

MONITORING

To ensure the effectiveness of this SPG, it will be monitored in terms of its success. This will be undertaken by the Council every year and the SPG will be reviewed and updated accordingly.

ACTION PLAN

In order to promote the value of good design for the wellbeing of the social, economic and environmental future of the Borders, the Design Action Plan represents a proactive approach to engaging everyone in the placemaking process. It represents Scottish Borders Council's commitment to achieving well-designed places that enhance the Borders region. As a vehicle for promoting higher quality design standards throughout the Borders, it unites a number of initiatives under one collective aim: **to make the Borders Region of tomorrow a better place to live.**

Continued and up-to-date guidance: the production a regular update of Supplementary Planning Guidance on Placemaking & Design incorporating a Design Quality Checklist. This would be an incremental process, and would be adaptable to include additional guidance or reflect design quality monitoring as appropriate.

Design Quality Workshops: a series of working sessions with councillors/area officers promoting the value of good design.

Set up a Design Forum: an internal working group incorporating key professionals (Urban Design/Planning/Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Roads) as a forum for key projects to be discussed to enhance the profile of the sustainable placemaking agenda in the planning system and to engender a collective vision.

Design Quality Monitoring: introduce an ongoing audit of development throughout the Borders, assessing best/worst practice and the successful application of the SPG.

Effective enforcement: where design has been an issue early on in the process, ensure that design quality is followed through and where necessary utilise all enforcement powers.

Design Events/Promotion: host design quality forums for key stakeholders, and incorporate design awareness into current programmes of town walks, etc.

Use Design Competitions as a means to achieving innovative designs for key developments thus opening up the design debate.

Continued promotion of the existing **Design Awards**

4.0 Placemaking & Design Principles

4.1 Placemaking & design principles

Introduction

PLACEMAKING OBJECTIVES

The process of placemaking is complex, combining a range of social, economic and environmental factors that are present in well-functioning communities. In order for new development to make places that work, the built, environmental, microclimatic, historic and socio-economic context of a place must all be analysed and understood as part of the planning and design process. This requires thinking outside the 'red line' boundary of a proposed development and a proper assessment of how development will relate and respond to its surroundings.

The following sections provide guidance on 1) understanding the context of development in the Borders and 2) responding to it appropriately, based on a series of placemaking and design principles structured round the role of new housing development at the wider, local and detailed level. The character and quality of the Borders environment at these three scales are inter-related, therefore it is essential to consider:



Gordon

WIDER AREA

how a place fits into the wider area in terms of the functional, environmental and visual context



Swinton

LOCAL AREA

how a place relates to the local community and forms an integral component of the local area, socially and physically



Bowden

PROPOSED BUILDING

how an individual building creates a positive and lasting addition to the Scottish Borders

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

How development fits into the wider area in terms of functional, environmental, and visual context

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Objective: creating development that acknowledges the local variation throughout the Scottish Borders Region

Landscape type

The Scottish Borders has a rich and varied landscape that has shaped where settlements have established, and the types of buildings and materials used, over centuries. This relationship is integral to how we see our towns, villages and countryside today and is vital in understanding how new development can respond appropriately to the wider landscape character; it has played an important role in the development of its towns and villages and has determined the type of industry that has taken place, the access that can be gained and the kind of buildings it can sustain.

Landscape character is informed by various factors including Geology, Topography, Hydrology, Vegetation and Land Use. When considering any new development, it is therefore vital to understand how the development can respond to:

- The existing vegetation patterns (e.g. field boundaries, woodlands, etc)
- The wider landscape character and established settlement pattern

There are four broad areas within the Borders: the uplands, the river valleys, the merse land and the coast region.



The **upland** landscape varies from large-scale rolling hills to upland plateaus, with heather, grassland and forest cover and limited/dispersed human settlement.



The **river valleys** along the waters of the River Tweed and its tributaries have seen human settlement since pre-Roman times, exploiting the pasture lands and power of the rivers to support agricultural and industrial activity.



The **merse land** is a gentle landscape through which the Tweed meanders towards the coast, an area with fertile soil which has been heavily cultivated to grow arable crops. Market towns and large steadings are a key feature of the area.

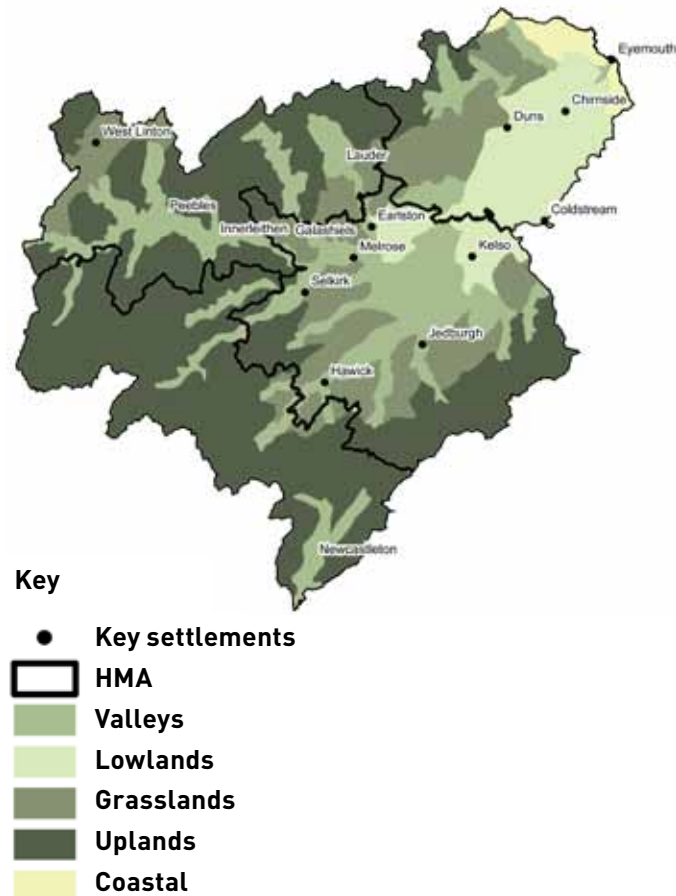


The rugged **coastline** is diverse with rocky sea cliffs and undulating farmland. Settlements are generally located in sheltered locations to protect buildings from the coastal weather.

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

Landscape character map



Landform

Integral to landscape character is the landform of an area. Landform has shaped patterns of landcover, microclimate, land use and the nature of human settlement and is inter-related with hydrology; both regional (river catchments) and local (tributaries and drainage flows). From the rolling uplands and steep sided river valleys in the south and west, to the flat plains of the east, the wider landform shapes the visual character of an area and how development can be absorbed into the landscape.



Flat open lowland landscape, Berwickshire

An understanding of the topography and landform of an area is essential to understand how development can fit into the wider context. Initial site appraisal must therefore consider:

- the landform in which the site is situated
- the relationship of the site to the wider landform such as impacts on skyline
- Landform as a backdrop to development and wider hydrology patterns



Rolling uplands, Tweeddale (West Linton)

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

Natural Heritage

The Scottish Borders has a wealth of natural heritage. There are two National Scenic Areas in the region: the Eildon and Leaderfoot NSA and the Upper Tweeddale NSA. There are also six Areas of Great Landscape Value: Berwickshire Coast, Cheviot Foothills, Eildon Hills/Bowhill, Lammermuir Hills, Pentland Hills and Tweedmuir Hills/Upper Tweeddale. The Scottish Borders have a considerable number of historic gardens and designed landscapes that appear in the Historic Scotland inventory, as well as many more sites that are of local significance. They represent a vital asset in the Scottish Borders and a forthcoming SPG will provide further guidance on maintaining and protecting these historic landscapes. Historic Scotland can provide additional guidance. There are 10 Special Areas of Conservation and 5 Special Protection Areas, of which the River Tweed is the best known. This demonstrates the importance of the area in terms of biodiversity habitats and species.



Eildons And Leaderfoot National Scenic Area from Scotts View



The River Tweed at Dryburgh – a Special Area of Conservation

Landscape Character: Summary

- ✓ Ensure the form and nature of proposed development – whether a large site or individual building – harmonises with the wider landscape in which it sits, i.e. open merseland or rolling upland may be able to absorb very different forms and scales of development.
- ✓ Establish design principles regarding the scale and form of development from the outset that relate to the wider landform, natural heritage and visibility of the site
- ✓ Check the local designations of any landscape features of ecological, recreational or heritage value

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

VIEWS

Objective: Relates positively to long, medium and short distance views from key locations (e.g. public footpaths, views from major roads)

New housing development must be considered as providing much more than simply new dwellings; as a part of the overall visual experience of the Scottish Borders for visitors, investors and residents alike, the towns, villages and buildings in the landscape are viewed by all who pass through

Long, medium and short distance views

The wider views within the landscape are largely defined by the combined factors of landcover and landform. The enclosure and exposure created by valleys, plains, woodlands and open merse land all influence how settlement sits in the landscape and the nature of impact that new development may have in the long, medium and short distance.

Any design response must acknowledge:

- where key visual receptors are (places where new development will be visible from)
- the extent to which the views from these points will be affected by the development on the site in question
- how new development can visually 'fit' within the wider landscape in the context of these views.

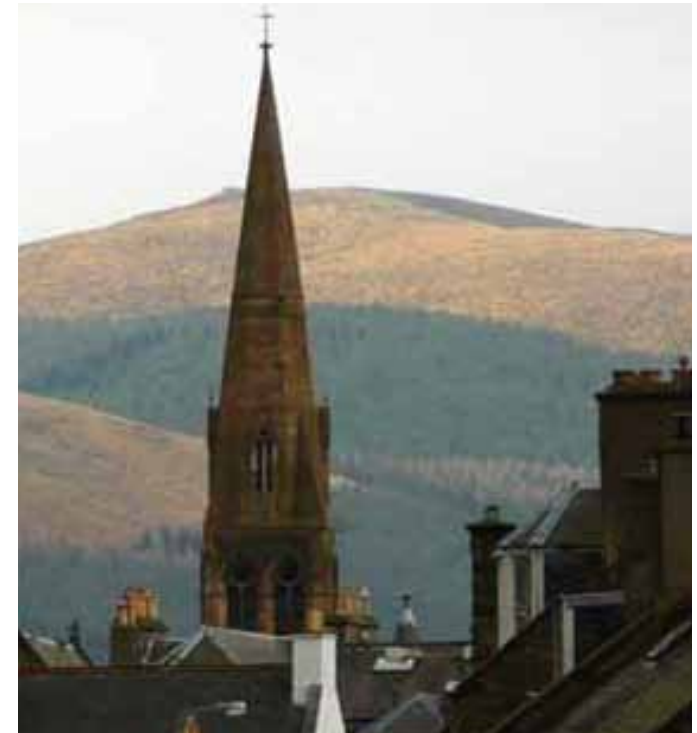
Buildings and places that will be visually affected by development, known as visual receptors, should be identified and impacts assessed through plans and photo illustrations.

While moving through the landscape, the sequence of views from roads, footpaths and cycle ways is integral to the overall quality of experiencing the Borders as a distinctive place. The visual experience of living in and visiting the Scottish Borders is shaped by these sequences and many towns, villages and buildings within the Borders provide both surprise and delight as they are approached within the landscape along roads and rights of way, framed by landform and vegetation or defined by landmark buildings and river crossings. The role of new development in the visual sequence along key routes must be identified from the outset.

Views: Summary

Any design response must acknowledge:

- ✓ where key visual receptors are (places where new development will be visible from)
- ✓ the extent to which the views from these points will be affected by the development on the site in question
- ✓ how new development can visually 'fit' within the wider landscape in the context of these views.



View of Peebles

You will be expected to illustrate these points in your design statement:

- ✓ How the design has responded to key views towards the site in the wider landscape
- ✓ How the design will be viewed moving through the landscape

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Objective: integrates well into pattern of settlement, whether urban or rural

Existing pattern of built development

The historic network of towns, villages and hamlets is integral to the character of the Scottish Borders and any proposed addition to the built environment should be founded upon and understanding of this context. Too often, recent layers of development lack any acknowledgement of the urban form or historical context, adopting instead a standardised range of building forms and road geometries. As a result they appear 'unconnected' to the surrounding built form and street patterns, and can erode the sense of place and identity of the area.

Urban

Within the context of Borders settlements new development must seek to form a logical addition to the existing settlement patterns, relating to the landscape and land use patterns of the area. Despite modern expansion, the overall character of settlements in the Scottish Borders is still largely defined by the historical origins of settlement throughout the region, reflected in the pattern and dispersal of towns and villages. Whether formal or informal, coastal or inland, each settlement has a distinct form and density of layout. A thorough analysis of this should guide the scale and nature of any new addition to a settlement, and will help to identify appropriate street patterns, public spaces and densities to a specific area.

Rural

In the context of rural development in the Scottish Borders you will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the existing and historic distribution of settlement, so that a clear rationale for appropriate forms of new development can be established. Assessing historic maps can give a fascinating insight into the origins of rural habitation in and around the site. The scale and distribution of existing building groups should also be assessed to determine the appropriate scale and siting of new development within the rural landscape.

Key considerations

Understanding patterns of settlement in either the urban or rural context is integral to the initial site appraisal and it is helpful to:

- Study historic maps: identify the growth and pattern of settlement over time
- Analyse the present day form of human settlement and visual relationship to the wider landscape
- Establish principles of siting and layout that are appropriate to the pattern of settlement

Settlement pattern: a summary

- ✓ You will be expected to have an understanding of the pattern and origins of settlement in the wider context
- ✓ Whether in town or country, avoid creating development that pays no regard to the local form, extents and patterns of built settlement

Remember to illustrate these points in your design statement:

- ✓ Understanding of settlement pattern: historic growth and origins
- ✓ Local character traits: scale and distribution of settlement



Traditional centre, Jedburgh

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

Historic settlement origins

Many towns have developed around one or two significant landmarks or features that related to the settlement's location and the relationship it had with the surrounding landscape:

Strategic landmark positions

Castles/tower houses, abbeys/kirks and river crossings all highlight the strategic historic importance of these settlements.



Peebles landmark church

Focal points for meeting/trade

Many settlements formed round a central focal point such as a market place, square, green or meeting venue. These were areas within the settlement where trade, community events or communal grazing took place.



Duns market square

Specific functions

Settlements formed around a particular function, such as fermtowns, harbour towns and industrial towns. Landowners also planned new settlements to serve their estate/industry such as agriculture or weaving.



Eyemouth harbour

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective: Is appropriately scaled and sited to maximise use of existing roads/rail/services opportunities

The earliest human settlements in the Borders were shaped by the availability and accessibility of vital resources – from food production to commercial or defensive infrastructure, settlements have grown and evolved around the efficient use of these resources. This is no less applicable to establishing sustainable development today – by considering the proximity of existing transport networks, utilities and community infrastructure, a well designed scheme will make the most efficient use of the available resources.

When considering a site for development, the opportunities presented within the existing resources should be maximised, such as rail halts (with the forthcoming Waverley Line), bus routes, road networks and other links to vital resources such as local shops. The scale and location of a potential development site should always seek to achieve the most efficient use of existing and proposed roads.

Infrastructure: a summary

- ✓ In and around towns and villages, plan development that is well connected to the existing road or street network
- ✓ Make sure development is of an appropriate size to accommodate a permeable through route or network of routes
- ✓ Consider the provision, or prevention, of longer term growth as appropriate: where there is capacity for future growth, ensure the design allows for this or where growth is constrained, ensure a clear and defensible edge is created
- ✓ In rural areas, consider the most efficient means of local access and services: off-grid utilities may be appropriate



Looking at the wider context of access and infrastructure with an appropriately long term vision is key to creating sustainable, well connected places (Ketso)

4.2 Placemaking & design principles

The wider area

To summarise, a design statement should demonstrate clear understanding of:

- ☐ **Landscape character**
- ☐ **Views**
- ☐ **Settlement pattern**
- ☐ **Infrastructure**

New development must seek to achieve the following objectives:

Development must fit within the wider landscape and vegetation patterns



New design should always respond to the wider landform in terms of views, settlement pattern, drainage and long term growth



Identify key landscape heritage features within the wider and local area from the outset



Key views towards proposed development from the wider area must be considered from the outset so that the design can respond by framing/containing these views as appropriate



New development must form a logical addition to the area-wide pattern of the settlement, in terms of distribution and form, whether in the urban or rural context



Wherever possible development should seek to make the most efficient use of existing roads and services infrastructure and consider appropriate future capacity for expansion within the proposed infrastructure network



4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

How a place relates to the local community and forms an integral component of the local area, both socially and physically

BUILT CHARACTER

Objective: sits well within surrounding built form (architectural style, urban grain, etc)

In establishing the design principles for any new development, the surrounding townscape or building character and built form must be understood from the outset. The layout, grouping and architectural style of buildings adopted within an area all contribute to a locally distinctive built character.

To successfully integrate new development into a settlement, first establish a detailed understanding a) the present day character; b) how it formed in that way and c) how new development can uphold and enhance the built character.

Urban structure

The physical structure of a neighbourhood is defined by the network of streets and spaces, the urban structure. The pattern of solid (=built) to void (=street or space) when viewed in plan gives the best indication of urban structure in an existing or proposed neighbourhood. This is called a figure ground. The proportion of solid to void, and the way in which the structure is arranged is defined as the 'urban grain' of an area, e.g. finely grained informal streets and spaces or large, regular streetblocks. This kind of analysis can help identify:

- the townscape character
- the proportion of open space to buildings
- the scale of open spaces
- the street pattern

Remember to illustrate these points in your design statement:

- ✓ Any analysis showing figure ground of local built form with proposed development shown
- ✓ Townscape studies that have influenced the development process



Example of infill site by Bain Swan Architects

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Townscape of the Scottish Borders

The townscape of the Scottish Borders is a rich visual experience. The variety of heights, shapes and styles of housing helps to track the evolution of the settlement. The relationship of buildings to streets, and streets to other streets defines the character and highlights the historic evolution of the settlement. The following are all typical to the Borders townscape, a historic legacy of the last three centuries of human settlement.

Pends, wynds and vennels are synonymous with the medieval street pattern of Scottish towns and villages. Pends are covered passageways that pass through a building, often from street to courtyard, developed as routes through the dense street frontage. Wynds, narrow paths between buildings that link up wider streets, can also refer to paths that link streets at different levels. Vennels are passageways between gables, as footpaths or minor streets.

Townhouses became a popular form of urban living during the Georgian period. Townhouses could be detached, semi-detached or terraced but are distinct from the smaller cottages in their more uniform frontages, adhering to the classical rules of symmetry. Georgian town planning features are characterised by a formal approach, using classic features of proportion and balance, with a regular rhythm of windows, doors and storey heights within the streetscape.

Row housing is a common feature in Scottish Borders towns and villages. Essentially, these are terraced buildings of various sizes, tenures and usage that formed the heart of many Borders communities. In smaller villages rows comprise 1-1.5 storey cottages, interspersed with occasional larger detached properties. In larger towns, these buildings can be larger (two storeys and up) lining the central areas. This built form is organic and can integrate a diverse roofline.



Eyemouth



Kelso



Foulden

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Corner buildings form part of the rich townscape heritage of Borders villages and towns. Corner buildings are a significant part of the townscape, forming strategic nodes that become neighbourhood landmarks and commercially desirable sites. They are visually prominent, culminating axial views along two streets, defined by dual frontage to both aspects.



Melrose

Villas often refer to 19th and 20th century detached suburban houses that were often individual in design, standing back from the street edge with gardens to the front. Construction of villa type properties was widespread in the Victorian era, as a result of the prosperity and population growth of the time. During the 20th century, this style of detached house was overtaken by the emergence of bungalows often dominant on the suburban edge of towns and villages. In the later half of the 20th century the villa typology has been superseded by detached 'executive' homes.



Melrose

20th Century Expansion

Many of the larger settlements within the Scottish Borders have seen considerable expansion in the 20th century. Due to political and planning legislation evolution, modern development is much more commercially-led and housing is predominantly a product of private sector development. Some of this development has been less responsive to the local area and has paid insufficient attention to the landscape and settlement context of the Borders. With the limited brownfield resource in many of the Borders settlements, much new development is likely to be sited on greenfield land and therefore adjacent to this type of expansion. It is important that any new development reflects the local identity working within the historic and modern context of the settlement.



Peebles

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Sense of place

Sense of place is concerned with the qualities that give a place a distinctive character. These qualities are shaped by social, cultural economic and environmental factors, the combination of which will be unique to any given place and how a place is experienced by the visitor/resident. This combination means that alongside the physical attributes of a place, sense of place can be influenced by:

- the community spirit: the vibrancy of a place and its cultural heritage.
- the socio-economic vitality of a place: the wellbeing of the local economy, land
- use patterns and accessibility of local services.



The whole street scene with the built form closing the view, Coldingham



Close knit urban structure with narrow plot frontages, Lauder



Vibrant streetscape in Eyemouth

Built character: a summary

- ✓ It is essential to establish an understanding of:
 - The local built character of the area
 - How it formed in that way: the built heritage and landscape characteristics that have shaped a settlement or place
 - The local sense of place
- ✓ New development must seek to uphold and enhance the local character and sense of place

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

BUILT FORM

Objective: Creates a contextual addition to the urban fabric.

Integral to the physical structure and character of the Borders townscape is the built form of the urban fabric. The overall composition of streets is shaped by how individual buildings work together, creating the unique visual character through repetition, variety and focal points in the streetscene. Features within the built form that create unity or variety include:

- building lines
- storey heights
- plot widths
- window proportions
- materials
- eaves height
- rooflines.

The Borders has a wealth of vernacular buildings and inspirational architecture that is a product of its diverse historic and landscape context. From the pantile cottages on the coast to the mill buildings of central Borders and the Burgh towns throughout, there are contextual cues that should form the basis for any design response in order to ensure the unique character is enhanced. Good architectural design should avoid slavish reproduction of historic styles unless in specific circumstances – quality design will only create the heritage of tomorrow by being true to its cultural context.

As a key factor in creating sense of place, the urban fabric of a place is central to all three factors, as an expression of the local context, cultural makeup and land use patterns.

Built form: a summary

- ✓ New development must pay due regard to:
 - appropriate scale of streets, building plots and buildings in context
 - the pattern and form of building lines, setbacks, rooflines, and building elevations
- ✓ Avoid arbitrary layouts that do not relate to a clear design concept and understanding of context



Coldingham, recent housing development



Coldingham, existing settlement



Newstead, recent housing development



Newstead, the existing settlement



Hawick, recent housing development



Tower Mill, Hawick, existing settlement

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

BUILT HERITAGE

Objective: Demonstrates a responsive understanding of the historic context of a site or area.

New development must be respectful of the built legacy of the past in order to uphold the character and quality of the Borders for the future. Alongside site-specific historic analysis, new development must respect the local context of protected or designated sites:

Conservation areas

There are currently 40 designated conservation areas that have been identified throughout the Scottish Borders as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Any proposed development within or near to a conservation area should therefore pay particular attention to the character and appearance of that area.

Listed buildings

There are nearly 3000 listed buildings throughout the Scottish Borders. These have been identified by Historic Scotland as buildings of architectural or historic interest, based on a combination of: Age and Rarity, Architectural/Historic Interest and Close Historical Associations. There are three categories of listed buildings - Category A, Category B and Category (C S). The listing covers both building exteriors and interiors and can include structures within the building's curtilage, e.g. boundary walls and outbuildings, therefore it is essential to check for any protected status as part of the site analysis process.

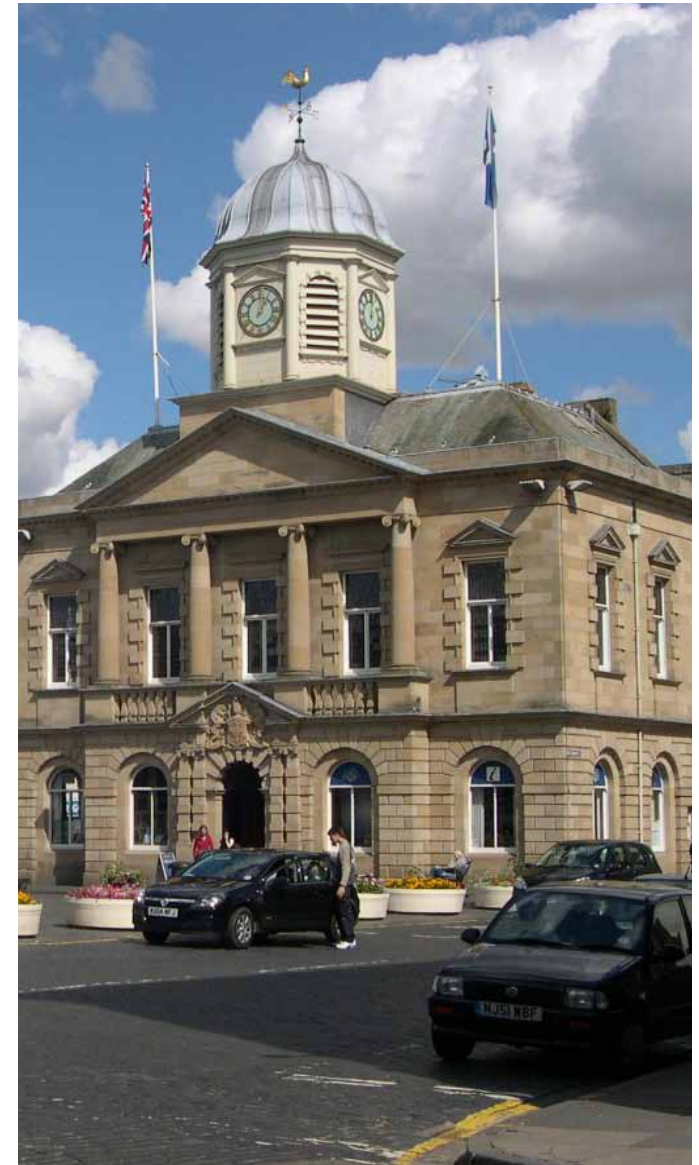
Scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological features

There are numerous sites throughout the Scottish Borders that have been scheduled by Historic Scotland as monuments of national importance. These can vary from small remnants of prehistoric settlement to medieval churchyards and 20th century wartime structures. There are also many unscheduled sites of historic or archaeological interest that are of local or regional importance. The Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments keep a record of all scheduled and non-scheduled monuments.

Scottish Borders Council holds a GIS-based Historic Environment Record (HER), containing information on heritage assets including archaeological sites, artefact find spots, scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings. This seeks to ensure heritage assets are detected and preserved (either in-situ or recorded) prior to new development. The HER is the most up-to-date source of information about the nature of archaeology or listed buildings.

Built heritage: a summary

- ✓ Do character studies of the local settlement origins and heritage: this will help an understanding of built form and local sense of place (you will be expected to illustrate an understanding of context in any design statement)
- ✓ Check for built heritage designations on or near to the site and ensure the design is responsive to any sensitivities



Town Hall, Kelso

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

SITING OF DEVELOPMENT

Objective: creates a place that fits within the landscape and built context

In considering a site for development, it is vital to assess the site conditions and its surroundings through analysis that can help to shape the potential extents and layout of development.

Landform

Any new development should harmonise with the existing localised landform. The landform will directly influence:

- views to and from the development
- how development sits in the landscape
- how and where access can be taken into a site
- how natural aspect and drainage can best be exploited.

All these factors should be taken into account in determining the appropriateness and physical extents, if any, for new development.

All new development must be designed in response to topographic features (ridgelines, slope orientation and surrounding high and low points) to 'fit' within the landscape and utilise the site conditions.

As a general rule the approach should be to "go with the grain" of the site i.e. if a proposal requires more than limited cut and fill or the misalignment of properties in relation to contours, established boundary or property lines, it is likely that the development will fail to integrate naturally with its wider setting. A well designed development will never presume a site is flat, however subtle the level changes.

Remember to illustrate these points in your design statement:

- ✓ Landform analysis: detailed understanding of landform and development
- ✓ Microclimatic study: identifying sun path, wind direction, etc and how this has shaped the design process
- ✓ Views: key views towards the site and how the design responds to these



The built character of Walkerburn is shaped by the landform



Buildings within landform, Newton St Boswells

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed



The relationship of buildings to the landform is essential, both in the visual context and microclimate of the localised area

Ridgelines

Development should generally avoid encroachment on ridgelines that is obtrusive to the horizon. Where a site is on or near a ridgeline, the proposed development should accommodate an appropriate setback from the ridgeline and/or appropriate vegetation to form a backdrop in views towards the site, ensuring that the roofline does not break the skyline arbitrarily. Development near ridgelines should always incorporate appropriate tree planting as a backdrop to the built form reducing the impact and 'framing' the building(s) in the landscape.

Slopes

Development on sloping sites must utilise the landform as part of the overall character of the place wherever possible, rather than imposing a 'development platform' on the site through excessive cut and fill. The most challenging of sites can generate the most creative and distinctive of responses by working with the contours rather than against them, creating a natural relationship between site and development. The layout of buildings and roads in larger developments should generally seek to follow the contours. Commissioning a topographic survey as early as possible helps to establish a full understanding of the site levels and implications on the layout.

Microclimate

The microclimatic conditions of a site – the prevailing wind direction, direction of the sun's movement, and the shelter and shading within the site – can determine the quality and usability of external spaces and the energy demands of heating and lighting internal spaces. An understanding of the microclimate is therefore essential to creating sustainable places that function well. Achieving optimum orientation of buildings, in relation to aspect and landform, should directly influence the overall layout of new development:

- Buildings and plots should be orientated to give a southerly aspect (within 30 degrees either side of south) for private spaces and living room
- Streets should be aligned wherever possible against the prevailing wind direction, to avoid 'wind tunnels'.

Where site conditions cause these dual issues to be in conflict, appropriate shelter should be provided from prevailing winds through breaking up the street pattern and/or other use of planting to provide shelter. The issue of shading from adjacent trees or wooded areas must always be considered in the siting of buildings and open space and areas in excessive shade should be avoided.

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Views

As well as the views within the wider landscape, the visual integration of development into its surroundings at the localised level must be considered. All buildings have a civic role to play as part of the built environment and overall visual quality of an area. Within localised views, new development must consider the following:

Approaching the settlement / site

Impact on views in approaching a settlement/site must be understood. New development – particularly in edge-of-settlement sites – should positively define the point of arrival into a settlement as the ‘first impression’ of a place. The sense of approach and arrival is heightened by development that fronts onto approach routes, incorporating attractive boundaries that frame and contain views



Swinton

Views towards the roofline/skyline

The relationship between the roof profile, landform and existing skyline should be considered in the siting and design of new buildings. Buildings should be considered in the context of ridgelines and/or rooflines in determining storey heights, roof profile and building line. In all cases, the appropriate use of colour within the roofscape is critical to achieving integration within its wider context, and the careful selection of roofing materials must be considered



Melrose

Approaching the site from within the settlement / neighbourhood

In moving along nearby streets or routes – where existing building lines, boundary treatments, landscape structures and landmarks together define views – new development should relate to the overall composition of these elements and read as an integral part of the street.



Coldingham

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Integration and access

In order to create an integrated addition to an existing building group/settlement, new development should always seek to tie in with existing road and footpath links. By identifying the key desire lines (most direct routes that people are likely to use) through or near to a site, these key routes can help shape the layout and anchor it into the surrounding area. The key pedestrian desire lines should be identified and integrated into the layout.

An early appraisal of the footpath network and the hierarchy of streets adjacent to or near the site can provide a baseline for determining the access and route network within a development. The arrangement of streets and spaces within a development must always be aimed at creating permeable places for both pedestrians and vehicles that are closely knitted into the surrounding network of routes (as outlined in PAN 76: New Residential Streets, and forthcoming Designing Streets). Cul-de-sac developments can inhibit the permeability of development and the relationship of development to its surroundings. Where possible, development should incorporate through routes linking a site into the wider access network.

Generally, it is preferable to provide more than one route into a site to enhance overall permeability of the streets network and disperse traffic within a neighbourhood. Interconnecting streets should form the basis for all movement through the site, avoiding excessive segregation of pedestrian and vehicular access.

Access network

Scottish Borders has an extensive network of paths, both an invaluable recreational facility for residents and a key tourism asset.

In planning new development it is essential that existing access networks within the local and wider context are protected wherever possible and, where impacts are unavoidable, appropriate mitigation provided. Recreational access to the countryside should be an integral consideration in planning any edge-of-settlement development. Rights of access are a material consideration in the planning system, as set out in SPP11: Open Space and Physical activity. For further information on the access network in the Scottish Borders, please see the Core Path Plan, which details existing rights of way, promoted or managed routes, new routes or any other route that can provide the public with reasonable access.



Footpath next to River Tweed in Peebles



Development at Peel using existing woodland as attractive boundary

Landscape structures

The importance of well-designed, properly specified landscape elements within the built environment must not be overlooked. When considered integrally to new development in both the urban and rural context, tree and woodland planting can greatly enhance the local character and visual, ecological and recreational quality of a place. Trees form an important visual backdrop, especially in rural or edge-of-settlement development, and tree groups can frame development and anchor it within the landscape. As well as the visual amenity of tree planting, trees can enhance local microclimate and biodiversity as well as provide health benefits.

Existing

As an integral element of towns and villages, trees and vegetation contribute to the unique sense of place of many settlements in the Scottish Borders. In the siting and design of new development, existing landscape structures (such as woodlands, shelterbelts, hedgerows and avenue planting) in or around the site should be assessed.

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Any landscape features of value need to be identified so that:

On-site features of value can be retained and enhanced where appropriate
Any landscape features that are central to the area's character (such as nearby avenue planting or woodlands) can be reinforced or enhanced through the development.

A vegetation survey should be carried out as early as possible in the process to identify the extent and condition of existing trees and shrubs.

Proposed Landscape Planting

The role of landscape planting in new development has a similar role to play to that in the existing townscape and landscape. Elements such as avenue planting, single specimen or tree groups all serve to break up the built form and frame views towards building groups.

Proposals for new development should give due consideration to landscape design from the outset as integral to the design process, and any new landscape planting should have meaning: to visually contain spaces, define gardens, or break up the streetscene – landscape design should not be an afterthought, simply as a means of filling left over spaces.

The specification for any new planting must ensure it is of an appropriate size and species to provide sufficient short-medium term impact, and the phased implementation is planned to provide the appropriate level of impact in relation to the development. The use of native species is promoted, particularly in the context of the wider biodiversity networks.

Settlement Boundaries

As settlements expand, the edge is often the setting for new housing development and is often the most visible part of the settlement in surrounding views as the transition between urban and rural. The treatment of this edge is essential to how a settlement sits in the landscape. Consideration should also be given to opportunities for further settlement growth and provision made for future integration and access where desirable.

It should be demonstrated fully that the design for new development on or near the settlement edge considers the overall visual composition of the settlement boundary (buildings, rooflines, boundary treatments and 'framing' elements such as landscape structure planting) as of equal importance to other elevational views.

Edge-of settlement development must actively seek to create a positive edge to the surrounding countryside. This should generally incorporate some kind of landscape framework either as a substantial wooded area of appropriate quality and species mix or - where combined with outward-looking housing and an attractive open edge - tree and hedge planting. This framework will be required to be of a sufficient scale and maturity to have early impact, and an appropriate specification, early implementation and subsequent management programme must be provided.



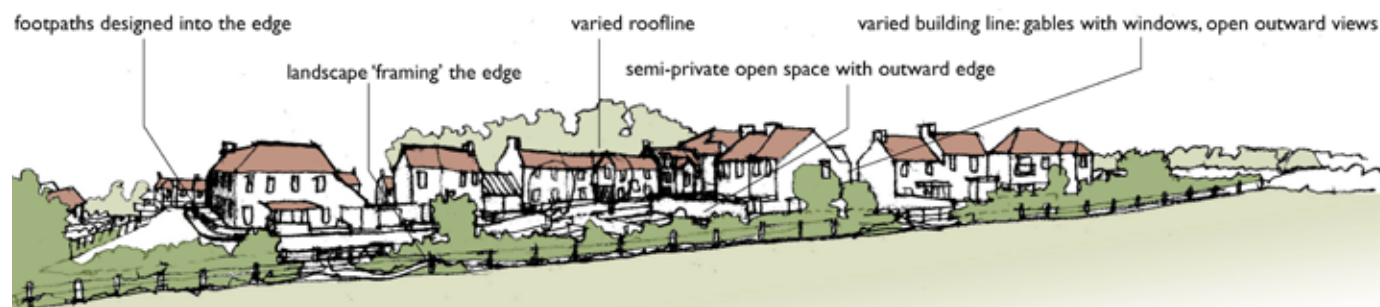
Example of new proposal (by Bain Swan Architects)

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Settlement boundaries are often closely associated with landscape planting such as historic policy woodlands, shelterbelts or hedgerows. These existing structures are valuable in defining the urban to rural transition and providing local habitat/recreation corridors. The presumption shall be that these are retained wherever appropriate, reinforced by new planting and appropriate provision for future management.

Pedestrian access to the countryside beyond should always be accommodated, with appropriate new provision linking into any existing footpath networks.



Creating a positive edge to the surrounding countryside: landscape planting, outward views and a variety in the built form create an attractive composition



A poor edge in the countryside: poorly spaced, monotonous built form, visually intrusive timber fencing and insufficient landscape planting

Siting of development: Summary

- ✓ The layout and design of new housing must relate to underlying landform, 'going with the grain' where possible
- ✓ New housing must work with the natural site characteristics and its microclimate; maximise south-facing aspects and shelter
- ✓ Always check from where a proposed site can be seen in the local area: new development must 'fit' visually within the local context
- ✓ Strive to create well-connected, accessible additions to the existing access network
- ✓ Identify at the outset any valuable local landscape structures and work with these
- ✓ Consider landscape design within new development from the outset
- ✓ Create attractive edges to settlements and/or building groups, utilising landscape frameworks and quality boundary treatments

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

LAYOUT AND LEGIBILITY

Objective; creates streets and places that are distinctive and legible with a clear sense of identity.

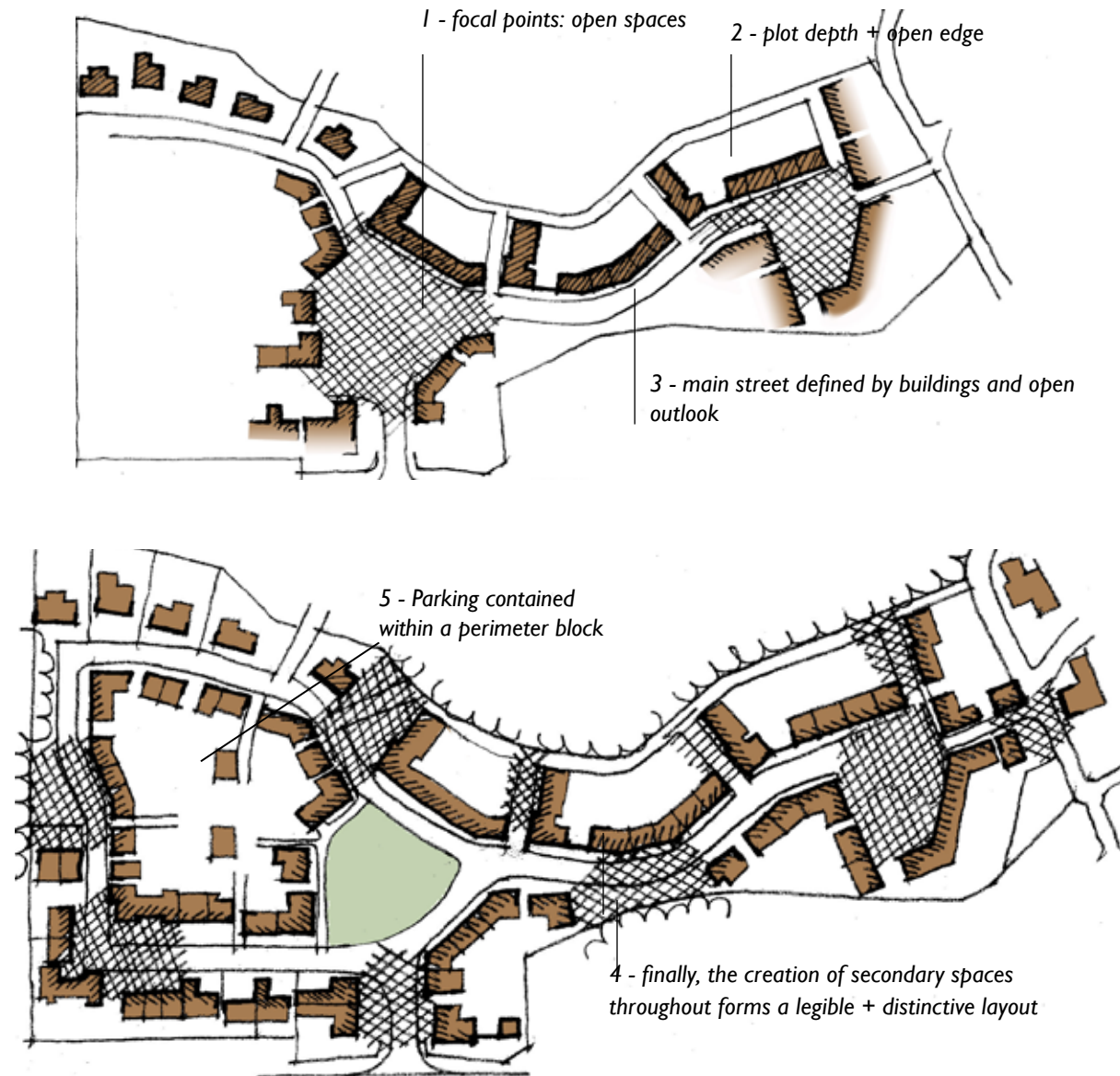
The creation of distinctive, attractive places that are easy to move around should be the common aim of all new development. The layout of new housing should be designed in response to the built context and local townscape. New development must actively seek to provide a permeable, legible movement network that maximises the attractiveness of walking and minimises car dependency.

Layout

Typically throughout the Scottish Borders, streets are often characterised by buildings arranged in a very organic way, close knit with a staggered building line and a range of double fronted, single fronted and gable fronted buildings. This variety and density of buildings adds richness and character. New development should strive to use the appropriate balance of variety and repetition in the built frontage to create continuity and rhythm and a clear sense of identity.

The layout of new development should consider:

- ✓ the nature of the site: the microclimate, the built context and existing street pattern
- ✓ distinctive character areas within the proposed neighbourhood(s)
- ✓ key frontages: to arrival points/open spaces
- ✓ how the development will be experienced as one moves through the spaces.



By approaching a site with some clear design objectives, the site almost designs itself. Here, 5 key elements combine through the design process

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed



Perimeter blocks
A perimeter block refers to a streetblock that is lined on all sides with buildings creating ‘active’ frontage and a clear delineation between public and private space. Here, the parking is well-contained within the block with central housing providing overlooking.

A variety of housing accommodated within a perimeter block

Permeability

The creation of a permeable street layout that is well-integrated to the character and structure of the existing area is central to sustainable development. Proposed layouts for new housing development should seek to provide a range of attractive routes through the site. Permeable development increases the ease of pedestrian movement through a site, thus discouraging car dependency. Enhanced permeability can also help to stitch new housing into existing neighbourhoods, by extending existing movement networks and desire lines (the most direct routes that people are likely to want or need to use).

Legibility

Places that have identifiable features and a logical structure are easy to ‘read’ and to move around in. This ease of orientation -legibility - is helped by considering the sequences of distinctive spaces and buildings that are experienced moving through a neighbourhood. The network of key nodes (areas which people are likely to identify with as places of note) and links (connecting routes between key nodes) within the existing/proposed street layout should be identified at the outset of design development. Within the Borders, there is a diverse range of elements within the townscape that represent nodes and links outlined below:

Routes	Edges	Spaces	Landmark	Neighbourhood
Streets	River	Market squares	Historic buildings (abbey/castle/	Town centre
Lanes/wynds	Coastline	Public park/garden	kirk)	Village centre
Paths	Historic boundaries (castle/estate grounds)	Village greens	Mercat crosses	Local area
	Steep slopes	Courtyards	Monuments/memorials	Anchor point
		Town/village Hall	River crossings	
			<u>Landform</u> : hilltop/ridgeline	

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Boundary treatments

Plot boundaries (between public and private space) help shape the overall quality and character of spaces within the street, almost as much as the buildings. Boundaries onto the street should be designed as an attractive high quality element in the public realm. Boundary treatments can help tie a new or contrasting element into the surrounding urban fabric by reflecting what is already there. The detailing of boundary walling or railing should be appropriately high quality: looking at the detailing of good local examples can help inform an appropriate design.

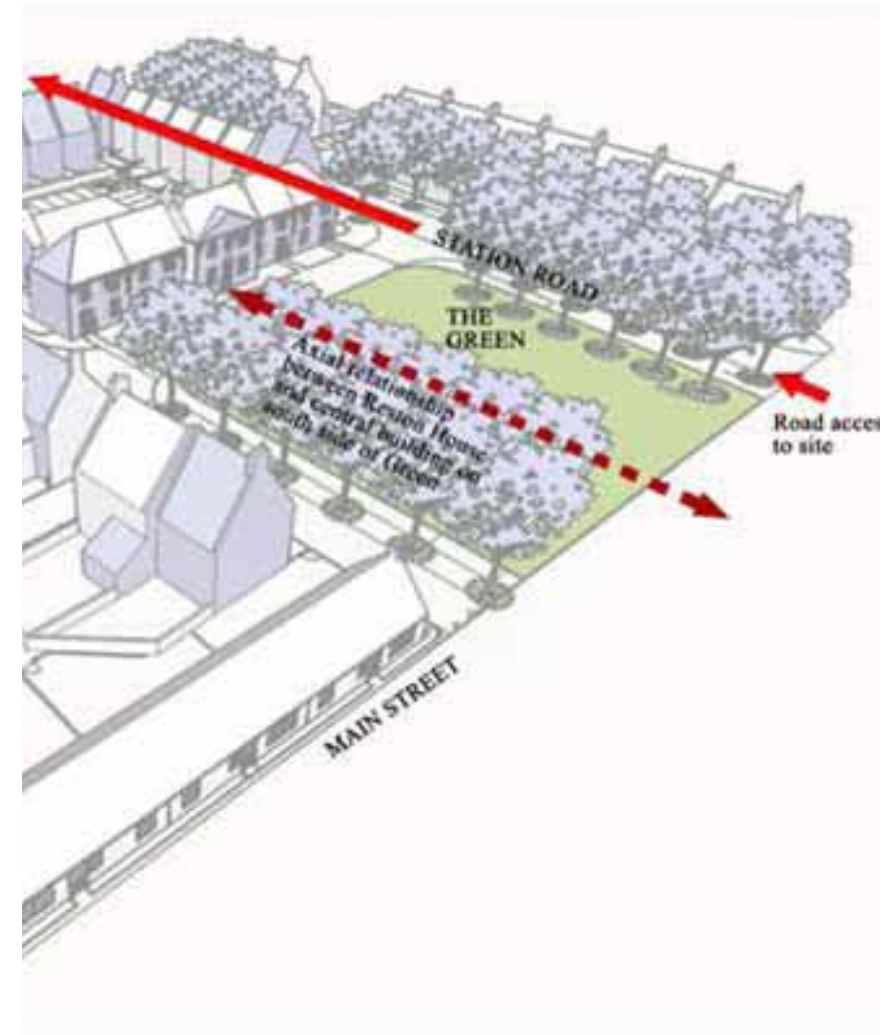
Random or coursed rubble walls and non-coniferous hedges are traditional boundary treatments within the Borders and such elements can help 'anchor' a development into its local setting. Appropriate provision for maintenance should be made from the outset. This may require to be incorporated into 'common land', requiring appropriate factoring mechanisms to ensure that the civic role of this edge is not compromised by future modification by private residents.

Designing safe places

Scottish Borders Council Supplementary Planning Guidance on Designing out Crime sets out requirements for community safety in new development. Development should ensure that vehicular and pedestrian routes are visually open, direct and well overlooked by habitable rooms within adjacent houses to enhance opportunities for passive surveillance; public open spaces should be well overlooked by adjacent houses; excessive blank gables facing directly onto key streets or spaces should be avoided as this limits opportunities for passive surveillance.



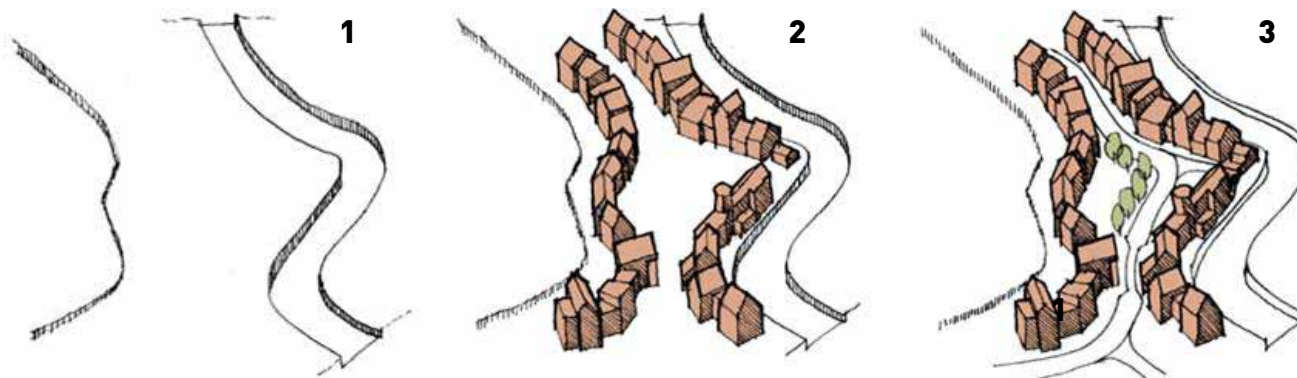
Some good examples of boundary treatments



Proposal at Reston by Simpson & Brown Architects

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed



Design the buildings first to create spaces into which the roads can be placed

Streets

The creation of successful streets is the subject of national advice and good practice currently represented in PAN 76: 'New Residential Streets' by the Scottish Government. This is to be replaced by the forthcoming 'Designing Streets' publication which will set the Department for Transport's 'Manual for Streets' in the Scottish context.

The function of a street is for 'traffic, the exchange of goods, social exchange and communication' (Spiro Kostof, 1992). Since the advent of the motorcar and a subsequent move towards separating vehicles from pedestrians, road design in modern development often focussed excessively on the former of these functions: streets shaped by road engineering with no consideration to the social function that they serve.

There is now a return to a more holistic view of streets and their role in civic life, shaped by the activities around them, the people moving through them and an overall reduction in vehicular dominance.

The diagram above outlines the approach that should be taken to creating streets and spaces. In response to site features (1) the arrangement of buildings should be designed first (2), with the roads fitting into the streetscene after (3), so that the enclosure of spaces by buildings is the primary element in defining the character of the street. The 'anywhere' development of curvilinear, heavily engineered, routes through dispersed buildings set in open, undefined front gardens must be avoided.



The building line, boundary treatments and curtilage parking working together (Allan Swan, Bain Swan Architects)

Development should be designed to create an 'active' edge to proposed and existing streets:

- Buildings should relate positively to the street on which they are situated. The 'front' of the building or buildings should generally seek to address the street as much as possible, working in balance with boundary walls and gables and creating active frontage.
- The internal layout of buildings should be designed to relate living rooms to the front and create opportunities for 'eyes on the street'.
- Excessive blank fences to main streets should be avoided: within the streetscene, walling, hedging or high quality railing should be used as a secondary architectural element to reflect their civic role within the townscape.
- The use of blank gables or walls should be designed carefully: where gables do face the street, these should be designed to incorporate windows or other openings – this creates a more 'active' frontage and presents opportunities for passive surveillance.
- Key routes such as main streets or major approaches to a settlement or site should always be positively addressed by the built frontage as a reflection of their civic role.

4.3 Placemaking & design principles

Local area: existing/proposed

Road design

Roads need not necessarily be constant in width (so long as the running carriageway is at least 3.7m for single file traffic and 4.8m for two way traffic flow) and junction layouts can be informal.

Street geometry

Reducing driver visibility distances, through tight building lines and avoiding overly engineered straights or curves, helps to reduce traffic speeds thus reducing vehicular dominance. The geometry of the street can be fairly constrained as long as there is sufficient access. A swept path analysis should be carried out to confirm that the largest vehicle (i.e. service/refuse vehicles) can be reasonably accommodated.

Pedestrian v's vehicle

Shared surfaces, and removal or reduction of grade separation (the conventional method of separating pedestrians and vehicles through an upstand kerb) can help encourage responsible driving by a heightened sense of risk. This helps calm traffic speeds naturally, facilitating the use of streets by pedestrians and cyclists.

The incorporation of home zone measures such as narrowing of carriageways, use of speed tables and using on-street parking as a naturally occurring traffic calming element, should also be explored. Shared surface streets and spaces can be used where appropriate and should be sensitively designed: without careful consideration vulnerable road users, including those with visual impairments who tend to rely on a kerb line can feel insecure or unsafe. There is also a

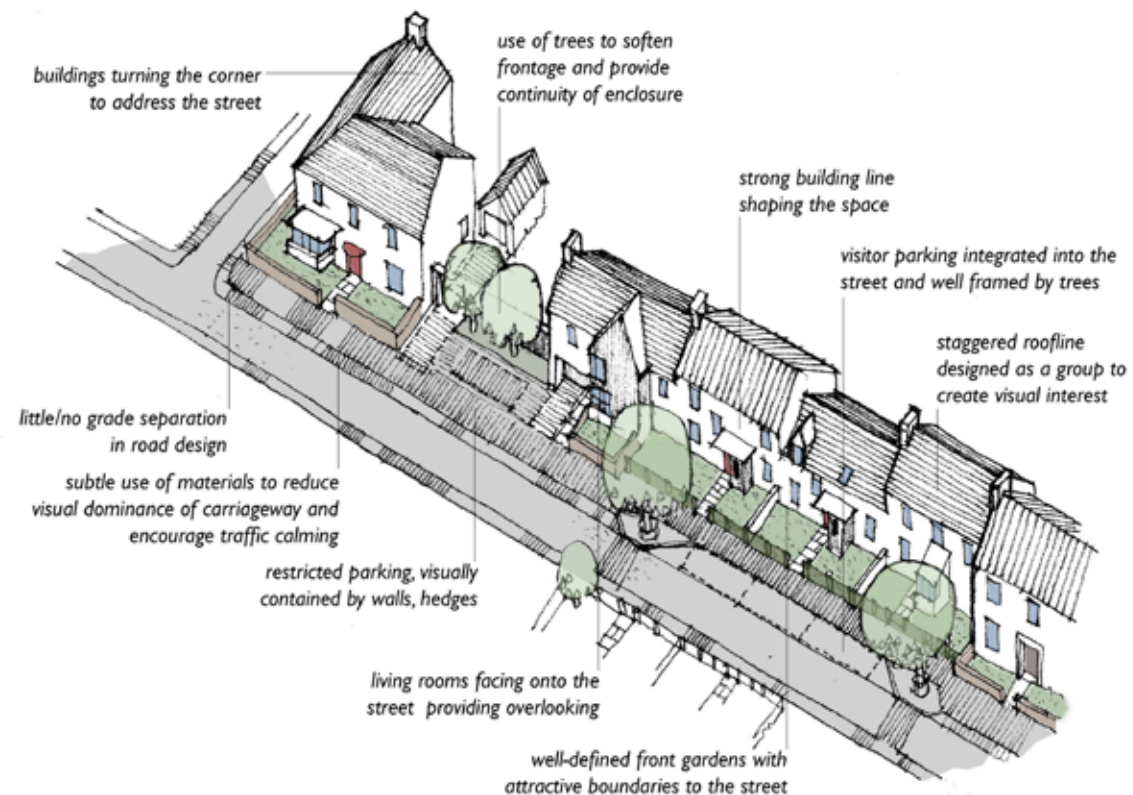
self-limiting factor on pedestrians sharing space with motorists of around 100 vehicles per hour.

Avoidance of clutter

The street scene should be carefully designed to avoid a dependency on excessive street signage. Directional, warning and information signage can clutter the public realm and detract from the overall quality of the public realm when present in, often unnecessary abundance.

Accessibility

A sustainable community or neighbourhood depends on a mix of uses and locally available public transport opportunities. To encourage walking, PAN 75: Planning for Transport recommends a walking distance of 400m (or a five minute walk) to local facilities such as the bus stop or corner shop. Where this is not possible, housing (in the urban context) should be no more than 800m (or a ten minute walk) from local services to encourage the creation of 'walkable neighbourhoods'.



Example of a well-designed street that considers people and spaces first, cars second (Allan Swan, Bain Swan Architects)