

APPENDIX 16

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN AND LAYOUT AND ACCESSIBLE AND ADAPTABLE BUILDINGS POLICY

Policy xxx Residential Design and Layout and Accessible and Adaptable Buildings

- (1) All new housing development should be designed and built to a high quality for the duration of its lifetime. This includes C3 and C4 Use Class developments, conversions and changes of use. A high quality dwelling is one which meets the criteria set out in this policy and which accords with the Local Plan objectives and other relevant Local Plan policies.
- (2) All applications for residential development, including new dwellings, replacement dwellings, and extensions or alterations to existing dwellings should satisfy the Design Criteria as set out in Appendix xx to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account.

New Residential Development

- (3) New residential development should make the most efficient use of land in accordance with Policy HSG4, which may include conversion or change of use of existing buildings, new development and taking opportunities to use airspace above existing buildings where this would be consistent with policies of the Local Plan and would not compromise the quality of the environment and existing residential areas.
- (4) The Council will protect the character and residential amenity of existing areas of housing from forms of backland, infill or other forms of new residential development which are inappropriate for the area.
- (5) Development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not result in harm to the character or amenities of an area including through:
 - a) Tandem development;
 - b) Servicing by an awkward access drive which cannot easily be used by service vehicles;
 - c) Unsafe or unsuitable access arrangements;
 - d) The generation of excessive levels of traffic;
 - e) Loss of residential amenity; or
 - f) Layouts detrimental to the particular character of an area in terms of plot size, plot depth, building footprint, plot frontage width, frontage building line, height, gaps between buildings and streetscape features (e.g. hedges, walls, grass verges etc.).
- (6) The individual and cumulative effect of applications for development on the character of an area will be taken into account and piecemeal development will be resisted in favour of comprehensive proposals that properly address design requirements.

Subdivision of Dwellings

- (7) Subject to other development policies, proposals for the conversion of single dwellings into two or more units will generally be acceptable where:
- a) The building is suitable for conversion by reason of its size, shape and number of rooms. Normally, only dwellings with three or more bedrooms will be considered suitable for conversion;
 - b) The dwellings created are completely self-contained, with separate front doors either giving direct access to the dwelling, or a secure communal lobby or stairwell which itself has a secure entrance;
 - c) Adequate car parking, services and amenity space can be provided for each new unit in compliance with the Council's standards;
 - d) The character of the area and the residential amenity of immediate neighbours are protected; and
 - e) If conversion of semi-detached dwellings is proposed, generally this takes place in pairs in order that privacy and the amenities of the occupants of the adjoining dwelling are maintained.

Internal and External Amenity Space Standards

- (8) All residential development should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards as set out by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) unless a different approach is robustly justified. Appropriate consideration should also be given to:
- a) Providing sufficient space for the general and specific storage needs of residents (including those with disabilities);
 - b) Floor layouts which provide for practical usable space and a good standard of amenity; and
 - c) The provision of rooms which are designed to function comfortably and efficiently for their intended purpose.
- (9) Standards for the quantity and quality of external amenity space set out at Appendix xxx should be met) unless a different approach is robustly justified.

Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings

- (10) All housing should be designed and built to encourage sustainable and flexible living, and should be built to be accessible and adaptable to meet changing occupier circumstances over the lifetime of the development. On developments of 50 or more dwellings:
- a) 10% of new homes should meet Building Regulations M4(2) standard (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and

- b) 10% of the affordable housing should meet Building Regulations M4(3) standard (wheelchair user dwellings) or subsequent standards in legislation to make homes accessible and adaptable.

In calculating the percentage of accessible and adaptable dwellings units to be provided as part of a development scheme, the M4(2) and M4(3) requirement will normally be 'rounded up' to the nearest whole number.