

Neighbourhood Plans and Design

Making the most
of Design
Opportunities

A toolkit for
neighbourhood
planning
groups

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Introduction



The opportunity to set out local design policies is one of the most popular aspects of neighbourhood planning for local communities, but feedback from neighbourhood planning groups also suggests that what can and can't be done with a neighbourhood plan can be confusing where design issues are concerned.

Leeds is made up of a diverse range of neighbourhoods, including small villages, market towns, major settlements and inner city communities. This toolkit is aimed to help neighbourhood plans in all types of areas to make the most of the opportunities for setting out locally-distinctive design policies, and will be of use to all groups preparing neighbourhood plans in Leeds and elsewhere. From establishing a design vision to writing design policies, it will help groups to understand how they can support the improvement of the built environment, conserving and enhancing the best buildings and spaces, and establishing a direction for future development that supports the community's quality of life, health and wellbeing.

A focus group made up of neighbourhood planning groups from across Leeds has helped to shape this toolkit and comments received on the draft suggested a number of helpful changes, in particular:

- Defining how design issues can be included in the different aspects of a neighbourhood plan;
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the planning process, for example how decision-makers use design policies and evidence in determining planning applications;
- Ensuring that the toolkit is as user-friendly and accessible as possible, including practical 'how to' tips and definitions of terminology.

Also included in this guide (see Section 9) are extracts from neighbourhood plans from Leeds and interesting or useful recommendations from neighbourhood plan examiners. These cover some of the design opportunities and challenges that groups in Leeds are likely to face, and will provide useful reference material for those considering design in the neighbourhood planning process.

Contents

1	Neighbourhood plans and design opportunities	P 4 - P 7
2	What is the local and national policy context and why is it important?	P 8 - P 9
3	What design guidance is already available and how can it be used?	P 10 - P 11
4	Key considerations	P 12 - P 13
5	How to incorporate design in a neighbourhood plan	P 14 - P 25
6	Other opportunities	P 24 - P 27
7	Support and advice from the Council	P 28 - P 29
8	Support, advice and funding from elsewhere	P 30 - P 31
9	Good practice from neighbourhood plans in Leeds	P 32 - P 35
10	Additional Information	P 36 - P 39

1 Neighbourhood plans and design opportunities



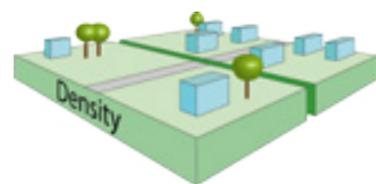
Potential design of new development within existing area

Design is of fundamental importance to how places are created, shaped and understood. Most importantly, design has a significant effect on the physical nature of the built and natural environment which, in turn, has an impact on the quality of people's lives through the relationship that they have with the environment around them.

Research shows that good design can improve health and wellbeing, safety, security and community cohesion as well as adding financial value to development. Good design can also ensure that development is resilient to climate change and can help mitigate the impact of development on the environment. Conversely, poor design can have negative impacts, for example by contributing to social isolation and anti-social behaviour, encouraging a reliance on the car and an unsustainable use of natural resources. It is difficult and costly to retrospectively rectify the damage done by poor design, and so it is important to carefully consider the impact of changes that are made to the built environment and landscape at an early stage in the plan-making process.



Design is a comprehensive term which, when applied in the context of neighbourhood planning, includes building and street layout, **scale** (height and mass), **density**, materials, open spaces, surfaces, landscaping and building proportion, style and detailing. All of these factors influence the way a place looks and feels, and have an impact on the health and wellbeing of its users.



Neighbourhood planning offers a unique opportunity to shape local design by setting out design policies that can cover a site, a character area or all of the neighbourhood area. It's also an opportunity for communities to think about their own neighbourhoods and how they fit into the wider area, developing an

understanding of local sustainability and how this can be improved. The neighbourhood plan can help ensure that new development respects and enhances existing character and street layouts, while creating a network of spaces that is sustainable enough to accommodate future change.

Specifically, design policies in a neighbourhood plan can:

1.1 Provide clarity and guidance to decision-makers

Policies contained within a neighbourhood plan help the local planning authority to make planning decisions and to influence appeal decisions. Once made, a neighbourhood plan will become part of the statutory development plan, which, along with supplementary planning guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will be used to inform decision-making on planning applications (see section 2). Paragraph 2 of the NPPF provides that decisions on planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Design policies in a neighbourhood plan will help to give decision makers clarity on local design issues but the evidence gathered in preparing the neighbourhood plan can also be useful, for example, a character analysis or assessment.

How are planning decisions made? (Planning Portal)

1.2 Help inform landowners, developers, and applicants early in the development process

If there are clear design policies in a neighbourhood plan they can help landowners and developers to take these into consideration early in the development process. It is important that landowners and developers are engaged throughout the plan preparation process.

Holbeck is a good example of engagement with developers. From the early stages, the Holbeck Neighbourhood Forum worked with a number of developers

and this has resulted in developers acknowledging local design concerns, in particular landscape and greening issues and factoring these into development proposals in Holbeck.

Further information/good practice:

- [Working with a Housing Association to bring forward affordable housing \(Locality\)](#)



The Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan Interactive policies map provides clear spatial information for decision making in the development process

1.3 Help to 'shape' development locally

Neighbourhood plans can shape local development by setting out what development could look like and where it should take place. A neighbourhood plan can allocate sites for development and include policies and guidance to shape their development, including design policies (see section 5).

Neighbourhood plans can also shape patterns of development by identify non-designated heritage assets, to be considered in the determination of planning applications and can designate Local Green Spaces to be protected from development (see section 6).

Further information:

- [Neighbourhood Plan Road Map 2018 \(Locality\)](#)

1.4 Increase local support for new development

The provision of well-designed and affordable housing is a national and local priority. The Government's intention for neighbourhood planning has been to increase local support for housebuilding through enabling communities to have a greater say in where development takes place, and the nature and quality of its design. This, in turn, helps to improve and encourage participation in the development process. There is evidence to suggest that this has happened to some extent although this will not always necessarily be the case as many communities will continue to have concerns about the volume of housebuilding in their local areas.

Well-designed developments can encourage local communities to accept and welcome new housing, and thoughtful positioning and connections between new and existing buildings can help with the integration of new residents. Good design can also help new development complement and enhance the existing historic environment and contribute to regeneration objectives. It can also ensure that new buildings and streets are accessible and user friendly to all ages and abilities, creating a more welcoming neighbourhood.

1.5 Promote sustainable development

The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is from the 1987 Bruntland Report:

'Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'

- Sustainable development is the core principle of planning, and its key economic, social and environmental roles are defined within the National Planning Policy Framework (see section 2).



Integrating new housing into the existing area (Walton Neighbourhood Plan)

- Good design can positively influence the sustainability of an area in a number of ways. For example:
 - economic sustainability can be encouraged by the inclusion of live-work spaces within a new development or through development that enables people to work near where they live.
 - Environmentally, design can improve air quality through tree planting, reduce flood risk through the inclusion of sustainable urban drainage systems, and encourage sustainable travel through street layouts and cycle networks.
 - Socially, good design can improve wellbeing by facilitating neighbourly interaction and physical activity through the inclusion of public space in a scheme, or improve security by maximising overlooking of communal space.

Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to define local sustainability objectives at a neighbourhood-level. Neighbourhood plans can identify opportunities and threats to local sustainability and set out how they could be avoided or mitigated, as well as any potential benefits that new development may bring.

Further information:

- [The Value of Urban Design \(Design Council\)](#)



Millennium Village, Allerton Bywater



Churchfields, Boston Spa

2 What is the local and national policy context and why is it important?

Step-by-Step Guide to Neighbourhood Planning

1	Is there scope?	11	Pre-Submission Plan preparation
2	Form a group	12	Pre-Submission Consultation
3	Explore the boundary options	13	Revise the Plan
4	Neighbourhood Area designation	14	Prepare the Submission Plan
5	Build your Forum (if applicable)	15	Submit the Plan to the Local Planning Authority
6	Neighbourhood Forum designation (if applicable)	16	Independent Examination
7	Engagement	17	Modifications
8	Scoping	18	Referendum
9	Policy Intentions Document	19	Made
10	Consult!	20	Monitoring and implementation



Neighbourhood planning groups are encouraged to have early discussions with the Council regarding the regulatory requirements and the national and local policy context. At examination, a basic conditions statement will be submitted alongside the neighbourhood plan which will set out how the plan has been prepared and how it meets the policy and legal requirements.

2.1 National Policy and Guidance

[The National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It emphasises the key role that design has to play in planning and includes Chapter 12 'Achieving well-designed places' on how it expects planning policies to reflect this. It states that "the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."

Paragraph 125 of the NPPF states that "plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. . . Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development." Advice on preparing a design vision is set out in section 5.

The NPPF is supplemented by [national planning practice guidance](#) including advice on [design](#). Ministerial Statements can also be issued by Government as planning policy.

2.2 Local Strategic Policy

Early discussions with the Council will establish the strategic policy context for the neighbourhood plan. In most instances, there will already be a policy in place that is being used by the authority to help determine planning applications. Groups should be aware of how this policy is being implemented locally, how effective it is in achieving positive outcomes, and the opportunities for the neighbourhood plan to provide a more locally-distinctive interpretation of the policy

[The Local Development Framework](#) is the name of a suite of documents that form the Development Plan for a local authority area, in this case the Leeds Metropolitan District. The Local Plan for Leeds includes the saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), Core Strategy, Site Allocations Plan, the Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan, Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan and the [Policies Map](#). In Leeds, the Saved UDP Policies and Core Strategy Policies are those considered by the Council as Strategic Policies.

The [Leeds Core Strategy](#) includes place-making as one of the key objectives in its spatial vision, and emphasises the importance of high quality design throughout, including its role in housing, sustainability, settlement centres and community centres. Policy P10 sets out a requirement for thorough analysis and consultation as part of the design process, and notes that 'Developments should respect and enhance existing landscapes, waterscapes, streets, spaces and buildings according to the particular local distinctiveness and wider setting of the place with the intention of contributing positively to place making, quality of life and wellbeing.' There are also a set of key principles that relate to site context, character, amenity, parking, storage, safety and accessibility.

[The Plain English Guide to the Planning System](#)

3 What design guidance is already available and how can it be used?

There is a range of useful national and local guidance which will help to embed design into a neighbourhood plan:

National Guidance

Building for Life 12 is a set of 12 criteria which was developed by a partnership of housing experts and sets a benchmark for well-considered residential design. This tool can be used to help understand the critical issues in housing design, for example character, parking and safe streets. These can be used to help a community brief a developer and to assess development proposals. A neighbourhood plan could include an expectation that developers will meet the 12 criteria and include the community in the assessment process.

Design in Neighbourhood Planning, has been produced by Locality, the national organisation responsible for providing support to neighbourhood planning groups. It sets out the importance of design and identifies some tools and exercises that help define the existing character of a place. It cites some useful case studies and provides guidance on how to move from a design vision to design policies.

Local Guidance

Neighbourhoods for Living is Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) which has been adopted by the Council to provide comprehensive guidance on the design of housing development. It can be used to help prepare a character assessment and to establish key design principles which could be adopted in neighbourhood plan policies.

Building for Tomorrow Today is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which promotes sustainable design and construction methods. It should be a starting point for a neighbourhood plan when considering climate change and environmental sustainability objectives to comply with local policy, and help plan development that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and adapts successfully to climate change.

Neighbourhood or Village Design Statements are adopted SPDs that provide comprehensive analyses of the character of areas across the city. Where they are in

place they can provide a useful starting point for the analysis of a settlement and can be referred to as evidence within a neighbourhood plan.

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans set out a Conservation Area's special qualities in detail, offer guidance to potential developers and can include design briefs for key sites and criteria for the demolition and replacement of buildings. There are over 70 conservation areas across the district, and many of them have up-to-date conservation area appraisals (CAAs). These can be used to inform a local approach to design and as evidence to support policy in a neighbourhood plan.



Example - The Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan using National and Local Policy.

Policy LC1 'A focus for Holbeck' uses NPPF and Leeds Core Strategy objectives as context and supporting evidence.

Policy LC1: A focal point for Holbeck

- Both the NPPF (Section 2- "Ensuring the vitality of Town Centres" para 23) and Leeds Core Strategy (objective 10) recognise the importance of concentrating retail and leisure uses within town and local centres, thus improving accessibility and contributing to their vitality. The core strategy includes policies to restrict permission for these uses elsewhere (CS Policies P3 and P4) and has identified the area as a lower order local centre (Spatial Policy 2 and Policy P1).
- The Character Area 3 Analysis (Section 11 - Heritage Assets) shows that the Local Centre at Holbeck is at a focal point in the area in terms of the road network and is visually highlighted by the spire of St. Matthew's Community Centre
- To reinforce that focal quality, proposals for publicly accessible uses should be concentrated within the Local Centre.

4 Key Considerations



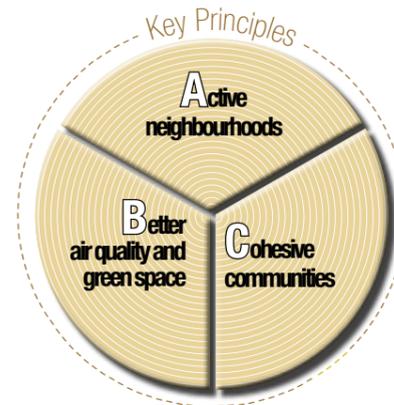
Open Sustainable Urban Drainage increases biodiversity and improves the street scene

Placemaking and **environmental sustainability** are at the heart of good design and are the key considerations for design in a neighbourhood plan, whether in an urban or a rural area.

Placemaking is the creation or improvement of quality spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, wellbeing and sense of identity. The layout of new developments and landscaping can influence the amount of time people spend outdoors and their interaction with each other, and so is a powerful tool in developing successful and sustainable communities.

The appearance and quality of new buildings is also a strong contributor to placemaking. (See "Planning & Design for Health & Wellbeing" in section 10).

Understanding and defining the local character of an area is a fundamental step in developing the design vision for a neighbourhood plan. Character is what makes a settlement distinctive and often gives a sense of pride and belonging. It is important to respond to the existing architectural context and natural environment when designing new buildings and places, to ensure that the settlement preserves and enhances this local distinctiveness.



Before photo of street



Sketch showing how this street could be improved

Environmental sustainability in this context is the minimisation of a development's impact on the environment and its ability to adapt to a rapidly-changing climate. The Government is committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions and energy consumption from non-renewable sources, and a neighbourhood plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as required by the Basic Conditions.

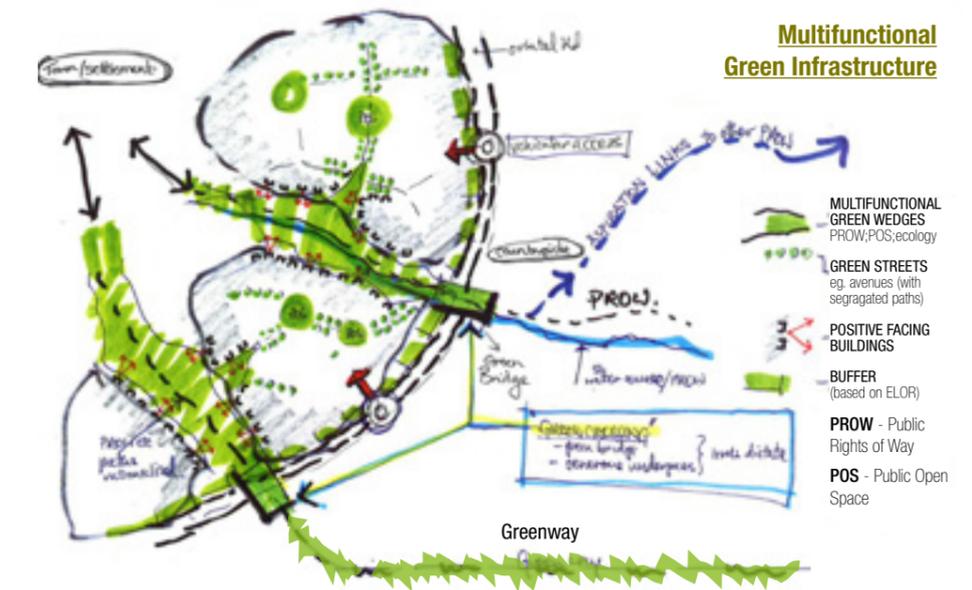
"The Basic Conditions" are the legal requirements for neighbourhood planning, see section 10

As part of this contribution, neighbourhood plans should consider any existing and new green and blue infrastructure in development. Green infrastructure (GI) is the term given to the network of green spaces and natural features in an area – for example parks, woodlands, green roofs, hedges, street trees and gardens. Blue infrastructure (BI) is that relating to water – canals, rivers, ponds, etc. Both are fundamental not only for environmental sustainability (encouraging biodiversity, providing natural cooling, mitigating flood risk, encouraging sustainable travel, capturing carbon dioxide and pollution) but for the quality of life and sustainability of a community, promoting good physical and mental health through social interaction and exercise. Green and blue infrastructure also promotes cycling and walking, reducing car use and its polluting effects.

Another way to incorporate environmental sustainability in a neighbourhood plan is through the design of new development – for instance, encouraging sustainable travel through provision of cycle storage and easy access to cycle networks and optimising the opportunities for installing renewable technology.

Advice on how to incorporate placemaking and environmental sustainability in a neighbourhood plan is included in the next section.

Healthy New Towns - NHS England Healthy New Towns programme has released a leaflet introducing the 10 Healthy New Town Principles: Putting



5 How to incorporate design in a neighbourhood plan



The opportunities to include design in a neighbourhood plan vary from design references in the plan's vision and objectives to design policies and indicative drawings for site allocations.

The key to doing this successfully is to discuss design issues with the local community from an early stage and continue to refer to them throughout the neighbourhood planning process. For example, asking questions about the design of the built environment as part of the early engagement and consultation will help to provide evidence to support design policies and issues included in the final draft plan.

The following section outlines how design issues can feature at all stages of the neighbourhood planning process.

5.1 Include design in the vision statement of the neighbourhood plan

The NPPF states that neighbourhood plans should develop a shared vision for a neighbourhood area. This is an opportunity to set out aims for high quality design and local distinctiveness, and these should be considered very early in the process. The vision should be used to set out the plan's objectives, and from each objective a policy (or policies) can be developed.



Community consultation will help to determine what is important to local people, what aspects of their area they are proud of, and what they value most in terms of design. It may be helpful to ask about their opinion of recent local development, but this should be carefully done. Views can change over time, so caution should be used in interpreting results. A "yes" or "no" response to questions should be discouraged, in favour of a more detailed explanation for people's views – for example, identifying which aspects have been well-liked and which have been unpopular. Perhaps new development has had an impact on their ability or inclination to walk, cycle or socialise? Or has had an impact on their safety,

security and comfort? Are there developments that were opposed, but which resulted in some positive outcomes? Looking at planning permissions over a specified recent period, say 5 years, will help to build up a picture of the key issues as well as building potential evidence to support policies.

When consulting with local residents, it is crucial to get as many views as possible from a wide cross section of the community or neighbourhood. Gathering views from people of all ages, abilities and cultures through working with local schools and other organisations is very important to ensure that new development is as accessible and enjoyable as possible for everyone.

Toolkit: [Locality: How to consult with your Local Community](#)

It is also useful to look further afield, at new development in other neighbourhoods, towns, and villages in the surrounding area and beyond. This can help to see what is possible, to learn from others and develop broader aspirations.

Walking around the local area as a group is a good way of beginning a discussion about aspirations for future development, and this can help with developing a character assessment (see section 5.2) later on.

Whatever approach is taken, it is important to get the design vision right. All of the design policies will stem from this, so it is worth spending time appraising development that works and understanding why, so that the most relevant and successful ideas are incorporated into the plan.

5.2 Area-specific policies – a good way to help ensure design consistency over a wider area

Writing policies that relate to specific areas within a neighbourhood can clarify local expectations but evidence is needed to support them. Finding existing sources of relevant information about the character of an area is an important first step.

Existing sources of information include Neighbourhood or Village Design Statements and Conservation Area Appraisals.

Design and Access Statements that are submitted alongside planning applications can also be a useful source of evidence, and the work undertaken by developers or agents in providing evidence to support their proposals will include at least a basic analysis or appraisal of the design or character of an area. The Local Planning Authority can provide or signpost to such statements where they are available.

Leeds City Council can provide details of conservation areas and any existing [Conservation Area Appraisals](#) (CAAs), character assessments and Neighbourhood or Village Design Statements. Identifying heritage assets – significant buildings and places – is crucial, because they contribute to the character of the area and are given special consideration in planning decisions. The [West Yorkshire Archive Service](#) is another useful resource giving information on the archaeology and historic built environment of this area.



Example of a design vision - Kirkstall Forge

The character of an area is made up of a wide variety of elements, including:

- density, height and shape of buildings in the area, e.g. no. of storeys, width of frontage
- layout of housing, e.g. back-to-back or through terraces, semi-detached, etc
- natural features, e.g. rivers, ponds, trees, hedges
- predominant materials, e.g. red brick, stone
- historical period, e.g. Georgian, Victorian, post war
- details, e.g. window and door surrounds, chimneys, canopies
- topography, e.g. steep streets with views



A character analysis of housing in each area of Leeds was undertaken recently. This awaits completion, preferably with the help of local communities, especially neighbourhood planning groups who know the character of their area better than anyone. Examples are shown below and the rest will be added at a future date.



Boston Spa

Where there is no local (or up to date) character assessment it is worthwhile preparing one, so that it can be used as evidence to support area-specific policies. It is often the case that a neighbourhood area has a variety of architecture, materials, styles and spaces. Thus, the process begins with identifying existing key character areas within the settlement and discussing their qualities. Planning Aid's [‘How to prepare a character assessment to support design policy within a neighbourhood plan’](#) is a comprehensive guide on how this can be done.

‘Placecheck’ is another useful tool that will help to build up knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of an area, by marking up an online map while walking around it, stimulating discussion and helping to foster aspirations. Including people of all ages and abilities on this walkabout is a good way to understand how people experience their environment and what might be done to make it more welcoming. It is worth talking to Council officers who can help with this process, or give advice on employing a design professional – an architect, urban designer or landscape architect – to help identify and represent the important issues and features.



Beeston

5.3 Allocate a site – making an allocation in the neighbourhood plan will provide the maximum influence over the design of the development

In Leeds, the Council has taken the lead in allocating sites for development in the Site Allocations Plan (SAP), Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVLAAP). Additional allocations can also be made in neighbourhood plans to complement this. They can be for any use where there is an evidenced local need, and most commonly this is for housing.

Allocating sites for development will impact on movement through an area and its appearance, density and scale.

The density of the existing settlement can be increased by looking at infill sites, or there may be potential to build on its edge in one or more locations. Site allocations should be carefully considered and supported by robust and up-to-date evidence to ensure that new development can be accommodated by necessary infrastructure such as services and roads. New infrastructure provision may be an identified requirement for a development site, and the plan would have to outline any funding mechanisms for the delivery of this, for example through Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 Agreements. The Council can provide advice on infrastructure requirements for new development.

Critical to the successful allocation of a site is the ability to demonstrate that the proposal is sustainable, viable and deliverable. [Sustainability appraisals](#) are not a requirement in neighbourhood planning, but can be a useful way to demonstrate that the proposals in the plan contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, one of the Basic Conditions. [Viability appraisals](#) can be undertaken on site-specific proposals to provide evidence to the neighbourhood plan examiner that the proposals are deliverable. Deliverability can also be evidenced through close collaboration with the landowners/developers of a site to demonstrate that the proposals can come forward according to the policies in the plan.



The East Leeds Extension allocation incorporates infrastructure and the location of community facilities at the outset (East Leeds Extension SPD)

The ability to allocate sites allows a neighbourhood planning group to consider brownfield or derelict sites that the community feels would benefit from regeneration. The Council undertook a nationwide pilot project in 2017 to collate information into a [Brownfield Land Register](#). This information is provided in an [online map](#).

The following steps will be helpful in analysing and determining suitable sites for housing development. It is important to consider and agree the evaluation and assessment process with the community and other stakeholders:

1. Gather the evidence to demonstrate the local housing need (e.g. Housing Market and/or Needs Assessments) – this will help determine the amount of development needed. Establishing a housing target for a neighbourhood area should always be done in collaboration with the Council. Neighbourhood Plans cannot be used to undermine or plan for less development than set out by the Local Planning Authority.
2. Look at all available site options in the area – use the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#), a register of sites that have been submitted to the Council to identify them as available for development, and consider a local ‘call for sites’, inviting landowners, agents, potential developers or others to put forward sites for consideration.
3. Develop criteria with the local community to score each site – these could be things like proximity of amenities and public transport, existing infrastructure such as roads, schools and healthcare, significant buildings or landscape features, flood risk and brownfield land. Issues can be weighted to help prioritise those that are most important to the community and pertinent to the local area, and need to be considered alongside the deliverability of the site. A useful starting point is the Local Planning Authority’s site assessment criteria.
4. Identify the site or sites that best fit the criteria and set out requirements for its development, supported by the evidence gathered.

5. Begin to shape how the site should be developed, as described in the following section.

Further information/good practice:

- [Locality’s Site Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [Site Assessment Document for the Walton Neighbourhood Plan](#).

5.4 Help to shape allocated sites – the neighbourhood plan can set out design policies for sites that are allocated by the Council

This section sets out the steps to help shape allocated sites but is equally applicable to sites that are proposed to be allocated in a neighbourhood plan.

Step 1 - Consider any existing planning requirements and the neighbourhood plan’s vision

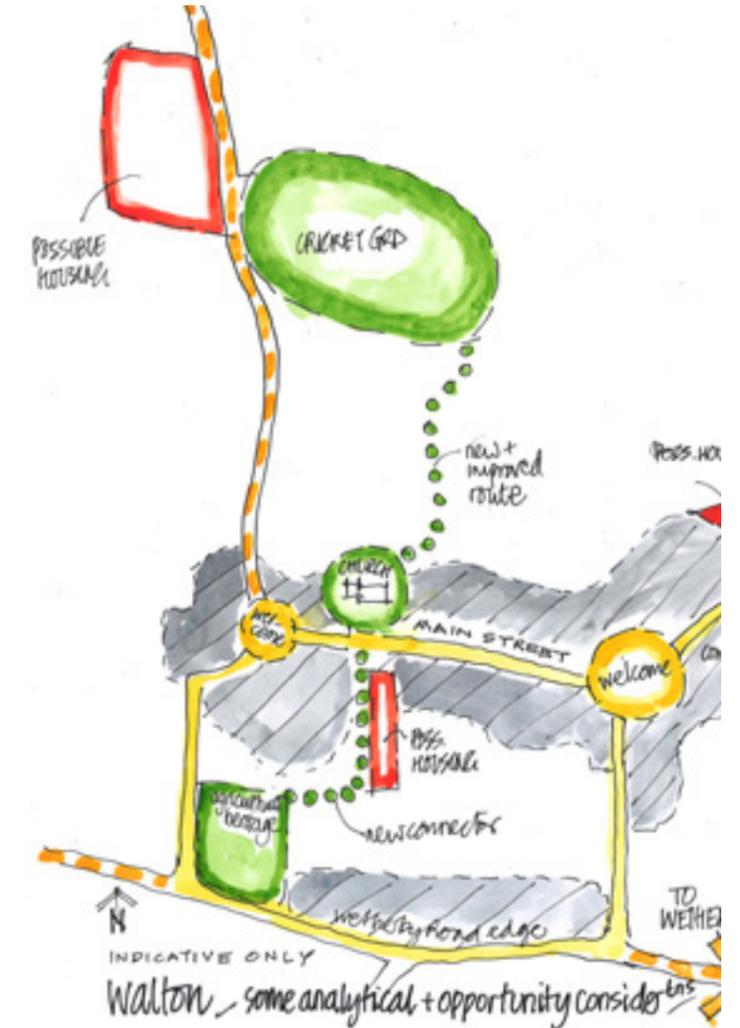
The first step when considering how to shape an allocated site should be to look at the site requirements, which can be found in Leeds City Council’s Site Allocations Plan and existing Local Plan requirements (as set out in the extant development plan). These can include details of requirements for highway access, ecology and green space, education provision, listed buildings, among other conditions. Once this has been done, consider the neighbourhood plan vision and objectives and how these could be delivered or met through the development of the site.

Step 2 - Explore and research the development site

It is important to fully understand the site, and consider its limitations and opportunities. The Council can provide its own site assessment information but it may be a good idea to do further site analysis if local knowledge can add more depth. The site may have a number of interesting and valuable features that could be preserved and enhanced, for instance existing structures, boundary walls, mature trees, level changes, streams, paths or views. Making good use of these assets can help harness and foster a sense of place.

If the site is accessible and safe, a walk around it will help identify its key features and map any ‘desire lines’ (commonly used short cuts and informal paths through undeveloped land). Desire lines may indicate where connections between the new site and its surroundings should be, and there should be careful consideration of the boundaries of the site as the new development will need to respond to this context.

Consider whether there are any assets that could be part of a blue and/or green infrastructure network. This can connect the site to its wider rural setting, or, in an urban area, to parks, canals and green corridors through the city, promoting walking and cycling. The green infrastructure (GI) corridors within Leeds are shown on Map 16 in the Leeds Core Strategy. The map also identifies opportunity corridors (shown with arrows on the map): these are areas where there is a potential to connect GI corridors or to enhance existing links. Leeds Core Strategy Policy G1 and Spatial Policy 13 require any development falling within a GI or opportunity corridor to incorporate special features that retain, enhance, or extend its functions. These features must be above and beyond general policies such as the provision of onsite green space or a landscaping scheme.



Analysis and opportunities plan highlighting movement and connections through an area

Site research is important and this might include identification and analysis of:

- Planning history, the site may have been put forward for development already. There may also have been a previous planning application submitted for the site which will provide a useful starting point as it will include an analysis of the site;
- Historical maps, to chart the site's context and how it has changed over time;
- The topography and how this might affect proposals – this can sometimes affect density and layout but can also highlight views which should be retained;
- Any other existing assessments of the land, e.g. flood risk, ecological, sustainability, or any local knowledge of issues affecting the site;
- Heritage assets on the site and how they can be conserved or enhanced;
- Public Rights of Way (definitive or permissive);
- Waterways including culverted streams;
- The [Leeds Habitat Network](#), which shows the locations of the most important ecological areas and ecological corridors, and which is protected by the Leeds Core Strategy; or
- Public transport routes near the site



Step 3 - Prepare a concept masterplan

It may be appropriate to prepare a concept masterplan – a drawing or series of drawings that show potential opportunities for its layout. It is a response to the constraints and opportunities that have been identified in the previous exercise. It is a good idea to talk to Council officers about this before any decision is taken.



A concept masterplan is a good way to set out expectations to developers without being overly prescriptive. Some of the important issues to consider include:

- **Movement and connections** - Consider how connections to the existing built form will be made. Both physical and visual connections are important in helping people find their way around. Offering several connections between new and existing development (increasing 'permeability') will make journeys more efficient, and restricting use of some of the links to pedestrians and cycles will discourage car use and increase physical activity, as long as the connections are pleasant and well-overlooked. If there are back gardens adjoining the site, it is usually best to locate the new development's back gardens adjacent to them, as this improves security and privacy.
- **Streetscape** - Space around development is important. A well-overlooked, well-proportioned street that is softened by landscaping is more likely to lead to more neighbour friendships, informal children's play and 'active travel' (walking and cycling) than one that is dominated by parking and traffic. These outcomes are very important for health and wellbeing, security and sustainability.



- **Semi-private space** - Front gardens allow residents to spend time immediately outside their own homes, gardening, pottering, or relaxing. A low front wall, fence or hedge allows children and those sitting down to see into their street, leading to incidental conversations that develop relationships and help make a street feel like part of the home. This sort of contact helps to combat social isolation and can boost mental and physical health. Larger front gardens can be paved over for parking in the future – this should be avoided as it can contribute to flooding. A small [front garden](#) of around 2m depth allows for planting and a space to sit, and maintains the enclosure of the street space between buildings.



- **Street trees and hedges** – The importance of green infrastructure for environmental sustainability is noted in section 4. Street trees and hedges are particularly important as they are well positioned to capture particulate pollution and provide pleasant spaces for socialising. They will help development look more established over time by screening and breaking up building form, as well as adding colour and seasonal variety. A neighbourhood plan can include a policy requirement for street planting, with careful thought given to species, life expectancy and size. Any existing healthy mature trees should be protected wherever possible and only removed as a last resort. While policies can be included to ensure that any trees to be removed are replaced at favourable levels (the Council's policy is for three new trees for every one removed), the benefit of a mature tree will not be matched by a young one for many years.
- **Accessibility of open space** - Neighbourhood plan policies can set out the amount and type of open space that new development is expected to provide. It can also designate Local Green Spaces (see section 6.2)



[Fields in Trust](#) champions and supports our parks and green spaces by protecting them for people to enjoy in perpetuity

They have a [guide](#) which emphasises the need for a range of both formal and informal outdoor spaces to meet our recreational needs and the practical tools to guarantee sufficient space is available.

- **Density and mix** – Varying the density throughout a development site can result in a layout that follows historic settlement growth patterns, with more intense development found nearer intersections, radiating out to lower densities. Variety in housing type creates a development that is more interesting and distinctive, assisting people in finding their way through it, and helps offer a mix of affordability. Setting aside an area for [self-build](#) or co-housing could also be considered.

Leeds has a [Self-Build Register](#) which will allow the Council to get a better understanding of the needs of people who want to build their own home in Leeds.



'Lilac', a Co-Housing Scheme



- **Environmental sustainability** - Major development should be 20% more energy efficient than the building regulations requirement and 10% of the energy needs of the development should come from renewable or low carbon energy sources. Non-residential major development is required to be built to BREEAM excellent standards and residential major development is required to be built to the higher optional water standard of 110 litres per person per day. Other ways of influencing the sustainability of new development should be considered, for example:

- ◆ provision of cycle storage facilities in new houses and flats
- ◆ provision of electric vehicle charging points (The [Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review](#) introduces a Policy EN8 for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, which requires new residential development that includes parking spaces to provide 1 charging point per dedicated parking space and 1 charging point per 10 communal parking spaces)
- ◆ considering live/work units to reduce the need for commuting
- ◆ considering the distance (walking or cycling) to local employment and educational facilities
- ◆ where the context is appropriate, encouraging higher density development, e.g. terraces rather than detached dwellings, as this is inherently more energy efficient
- ◆ orientation of new dwellings to optimise their opportunities to install solar panels
- ◆ use of sustainable and durable materials

5.5 Create design codes

A neighbourhood plan can also use a design code as part of policy. A design code is a set of key principles that guide the design of a particular development or area. It is a useful tool for ensuring quality and consistency in new development. It aims to guide the appearance and feel of new buildings and places and ensure that they fit into a family of styles which are distinctive.

The scope of a design code can vary. It can consist of broad guidance on scale, building orientation and lines, or be more prescriptive, including a palette of building materials, landscaping, detailing and colour. It might recommend, for example, that for particularly sensitive developments, a building material requires approval as part of a planning condition. However, it is important to recognise that very tight constraints imposed by design codes may stifle creativity and can result in repetition.

A design code could be written to accompany a concept masterplan for a site. Using character assessments and looking further afield at other high quality new development will help identify valued characteristics and aspirations for the area. Guidance can be included on many aspects of the design of new development, including building style, material and colour, scale of spaces and streets, depth of front gardens and boundary treatments, landscaping including paving, trees and other planting, parking and paths.

The NPPF supports the preparation of design codes to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, in particular through the use of visual tools. Additional funding is available to those neighbourhood planning groups preparing design codes.

[Preparing Design Codes](#) is a useful document that shows how design codes can be integrated into the planning process to help deliver good quality places.

Design Codes - [The Design Council \(CABE\)](#)

6 Other opportunities



Holbeck Viaduct-proposals for a green walkway (Photos courtesy of Edward Architecture)



The disused railway viaduct that could become a walkway into the City Centre

There are a number of other opportunities for neighbourhood plans to have a positive local impact as shown by a number of made plans in Leeds:

6.1 Identifying Community Projects

The inclusion of projects in a neighbourhood plan is an opportunity to demonstrate how the group will seek to deliver and implement the plan, as well as identifying those issues that are important to the local community but cannot be addressed through planning policies.

If a neighbourhood plan is to include projects then these must be clearly distinguishable from the policies for example by being placed into an appendix. Including projects in a neighbourhood plan can serve to boost local support for the plan as it can be demonstrated that local issues and aspirations have been taken on board in the plan making process.

Boston Spa - The made plan contains a section on creating a “people friendly village” which responds to issues raised through the consultation undertaken during the preparation of the plan. The Parish Council have subsequently set up a “People Friendly Boston Spa” working group and are working with the Council to work up some initial ideas will help to meet the neighbourhood plan’s objectives.

Walton Parish Council have recently installed a new children’s playground during the preparation of the plan, which was identified as an aspiration of the local community. Further work is planned to create a wildlife friendly boundary to integrate it with the rural setting.



6.2 Designation of Local Green Spaces

The designation of a Local Green Space (LGS) is a key opportunity for neighbourhood plans. Over 130 have already been designated in Leeds.



To qualify for designation a LGS proposal must be:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The NPPF also states that a Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space, so evidence of the above criteria must be robust.



In order to provide evidence of the rationale for designating a local green space in a neighbourhood plan, it is recommended that an assessment against the NPPF criteria is undertaken and included in the neighbourhood plan evidence base.

Further guidance:

- [Locality: Local Green Space Designations](#)

Before photo of Boston Spa High Street dominated by traffic and parking



The [Site Allocations Plan Greenspace Background Paper](#) contains an assessment of green space provision across Leeds and identifies those areas with deficits or surpluses of certain green space typologies. Groups can undertake a locally-specific assessment and determine the levels of provision within the neighbourhood area. Policies in the neighbourhood plan can then direct new green space provision to meet identified deficits and identify opportunities for improving green spaces as part of the projects section of the neighbourhood plan.

Quantities of new greenspace provision are determined by the Core Strategy, however neighbourhood plans can direct how the greenspace is laid out or sited. For example, new green space can be directed to areas of deficiency to enhance the local green infrastructure network, helping to improve connectivity and accessibility.



6.3 Identification of Non-designated heritage assets

Historic England's website has a [list](#) of designated heritage assets including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and registered parks and gardens. Neighbourhood plans can identify other buildings and places that are not on this list, as 'non-designated heritage assets', but these must be supported by evidence to show that they have sufficient historic significance or interest.

Non-designated heritage assets identified in neighbourhood plans can be included as considerations in development proposals through a neighbourhood plan policy. Opportunities to conserve or enhance heritage assets can also be identified.

Further guidance:

- [Historic England Advice Note on Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment](#)

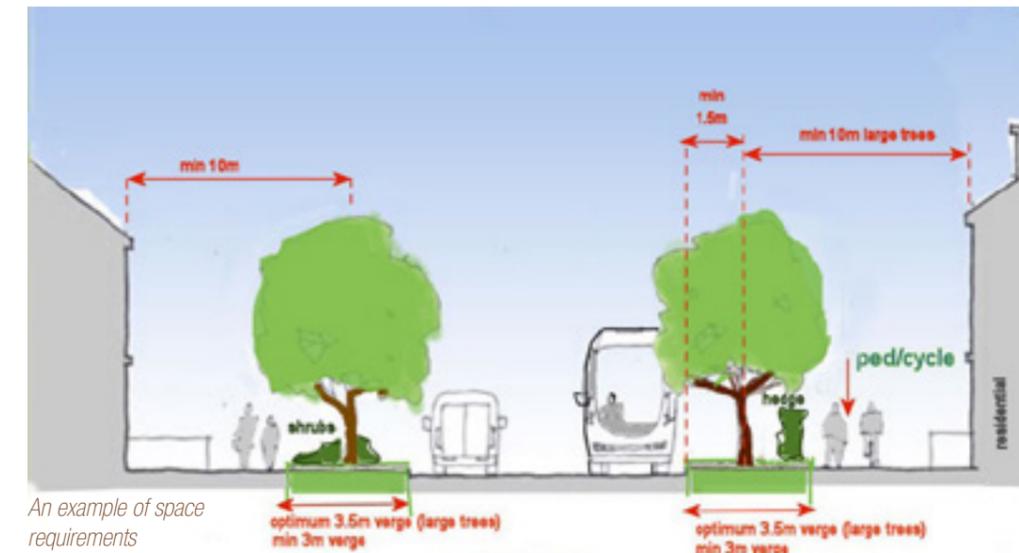


The Old Chapel, a non-designated heritage asset identified in the Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan

6.4 Highways Design Opportunities

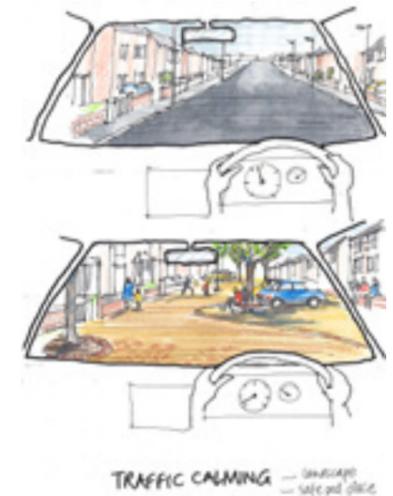
There is substantial evidence of the negative impact of air pollution on our health and wellbeing from vehicles along road corridors notwithstanding the environmental impact of vehicular travel. There are often opportunities to create a green buffer between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists as trees and shrubbery absorb particulates in particular and thereby help to improve air quality. However, this will require the provision of sufficient space to ensure sustainable healthy trees and shrubs by including sufficiently wide/verges beds (3m) or using 'load bearing root cells' in paved situations. As well as the health benefits this approach encourages more walking and cycling because it will be a more pleasant experience. This in itself is another health benefit. The issue is of particular importance for roads around schools and any attempts to create green pedestrian/cycle routes through new and existing greenspace could be encouraged as a policy in a neighbourhood plan.

The Council is committed to development of more "Green Streets"



An example of space requirements

New public realm scheme to soften a busy road junction (Woodhouse Lane)



Impact of landscaping and pedestrian-friendly surfacing to slow traffic

7 Support and advice from the Council

Design support will vary from group to group. The level and type of support will depend on what the neighbourhood plan is seeking to achieve, so an early discussion on this is advised. The type of support could include:

7.1 Signposting

At an early stage in the neighbourhood planning process, the Council will signpost groups to existing guidance and policy, such as relevant neighbourhood or village design statements, conservation area appraisals, or previous characterisation work. The Council will also provide information on any local plan implications, for example development allocations or proposed development allocations. The Council will be working on a number of planning briefs for sites that are being allocated through the Site Allocations Plan, and will seek to work with groups to facilitate a collaborative and complementary approach in shaping the development of those sites where this is appropriate.

7.2 Evidence

An understanding of the design history and context of a site, area or place is important. An understanding of how an area has developed historically and recent planning approvals is a good starting point. Design and access statements can also be helpful. These are documents that are submitted alongside planning applications often provide useful information and design analysis which will help groups to understand the context of an area. Speak to the Council about how to find out about recent planning approvals and good examples of design and access statements.

7.3 Scoping, issues and options

Depending on what a neighbourhood planning group is seeking to achieve, the Council can help to scope the issues and options for inclusion in the neighbourhood plan. For example, the Council may be able to help scope issues and options, including advice on potential development sites, provision of existing evidence and support for engagement activities. Check at an early stage what support may be available. If a group is considering including design codes

or seeking to shape Local Plan allocations, the Council can support with early analysis and research on these sites, facilitating a site visit or group discussion.

7.4 Design concepts/proposals

The Council can help with the preparation of design concepts for sites that are proposed to be allocated in neighbourhood plans. The extent of this support will vary depending on resources but could involve helping groups to understand the policy context, site analysis and key guiding principles. The Council supported the Walton neighbourhood planning group by undertaking some design analysis for the proposed housing site allocations in the neighbourhood plan. This plan received a 'yes' vote at referendum on 20th September 2018 and has subsequently been made by the Council. Please note that this work involved a fee.

The chair of the Walton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Brodie Clark CBE, provided the following feedback:

"The Design work by LCC was outstanding – it transformed a potentially dull technical document into something that connected with the villagers of Walton – they saw and felt a future that they themselves had envisaged."

"The Design work spoke in a language, through its sketch work, that made a real and meaningful connection to the community."

"The Design work firmly sold the Plan to the community – it was presented as a reality – not simply a technical specification."

7.5 Preparing the evidence base

The Council will support groups to gather and understand evidence in the early drafting stages of the plan preparation process, and will also help to prepare and rationalise evidence to support design policies when preparing for the formal pre-submission consultation - for example, by helping to identify and make use of any existing design guidance. The Council can also provide comments on evidence base documents (such as character assessments) and policy intentions

documents, in advance of formal pre-submission consultation taking place.



Before photo and after sketch demonstrating design concept (Walton NP)



8 Support, advice and funding from elsewhere

8.1 Locality

Locality was awarded the neighbourhood planning support programme by the government for 2018 – 2022. There is £9000 funding being made available to all neighbourhood planning groups. However, please note that any funding received under the 2015-2018 programme will be deducted from the amount available under the 2018-2022 programme.

Some neighbourhood planning groups are eligible to apply for up to £8000 additional funding from Locality if they are:

- **Allocating sites for housing development;**
- **Including design codes in the plan;**
- A designated business neighbourhood plan;
- A cluster of three or more parishes writing a single plan; or
- A Neighbourhood Area with a population over 25,000 people.

[Technical support](#) is available through Locality and can be applied for at the same time as funding support. Groups are eligible for technical support if they are:

- **Allocating sites for housing development;**
- **Including design codes in the plan;**
- Planning to use a neighbourhood development order;
- An undesignated neighbourhood planning group needing help to be designated.

[Case study: Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Notes \(Locality\)](#)

8.2 Planning Aid England

Planning Aid England is a national voluntary body funded and supported by the Royal Town Planning Institute. It is a national network of volunteers who have prepared neighbourhood planning resources and provide support and guidance to neighbourhood planning groups. The Council can facilitate a link between neighbourhood planning groups and Planning Aid England in Yorkshire, or they can be approached [directly](#).

Please note that Planning Aid has limited resources and gives priority to supporting disadvantaged areas.

[Planning Aid Direct](#) is a web-based source of information about planning issues

There is also an email-based Advice Service – advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
In respect of supporting wider community engagement in the planning system phone 0207 9298338

8.3 Student Support

Each year the Council hosts a number of planning student placements which offers an opportunity for groups to access additional support. These placements are managed by the Council, and groups should approach the Council if there are areas where students are able to support on specific projects in neighbourhood planning. Previous examples have included: research and evidence projects, support at engagement events, online / social media support, character analysis / appraisals, and topic studies.



Holbeck – public consultation on the draft Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan, the Forum received support from Planning Aid England, the Council, and others.



Chapel Allerton – inaugural meeting of the Chapel Allerton Neighbourhood Forum, supported by the Council.

9 Good practice from neighbourhood plans in Leeds

Policy Intention

Our objective:

The public consultation indicated support for up to an additional 20 houses within the community. A key objective is to support such development and ensure, where possible, that future build is in keeping with the style of the village and the needs of the community.

Policy D1:

To allocate three sites for future housing development:

- Opposite the cricket ground
- The Coal Yard
- Hall Park Road

Policy D2:

To inform any future housing development in regard to the appropriate type of housing and suitable types of design.

Walton Neighbourhood Plan Design Policy

Pre-Submission Policy

Policy H1

The following sites identified on the Policies Map are allocated for providing a maximum of 20 new homes within the plan period:

- Land West of Springs Lane/Walton cricket pitch.
- Land South of Main Street (Coal Yard)
- Land North of Hall Park Road.

Proposals for development on all allocated sites should adhere to the design principles set out in Appendix 4 'Design Principles and Site Concepts':

- Development proposals must be underpinned by a robust analysis of both the village of Walton and of the immediate site context, to inform the scale, massing, form, materials and details of any proposal;
- Developments should seek to ensure where possible they offer views of St. Peter's church, or do not obscure existing views of it;
- Small grass verges and landscaping are found to the edges of highway throughout Walton and these features should be incorporated into any proposal of a scale which allows them;
- Where buildings front main highways and where developments propose new highway, orientation of dwellings should continue this feature;
- Variation of the building line to the street will assist in mirroring the character of Walton where existing dwellings have a range of set-backs, from buildings which meet 'back of footpath' through to dwellings with generous front gardens with mature landscaping;
- Vertical articulation of dwellings and their façades should be dealt with sensitively. Many dwellings in the village benefit from chimneys which add definition to roof lines and also pitched canopies to entrance ways offer articulation to the front façade, joining the ground and first stories;
- Landscape treatments within front gardens are a strong visual feature of streets within Walton, and a landscape plan for a development of any size should be considered from the outset, with plants, shrubs and trees provided with space to mature within the built form layout.

Submission Policy

Policy H1

The village design policy, referring to new housing development is laid out in HG4 which describes more clearly the importance around layout, design and materials.

The following sites identified on the Policies Map are allocated for providing approximately 20 new homes within the plan period:

- Land West of Springs Lane/Walton cricket pitch.
- Land South of Main Street (Coal Yard).
- Land North of Hall Park Road.

Proposals for development on all allocated sites should adhere to the design principles set out in Appendix 4 'Design Principles and Site Concepts':

- Development proposals must be underpinned by a robust analysis of both the village of Walton and of the immediate site context, to inform the scale, massing, form, materials and details of any proposal;
- Developments should seek to ensure where possible they offer views of St. Peter's church, or do not obscure existing views of it;
- Small grass verges and landscaping are found to the edges of highway throughout Walton and these features should be incorporated into any proposal of a scale which allows them;
- Where buildings front main highways and where developments propose new highway, orientation of dwellings should continue this feature;
- Variation of the building line to the street will assist in mirroring the character of Walton where existing dwellings have a range of set-backs, from buildings which meet 'back of footpath' through to dwellings with generous front gardens with mature landscaping;
- Vertical articulation of dwellings and their façades should be dealt with sensitively. Many dwellings in the village benefit from chimneys which add definition to roof lines and also pitched canopies to entrance ways offer articulation to the front façade, joining the ground and first stories;
- Landscape treatments within front gardens are a strong visual feature of streets within Walton, and a landscape plan for a development of any size should be considered from the outset, with plants, shrubs and trees provided with space to mature within the built form layout.
- Developments on the two smaller sites should not preclude a consideration of self-build.

Examiner and Comments

Rosemary Kidd

The policy allocates three sites for housing development and sets out eight design principles. The first paragraph of the policy refers to Policy HG4 and repeats the last paragraph in the justification. It is considered to be unnecessary repetition and I recommend that it be deleted.

The second paragraph is not clearly worded and a revision is proposed to allocate the sites for "housing".

The policy is worded that "approximately 20 new homes" are to be provided and this gives an indication of the amount of new development envisaged without setting a limit or target. However, some of the background evidence reports refer to "up to 20 homes". It is recommended that the justification and background evidence reports are reviewed to ensure that, as appropriate, they are consistent with the wording of the policy.

Recommendation 12: Revise Policy H1 as follows: Delete the first paragraph of the policy referring to Policy HG4.

Revise the second paragraph to read: "...are allocated for housing to provide approximately 20 new homes within the plan period."

The justification to the policy and background evidence should be revised, as appropriate, to be consistent with the wording of the policy.

Referendum and Made Version

Policy H1

The following sites are allocated for housing to provide approximately 20 new homes within the plan period:

- Land West of Springs Lane/Walton cricket pitch.
- Land South of Main Street (Coal Yard).
- Land North of Hall Park Road.

Proposals for development on all allocated sites should adhere to the design principles set out in Appendix 4 'Design Principles and Site Concepts':

- Development proposals must be underpinned by a robust analysis of both the village of Walton and of the immediate site context, to inform the scale, massing, form, materials and details of any proposal;
- Developments should seek to ensure where possible they offer views of St. Peter's church, or do not obscure existing views of it;
- Small grass verges and landscaping are found to the edges of highway throughout Walton and these features should be incorporated into any proposal of a scale which allows them;
- Where buildings front main highways and where developments propose new highway, orientation of dwellings should continue this feature;
- Variation of the building line to the street will assist in mirroring the character of Walton where existing dwellings have a range of set-backs, from buildings which meet 'back of footpath' through to dwellings with generous front gardens with mature landscaping;
- Vertical articulation of dwellings and their façades should be dealt with sensitively. Many dwellings in the village benefit from chimneys which add definition to roof lines and also pitched canopies to entrance ways offer articulation to the front façade, joining the ground and first stories;
- Landscape treatments within front gardens are a strong visual feature of streets within Walton, and a landscape plan for a development of any size should be considered from the outset, with plants, shrubs and trees provided with space to mature within the built form layout.
- Developments on the two smaller sites should not preclude a consideration of self-build.

9 Good practice from neighbourhood plans in Leeds

Policy Intention

Policy D1
Local distinctiveness and character, including townscape setting, key features of built forms, and materials, should be recognised and enhanced by any new development, alteration or extension.

Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan Design Policy

Pre-Submission Policy

**Policy HC1
Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area**
Development within the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area (as defined on Map 9) should preserve and enhance the historic, archaeological and architectural character of the area and buildings and structures (as described in the Appendix) within it.

Proposals for development within the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area should demonstrate:

- an understanding of the historic significance of the site; and
- how the development will seek to enhance its heritage attributes in ways which will be particularly beneficial to the future of Holbeck.

Submission Policy

**Policy HC1
Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area**
Development within the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area (as defined on the Policies Maps 4 and 11) should preserve or enhance the historic, archaeological and architectural character of the area and buildings and structures within it, including but not exclusively, positive characteristics which give the area its distinctive identity, such as:

- location and course of the Hol Beck and any associated structures, and;
- scale, form and architectural detail of the 18th and 19th century development.

Proposals for development within the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area should demonstrate:

- an understanding of the historic significance of the site, and;
- how the development will seek to preserve or enhance its heritage attributes in ways which will be particularly beneficial to the future of Holbeck.

Examiner and Comments

Tony Burton
Policy HC1
This defines the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area as including a part of the Holbeck Conservation Area and an additional area supported through community consultation and subject to proposals by Leeds City Council for a Conservation Area extension.

It is not possible for a Conservation Area to be defined through a neighbourhood plan policy. This is rightly identified as a proposal to be brought forward through Project HC-a. The effect of Policy HC1 is to require development in the defined area to “preserve or enhance” its character as if it were all designated as a Conservation Area. As a result the Policy does not meet the Basic Conditions and a more nuanced approach is required which recognises some of the proposed area lies within a Conservation Area and some without.

Amend Policy HC1 to delete “preserve or enhance” and add “respect the Conservation Area and” after “Maps 4 and 11) should”

Amend Policy HC1 to replace “area” after “character of the” with “Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area”

Amend Policy HC1 to replace “area” after “characteristics which give the” with “Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area”

Amend Policy HC1 to add “within the Conservation Area or otherwise respect them” after “heritage attributes”

Referendum and Made Version

**Policy HC1
Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area**
Development within the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area (as defined on the Policies Maps 4 and 11) should respect the Conservation Area and the historic, archaeological and architectural character of the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area and buildings and structures within it, including but not exclusively, positive characteristics which give the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area its distinctive identity, such as:

- location and course of the Hol Beck and any associated structures, and;
- scale, form and architectural detail of the 18th and 19th century development.

Proposals for development within the Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area should demonstrate:

- an understanding of the historic significance of the site, and;
- how the development will seek to preserve or enhance its heritage attributes within the Conservation Area or otherwise respect them in ways which will be particularly beneficial to the future of Holbeck.

10 Additional Information

The Basic Conditions

Every plan needs to demonstrate that it meets a range of legal requirements, known as the Basic Conditions (see below). The independent examiner will assess the plan against the Basic Conditions, and will not recommend that the plan proceeds to a referendum unless they are convinced that they are met. It is therefore important for the local neighbourhood planning group to understand these from the outset, and to discuss local strategic policy with the Council, to avoid missing important information about the context in which the plan must fit. Groups are required to submit a Basic Conditions Statement as part of the material submitted for independent examination, alongside the neighbourhood plan. The Basic Conditions are set out in guidance and regulations on the creation of plans. This means ensuring that the plan:

- Has regard to **national policies** and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contributes to the achievement of **sustainable development**;
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the **development plan** for the area;
- Does not breach, or is otherwise compatible with **EU obligations**;
- Does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (in that it does not undermine the integrity of a protected habitats site).

Once an examiner 'tests' the neighbourhood plan alongside the Basic Conditions, one of the following recommendations will be made to Leeds City Council:

- That the plan meets the basic conditions and can proceed to referendum;
- That the plan, subject to modifications recommended by the examiner, meets the Basic Conditions and can proceed to referendum; or
- That the plan fails to meet the Basic Conditions and cannot therefore proceed to referendum.

Planning and Design for Health and Wellbeing

The key principles of planning and design for health and wellbeing have been brought together on a page. These principles are underpinned by national and local planning policy, meet the strategic priorities for the city and can be signed up to by all partners.

Key Principles

- **Active neighbourhoods** – promoting cycling and walking, reducing car usage and improving children's opportunities for independent mobility.

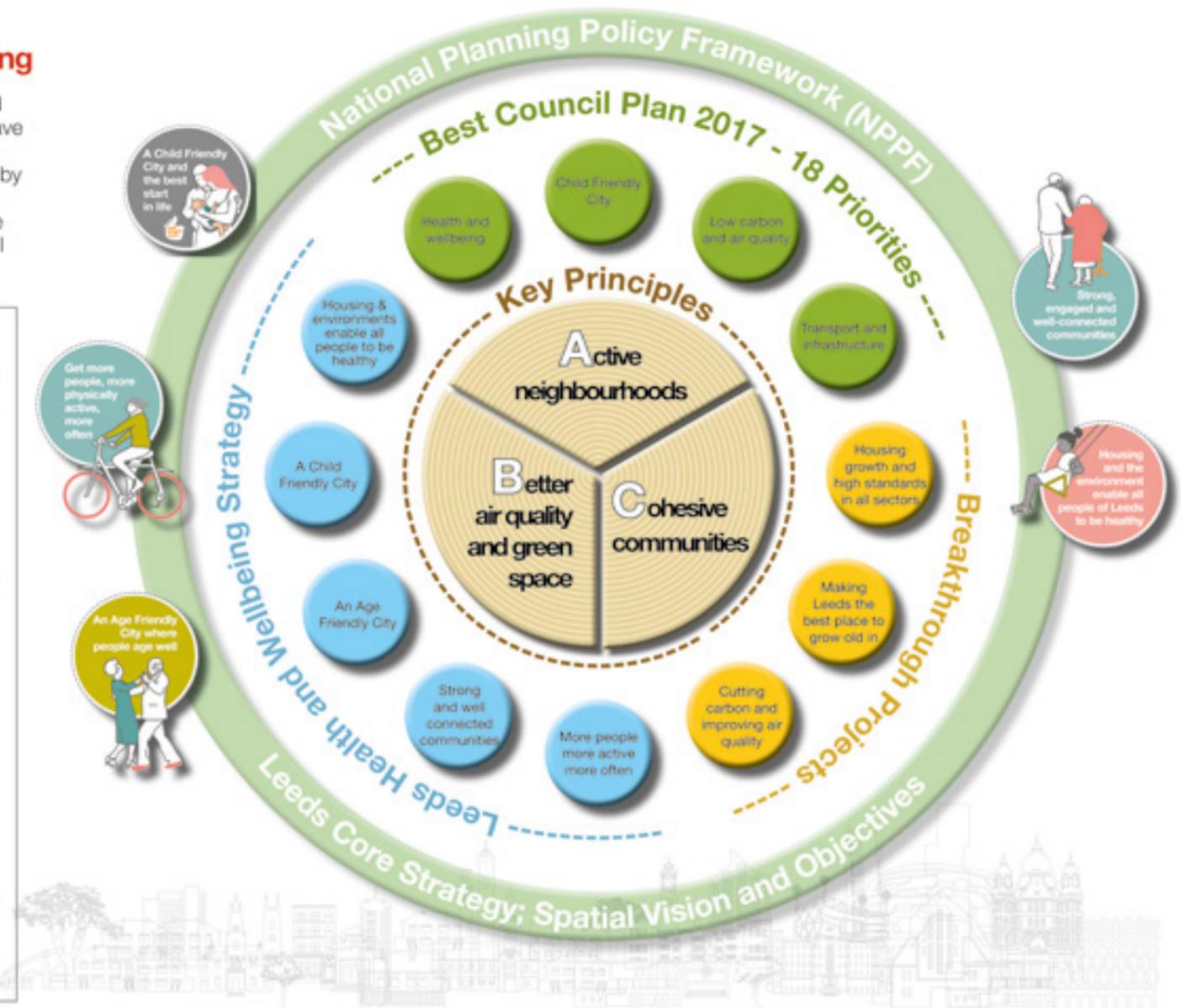
The increasing volume and speed of traffic over the last few decades have been shown to impact negatively on healthy outdoor activity. Attractive, safe streets and networks lead to more children's informal play and active travel for all ages and abilities, and can add to the financial value of development.

- **Better air quality and green space** – using green and blue infrastructure to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and promote mental wellbeing.

New development should provide and link to existing green and blue infrastructure wherever possible and should provide new natural features including green roofs, hedges, street trees and gardens. Environmental sustainability is integrally linked.

- **Cohesive communities** – encouraging co-located services and high quality neighbourhood spaces to encourage social interaction and combat isolation.

A well-overlooked street or space that provides places for chance encounters or to sit and chat is more likely to lead to more neighbour friendships, helping those from different backgrounds get to know each other and feel safe. Facilities and workplaces should be easy to reach, and communities helped to play an active part in managing their area.



Glossary

Basic Conditions are the 5 legal tests that a neighbourhood plan will be tested against at independent examination. A Basic Conditions Statement must be submitted alongside a neighbourhood plan which demonstrates how the plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.

Brownfield Land (or previously developed land) is land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure and has the potential to be re-developed. The NPPF provides for and promotes the use of brownfield land or sites first.

Community Infrastructure Levy is a planning charge to provide a fair and transparent means for ensuring that development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure that it will rely upon, such as schools and roads. Where there is a made neighbourhood plan in place, 25% of CIL will be transferred to the relevant Town/Parish Council or Community Committee (if the area is non-parished).

Conservation Area Appraisals outline the special characteristics of conservation areas and provide guidance on how they can be preserved, enhanced or special features for additional protection.

Extensions to the settlement are developments that are adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and are “tacked on” to existing highways and other infrastructure.

Greenfield Land is undeveloped land in a city or rural area either used for agriculture, amenity or natural landscape.

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-used parcels of land within existing urban areas that are already largely developed.

Local Plan is a plan for the future development of an area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the local community. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Material Considerations are matters that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision. They can include highways safety, traffic, noise, nature conservation, or previous planning decisions.

Section 106 Agreements are legal agreements between the local planning authority and developers and can be attached to a planning permission to make acceptable development which would be otherwise unacceptable in planning terms. Section 106 agreements must be directly related to the proposed development.

Self-build (and custom-building) is housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual.

Site Allocations Plan is the Council's plan that allocates sites for different types of development: housing, employment, retail, mixed-use, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, and green space.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents pre-date Supplementary Planning Documents but their content is similar to the material in Supplementary Planning Documents in providing additional details to existing policies or setting out guidance not covered explicitly by existing planning policies. Supplementary Planning Guidance is used to inform development proposals and also helps decision-makers in the determination of planning applications by setting out how policies are to be implemented in the decision-making process.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a register of sites that have been submitted to the Council to identify them as available for development. New sites can be submitted to the SHLAA and may be considered when it is next updated. The SHLAA is used by the Council as a technical study to determine the level of deliverable housing sites, and informs the Council's 5 year housing land supply.

Produced by City Development's Policy and Plans Group and Environment and Design Group.

For further information, please visit: www.leeds.gov.uk/np or email npsupport@leeds.gov.uk