

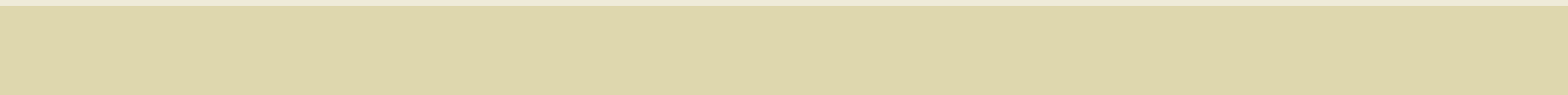
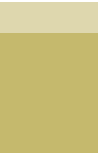


Supplementary Planning Document  
**Design and Sustainable Development  
Planning Guidelines**

Adopted - February 2009



*Working for West Dorset*



	<b>Non-Technical Executive Summary</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1.	Why this document has been produced	1
1.2.	The status of this document	1
1.3.	What this document covers and who it is for	1
1.4.	How this document is structured	2
1.5.	Who to contact for further information	3
<b>2.</b>	<b>Design Policies</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1.	Introduction	4
2.2.	Work in harmony with the site and its surroundings, and the limitations and opportunities these create	6
2.3.	Involve the right people at the design stage	8
2.4.	Create walkable and accessible neighbourhoods and plan for a thriving public transport network	10
2.5.	Create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses	13
2.6.	Make efficient use of land	14
2.7.	Create well-defined streets and spaces	16
2.8.	Create active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas	17
2.9.	Maintain and enhance local character	18
2.10.	Create high quality architecture	21
2.11.	Achieve high standards of environmental performance	22
<b>3.</b>	<b>Streets, Paths and Open Spaces</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1.	Things to consider:	25
3.2.	Who do I need to involve?	25
3.3.	What is likely to be the most appropriate form of development?	25
3.4.	How do you reinforce local character and produce an understandable layout?	26
3.5.	What should I do if local character is based on street patterns that wouldn't be acceptable under these policies?	27
3.6.	How should traffic speeds be managed?	27
3.7.	Should pedestrian and bicycle routes run alongside the street?	28
3.8.	What provision should be made for buses?	29
3.9.	How much public open space will be needed and where should it be located?	29
3.10.	What materials should I use?	30
3.11.	Are there standards for the width or gradient of pavements?	31
3.12.	Should kerbs be used or are shared surface areas acceptable?	32
3.13.	What level and type of lighting should be used?	32
3.14.	How should I include public art?	33
3.15.	Who is responsible for the on-going maintenance of public spaces?	33
<b>4.</b>	<b>Utilities Infrastructure Requirements</b>	<b>34</b>
4.1.	Things to consider:	34
4.2.	Who do I need to involve?	34
4.3.	How do I get connected to an existing utility supply?	34
4.4.	What do I do if electricity lines run over or close to my site?	35
4.5.	How should I deal with surface water drainage?	35
4.6.	What happens if there may be a risk of contamination?	35
4.7.	How can I reduce the amount of water used?	35
4.8.	How can I produce renewable energy?	35
4.9.	Do I need permission to retrofit a renewable energy system to my house?	37
<b>5.</b>	<b>The Plot</b>	<b>38</b>
5.1.	Things to consider:	38
5.2.	Who do I need to involve?	38
5.3.	What land uses are likely to be appropriate in a mixed use area?	38
5.4.	In sub-dividing or amalgamating land into plots, what do I need to consider?	39
5.5.	Is there a minimum plot size?	39
5.6.	Is there a minimum garden size?	39

5.7.	Do I need to say how the boundary will be defined?	40
5.8.	Is there a maximum height for walls or hedges?	40
<b>6.</b>	<b>Parking Provision</b>	<b>41</b>
6.1.	Things to consider	41
6.2.	Who do I need to involve?	41
6.3.	What do I need to consider if providing parking on-street?	41
6.4.	What do I need to consider if providing parking in parking courtyards?	42
6.5.	What do I need to consider if providing parking in-curtilage (inside the boundaries of a plot)?	43
<b>7.</b>	<b>The Building</b>	<b>44</b>
7.1.	Things to consider:	44
7.2.	Who do I need to involve?	44
7.3.	Are there any limitations on building height?	45
7.4.	Are there any limitations on building width or depth?	45
7.5.	Is there a minimum distance needed between properties?	46
7.6.	How far should the building be set back from the street?	46
7.7.	How can I ensure the design takes advantage of solar gain and other measures that will naturally reduce its running costs?	47
7.8.	What types of wall are likely to be appropriate?	48
7.9.	What roof forms and materials are likely to be appropriate?	50
7.10.	Should my building have a chimney stack?	51
7.11.	Should my building have an entrance porch?	51
7.12.	Where should doors and windows be placed?	52
7.13.	What types of doors and windows are likely to be appropriate?	52
7.14.	What level and type of architectural detailing is appropriate?	54
7.15.	What scope is there to improve the energy efficiency of a Listed Building?	55
7.16.	Is there any specific guidance for shop fronts or advertisements?	56
7.17.	Can I add security features (lighting, shutters, CCTV)?	58
7.18.	Do I need planning permission to make minor alterations to my house?	58
7.19.	Who is responsible for on-going maintenance?	58
<b>8.</b>	<b>Internal Layout</b>	<b>59</b>
8.1.	Things to consider	59
8.2.	Who do I need to involve?	59
8.3.	Does it matter how I subdivide a house?	59
8.4.	Does it matter how the rooms are distributed?	60
8.5.	What else do I need to consider?	60
<b>9.</b>	<b>Monitoring and Review</b>	<b>60</b>
9.1.	What we will consider	60
	<b>Appendix 1: Additional Reading</b>	<b>61</b>
	<b>Appendix 2: The Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM</b>	<b>63</b>

## Accompanying Documents

- Landscape Character Assessment
- Urban Character Assessment

These documents form part of the design guidelines, and have been subject to the same level of public consultation and adopted by the council, but are published separately.

# Non-Technical Executive Summary

The local plan for West Dorset encourages high standards of design in keeping with local character, and promotes more sustainable construction methods. It sets out matters that will be considered when assessing proposals for development, but does not go into extensive detail. So design guidelines have been produced to give greater clarity on how development might meet the requirements in the plan.

The design guidelines were adopted by West Dorset District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on 3 February 2009. This means that the guidance will be a material consideration in deciding planning applications. The document contains 10 design policies and explains how these policies are applied in relation to different types and scales of development. The policies are summarised here:

- a) **Work in harmony with the site and its surroundings, and the limitations and opportunities these create** - in designing any new development, we need to understand the local landform, how the site fits into the street network, the neighbouring land uses and local features of interest
- b) **Involve the right people at the design stage** - to ensure that the design takes into account planning issues, problems and opportunities that neighbours, specialists and other interested parties may identify
- c) **Create places where people can get about easily without needing to use their cars** - routes in towns and villages should be well-connected and the layout easy to understand, streets and spaces safe and pleasant, places designed to suit people of all abilities, and public transport planned in advance to make sure it is likely to be efficient and easy to use
- d) **Create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses** - so that places that people go to on a daily or frequent basis are close to their homes (this goes hand in hand with the previous policy)
- e) **Make efficient use of land** - we should avoid creating wasted or leftover land, and make the best use of the site, particularly in the most accessible locations
- f) **Create well-defined streets and spaces** - the relationship between buildings and the way they enclose space is a major factor in defining the character and feel of the street, and is also important (together with the next policy) in reducing fear of crime. We should also ensure that where parking is needed, the street's character is not dominated by a wide expanse of tarmac and parked cars
- g) **Make sure public areas are full of activity and overlooked by people in buildings, and private areas are secure** - designs should ensure that windows and doors face onto the street and other places where surveillance is needed, and the rear of homes enjoys a basic level of privacy
- h) **Maintain and enhance local character** - the design and materials used in new development should help maintain or strengthen the local identity of an area, creating places which people associate with and have pride in. This doesn't mean that development should simply copy what already exists, or that new technologies cannot be used. Traditional materials and design ideas can be used in a totally modern way, new materials and technologies can be used to create places and reflect traditional styles
- i) **Create high quality architecture** - consider the symmetry within the design, the distribution and proportioning of doors and windows, the richness of detail and quality of materials used

- j) **Achieve high standards of environmental performance** - buildings and spaces should be designed to last. Construction materials and techniques should not cause significant harm to the environment and should make efficient and prudent use of resources. Renewable sources should be used to harness carbon and water savings where practical.

Character assessments have been produced. These set out clearly the key characteristics that give an area its individuality. These include:

- Appraisals or studies of the main Conservation Areas, completed for the oldest and most historic parts of many towns and villages in West Dorset, helping us understand the special character of these places and ensure that development either preserves or enhances that character
- Urban character assessments of the main towns, identifying what makes them different. These also focus on the areas not included in the above appraisals. They list features that make people relate positively to a place. This should mean that when building works take place, it is done in a manner that reinforces local character in a good way, even if the area isn't of historic interest
- An assessment of the landscape character of the district. This recognises that the landscape of West Dorset is very varied. It is a working and living landscape with mixed farmland and a rich history. Each area is described in terms of its characteristic features, and also what changes have taken place that have detracted from the underlying character. This will be useful in assessing whether and how a design would fit within an area, and what landscape treatment may be appropriate.

The district council is keen to encourage protection of the environment and ensure the

efficient use of resources, for today and for generations to come. Because some developers have told us that they are unsure how to improve their designs to meet higher standards in a cost-effective way, the council has provided information sheets on various technologies that are currently available. These include:

- Insulation & air-tightness
- Low energy ventilation
- Thermal mass
- Combined heat & power
- Energy efficient appliances
- Glazing, orientation & solar gain
- Solar hot water
- Solar photovoltaics
- Wind power
- Heat pumps
- Biomass (such as wood chip boilers)
- Community heating systems
- Biofuels & biogas
- Rain water harvesting
- Grey water recycling (such as water from washing machines)
- Water efficient devices
- Green roofs covered with living vegetation
- Lifetime homes which are easily adaptable to someone's needs throughout their life

Although the council was keen to specify a minimum code for sustainable homes standard for all new homes, the Government has said that this should not normally be done by local councils as such advances will be brought in through changes to the building regulations. We will monitor how much these technologies are introduced in new development, and continue to work with developers to find practical solutions to any planning issues.

It is hoped that these design guidelines, together with the supporting documents, will be effective in encouraging high standards of design in keeping with local character, and promoting more sustainable construction methods.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Why this document has been produced

1.1.1. The local plan for West Dorset encourages high standards of design in keeping with local character, and promotes more sustainable construction methods. It sets out matters that will be considered when assessing proposals for development, but does not go into extensive detail. So these design guidelines have been produced to give greater clarity on how development might meet the requirements in the plan.

## 1.2. The status of this document

1.2.1. This document was adopted by West Dorset District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on 3 February 2009. This means that it will be a material consideration in deciding planning applications. The importance given to it when making planning decisions will reflect the fact that it has been subject to considerable public consultation as well as a sustainability appraisal process.

1.2.2. It should be noted that the policies contained in this document do not override national planning guidance, the regional spatial strategy or adopted development plan documents. This document does not override the need to consider other regulations such as the Habitats Regulations that protect sites of European nature conservation importance.

## 1.3. What this document covers and who it is for

1.3.1. This document covers a wide range of design issues and possible solutions. We all know that a solution that works well in terms of one objective, such as maximising its sustainability, may not necessarily work well in terms of another objective, such as strengthening local character. The type of scheme, its location and its proposed use will all have

a bearing on what works and what doesn't. Guidance in this document is intended to apply to all types of built development in towns, villages and the more rural parts of West Dorset. Where the principles would not be appropriate for a certain type of development (for example, large industrial units) or is only relevant to the more built-up, urban areas, this is made clear in the policy or accompanying text.

1.3.2. The aim of these guidelines is to set out clear, simple and consistent advice so that those involved in development know what the council, as planning authority, will insist on in terms of design and sustainable construction, prior to giving planning consent.

1.3.3. The planning and building process involves or impacts upon a wide range of people including planning officers, designers, engineers, developers, builders and contractors, the owner and end users, as well as the wider community. All have a part to play in ensuring that developments are designed, built and function, and may use this document to help guide their actions. The roles of some of those involved in the planning and building process in ensuring good design are set out below in more detail in the following table.



View of Chickerell in the landscape

# 1. Introduction

## Local planning authority

West Dorset District Council, as the local planning authority, is committed to securing high quality design in new developments, through effective planning policy, early discussion with the owner or developer and other interested parties, and clear and consistent development control decisions. Planning staff try to work closely with the other divisions, such as building control, and with the county council on roads and other transport issues, and representatives of the local community, to help ensure that the resulting development looks good, functions well and meets local needs.

## Owner or developer

Success must start with the person initiating the project (the developer), which may either be a house building or commercial development company, or, in the case of extensions or alterations to a home, the owner or occupier. It is important that owners and developers are aware of the benefits of good design, both in terms of creating a more positive environment and potential long-term rewards. For example, many energy-efficient features are much more economical to include in the initial building (as opposed to retro-fitting later), will pay-back through reduced running costs and add to the resale value of a property.

## Designers, architects and engineers

Designers are responsible for creating environments for people to use and enjoy. Architects, urban designers, artists, landscape architects and engineers are highly trained and can all bring a range of positive ideas that together can inspire great designs and new ways of working.

## Builders and contractors

Builders and contractors are responsible for turning designs into reality. The application of skills and specialist knowledge required can make an enormous difference to the quality of the finished building.

## 1.4. How this document is structured

1.4.1. Chapter 2 sets out the broad principles and policies for development, in relation to design and sustainable development. The remaining chapters 3 to 8 consider the different built elements, from the large scale decisions (such as the road layout) down to the detailed decisions (such as the type of windows used). Each chapter answers commonly asked questions, and aims to highlight where there may be conflicts and what solutions are likely to be acceptable. Chapters cover the following built elements:

- Streets, paths and open spaces - the pattern of the streets, traffic management, pavements, surface treatment, lighting and public art
- Infrastructure needed for utility services

- connections, drainage, contaminated land, water and electricity generation (including renewable energy)

- The plot - size and shape, extent of gardens, and the treatment of the boundary
- Parking provision - on-street, in parking courtyards or on the plot
- The building - size, orientation and distance from the road plus detailed design, materials and security measures
- Internal layout and fittings - subdivision and distribution of rooms.

1.4.2. The final chapter sets out how this document will be kept under review.

1.4.3. To help set out clearly the key characteristics that give an area its individuality, character assessments have



# 1. Introduction

been produced that go with this planning guidance. These are:

- **Conservation Area appraisals**, completed for the oldest and most historic parts of many towns and villages in West Dorset, helping us understand the special character of these places and ensure that development either preserves or enhances that character
- **Urban character assessments**, which look at the character of the main settlements outside the conservation areas and identify the local features and landmarks plus the type of streets and local buildings that characterise a place.
- **Landscape character assessments**, which identify the local landscape types, and within each type, individual character areas. These describe the characteristic features of each area and what recent changes may have undermined this.

1.4.4. There are also sustainable technology information sheets, which provide information on a range of technologies, including their effectiveness, costs, suitability and current levels of use.

1.4.5 Guidance on what information to submit with a planning application is also provided and will be kept under review.



Distinctive cottage in Lyme Regis

## 1.5. Who to contact for further information

1.5.1. To find out more about planning policy, or to have your details added to (or removed from) our consultation database, please contact the planning policy division at the address below:

Planning Policy Division  
West Dorset District Council  
Stratton House  
58-60 High West Street  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT1 1UZ

Tel: 01305 252386

Fax: 01305 251481

Email: [local.policy@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:local.policy@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)

If it would be helpful to get this information in a different format, you can request it free in:

- large print
- braille
- audio CD
- audio cassette
- Easy Read

A summary of this policy document can be translated or interpreted into another language

This document and non-technical summary can also be downloaded from [www.dorsetforyou.com/designguidelines/west](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/designguidelines/west)

To request a copy contact:  
Equality and Community Development  
Officer, West Dorset District Council  
Tel: 01305 251010  
Email: [customerservices@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)  
Typetalk calls welcome

## 2. Design Policies

### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

2.1.1. There is general agreement that good design and sustainable development should go hand in hand, and should be applied whatever the type or scale of building works proposed.

**"All development should deliver the highest possible standards of design, both in terms of urban form and sustainability criteria"**

2.1.2. Everyone can play a role in ensuring that good design and sustainable development are achieved, including the development industry that designs and constructs buildings, the council and others who consider or comment on the proposals, and the existing or future occupants who need and will use the development.

2.1.3. But what is good design?

**"Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development"**<sup>12</sup>

**"All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness."**<sup>13</sup>

2.1.4. And what is the goal of sustainable development?

**"to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations"**<sup>14</sup>

2.1.5. To help clarify what is meant by good design and sustainable development, the principles<sup>5</sup> opposite have been pulled together, and form the basis of the design policies outlined in this chapter.

2.1.6. These objectives are reflected in the council's adopted planning policies and more recent national policy. The first two objectives (A and B) relate to good planning practice, the need to understand the site and the issues that may be raised in relation to any development, and are relevant for all types and scales of development. The following two (C and D) relate mostly to large-scale developments or changes that will affect how a neighbourhood functions. Objectives E to G consider how buildings affect surrounding spaces, and how those spaces can function most effectively. The final three policies (H to J) focus on the more detailed design and sustainability of built development, and are most relevant to householders considering changes to their properties as well as being applicable at larger scales. The following policies provide more detailed guidance on these objectives and how proposals for development will be assessed.



New development in West Bay

<sup>1</sup> Policy E, Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy For The South West, 2008, GOSW

<sup>2</sup> Para. 33, PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, 2005, ODPM (now DCLG)

<sup>3</sup> Para. 1, PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, 2004, ODPM (now DCLG)

<sup>4</sup> definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, which was reaffirmed in the UK Government's 2005 strategy, Securing the future - delivering UK sustainable development strategy, The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy. Cm 6467 HM Government, March 2005

<sup>5</sup> based primarily on para 36, PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, 2005, ODPM (now DCLG) and acknowledged best practice

## 2. Design Policies

### Development should:

- a) **Work in harmony with the site and its surroundings and the limitations and opportunities these create** - understand the local landform, how the site fits into the street network, the neighbouring land uses and local features of interest
- b) **Involve the right people at the design stage** - to ensure that the design takes into account planning issues, problems and opportunities they may identify
- c) **Create walkable and accessible neighbourhoods and plan for a thriving public transport network** - routes in towns and villages should be well-connected, streets and spaces safe, pleasant and easy to use
- d) **Create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses** - so that places that people go to on a daily or frequent basis are in a reasonable walking distance of their homes
- e) **Make efficient use of land** - avoid creating wasted or leftover land, and optimise the potential of the site, particularly in the most accessible locations
- f) **Create well-defined streets and spaces** - the relationship between buildings and the way they enclose space is a major factor in defining the character and feel of the street, and should not be dominated by a wide expanse of tarmac and parked cars
- g) **Create active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas** - windows and doors should face onto the street and other places where surveillance is needed, and the rear of homes should enjoy a basic level of privacy
- h) **Maintain and enhance local character** - the design and materials used in new development should help maintain or strengthen the local identity of an area, creating places which people associate with and have pride in
- i) **Create high quality architecture** - consider the symmetry within the design, the distribution and proportioning of doors and windows, the richness of detail and quality of materials used
- j) **Achieve high standards of environmental performance** - buildings and spaces should be durable and adaptable, construction materials and techniques should not cause significant harm to the environment, and should make efficient and prudent use of resources. Renewable sources should be used where practical to harness carbon and water savings.

## 2. Design Policies

### 2.2. WORK IN HARMONY WITH THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS, AND THE LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES THESE CREATE

2.2.1. No two sites are the same as each other. Very few are flat and featureless. Understanding the site and how it relates to the wider area is essential to ensuring that development can reinforce a sense of local identity, has good access to the local area, and does not adversely impact on neighbouring uses. Carrying out appropriate checks or surveys at an early stage can help ensure that features of interest can be successfully identified and where possible, incorporated into the design of the new development.

2.2.2. The council's policies and allocations aim to direct development away from sites that are prone to flooding or land instability, may be contaminated or particularly susceptible to contamination, or prone to unpleasant microclimatic effects such as high levels of wind speed and frost pockets. Areas where there are strategically significant features that are likely to limit development potential (such as the flood plains associated with the main rivers and sites of known nature conservation importance) are shown on the council's proposals map<sup>6</sup>.

2.2.3. There may also be local features that should be retained because of their contribution to the local character of the area or other benefits that they provide. The importance given to keeping them will depend on the nature of their

interest, and how much they are part of the street scene or can be seen from a wider area. In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to consider introducing new features (see also section [2.9]).

2.2.4. A site assessment should be submitted with most planning applications (as part of the design and access statement), identifying the various constraints and opportunities for that site, and how these have influenced the design. This may include information on:

- The local landform (both in terms of topography and potential geological hazards such as landslips, subsidence or fault movements) and known microclimatic (weather) factors that may influence how the buildings or spaces function
- Opportunities to connect into the existing route network, for pedestrians, cyclists and motorised traffic<sup>7</sup>
- Existing features that are either locally significant or important for local character (including ecological, geological or historic interest)<sup>8</sup>
- Opportunities to build in beneficial biodiversity (plant and wildlife) or geological features. This can include small actions, such as including bird

<sup>6</sup> The extent of these areas may be reviewed by the designating body (such as the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England) and therefore developers are advised to check with the council if they are unsure whether a site's development potential may be affected.

<sup>7</sup> Advice on connections into the existing route network can be obtained from the highway authority (normally the county council).

<sup>8</sup> Possible features could include significant trees or hedgerows, ancient woodlands, native wildflower verges, significant bird colonies, bat and barn owl roosts, and the presence of other protected or locally significant species (that may not necessarily be protected in their own right), ponds, streams or rivers, other boundary markings, features of archaeological interest, Listed Buildings and other buildings and features of local historical interest, historic parks or gardens etc. Information on local character is provided in the relevant landscape character and urban character and conservation area assessments - see section [2.9]



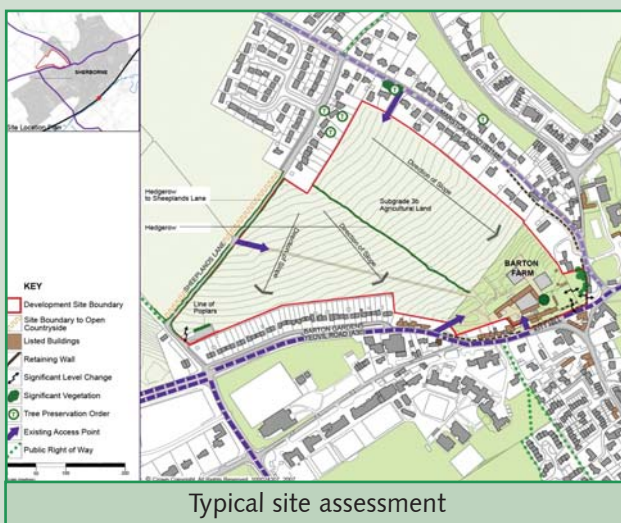
## 2. Design Policies

and bat boxes on buildings, to larger scale actions such as providing spaces for wildlife to go through a development linking to the countryside beyond<sup>9</sup>

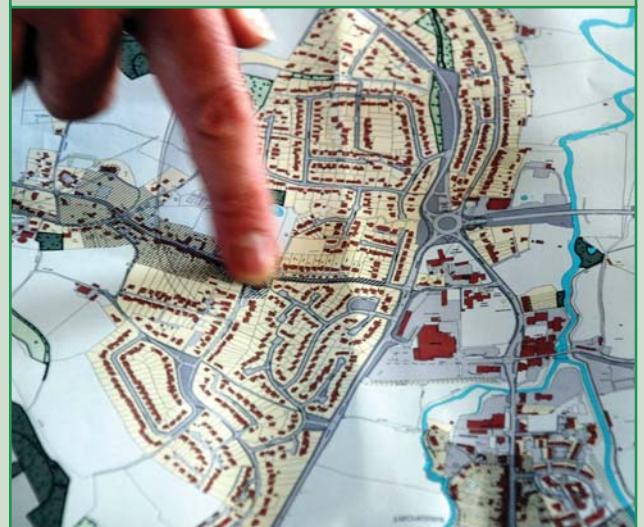
- Opportunities to enhance the natural beauty of the area<sup>10</sup>
- What the neighbouring land is used for, the likely level of activity and noise and proximity to people's homes. These need to be considered to ensure people's enjoyment of their own homes is not unduly affected<sup>11</sup>



Consider the wider context



Typical site assessment



### Design Policy A: Work in harmony with the site and its surroundings, and the limitations and opportunities these create

Development should respect and work in harmony with:

- the local landform and microclimate
- the existing route network
- existing features that are locally significant or important for local character, historical, ecological or geological reasons
- neighbouring land uses.

Opportunities to incorporate features that would enhance local character, or the historical, ecological or geological interest of a site, should be taken if practical and appropriate.

<sup>9</sup> as set out in national guidance para 14, PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, 2005, DCLG

<sup>10</sup> Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires local authorities in exercising their development control functions in the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area.

<sup>11</sup> Advice on noise and disturbance, pollution, as well as daylight standards, can be obtained from the district council's Environmental Health division



## 2. Design Policies

### 2.3. INVOLVE THE RIGHT PEOPLE AT THE DESIGN STAGE

2.3.1. It is important in designing any new development to understand and take on board the thoughts of those who may be affected by it. It is also important to understand what utility services and other infrastructure requirements (such as roads) will be needed, to plan for these and integrate them into the design to best effect. Involving the right people at an early stage will save unnecessary time being spent pursuing schemes that have insurmountable objections, and may potentially achieve a greater degree of support for a project. It may also show opportunities to improve a scheme, which may otherwise be overlooked or go unnoticed until much later in the process.

2.3.2. Who and how you consult will depend upon the type and scale of the development proposed. Household extensions and alterations will normally only affect the immediate neighbours. Larger schemes will potentially affect many local residents, businesses and visitors to the area. There may be organised, representative groups that can be involved as part of your consultation, and the local area partnership can help put you in touch with these<sup>12</sup>. There is also a wide range of local groups and organisations with expert knowledge that can be tapped. Elected representatives (the town or parish council, as well as the district and county councillors for the area) may be able to raise local issues.

However due to their involvement in making decisions on planning applications, councillors may be limited in what they can say<sup>13</sup>.

2.3.3. Liaison with building regulations advisors and disabled representatives<sup>14</sup> should take place to ensure that any proposals will meet current regulations and best practice. Because there will generally be a need for drainage for all new buildings, and such systems require maintenance, these should be discussed with the Technical Services Division of the district council before an application is submitted. The Dorset Police Architectural Liaison Officer should also be involved at an early stage if there are crime or safety concerns<sup>15</sup>.

2.3.4. On larger schemes, liaison with officers responsible for highways and waste collection is advisable with the provision of all new roads. Public transport operators should be involved in schemes where new bus routes are likely to be needed. Where development will create new public spaces, liaison with the organisations responsible for the overall landscape design and the various items of street furniture is advisable. Artists can usefully be involved in the early stages of the design of the development. Consultation can be more valuable if creative ways are used. One example of this is to employ artists to run workshops

---

<sup>12</sup> The West Dorset Partnership Officer at the council can provide relevant contact details, or visit <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=1833>

<sup>13</sup> Due to the need to avoid pre-determination at a later stage in the planning process, councillors may not be able to provide definitive views at pre-application stage (if such views would give the impression that a later response would not be made with an open mind). However, by keeping them informed they can help raise local issues and better represent local interests. The Members Services Officer at the council can provide relevant contact details, or visit <http://dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=384497>

<sup>14</sup> Such as representative groups linking to the Local Area Partnerships, or Dorset County Council Adult Services, who employs state registered occupational therapists that have regular involvement in the elderly population and a good background knowledge in a variety of disabling conditions and the impact it has on their lifestyle.

<sup>15</sup> Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act places a statutory duty on police and local authorities to work in partnership to tackle problems in their area.

## 2. Design Policies

with communities. On particularly significant or sensitive schemes, organisations which have to be consulted by law, such as Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency, may be able to provide advice on issues relevant to them before a planning application is submitted.

- 2.3.5. It is the owner's or developer's responsibility to decide on how such consultation will be carried out, and to make the proposed arrangements. A statement setting out who was consulted, showing the findings and how these have influenced the design, should be submitted with most applications. The council will produce an advice note for developers on how to carry out consultation with the local community and relevant specialists on major or potentially significant developments before a planning application is made.



Different consultation techniques



Keep a record of what was said



### **Design Policy B: Involve the right people at the design stage**

The council encourages owners and developers to engage in early discussions with adjoining residents, service providers and other groups likely to be affected by, comment on, or have creative ideas about the development, to ensure the design takes into account planning issues, problems and opportunities that these groups may identify.

## 2. Design Policies

### 2.4. CREATE WALKABLE AND ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOODS AND PLAN FOR A THRIVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

2.4.1. Developments that promote lifestyles which are not reliant on the car, and provide natural opportunities for healthy recreation and social interaction, go some way towards creating better places that will not harm the environment in the longer term. This can be achieved by planning for a thriving public transport network and developing walkable neighbourhoods in the towns and villages of West Dorset, and taking into consideration development that is likely to come forward in the future.



Consider where links are needed

2.4.2. A walkable and accessible neighbourhood is where:

- places that people go to on a daily or frequent basis are in walking distance of their homes
- the layout is permeable (routes are well-connected)
- the layout is legible (easily understood), and everyday facilities used by a community, and buildings that serve other important public functions (such as law courts and council offices), are easy to find

- streets and spaces are safe and pleasant to use, with the emphasis placed on inclusive design and considering pedestrians first

2.4.3. Access to everyday facilities is important, and at a strategic level, the council's policies and allocations aim to direct new development to the larger settlements which have a broad range of services. The need to encourage mixed use neighbourhoods is also well supported nationally<sup>16</sup> (further guidance is given in section [2.5]).



Identify where bus stops should be



Streets and spaces should be safe and pleasant

<sup>16</sup> para 36 PPS1: "Planning authorities should prepare robust policies on design and access... Key objectives should include ensuring that developments ... create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks."




## 2. Design Policies

2.4.4. In towns and villages, the design of streets and spaces, use of landmark buildings and other landmark features (such as a village green, a traditional red telephone kiosk, a pond, or a visually prominent tree), and views to and between these features, should all be used to make it easier for people to understand the layout and find their way about. The road and pavement widths should reflect the likely levels of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, providing an understandable hierarchy within an overall network providing this doesn't undermine the historical significance of the route (see section [2.9]). The perimeter block (where buildings are located on all sides of a block, each facing onto the street, with private gardens meeting in the centre) is a tried and tested structure for providing a permeable, convenient and well-connected layout, whilst achieving the other objectives of good design. Further guidance is given in section [3].

2.4.5. To ensure streets and spaces are safe and pleasant to use, consideration needs to be given to the needs of all users, traffic speeds, pedestrian and cyclists' safety, fear of crime and localised problems caused by the climate (such as wind and shading). By law<sup>17</sup>, design should ensure that disabled people have reasonable access to facilities, services and premises<sup>18</sup>, and further guidance is given on appropriate pavement design, including widths and gradients (see section [3.11]). The positioning of buildings as well as the design of the road layout can be used to manage traffic speeds. Development should avoid creating places in built-up areas where routes are not well used or overlooked, and have potential 'hiding places' where people may feel unsafe and criminals may

operate undetected (see section [2.8]). Any potential microclimatic effects, such as wind tunnels and shade, should be carefully considered and adverse effects reduced in the design.

Consider first	Pedestrians Cyclists Public transport users Specialist service vehicles (e.g. emergency services, waste, etc.)
	
Consider last	Other motor traffic



Consider pedestrians and cyclists first

2.4.6. Buses are likely to be the most practical solution for providing public transport in West Dorset. Local streets likely to be used by buses should be identified in the design process, working in partnership with public transport operators. This should ensure that the streets can accommodate the size of vehicles likely to be used, that stopping places can be provided (even if they are not immediately built or used), and that the routes are likely to be attractive to users and operators. In areas close to an existing railway station, access to the station (both on foot and by bus) should be safeguarded.

<sup>17</sup> Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

A minimum standard is set in building regulations: Approved Document M - Access to and Use of Buildings, 2004, OPDM

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/1115314110382.html>

## 2. Design Policies

2.4.7. In rural areas, changes to existing or the provision of new routes will normally be undertaken by Dorset County Council and therefore will be guided by the principles adopted in the Dorset Rural Roads Protocol. The aim of the protocol is:

- To balance the safety and access needs of users with care for the environment and the quality of our landscape and settlements
- To use local materials and design schemes to be sympathetic to the character of our rural settlements
- To consider the landscape near the road and address the needs of the natural environment plus local heritage
- To encourage sustainability and consider the potential impacts of climate change, ensuring that rural roads do not create or contribute to foreseeable environmental problems in the future
- To keep signs, lines and street furniture to the minimum needed for

safety and remove intrusive roadside clutter. Where signs and markings are needed, to adapt standard designs wherever possible to make them the best possible fit with local surroundings.



### **Design Policy C: Create walkable and accessible neighbourhoods and plan for a thriving public transport network**

Within settlements, the design of streets should be permeable, and respect opportunities for future growth. In residential areas, or where pedestrian activity is high, the design should aim to keep traffic speed below 20mph.

Bus routes and stops, and strategic cycle and pedestrian routes, should be planned for (even if they are not immediately used or built), including possible future connections to adjoining neighbourhoods.

The design of public outdoor spaces (where walking or recreation is encouraged) should minimise unpleasant microclimatic effects, cater for the needs of disabled people, and be appropriately lit and overlooked to reduce the fear and incidence of crime.

Within settlements, the design of development should be legible, and this can be achieved through ensuring:

- Routes are designed to reflect the likely levels of vehicular, cycle and pedestrian traffic, within an understandable hierarchy in the overall network. Key routes should broadly follow desire lines where this is practical, and any significant changes in direction should be marked by stopping places or landmarks
- Stopping places are included at key points on the route network, and views to these safeguarded
- Landmark buildings and features are included at key points, buildings reflect the type of use or activity proposed, and views to landmarks are safeguarded.



## 2. Design Policies

### 2.5. CREATE AND SUSTAIN AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF USES

2.5.1. The provision of a range of facilities and employment areas together with new housing will help to increase the level of self-containment, reduce the need for car-based travel, and enhance the vitality, viability and sustainability of that area in the long term. Planning should aim to ensure that places people go to often (such as their place of work, local shops, school and doctor's surgery, recreation spaces, community hall and public transport) are in a reasonable walking distance of their homes. Meeting places, community facilities and uses that generate a lot of local activity or have a high public profile, can help provide a focal point in a development, and strengthen a place's identity. A mix of open spaces can also support a greater mix of plants and wildlife and provide recreational and other benefits.

2.5.2. In deciding what level of mixed use is appropriate, the level of development and its context should be considered. For example, in a large urban extension, it would normally be necessary to include a wide range of different uses to ensure a reasonable level of self-containment. On small schemes the proximity of, and potential impact on, existing facilities will be the main consideration. Uses that will generate a reasonably high degree of pedestrian activity should normally be clustered together in local centres to ensure that trips can be shared and public transport works well. The following factors will also be relevant:

- The scale and design requirements of the proposed uses and whether these would adversely affect local character
- The potential noise and disturbance and whether this would adversely affect neighbouring uses
- The likely generation of trips by car and other vehicle movements, and whether these can be accommodated without harm
- Wider potential impacts, for example on wildlife, protected habitats or human health.

Further guidance on appropriate uses is given in section [5.3].

2.5.3. In planning larger scale developments (in the region of 100 or more homes or sites of over 2.5ha) the council will normally work in collaboration with the developer (if known) and the local community to produce a detailed development brief or masterplan for the site.



Compatible mix of uses at Poundbury

#### **Design Policy D: Create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses**

Proposals for development of new buildings or change of use within settlements should, where practical, contribute towards an appropriate mix of uses, aimed at increasing the level of self-containment and reducing the need for car-based travel, through a balance of homes, open spaces, local services, community facilities and employment workspace.

In this mix, uses that will generate a comparatively high degree of pedestrian activity should normally be clustered together to ensure that trips can be shared and public transport can be effectively routed.

### 2.6. MAKE EFFICIENT USE OF LAND

2.6.1. The most efficient use of land is achieved through higher density, mixed use developments. The regional spatial strategy<sup>19</sup> says that councils should aim to achieve a target net density of 40 dwellings per hectare (averaged across all new housing in their local area), with higher densities in the most accessible locations<sup>20</sup>. Densities below 30 dwellings per hectare are not acceptable unless local character, lack of infrastructure or poor accessibility of a location justifies otherwise. The route network, size and shape of plots, and use of outside space, will all have a bearing on the density of development.

2.6.2. Well-defined streets and spaces within a perimeter block layout<sup>21</sup> tend to make the most efficient use of land in built-up areas. Distributor or service roads and road layouts that need large turning areas are less efficient and unlikely to produce a reasonable degree of enclosure.

2.6.3. The subdivision of plots may be inefficient if it results in areas that are difficult to develop, for example because of proximity to adjoining buildings or other limitations, and when the leftover space has no intrinsic value.

2.6.4. The creative use of outside spaces in and adjoining settlements can help achieve the most efficient use of land. For example, there may also be opportunities to combine:

- Leisure and recreation (for example, through the inclusion of seating, shelter or play equipment, which may help form a focal point in the development)<sup>22</sup>

- Sustainable drainage to help deal with surface water drainage and alleviate flooding (for example, through the extent and permeability of surface treatments, and the use of retention ponds and wetlands)
- Wildlife and plant support
- Landscape solutions that will help soften the impact of new development, which may otherwise for example be dominated by tarmac (this could be the inclusion of street trees or verges, planting strips as part of a landscape scheme).

How the space between buildings is shared between the carriageway, any on-street parking, pavement, grass verge, public open space and private front garden, will also have a bearing on local character (see section [2.9]), overlooking and privacy (section [2.8]), and the servicing arrangements for the building (section [7.6]). The design of public spaces must work with the rest of the development's overall design to help achieve the most efficient use of land and meet the other policies in this guidance.

2.6.5. On sites where there is a lot of public open space planned, the council will require a strategy to be submitted setting out how the open space will be designed, how the spaces will function (particularly in terms of public access, recreation, surface water drainage and inclusion of biodiversity and other local features), and their future management and maintenance.

<sup>19</sup> Policy H2

<sup>20</sup> para 47, PPS3: Housing, 2006, DCLG

<sup>21</sup> where buildings are located on all sides of a block, each facing onto the street, with private gardens meeting in the centre

<sup>22</sup> Targets for public open space provision of various types, based on a recent assessment of current provision and need, will be set in the Planning Obligations guidelines in 2009

## 2. Design Policies



Well used allotments in Bridport serve a valuable community need



Leftover shared private amenity space may be of no real benefit



Creative design of storm tanks and sewage pumping station in Lyme provided public open space along the sea front

### **Design Policy E: Make efficient use of land**

Development should make efficient use of land, and layouts that create wasted or leftover land will not be accepted.

The design and management of outdoor spaces within and adjoining settlements should fully utilise the opportunities for:

- Recreation and social interaction
- Dealing with surface water drainage and alleviating flooding
- Providing new or enhancing existing wildlife habitats.
- Incorporating landscape solutions to soften the urbanising impact of new development

## 2. Design Policies

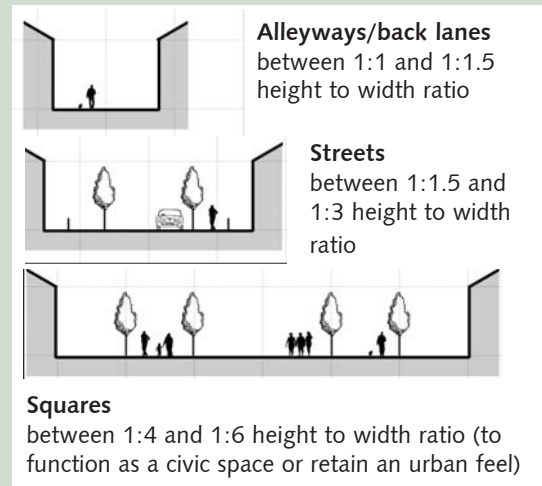
### 2.7. CREATE WELL-DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES

2.7.1. In built-up areas, the relationship between the buildings is a major factor in defining the character of the street, and is also important in reducing fear of crime. This relationship is determined by the extent to which the street or space is clearly defined, the likely or perceived levels of activity and overlooking (see section [2.8]) and the strength of local character (see section [2.9]).

2.7.2. A common building line is normally the preferred approach to creating a well-defined street in built up areas (unless there is significant variation in the local area). Street trees and boundary features can also help define a street or space. Variations in the building line will be acceptable, where they provide interest and local character. For example, landmark buildings may deviate from the building line where this would reinforce their prominence, and pavements can be widened or spaces created by buildings being set further back.

2.7.3. The road and pavement widths should reflect the road's place in the hierarchy within an overall network (see section [2.9]). In built-up areas, the following ratios of height (measured to eaves) to width serve as a general principle<sup>23</sup>, for achieving a reasonable sense of enclosure appropriate to the type of street or space proposed. Factors such as avoiding excessive overshadowing will also need to be taken into account. In rural areas, or where a sense of enclosure cannot be

achieved through a strong building line, street trees or appropriate boundary features (walls or hedges) may provide a reasonable level of definition. Where parking is likely to occur on the street, this needs to be carefully designed so as to not dominate the space (see section [6.3]).



Some variation in building height within these parameters will generally help add interest to the street scene, unless the local character is that of strict uniformity. Landmark buildings, which by their very nature are meant to be more prominent, may justify greater height outside these standards. If greater height overall is needed to obtain higher densities, setting back upper storeys may provide an acceptable solution.

2.7.4. Information on the above criteria should be incorporated into the design and access statement.

#### **Design Policy F: Create well-defined streets and spaces**

In built-up areas, unless there is significant variation in the local character, a strong sense of enclosure should be achieved through a common building line and appropriate building height to street width ratio. In rural areas, and in areas where a sense of enclosure is needed but cannot be achieved through a strong building line, street trees or appropriate boundary features (walls or hedges) should be used.

Adequate parking provision should be made, and designed so as to not dominate the street scene.

<sup>23</sup> based on advice in Urban Design Compendium 1: Urban Design Principles, English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, 2000, <http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/qualityandinnovationpublications.htm>



## 2. Design Policies

### 2.8. CREATE ACTIVE AND OVERLOOKED PUBLIC AREAS AND SECURE PRIVATE AREAS

2.8.1. Although West Dorset has a relatively low rate of crime, particularly compared with the national average, some local residents still don't feel safe particularly after dark<sup>24</sup>. It is important that public areas are well used, appropriately lit and overlooked, to reduce opportunities for crime. Active and overlooked public areas can also add interest to the street scene (in contrast to large expanses of uninteresting, blank walls), enhancing the quality and enjoyment of an area.

2.8.2. An appropriate level of activity on the street can be achieved through developing a mix of uses (see section [2.5]) and using spaces creatively. Extensive sections of blank walls or fencing facing onto public areas will not normally be acceptable. Windows and doors should face onto the street and other places where surveillance is needed (such as parking courtyards). The main access to a building is generally best on the front of the building facing the street, as this improves the level of activity on the street. Where privacy is required for ground floor rooms on busy streets, this can be achieved by raising the floor above street level (subject to disabled access requirements) or providing a private front garden area.

2.8.3. Not all areas need to be overlooked, such as rear gardens, where a degree of privacy is needed for people to enjoy their own space (see section [7.5]). Such areas should be clearly defined (without using 'keep out' signs) so that people do not stray into them by accident. Designs should also avoid creating easy, unobserved rear or side entry points for criminals.



Overlooked public area



Rear alley with little surveillance can increase opportunities for crime

#### **Design Policy G: Create active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas**

Development should normally:

- Have the main access to a building at the front, facing the street
- Make sure doors and windows face onto the street and places where surveillance is needed, and avoid blank walls enclosing public areas
- Provide a basic level of privacy at the rear of homes through either sufficient rear garden depth or orientation and screening to prevent direct overlooking.

Private areas should be clearly defined through appropriate boundary treatment, and care taken to limit opportunities for the criminal to gain easy access to the rear of buildings and other private spaces.

<sup>24</sup> 17% of local residents don't feel safe walking in their area after dark - West Dorset Performance Plan 2007



## 2. Design Policies

### 2.9. MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE LOCAL CHARACTER

2.9.1. It is important that new development is read as being part of, and belonging to, the area in which it is placed. The overall settlement form and street pattern, local features (such as trees and spaces), together with building forms and traditions (such as the materials used and styles adopted), all help create a local identity which distinguishes one place from another. A sense of local identity is important in establishing a sense of pride and ownership. Where there is a lack of local identity, the challenge for new development will be to create a distinctive place.



Tree lined avenues characteristic of Dorchester

2.9.2. There is no reason why local distinctiveness and innovation should not go together, and in a way that supports the other objectives for good design and sustainable development. Traditional materials and design ideas can be used in a totally modern way, and conversely, new materials and technologies can be used to create places and reflect traditional styles. New and old buildings can co-exist, if the design of the new responds to the local context. Although designs may change to reflect modern technologies and good practice, development should still relate to the local area. Thought should be given to how the transition is made between old

and new areas, so that the new does not feel as if it has simply been dropped in from another place with no thought to its local context. The treatment of the edge of settlements is also important, although the approach taken (either to provide a hard or soft edge) will vary depending on the local character.



Consider the transition between old and new

2.9.3. To help establish clearly the key characteristics that give an area its individuality, character assessments have been produced. These are obtainable from the district council offices and website<sup>25</sup>, and include:

- Appraisals of the main Conservation Areas
- Urban character assessments of the remaining areas of the main towns
- An assessment of the landscape character of the rural parts of the district.

<sup>25</sup> [www.dorsetforyou.com/conservation/west](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/conservation/west), [www.dorsetforyou.com/designguidelines/west](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/designguidelines/west) and [www.dorsetforyou.com/landscapecharacter/west](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/landscapecharacter/west)

## 2. Design Policies



Wider landscape character

2.9.4. The settlement form, grain and pattern of building will normally reflect the history of the place, the mix of uses and levels of activity. The overarching settlement form, its origins and opportunities for gradual (organic) growth, should be respected. And the road and pavement widths should reflect its place in the hierarchy in an overall network (see also section [2.4]). Where there is a strong grain or pattern of development (for example, relating to plot widths) that plays an important part in defining the character of the street or reflects the history of the site, this should be respected, unless it would conflict with other objectives (in which case careful consideration should be given to how the transition between old and new areas is designed).



Settlement form and traditions reflected in Bradford Peverell

2.9.5. The scale of development is important in defining the street (see section [2.7]) and should relate to that of adjoining buildings (taking into account daylight and privacy issues (see sections [2.11] and [2.8])) and the general pattern of heights in the area (in particular whether there is variety or uniformity). Corner positions and landmark buildings will tend to have more public-orientated uses and act as focal points. Development should not obscure important views or significantly reduce the impact of local landmark features (see section [7.3]).



New development blends with old in Tolpuddle

2.9.6. The intention of this policy is to ensure new development enhances local character, not to duplicate existing developments which in themselves may not be of good quality. The designer should review the local building forms and traditions, selecting aspects from this palette that are significant in the local character, to reflect in the new design. This could include housing types, boundary treatments, building lines, roof shapes, window types, local materials used and/or architectural detailing. Where there is a particularly strong characteristic, this should either be incorporated into the design or interpreted in a more modern way. Designs or materials that would be highly visible (for example, because of their prominence or contrasting style) will not be appropriate, unless they are planned as a landmark feature. Designs should



not significantly undermine the coherent, harmonious character of an area (for example, where there is a particularly notable palette of styles or materials).

2.9.7. The site assessment should identify the overall settlement form and street pattern, plus existing site features that are either locally significant or important in the wider landscape character. Where

there are no such features in the local area, it may be appropriate to consider introducing some that can reinforce the wider landscape character (see section [2.2]). Information on how the development has responded to local identity and addressed these considerations should be incorporated into the design and access statement.



New development responding to old, Dorchester

#### **Design Policy H: Maintain and enhance local character**

New development should be influenced by the local building forms and traditions, materials and architectural detailing that are significant in the local area, and maintain or, where appropriate, enhance local character.

Where development is proposed in or on the edge of an existing settlement, any new routes should respect their place in the hierarchy within the overall network, and the design of the development should be influenced by the need to define or soften the transition between areas of different character.

Where new plots are being formed, these should reflect the existing grain and pattern of development where these form a significant characteristic in the street scene, unless this would conflict with other policies.

New development should not be disproportionate in size to adjoining buildings in the locality, unless warranted by its proposed use and position on the street. It should not introduce building forms, traditions, materials or architectural detailing that are alien to the area unless these would either provide significant sustainability benefits that cannot otherwise be delivered or the elements can be accommodated in a way that will enhance local character.

## 2. Design Policies

### 2.10. CREATE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

2.10.1. High quality architecture should result in attractive development in which the community feel a sense of ownership and pride. This can depend on factors such as:

- The relationship between wall space and windows (technically known as the solid to void ratio). In traditional buildings the construction techniques and materials available kept windows small with large areas of wall surround. Modern building techniques and in particular advances in the manufacture of glass has meant that the size and distribution of windows is no longer restricted, and glazed areas can effectively take up a much higher proportion of the wall space
- The proportion, elegance, scale, symmetry (or asymmetry) and positioning of its doors and windows (in good designs, these help establish a vertical or horizontal emphasis or pattern and the same proportion may be repeated or reoccur elsewhere in the design to achieve a visually balanced result)
- The richness of detail (particularly important on landmark buildings and at ground level, where it is seen close at hand). Unless there is a particularly strong sense of uniformity, designs should allow for some variation and expression of individuality. It is also important that good quality should span the whole development, and

variation in designs should not highlight particular groups in society (affordable housing, for example, should not look different from similarly sized private housing).

- The quality of materials used and workmanship, both in terms of their appearance and future maintenance requirements.
- The coherence or harmony with the surrounding development and the extent to which any changes might reinforce local character (see also section [2.9])

The latter three points are also relevant to landscaping schemes.

2.10.2. In an existing building, or an extension to it, the design and materials used should respect the character and appearance of the original building.



Attention to detail, Poundbury

#### **Design Policy I: Create high quality architecture**

Development should create high quality architecture appropriate to the type of building and architectural style through:

- Ensuring buildings have an appropriate solid to void ratio
- Ensuring buildings have a sense of proportion, elegance, scale, symmetry and rhythm
- Incorporating an appropriate richness of detail (without clutter)
- The use of good quality materials

In an alteration or extension to an existing building, the design and materials used should respect the character and appearance of the original building.



## 2. Design Policies

### 2.11. ACHIEVE HIGH STANDARDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

2.11.1. All new homes are now rated against the Code for Sustainable Homes. Non-residential buildings and major alterations to existing homes can be rated against BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method). These measure the sustainability of a building against a range of design categories, setting progressively higher standards of environmental performance. Although the regional planning body was keen to specify a minimum code level for all new homes in the South West, the Secretary of State removed this requirement from the regional strategy on the basis that such advances would be driven through changes to the building regulations. Although this council has not set a minimum standard, it will encourage owners and developers to attain the highest practical Code for Sustainable Homes levels (or equivalent BREEAM rating) in all new development, and will monitor the code ratings achieved. For more information on the Code and BREEAM, see Appendix [2].

2.11.2. A significant amount of energy and resources is expended on the construction of new buildings<sup>26</sup>. Choosing the right location away from areas that are prone to flooding or land instability is a key factor in ensuring a development's durability (see section [2.2]). The right design and materials will also play an important role in increasing the life of the development. Development that is easy

to maintain and can adapt to meet the needs of a range of potential users will last longer and will also be less likely to remain vacant for long periods. The lifecycle costs<sup>27</sup> of the primary materials used in the construction of floors, roofs, walls should be considered (the Green Guide to Specification<sup>28</sup> assesses the most common building materials, which are ranked from A+ to E, where A+ represents the best environmental performance with the least environmental impact, and E the worst).



Wind turbine installed at Dorset School

2.11.3. In the UK, much of our carbon emissions and water consumption are caused by the use of buildings<sup>29</sup>. By installing devices that use water and energy more efficiently, and using renewable sources where practical, there is potential for significant carbon and water<sup>30</sup> savings. Although the reduction of energy use and carbon emissions will largely come through revisions to Building Regulations<sup>31</sup>, there are a number of

<sup>26</sup> In 2001, the Green Guide to Specification, BRE, estimated that 10% of energy use in this country was associated with construction materials and methods

<sup>27</sup> the overall costs from "cradle to grave", taking into account factors such as the potential climate impact, scarcity of resources (used in manufacturing or transport), possible harm to human, animal and plant health (from the end-product or manufacturing process), water used and disposal of waste

<sup>28</sup> Green Guide to Specification, BRE, online version [www.thegreenguide.org.uk](http://www.thegreenguide.org.uk).

<sup>29</sup> Building Regulations Advisory Committee SDC Report on Existing Building Stock, BRAC(06)P5, ODPM, 2006

<sup>30</sup> Although existing water resources are not predicted to be over-stretched in this area, the average levels of water use in the home is over 150 litres per person per day, which is much higher than the standards set in the Code for Sustainable Homes which requires mandatory maximum water consumption of 120 litres/person/day to achieve Code Level 1.

<sup>31</sup> Building a Green Future: policy statement, 2007, DCLG

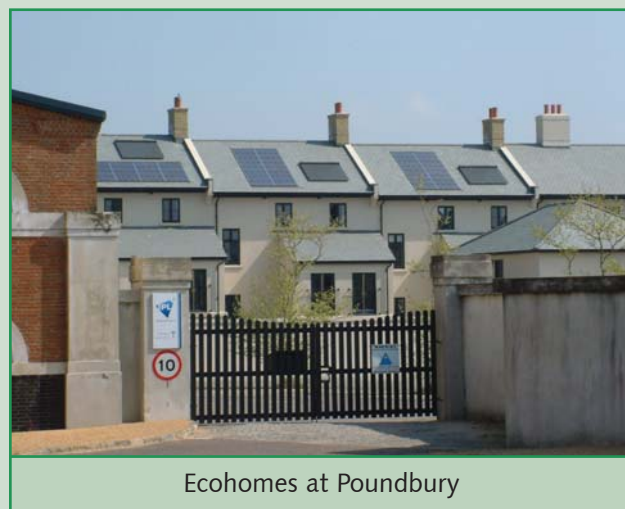
## 2. Design Policies

factors that need to be taken into account at the early design stage, to ensure the best fit of design and technology is achieved, appropriate to the character of the building and local area<sup>32</sup>. These include opportunities to use the landform and landscaping, together with the building shape, orientation and positioning, to minimise energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, and limitations imposed by landscape and townscape sensitivity (see section [2.9]), and viability. Further advice on orientation and passive solar design is given in section [7.7]

2.11.4. Energy-efficient systems and systems that can generate renewable and low-carbon energy are needed to help reduce our dependency on scarce fuel resources, reduce the amount of pollution generated, and reduce the running costs of buildings. These systems will be supported, provided that the impact on the character and amenity of the area is acceptable. In assessing this, consideration will be given to the scale and effectiveness of the potential carbon savings, as well as the character and sensitivity of the landscape and buildings. Proposals for 10 or more dwellings or more than 1,000 square metres of non-residential floor area will be expected to demonstrate how the development will contribute towards renewable energy generation targets set in the development plan<sup>33</sup>. Where there are no feasible and viable technologies that can be accommodated to achieve this level of

energy generation without unacceptable impacts, the best endeavours should be made to source a lesser percentage of energy from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. See sections [4.8] and [4.9] for further advice.

2.11.5 Homes that meet the 16 Lifetimes Home<sup>34</sup> criteria are encouraged by the council (see accompanying information sheets on sustainable technologies). Provision for working at home is also encouraged in residential developments<sup>35</sup>. The provision of space that can be used to store bicycles, or used for a pram or electric mobility scooter, space for the storage of waste (for recycling and disposal) and drying space is also encouraged. Daylight requirements (both within the planned building and to neighbouring properties<sup>36</sup>) also need to be considered (see section [7.5]).



Ecohomes at Poundbury

<sup>32</sup> para 42, Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1, 2007, DCLG

<sup>33</sup> The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (July 2008) requires that at least 10% of the energy use will come from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. Further targets may be developed through future development plan documents.

<sup>34</sup> See [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk). The health and wellbeing criteria in the Code for Sustainable Homes currently includes a mandatory requirement for Lifetime Homes at code level 6, and from 2010 this will be mandatory at code level 4 and in 2013 at code level 3.

<sup>35</sup> The Code for Sustainable Homes awards credits for providing sufficient space and communication connections within the home to enable effective use as a home office. It is not anticipated that provision for working from home would change the use class or require subsequent planning consent.

<sup>36</sup> Site Layout Planning for daylight and Sunlight - a Guide to Good Practice, 2002, BRE provides further guidance.

## 2. Design Policies

2.11.6. Sustainable drainage systems will be needed to help deal with surface water drainage and alleviate flooding. Any large areas of hard surfacing (over 5 square metres) should normally be made permeable. The use of infiltration trenches, swales, ponds and wetlands should also be considered. Rainwater harvesting is a practical solution that can be accommodated in most new homes.

2.11.7. In order to help understand the potential opportunities, limitations and costs of sustainable technologies, the council has produced a range of information sheets on the most common and/or effective technologies. Information on how this principle has been addressed in the design should be incorporated into the design and access statement.



Green roof at Kingston Maurward



Crossways school design considered green options

### **Design Policy J: Achieve high standards of environmental performance**

The council encourages owners and developers to attain the highest practical Code for Sustainable Homes levels (or equivalent BREEAM rating) in all new development.

The council will encourage owners and developers to design to last, and incorporate measures to reduce energy use and carbon emissions, and this can be achieved through ensuring new development:

- Avoids using those materials most harmful to the environment (those given a 'D' or 'E' rating in the Green Guide to Specification).
- Is readily adaptable to accommodate likely needs for storage, and the needs of people with disabilities
- Anticipates and accommodates the full extent of landscaping once matured
- Takes advantage, where practical, of the benefits of passive solar design as part of an overall approach towards reducing the need for conventional energy sources in providing heating, light and ventilation
- Does not reduce daylight levels to an unacceptable level.

Where practical, new homes should be designed to Lifetime Homes Standards, and make provision for drying space and working from home.

The council will encourage owners and developers to use sustainable drainage systems to help deal with surface water drainage and alleviate flooding wherever practicable in the design of development. In areas with known flooding issues, or where extensive areas of hard surfacing are required, the hard surfacing should be permeable. Where practical, the council will encourage homes to have systems in place to collect rainwater for use and those that have a communal space to make provision for composting garden waste.

## 3. Streets, Paths and Open Spaces

### 3.1. Things to consider:

- 3.1.1. In designing a development it is extremely important to provide good connections to the surrounding areas, and a layout that is easy to understand, creates walkable spaces and reduces reliance on motor vehicles. The streets, paths and open spaces also need to be designed so that they feel safe and pleasant for those on foot or cycle, to further encourage healthy recreation and social interaction. The layout of the route network will also have a bearing on the efficient use of land, particularly plot size and shape and surplus spaces.
- 3.1.2. The next sections answer the following frequently asked questions:
  - 3.2 Who do I need to involve?
  - 3.3. What is likely to be the most appropriate form of development?
  - 3.4. How do you reinforce local character and produce an understandable layout?
  - 3.5. What should I do if local character is based on street patterns that wouldn't be acceptable under these policies?
  - 3.6. How should traffic speeds be managed?
  - 3.7. Should pedestrian and bicycle routes run alongside from the street?
  - 3.8. What provision should be made for buses?
  - 3.9. How much public open space will be needed and where should it be located?
  - 3.10. What materials should I use?
  - 3.11. Are there standards for the width or gradient of pavements?
  - 3.12. Should kerbs be used or are shared surfaced areas acceptable?
  - 3.13. What level and type of lighting should be used?
  - 3.14. How should I include public art?
  - 3.15. Who is responsible for the on-going maintenance of public spaces?

### 3.2. Who do I need to involve?

- 3.2.1. Most development creating new streets or open spaces will be significant in size. As such, considerable effort should be made to engage with the range and type of users that may use the spaces, as well as those responsible for street furniture and the like. The work of artists should be integrated into the design process at the earliest possible stage to have the maximum benefit. An ecologist and civil engineer should also be engaged early on to advise on opportunities for integrating wildlife and sustainable drainage as part of the landscaping plan.
- 3.2.2. Local residents and the wider community should be involved in the design and, where appropriate, the ongoing maintenance of public open spaces and pedestrian areas. Because the design should ensure that public spaces are accessible to everyone, disabled users or their representatives should be contacted as soon as possible.

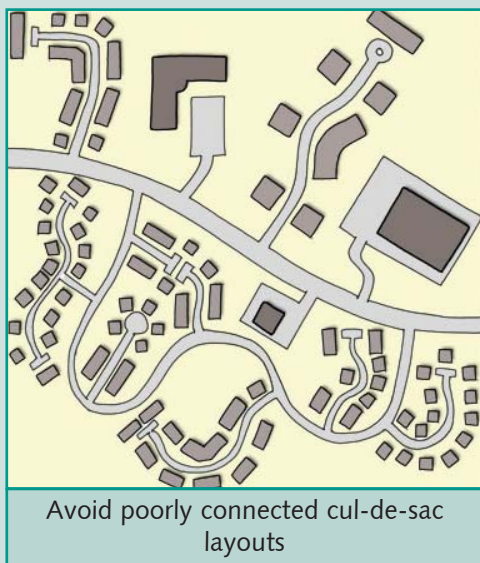
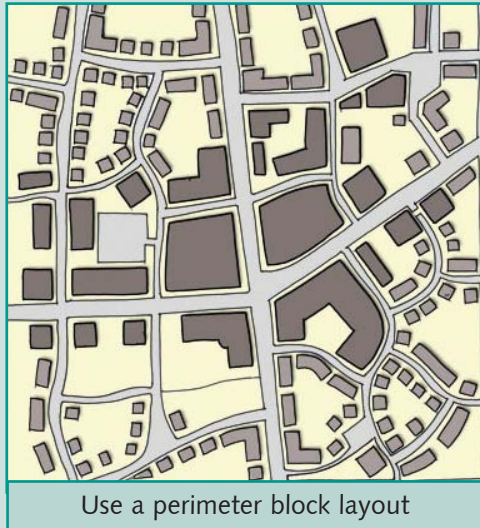
### 3.3. What is likely to be the most appropriate form of development?

- 3.3.1. The perimeter block<sup>37</sup> is a tried and tested type of structure for providing a convenient and well-connected layout on larger development sites. It limits the amount of space given to roads and turning areas for vehicles, and offers good levels of security to the backs of properties. It can take a wide variety of forms, including rectangular blocks based on a grid, concentric or circular patterns designed to promote access to local centres or public transport routes, and more irregular layouts with an 'organic' character which look like they have been developed over some time.

<sup>37</sup> where buildings are located on all sides of a block, each facing onto the street, with private gardens meeting in the centre



### 3. Streets, Paths and Open Spaces



3.3.2. In contrast, winding cul-de-sac estate layouts with local distributor or service roads are not well-connected and are not typical of the character of many West Dorset towns and villages. They can create unused spaces, have long stretches of blank walls or fencing where properties back onto public routes, and are more difficult to understand. Cul-de-sac and turning areas for vehicles should only be considered where topography, boundary or other limitations mean there is no acceptable way to create a more permeable layout.

3.3.3. The degree to which access and car parking should be provided in a block (through internal courtyards) will depend upon whether the benefits this provides

(in terms of making more efficient use of land and reducing the amount of provision needed for parking on-street and in driveways) are balanced by the disadvantages (in terms of safety and security, and the amenity value of back gardens). More information is provided in section [6].

#### 3.4. How do you reinforce local character and produce an understandable layout?

3.4.1. The site assessment and information contained in the relevant landscape character, urban character assessments or conservation area appraisals (see sections [2.2] and [2.9]), should help you understand the settlement form and identify local features that should be incorporated into the development to help reinforce local character.

3.4.2. The design of routes, stopping places (junctions and public open space), use of landmark features and views to and between these features (which can be reinforced by the underlying topography) should be used to make it easier for people to understand the layout and find their way about:

- **Routes** should be designed to reflect their status in the network and type of uses found within them. The widths should reflect the likely levels of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, creating an understandable hierarchy within an overall network providing this would not undermine the route's historic significance. The alignment or curvature is also important, as gradual and unmarked changes along a continuous route give rise to confusion, and therefore are better avoided on the more principal routes (see section [2.4]). Where practical, routes should broadly follow desire lines.
- **Stopping places (junctions and public open space)** should be

### 3. Streets, Paths and Open Spaces

provided on the road network either in the area or acting as a point of entry. The spaces should be well defined, normally by the surrounding buildings, to help reinforce their importance.

- **Landmarks** (important and memorable buildings or landscape features) should be where they can be seen (for example, to terminate a route or mark a stopping place). Their design (through their height, position in the street and the quality and detail of their design) and their use should reflect their importance and contribute positively to the street scene. In general, uses that generate higher levels of activity will be more appropriate for landmark buildings. Any historical associations will strengthen a landmark's identity.



Avoid designing in unwelcoming links

#### 3.5. What should I do if local character is based on street patterns that wouldn't be acceptable under these policies?

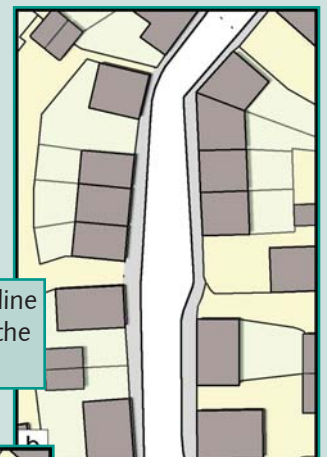
- 3.5.1. Where possible, street design should respond to the settlement pattern and local character. However, the need to create walkable places is the most important consideration. The likely level, type and speed of traffic, pedestrian activity, and need for parking may also necessitate a revised approach.

#### 3.6. How should traffic speeds be managed?

- 3.6.1. In residential areas, or where there are high levels of pedestrian activity, the design should aim to keep traffic speed below 20mph. This should be managed by the arrangement of buildings and spaces, without the need for conventional traffic-calming measures such as signs, speed humps and chicanes.



First place the buildings



Add the kerbline to reinforce the space



Identify the main vehicle track and potential for onstreet parking

## 3. Streets, Paths and Open Spaces

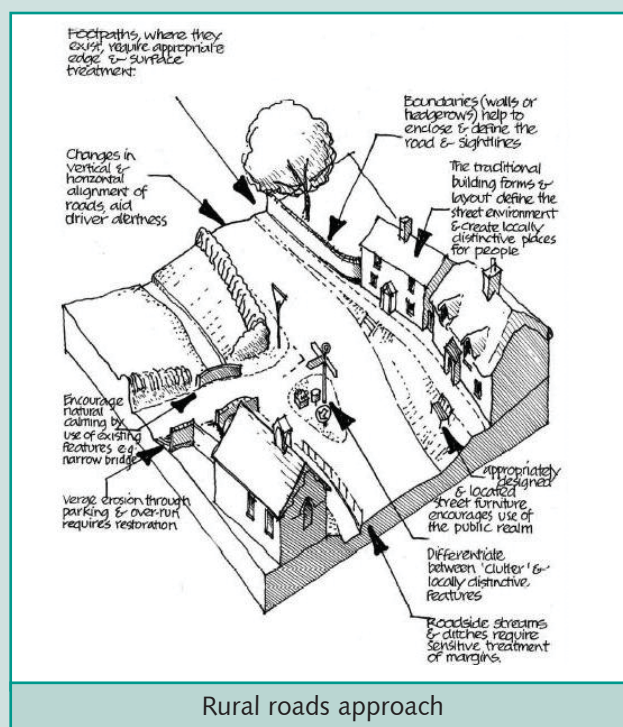
3.6.2. Changes in materials or narrowing at the entrance to these areas can alert motorists to the need to reduce speed. This can be reinforced within the area by using tight corners and reduced visibility (for example, by bringing buildings forward to a corner) that requires more careful vehicle movement. Tight corners also provide more direct and safer pedestrian crossing points than large radii junctions. Experience has shown that the lengths and links in a permeable layout can provide a good basis for controlling speeds effectively. Long, straight streets can lead to higher traffic speeds and as a general principle an uninterrupted straight stretch of more than 70m should be avoided<sup>38</sup>. Separate service or distributor roads will not normally be appropriate unless the traffic flow is extremely high<sup>39</sup>.



Street trees used in Sherborne

3.6.3. In rural areas, changes to existing roads or the provision of new routes will normally be carried out by Dorset County Council and will be guided by the Dorset Rural Roads Protocol. This recognises that attempts used in the past to reduce traffic speed have often relied on signs and hard engineering, which can have a negative impact on our environment by

eroding character and 'urbanising' rural areas. Instead, the county council will look to use features in the environment, such as hedgerows, bends, restricted sight lines, boundary walls or buildings, or changes of road surface, to communicate to the driver that hazards exist and extra vigilance should be exercised.



### 3.7. Should pedestrian and bicycle routes run alongside the street?

3.7.1. Providing a totally separate pedestrian or bicycle route away from the street should only be considered as a last resort. There will however be exceptions. For example, historic railway lines may be re-used for recreational routes. Where routes are planned away from development and would not be overlooked by buildings, the potential fear of crime will need to be carefully considered.

<sup>38</sup> para 7.4.3 of Manual for Streets, DCLG and DfT, 2007 advises that evidence from traffic-calming schemes suggests that speed-controlling features are required at intervals of no more than 70m in order to achieve speeds of no more than 20mph.

<sup>39</sup> section 7.9 of Manual for Streets, DCLG and DfT, 2007 suggests that the limit for providing direct access on roads with a 30mph speed restriction is at least 10,000 vehicles per day.



## 3. Streets, Paths and Open Spaces

### 3.8. What provision should be made for buses?

- 3.8.1. The county council and local public transport operators can advise on planning for a thriving bus network.
- 3.8.2. Streets currently or likely to be used by buses should be identified in the design process. In general routes are more likely to succeed if they are reasonably direct and can give priority to buses at junctions or links where delays may occur. This will reduce journey times. They should also run in or between well-populated areas in order to attract sufficient passenger numbers to be viable.
- 3.8.3. Streets on bus routes should be at least six metres wide (although this can be reduced on short sections). The presence and arrangement of on-street parking, will also need to be considered in deciding the street width.
- 3.8.4. Bus stops should be where people can walk to them easily, they should be clearly visible and located where their use is unlikely to cause undue noise nuisance. Although walking distances will vary, the spacing of stops should aim to ensure that the majority of the likely catchment population are within 400 metres from a bus stop.

### 3.9. How much public open space will be needed and where should it be located?

- 3.9.1. Public open space can perform a range of functions, as well as being an important element in the identity and character of an area. The council's audit and assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities<sup>40</sup> identified seven types of open space, ranging from quiet, informal areas and natural greenspace, to more urban civic squares, active play areas and sports pitches<sup>41</sup>. The size of the space will also depend on the activities proposed, and its relation to surrounding buildings (see section [2.7]). Planning obligations guidelines are being produced that will include further guidance on what is required from individual developments.



Different open space types, Bridport

<sup>40</sup> PPG17 study: audit and assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities, 2007, WDDC  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=374563>

<sup>41</sup> The types identified were: ·

- parks, gardens and recreation grounds - including formal gardens laid out with floral landscaping, grassed areas and seating, as well as sites used as informal areas for recreation or having a range of facilities
- amenity greenspace - highly accessible and generally more 'urban' spaces that function as market squares, improve the visual appearance of the area or provide opportunities for informal activities e.g. dog walking or kick about
- allotments - providing opportunities for those who wish to grow their own produce
- play areas for children and young people
- formal outdoor sports provision, including football, cricket, rugby and hockey pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and golf courses
- natural and semi natural greenspace - including nature reserves, woodlands, areas set aside for wildlife conservation, environmental education awareness and countryside recreation such as walking or cycling
- cemeteries.



## 3. Streets, Paths and Open Spaces



Different open space types, Bridport

3.9.2. Because of its potential to act as a feature that will help people find their way about, public open space should be located on a junction or where it may be more prominent in local views. It should also be overlooked from nearby properties to provide natural surveillance and reduce the fear of crime. However potential noise or disturbance to people in nearby homes will also need to be given careful consideration.

### 3.10. What materials should I use?



Crossing design reflecting local context, Fordington

3.10.1. The choice of materials should reinforce local character and a sense of place, although where this would require the use of materials that are the most harmful to the environment (according to the Green Guide to Specification), an alternative material should be used. The materials will also need to be appropriate to the anticipated levels and type of use. Imported materials foreign to the south

west region, for example Spanish slates, Chinese granite and Indian sandstone, should be avoided not least because of their poor environmental performance.

3.10.2. Some surfacing materials, such as stone setts and loose gravel, may generate other problems such as noise and create difficulties for wheelchair users. Gravel surfaces will need to be fixed, for example by being resin bonded or bound into the tarmac surface. In general, paths should be smooth and slip resistant. It is important to consider the likely future maintenance requirements, to ensure that the quality and appearance of the scheme can be sustained.



Traditional paving in Sherborne

3.10.3. Where historic surfaces exist, these can help define local character and add considerable value to the appearance and perception of a place, and unless there is good reason it is expected that these should be incorporated into the design, rather than removed or covered over.

3.10.4. Large expanses of hard surfacing, if needed, can be made less intrusive if the predominant material (such as tarmac) is combined with areas of higher quality surfacing or paving (an example of this can be seen at Cart Road in Lyme Regis). Consideration should also be given to using specially designed permeable asphalt or block surfacing to reduce the amount of surface water run-off generated by the extensive areas of hard surfacing in the development.

3.10.5. By involving the community in the design, potential problems should be highlighted and alternative solutions explored. This may mean that only parts of the surface use the traditional material, or that alternative materials that harmonise with the adjoining surfaces are used but laid in a traditional pattern.

3.10.6. Tactile paving will be needed at pedestrian crossing points. Historic areas are more sensitive to the colour and types of paving used, so the standard red and buff coloured concrete paving may not be appropriate. Alternative solutions, such as contrasting shades, changes in surface texture or inserting studs should be explored. Drainage gullies and covers and other infrastructure requirements are usually needed. If possible these should be installed as an integral part of the design, and not as an afterthought.



Remember to consider tree growth when surfacing

### 3.11. Are there standards for the width or gradient of pavements?

3.11.1. The minimum unobstructed width of pavements should generally be 2 metres, although greater widths will be required at bus stops, shopping areas and other places of high pedestrian activity. Obstructions from signposts, lighting columns, trees, litter bins, refuse bags left out for collection, seating and other street furniture, can be a hazard for blind or partially-sighted people.

3.11.2. Where a 2 metre pavement is not possible, the absolute minimum should be 1 metre (although in some historic areas where the street is confined by listed walls, even this may not be possible). It is important that liaison with the highway authority, disabled groups and the agencies responsible for street furniture should begin at an early stage, so that all options can be considered. Specific provision for bins may need to be accommodated at the kerbside where groups of properties do not front onto the highway, to avoid waste collections cluttering the pavement.



Pavement width confined by listed wall, Sherborne

3.11.3. It is advisable to avoid steep gradients on pedestrian routes. Gradients for pedestrians should ideally be no more than 5% (1 in 20), although topography or other circumstances may make this difficult to achieve. Steeper gradients (up to 8% or a 1 in 12 incline) may be acceptable over very short distances (ideally less than 2 metres, and certainly no longer than 10 metres). The camber should not exceed 2.5% (1 in 40) or vary frequently, as this will cause problems for wheelchair users and those with walking difficulties. All raised pathways should



have a lip to prevent wheeled buggies and wheelchairs going over the edge.

### 3.12. Should kerbs be used or are shared surface areas acceptable?

3.12.1. In settlements, kerbs should normally be used to separate pedestrian areas from traffic, as they offer some protection to pedestrians, assist blind or partially-sighted people in finding their way around, and can help channel surface water. However, the widespread use of smooth faced, precast concrete kerbs, generally 150 millimetres high, has brought a standardised appearance to highway design. The designer needs to evaluate both the engineering needs of highway design and the relevance of local context in determining the best solution<sup>42</sup>. A good example of local context in this respect can be found in Abbotsbury where the kerbstones used in Glebe Close takes reference from the much older parts of the village.



Bespoke kerbing, Abbotsbury

3.12.2. Shared surface areas may provide an acceptable solution in areas where vehicular traffic levels are very low, and there is no real need or benefit of defining a clear pedestrian route. This has the potential to make more efficient use of land, but the resulting design will also need to be in keeping with local character. At heavily pedestrianised junctions (such as outside a school) it may be appropriate to bring the carriageway up flush with the pavement to slow vehicle speeds and allow people to cross on one level.

### 3.13. What level and type of lighting should be used?

3.13.1. Effective lighting may be needed to achieve good visibility and reduce fear of crime. Care needs to be taken to avoid unnecessary light pollution, and minimise clutter in the street environment. It is important that lighting engineers are involved at an early stage in the project design. Lighting can come from a variety of sources, including conventional overhead street lamps, building-mounted lights, bollards, and even lighting from shop windows. Standard lighting systems for highways may not always be appropriate to the local character. If street lighting is needed, solar energy should be considered where practicable.



Lighting to reflect local character, West Bay

<sup>42</sup> Manual for Streets gives information about the design considerations (section [7.2])

### 3.14. How should I include public art?

3.14.1. Public art and design can help raise the quality of a development. There are many areas where a creative and design led approach can provide additional benefits. For example, an artist may generate new ideas about how the development could respond to and enhance local character, draw attention to local links, add new landmarks or memorable places. The preferred approach on larger schemes is to involve an artist within the design process at an early stage, to influence the design and how it responds to the site, and integrate quality craftsmanship into the design.



Shelter as local landmark, Poundbury

### 3.15. Who is responsible for the on-going maintenance of public spaces?

3.15.1. The upkeep of streets, paths and open spaces needs to be on-going, to ensure that the quality of spaces does not deteriorate over time (which can affect people's enjoyment, encourage vandalism and require costly restoration work).

3.15.2. If development results in new streets, paths and open spaces, the council will normally attach conditions or require a legal agreement, ensuring appropriate provision is made for future maintenance. The council will encourage the transfer of such land into public ownership, although maintenance by the local community, through a management company or

similar measure, may be accepted. A commuted sum will normally be required to cover the ongoing costs of maintenance.

3.15.3. A condition may also be imposed specifying the maintenance of any landscaping scheme on private land for a minimum period (normally at least five years).



## 4. Utilities Infrastructure Requirements

### 4.1. Things to consider:

4.1.1. The main utilities associated with new development are water, drainage (surface and foul water), electricity, gas and telecommunications services. In most cases there are established operators in the area, and a developer will deal with them direct. However, the matter may become a planning issue because of other impacts.

4.1.2. The next sections answer the following frequently asked questions:

- 4.2. Who do I need to involve?
- 4.3. How do I get connected to an existing utility supply?
- 4.4. What do I do if electricity lines run over or close to my site?
- 4.5. How should I deal with surface water drainage?
- 4.6. What happens if there may be a risk of contamination?
- 4.7. How can I reduce the amount of water used?
- 4.8. How can I produce renewable energy?
- 4.9. Do I need permission to retrofit a renewable energy system to my house?

### 4.2. Who do I need to involve?

4.2.1. There will generally be a need for sustainable drainage systems (often referred to as SUDS) for all new buildings. These systems require maintenance. Details should be discussed with the Technical Services division of the district council before submitting an application<sup>43</sup>. In areas of flood risk, or where surface water run-off may be high, or where the land is contaminated, the

Environment Agency should be asked for advice.

4.2.2. You will also need to talk with the relevant utility services to check whether there is any existing infrastructure running across your site, and also how your development may connect to the local network.

- Contact Wessex Water Services<sup>44</sup> (or South West Water<sup>45</sup> for Lyme Regis) for information on the local water and sewerage network
- Contact BT Openreach<sup>46</sup> for information on the local telecommunications network
- Contact Southern Gas Networks<sup>47</sup> for information on the local gas network

4.2.3. If the building work may affect these services, it is the owner's or developer's responsibility to contact the service provider to discuss any necessary action and costs.

4.2.4. Liaison with experts in designing energy efficient buildings is needed, if the design is to consider all opportunities to reducing the amount of non-renewable energy used.

### 4.3. How do I get connected to an existing utility supply?

4.3.1. The utilities infrastructure will need to be adopted by an appropriate, competent organisation, such as the local utilities provider, to ensure that it is managed and operates as designed for the life of the development. Network modelling may be needed to decide how the site connects to the existing network, and any

<sup>43</sup> For further guidance refer to the West Dorset District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), 2008, PPS25: Development and Flood Risk - Practice Guide, 2008, DCLG and the CIRIA website [www.ciria.org/suds/](http://www.ciria.org/suds/)

<sup>44</sup> [www.wessexwater.co.uk](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk)

<sup>45</sup> [www.southwestwater.co.uk](http://www.southwestwater.co.uk)

<sup>46</sup> [www.openreach.co.uk](http://www.openreach.co.uk)

<sup>47</sup> [www.southerngasnetworks.co.uk](http://www.southerngasnetworks.co.uk)

## 4. Utilities Infrastructure Requirements

need for off-site reinforcement to ensure adequate supplies. Where reinforcement or other works is required, the owner or developer will be expected to contribute to the cost of these works, and these may be subject to a planning obligation.

### 4.4. What do I do if electricity lines run over or close to my site?

4.4.1. Where electricity lines run over or close to a site, the type and location of equipment in relation to the planned use, structures and landscaping of the development may be assessed as part of the planning process.

4.4.2. A proliferation of poles and overhead wires can have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of an area, and the council will encourage the undergrounding of such services where practical. Although requests to remove cables or place them underground are considered by the operators, the costs involved and possible operational or other limitations, means this cannot be guaranteed. If development needs connection to the national grid, the owner or developer will need to contact the local distributor<sup>48</sup>.

### 4.5. How should I deal with surface water drainage?

4.5.1. If ground conditions are suitable, the best way of disposing of surface water is by incorporating a sustainable drainage system (SUDS) to reduce flood risk by reducing the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site. This approach can involve a range of techniques

including soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds and wetlands. Building regulations set the minimum standard<sup>49</sup>. The Code for Sustainable Homes includes an obligatory requirement that the peak rate of run-off into watercourses is no greater as a result of the proposed development<sup>50</sup>. Rainwater harvesting can play an important role in reducing surface water run-off.

### 4.6. What happens if there may be a risk of contamination?

4.6.1. In areas of flood risk, or where surface water run-off may be high, or where the land is contaminated, it is particularly important to consider how surface water is controlled to avoid creating any problems. The Environment Agency can advise on how best to minimise the risks of pollution, and what measures should be part of any scheme.

### 4.7. How can I reduce the amount of water used?

4.7.1. Information on water-saving devices (rainwater harvesting, grey water harvesting and water efficient fittings) is provided in the council's sustainable technologies information sheets.

### 4.8. How can I produce renewable energy?

4.8.1. The Government has made a commitment to generate at least 10% of electricity from renewable sources<sup>51</sup> by 2010, rising to 20% in 2020 and 40% in 2050<sup>52</sup>. To contribute to these national

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/Electricity/AboutElectricity/DistributionCompanies/>

<sup>49</sup> Approved document H - drainage and waste disposal, 2002, ODPM  
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/1115314110382.html>

<sup>50</sup> Where the additional predicted volume of rainwater discharge is significant, it should be reduced either through using infiltration techniques or rain water harvesting.

<sup>51</sup> Renewable sources (based on the Renewables Obligations Order) include: biogas (such as that generated from landfill or sewage waste); biomass (from wood or energy crops); hydro power (including tidal, tidal stream and wave power); wind power; geothermal power; and solar power

<sup>52</sup> Energy White Paper, HMSO, 2003

## 4. Utilities Infrastructure Requirements

targets, Dorset is expected to be able to generate in the region of 75 MW of electricity from renewable sources by 2010, and take its share of the 850 MW of electricity from renewable sources by 2020<sup>53</sup>. Renewable heat targets are also likely to be introduced for the region.

4.8.2. There are a number of factors that need to be taken into account at the early

design stage, to ensure the best fit of design and technology is achieved, appropriate to the character of the building and local area<sup>54</sup>. In order to help understand and encourage the most appropriate forms of renewable electricity generation, the council has produced a range of information sheets on the most common or effective technologies for West Dorset. The key planning issues are

Source	Overview	Planning issues
Solar photovoltaics and solar water heating	Well-proven and flexible technology, although effectiveness will depend on orientation and angle of mounting	Potential impact on local character, particularly if the building is Listed or within a Conservation Area, and the effect of long distance glare. Careful positioning may overcome these concerns
Wind turbines	Wind speeds need to exceed 3 metres per second to operate and therefore small-scale turbines may not be effective in built-up areas <sup>55</sup>	The height and number, colour, position in relation to buildings, potential noise and disturbance, impact on views and local character will be considered. Careful design and positioning may overcome these concerns
Biomass and biogas boilers	Single boilers well proven, but larger combined heat and power (CHP) schemes are relatively new. Energy is best sourced locally from improved woodland management or waste, to minimise wider potential environmental costs	Small-scale boilers: potential impact of the flue on local character, particularly if the building is Listed. Large plants: potential impact from vehicle movements and air quality, and visual impact of new buildings on local character
Ground and air source heat pumps	Although requiring an energy source to operate, the efficiency savings are classed as renewable. This technology may not always be effective for hot water because of the higher temperatures required	Ground source heat pumps: potential impact on archaeological interests or land stability Air source heat pumps: the externally mounted components may have a potential impact on local character, particularly where the building is Listed or within a Conservation Area. Careful positioning may overcome these concerns, and also reduce any potential impact on neighbours caused by noise and vibration

<sup>53</sup> recommendations from REvision 2020, South West Renewable Electricity, Heat and On Site Generation Targets for 2020, June 2005, produced by Centre for Sustainable Energy on behalf of Government Office for the South West and the South West Regional Assembly

<sup>54</sup> para 42, Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1, 2007, DCLG

<sup>55</sup> information on average windspeed at 10m and higher above ground level can be found at <http://www.bwea.com/noabl/index.html>, however a local assessment is advised as the data relates to 1km squares and takes no account of topography on a small scale or local surface roughness, both of which may have a considerable effect on the wind speed.



## 4. Utilities Infrastructure Requirements

summarised below. Where planning issues are highlighted, early contact with the council is advised.

### 4.9. Do I need permission to retrofit a renewable energy system to my house?

4.9.1. Planning permission is no longer required for some microgeneration technologies on homes and buildings in gardens. This is subject to certain criteria<sup>56</sup> summarised here. If you are unsure whether your scheme needs permission please contact the council. This applies to:

- solar photovoltaics or solar thermal systems
- ground source heat pumps
- water source heat pumps
- the flue for a biomass heating or combined heat and power systems.

There are plans to extend these rights to wind turbines and air source heat pumps once clear standards on noise and vibration are agreed.

4.9.2. Permitted development rights are subject to the equipment being sited to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and amenity of the area (so far as practicable). In the case of solar microgeneration technologies, the equipment must be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when it is no longer needed.

4.9.3. Permission is still needed if permitted development rights have been removed by planning condition, or if the equipment:

- a) Would be higher than the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney), or, in the case of a flue, the height

would exceed the highest part of the roof by one metre

- b) In the case of solar microgeneration technologies, the equipment would protrude more than 200 millimetres beyond the plane of the wall or the roof slope (when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the wall or roof slope)
- c) Would result in more than one set of solar panels in the garden or curtilage (boundaries) of the home
- d) In the case of stand-alone equipment, the panels would be more than 4 metres in height above ground level, more than 9 square metres or 3 metres in any dimension, or sited within 5 metres of the plot boundary
- e) In the case of land in a conservation area or on the World Heritage coast, the equipment is installed on the outside of a house on a wall or roof slope forming the principal or side elevation visible from a highway (or if installed on a building or as stand-alone equipment in the garden it would be visible from a highway)
- f) Would be installed on a listed building or within the curtilage (boundary) of a listed building.



Ecohomes showcase a range of solutions

<sup>56</sup> Following an amendment to The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order which came into force on 6 April 2008.

## 5. The Plot

### 5.1. Things to consider:

- 5.1.1. In considering the plot, thought needs to be given to what is the best size and shape, how much is developed, and how the boundaries will be marked.
- 5.1.2. Although the erection of fences and walls, and changes in surface treatment, may be classed as development, certain changes are permitted automatically by law<sup>57</sup>. In general, greater restrictions are put on development next to roads, in Conservation Areas and in the grounds of a Listed Building. Hedges are not classed as development so are not controlled by the council unless they are conditioned as part of a landscape scheme or protected under the hedgerows regulations. It is advisable to check with the council whether consent is needed before undertaking any works.
- 5.1.3. The next sections answer the following frequently asked questions:
  - 5.2. Who do I need to involve?
  - 5.3. What land uses are likely to be appropriate in a mixed use area?
  - 5.4. In sub-dividing or amalgamating land into plots, what do I need to consider?
  - 5.5. Is there a minimum plot size?
  - 5.6. Is there a minimum garden size?
  - 5.7. Do I need to say how the boundary will be defined?
  - 5.8. Is there a maximum height for walls or hedges?

### 5.2. Who do I need to involve?

- 5.2.1. Talk to local people who live near the site.
- 5.2.2. Where a development borders on a site designated for its nature conservation or geological interest, the appropriate specialists should be consulted. It may also be useful to talk to an ecologist and

a civil engineer about opportunities for integrating wildlife and sustainable drainage as part of the landscaping plan.

- 5.2.3. Because the design should ensure that disabled people can gain access to the building from the street, talking with disabled users or an expert in this field is advised.

### 5.3. What land uses are likely to be appropriate in a mixed use area?

- 5.3.1. It is expected that a sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhood will contain a balance of homes, local services, community facilities and employment workspace. This should be made up of:
  - A mix in the size, type and affordability of homes
  - A reasonable range of local services and community facilities in comparison to the size of the neighbourhood being served, and taking into account access to alternative facilities. Consideration should be given to the provision of local shops, a community hall, education and healthcare facilities, public open space including provision for children's play and allotments, and art or cultural facilities
  - A range of offices, workshops and other land uses that support local employment, ideally including a mix in the size, type and affordability of units



Local shops - Bridport neighbourhood

<sup>57</sup> The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended

## 5. The Plot

5.3.2. Uses which would generate significant levels of noise or pollution, high levels of freight traffic or other problems that would adversely affect neighbouring uses are not considered appropriate in a mixed use area. Some uses may be more appropriately located within a town centre<sup>58</sup>, or clustered together to provide improved facilities.



### 5.4. In sub-dividing or amalgamating land into plots, what do I need to consider?

5.4.1. Where there is a strong grain of character (in terms of plot size, orientation or shape), this should be reflected in the subdivision or amalgamation of plots, unless one or more of the following would result:

- This would reduce the density of development to below acceptable levels
- There would be insufficient space to retain features that are either locally significant or important for local character (see section [2.9])
- On site requirements for sustainable drainage, garden space, parking provision and storage could not be provided

- The resulting layout would severely limit the energy efficiency of any subsequent development
- The resulting layout would severely limit connections to the surrounding route network
- The resulting development would severely limit the privacy or daylight to any subsequent development or adjoining development.

5.4.2. Information on the significance of an area and the grain of character can be found in the relevant urban character assessments and conservation area appraisals, although it is essential to confirm this by visiting the site.

### 5.5. Is there a minimum plot size?

5.5.1. There is no minimum standard, as a variety of factors need to be taken into account, and plots widths will vary. As a guide, a plot width of about 6 to 7 metres will tend to provide a flexible form that can accommodate a range of uses. Plot widths of less than 5 metres will be more challenging to develop well.

### 5.6. Is there a minimum garden size?

5.6.1. There is no minimum standard, although the need to consider local character and retention of important local features, the need for surface water drainage and need for adequate daylight may limit the areas that can be built on. The likely needs of future occupants should also be considered. If no provision is made in the home, storage space that can be used for bicycles or a wheelchair, for example, should be provided elsewhere. Storage for waste, and space for drying clothes, should also be provided, where it will be convenient to the users. Although not a policy requirement, the ability for future occupiers to have space to grow some of

<sup>58</sup> A sequential test for "main town centre uses", is contained in PPS6 Planning for Town Centres, 2005.



## 5. The Plot

their own food does have wider sustainability benefits as it reduces the need to travel.

- 5.6.2. It is anticipated that some private amenity open space will be needed for most homes, although the extent and proximity to public open space (including allotments) will be considered. As a general principle, a depth of 10 metres from the rear of a property will normally provide privacy. Shorter distances may be acceptable depending on the design of the building. In the case of flats, shared amenity areas may be considered, although some private space will normally be sought. Homes with no private amenity space will not normally be acceptable.

### 5.7. Do I need to say how the boundary will be defined?

- 5.7.1. Boundary treatment may be key to reinforcing and defining the street, particularly where the building line is set back. In some areas, there is a consistent approach to the type of boundary treatment used, and this should be respected unless to continue it conflicts with other objectives. Clear boundary treatment also helps indicate the extent of private ownership, and reduces opportunities for crime. For these reasons, the type of boundary treatment will be considered in deciding planning applications.

### 5.8. Is there a maximum height for walls or hedges?

- 5.8.1. There is no set standard. However walls, hedges and fencing along the front edges of a plot should normally be kept below 1 metre in height to get a reasonable level of overlooking and surveillance of public areas. If privacy is needed in rear gardens, a 1.8 metre high boundary will normally be sufficient to prevent overlooking from a neighbour's ground floor or garden.



Different but continuous boundbury treatments, Dorchester



Conflict between the need for privacy and overlooking should be avoided



Industry in Sherborne

## 6. Parking Provision

### 6.1. Things to consider

6.1.1. Although the council is trying to promote a way of living that is less reliant on the private car, the fact is that four in five households in West Dorset have at least one car, and this figure is even higher in the more remote, rural locations.

Adequate parking provision in the right location is needed to ensure that cars are parked safely without dominating the street scene or creating a hazard to pedestrians.

6.1.2. This chapter focuses on the different ways in which parking provision can be made, and what needs to be considered in deciding how parking is best provided. The main choices are between parking on-street, in parking courtyards, or in the plot (either on driveways or garages). A combination of these is more likely to provide the best solution for larger schemes.

6.1.3. The next sections answer the following frequently asked questions:

6.2. Who do I need to involve?

6.3. What do I need to consider if providing parking on-street?

6.4. What do I need to consider if providing parking in parking courtyards?

6.5. What do I need to consider if providing parking in-curtilage (in the boundaries of the plot)?

6.1.4. It should be noted that Lifetime Homes Standard states that the distance from the car parking space to the home should be kept to a minimum and should be level or gently sloping.

6.1.5. Information on surfacing and related design matters is covered in Chapter 3 (Streets, Paths and Open Spaces).

### 6.2. Who do I need to involve?

6.2.1. Advice on parking provision and connections into the existing route network can be obtained from the highway authority (normally the county council).

### 6.3. What do I need to consider if providing parking on-street?

6.3.1. On-street parking can provide a convenient and efficient solution where cars are well overlooked from surrounding houses. It can reduce the need for visitor parking<sup>59</sup>, and provide a traffic-calming effect.

6.3.2. On-street parking needs to be reasonably near to the homes it is intended for, and overlooked by buildings that will provide a degree of surveillance.

6.3.3. Parking bays should be incorporated into the overall width of the street. To soften the visual impact, instead of marking these out by painted lines, consideration should be given to the creative use of paving, trees or planting. Cars can be parked parallel to the kerb, or where street width and safety allows, at an angle.

6.3.4. Large areas of hard surfacing to accommodate ranks of parked cars are both unattractive and may lead to problems with surface water drainage. Landscaping treatment to soften or interrupt the lines of cars can reduce this impact, providing such treatment would be appropriate to the character of the local area.

6.3.5. Where cars are to be parked in a civic space or square, generally there should be no more than 15 spaces so as to not dominate the space. Larger parking areas, if needed, will require careful

<sup>59</sup> research by Noble and Jenks (1996) has shown that visitor parking requirements generally coincide with the times when a reasonable proportion of residents will be using their cars.

## 6. Parking Provision

landscaping, and pedestrian routes should be clearly defined.



On-street parking at Charlton Down



On-street parking in Sherborne

### 6.4. What do I need to consider if providing parking in parking courtyards?

- 6.4.1. Parking courtyards in perimeter blocks can provide the best solution in higher density, built-up areas where the extent of parking provision needed may otherwise dominate the street scene. However, it needs careful design to ensure that areas are safe, and the enjoyment of rear gardens not unduly diminished.
- 6.4.2. Parking courtyards will not be acceptable if they are insufficiently overlooked by buildings, the parking provision does not relate to the surrounding homes or it results in large areas of tarmac (generally no more than 10 spaces should be clustered together). Any large areas of hard surfacing (over 5 square metres) should be made permeable (so that water can pass through it).
- 6.4.3. Where possible two access points should be provided, forming a route across the block. This should not be at the expense of security, and care needs to be taken to ensure that the entrance points do not significantly break up the street frontage and undermine its definition (see section [2.7]).
- 6.4.4. Homes placed in or on the entrance to the courtyards are generally the best solution to ensure adequate overlooking. Where such properties are not on the highway, provision should be made for a refuse collection area for bins at the kerbside.
- 6.4.5. The layout should allow sufficient space for some bays to be enlarged to 3.3 metres width at a later date for disabled people to use, should the need arise. Garages should where possible be incorporated into the boundary of the rear gardens of the homes they serve. Ranks of disassociated garaging should be avoided.
- 6.4.6. Due to the shared nature of the space, it is important that a high quality of design, good landscaping and ongoing maintenance are provided.



Consider landscaping within the parking courtyard



## 6. Parking Provision



Badly planned courtyards may be unwelcoming and neglected



Homes can provide some surveillance of parking courtyards

### 6.5. What do I need to consider if providing parking in-curtilage (inside the boundaries of a plot)?

- 6.5.1. Parking within a plot is unlikely to make the most efficient use of land, but may be the only option available on smaller or individual sites or when on-street or parking courtyards are not an option.
- 6.5.2. Where planning permission is required, in-curtilage parking will not be acceptable if the provision will be forward of the building lines that help define the street, or if it would require alterations in ground levels that would cause significant problems for people with walking difficulties (see section [3.11]).

6.5.3. Any provision within the plot should be alongside or to the rear of the house (if accessed from the rear), set back from the building line. Sufficient room should be allowed to enlarge the space to 3.3 metres width for future disabled residents (for example, by providing a grass verge alongside the parking space), should the need arise. Any large areas of hard surfacing (over 5 square metres) should be made permeable.

6.5.4. Car ports and garaging can be used to reduce the visual impact of cars and provide increase security. However, it is important that adequate storage provision is made within the property to ensure that garages are used as intended.



Without careful consideration, on-plot parking can be intrusive in the street scene

# 7. The Building

## 7.1. Things to consider:

7.1.1. In considering a new building, or an extension or alteration to an existing building, thought needs to be given to what is the most appropriate size and form, and how it is placed on the plot. These factors are key in helping define the character of that building and its identity and harmony with the local area (and, in the case of extensions and alterations, how it impacts on the main building). It will also depend on:

- The underlying block and plot structure, and the need for outside space
- Potential for energy efficiency (particularly reducing the need for artificial lighting and ventilation) and use of renewable energy sources
- Potential problems in relation to privacy and daylight, both for the proposed building and how it may affect the amenity and enjoyment of neighbouring properties

7.1.2. The character and visual interest of a building can depend on the symmetry (or asymmetry) and proportions of its doors and windows, the materials and building techniques used and any architectural detailing.

7.1.3. These guidelines do not override the need for designers to understand the character and identity of the local area, and take a creative approach to carry this forward in new building works. There is no one standard solution that will work in all places, and every design should respond to the uniqueness of the place in which it will be placed.

7.1.4. The next sections answer the following frequently asked questions.

- 7.2. Who do I need to involve?
- 7.3. Are there any limitations on building height?

- 7.4. Are there any limitations on building width or depth?
- 7.5. Is there a minimum distance needed between properties?
- 7.6. How far should the building be set back from the street?
- 7.7. How can I ensure the design takes advantage of solar gain and other measures that will naturally reduce its running costs?
- 7.8. What types of wall are likely to be appropriate?
- 7.9. What roof forms and materials are likely to be appropriate?
- 7.10. Should my building have a chimney stack?
- 7.11. Should my building have an entrance porch?
- 7.12. Where should doors and windows be placed?
- 7.13. What types of doors and windows are likely to be appropriate?
- 7.14. What level and type of architectural detailing is appropriate?
- 7.15. What scope is there to improve the energy efficiency of a Listed Building?
- 7.16. Is there any specific guidance for shop fronts or advertisements?
- 7.17. Can I add security features (lighting, shutters, CCTV)?
- 7.18. Do I need planning permission to make minor alterations to my house?
- 7.19. Who is responsible for on-going maintenance?

## 7.2. Who do I need to involve?

- 7.2.1. Talk to local people who live near your site. If the building is to be a landmark, or lies within a town centre area, then a broader consultation exercise may be appropriate, including interested groups such as the local chamber of trade, and representatives of disabled users.
- 7.2.2. Talk with experts who design for energy efficiency within buildings, to properly

## 7. The Building

consider all opportunities to reducing the amount of non-renewable energy used.

7.2.3. Information on local character is provided in the relevant urban character assessments and conservation area appraisals. Further advice may be obtained from the district council's Development Services Division.

### 7.3. Are there any limitations on building height?

7.3.1. In a rural district such as West Dorset, building heights have tended to range from two to three storeys, with some single and one and a half storey dwellings. Storey heights vary. The height will need to take into account the character and period of the local area (or existing building).



Sherborne's roofscape shows a variety in building heights

7.3.2. Decisions about building height should also be made in relation to creating street-building height ratios resulting in good enclosure (see section [2.7]).



Example of building heights and enclosure at Charlton Down

7.3.3. Buildings of four or more storeys (or the equivalent height) will generally only be acceptable in or adjoining town centre locations, or where the building use is of significant importance, or a landmark is needed. Corner plots may be suited to taller, landmark buildings, although in residential buildings the limited scope for private rooms and private garden space may mean this is not practical. The relationship with nearby buildings (in terms of local character, daylight and privacy) may potentially limit height (see sections [2.9], [2.11] and [2.8]).

7.3.4. The appropriate height of an extension will very much depend on the character of the original building, and also the relationship with its neighbours (both in character and in terms of daylight and privacy). An extension should not dominate the original building (although extensions into the roof space or by adding another storey can sometimes be sympathetically achieved). For buildings that are listed, as a general principle any extension should be subservient in height and character so as to not undermine the special interest of the building.

### 7.4. Are there any limitations on building width or depth?

7.4.1. The form of the building will often depend upon the plot shape and orientation. Narrow frontage, deep plan forms are usually found in higher density, terraced areas where plot widths are narrow. Shallow plan forms predominate elsewhere, and provide more varied street layouts with a mix of dwelling frontages, garden and garage walls. The need for sufficient outdoor space, privacy and daylight can limit the width or depth of a building, although careful positioning within the plot and use of screening can help overcome some problems. More information on outdoor space is given in section [3]. Information on assessing privacy and daylight is given in section [7.5]).



## 7. The Building

### 7.5. Is there a minimum distance needed between properties?

- 7.5.1. There is no minimum distance stipulated between neighbouring properties, however the need to ensure adequate privacy and daylight is important, and the following general principles provide some guidance.
- 7.5.2. 20 metres between facing buildings will normally give good privacy between the rear of buildings. Closer distances may be possible where homes are not directly facing each other, or suitable screening can be achieved. Consideration can be given to removing permitted development rights where future extensions or alterations may cause concern.
- 7.5.3. As a guide, if the shadow areas created by new buildings or extensions extend over more than half of a window in a nearby property, then there may be a significant reduction in light entering that room<sup>60</sup>.

### 7.6. How far should the building be set back from the street?

- 7.6.1. Setting back buildings from the street influences local character, the degree of privacy given to ground floor rooms, and the ability to accommodate storage and servicing arrangements at the front of the building.
- 7.6.2. A common building line creates continuity of frontage which better defines the street space, and is generally the preferred approach. Landmark buildings may either step forward or back from this line, to help reinforce their prominence in the street or create a space where, in some instances, activities may take place. If there is significant variation locally, other considerations, such as the potential for more energy efficient layouts, should be given greater weight.
- 7.6.3. The following table provides some further guidance:

Setback	Main use	Things to consider
None	In high density, mixed use or predominantly commercial areas where an intimate, enclosed street environment is warranted and buildings can be serviced from the rear. Can be used to reduce traffic speeds where the buildings limit forward visibility along a street.	The design and positioning of doors and windows where residential uses are proposed, to provide a reasonable degree of privacy. Raising the ground floor of a building above street level may be an appropriate solution provided it would not compromise disabled access.
1 to 3m	In medium to high density, mixed use or residential areas.	The degree of privacy to front rooms and possible pressure to accommodate parking in the front garden area (see below).
3 to 5m	In low to medium density, predominantly residential areas, where a small front garden is important to local character, or to reduce the noise and disturbance from a busy street.	Incorporate railings, hedge or other boundary treatment to prevent the front gardens from being used for parking vehicles, which may undermine the character and visual attractiveness of the area.

<sup>60</sup> Further guidance is given in Site Layout Planning for daylight and Sunlight - a Guide to Good Practice, 2002, BRE

## 7. The Building



No setback, with buildings on the pavement, Sherborne



Small front gardens provide some privacy, Dorchester

### 7.7. How can I ensure the design takes advantage of solar gain and other measures that will naturally reduce its running costs?

7.7.1. The orientation and design of buildings to benefit from natural light and heat from the sun, and avoid overheating, is known as passive solar design. Such design, which may not add much to the building cost, can make significant savings to heating and lighting costs during the building's lifetime. Key factors to consider in the design<sup>61</sup> are:

- Orientation and building form (shape) can be designed to capture heat and energy from the sun effectively, by orientating the main glazed elevation and living rooms of a building to face

within 30° of south. Any solar or photovoltaic panels that may be fixed to a building will also benefit from such orientation. The possible effect of any overshadowing from nearby buildings should also be taken into account. Orientation is particularly important for housing and schools, which can make effective use of solar heating and light

- Building form can also provide opportunities from natural ventilation, which is particularly relevant to offices, schools and other public buildings, to reduce the need for air conditioning. The use of atria and roof lights can help also reduce the need for artificial lighting in large buildings. Houses and apartments should be designed to assist cross-ventilation where practical
- Thermal mass and insulation can be used to absorb heat during the day and release it slowly at night. Unheated spaces such as conservatories, green houses and garages which are attached to the outside of heated rooms can also act as thermal buffers
- Window sizing and position can have an impact on the potential for solar gain as well as daylight. Where possible, the size and number of north facing windows should not be excessive. Homes which only face north should be avoided. Conservatories and atria can help with natural ventilation and heat collection during the spring and autumn, but the overall benefits will be lost if they are heated for use during the winter.

7.7.2. The council has produced further advisory information on sustainable or green technologies that is available on-line on [www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com) and from the council offices.

<sup>61</sup> Key points summarised from Planning for Renewable Energy, A Companion Guide to PPS22, ODPM 2004, Section 5 on Passive Solar Design

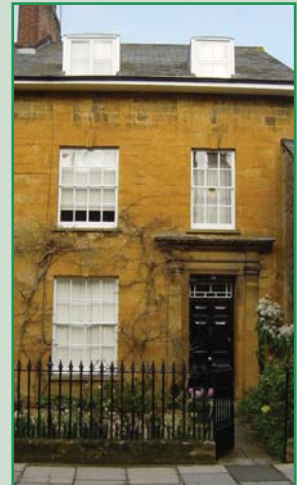
## 7. The Building

### 7.8. What types of wall are likely to be appropriate?

7.8.1. The materials and types of walls used should be in keeping with, or help enhance, local character. Additional considerations include insulation, air tightness, and thermal mass. Evidence has shown that it is possible to develop energy-efficient buildings using materials that are in keeping with the character of West Dorset. In areas known to be affected by Radon gas, specific measures may also be required (advice on this can be sought from the Building Control Team).



Slate hanging, Lyme Regis



Limestone walls and slate roof, Sherborne



Flint and limestone walls, thatched roof, Stratton



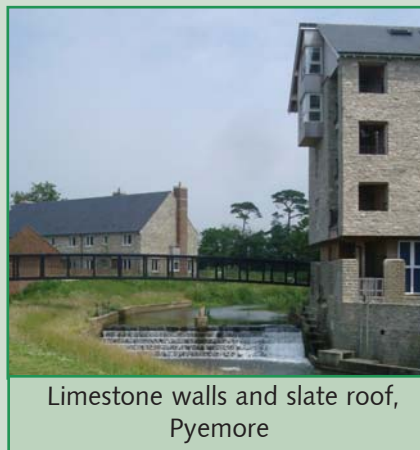
Industrial converted stone building with modern metal roof, Sherborne



Painted brick with timber-clad projecting bay, Lyme Regis



Brick and slate or thatched roofs, Lyme Regis



Limestone walls and slate roof, Pyemore



Brick and rendered walls, slate roofs, Chickerell



## 7. The Building

7.8.2. Examples of traditional wall finishes in West Dorset include the use of:

Material	Notes
<p><b>Local Limestone</b> Used as the principal building material and used in combination with brick, flint and chalk block. Traditionally sourced from local quarries (usually within 10 miles), Portland and Purbeck stone are more common in the south, whereas a golden limestone is more common around Sherborne.</p>	<p>Found throughout the district, generally more predominant in rural areas. Traditionally laid as random rubble, coursed or uncoursed in lime mortar. Ashlar and dressed stone normally limited to larger formal buildings. Pointing is normally full and flush. Reconstructed stone is generally unsuitable.</p>
<p><b>Brick</b> Predominantly mottled brown or red in colour, with more unusual colours (often a bi-product of manufacture) used for details around openings, horizontal 'band' courses around the buildings and vertical cornerstones or 'quoins'. Also used in chimney stacks. Painted brick occurs primarily in the west.</p>	<p>Found throughout the district, generally more predominant in urban areas. Bricks traditionally laid in Flemish, English, garden wall or stretcher bond laid in lime mortar. Pointing is normally flush and does not project beyond the surface of the wall. New painted brick is not normally encouraged.</p>
<p><b>Rendered masonry</b> Traditionally a rich lime: sand mix, limewashed in a range of natural colours, often applied subsequently to provide additional weather protection. Is also found with the substrate or base 'grinning through'. Modern colour renders are spray applied onto blockwork.</p>	<p>Found for example in Regency properties throughout the district. Generally smooth surface finish, self coloured, limewashed or painted, coursed, lined out or scribed around apertures. Roughcast highly textured render is less common. Bright colours are generally unsuitable.</p>
<p><b>Cob</b> Chalk cob, usually locally produced. Used in barns, dwellings and boundary wall treatment.</p>	<p>Found in Cerne Abbas, Piddle Valley and exceptional examples occurring in Bridport and Sherborne. Smooth, usually rendered surface with rounded corners.</p>
<p><b>Flint &amp; Chert</b> Much variety and variation. Materials often obtained directly from site, used fully knapped (split down the middle to reveal dark glossy flint centre), semi knapped and squared laid in courses and randomly with small pieces (gallets of shards) embedded in mortar. Modern flint panels are prefabricated.</p>	<p>Chert found for example in Lyme Regis, whole beach pebbles in walling at Charmouth. Flint found along the Bride Valley on the downland and in the chalk valleys.</p>
<p><b>Timber cladding</b> Horizontal and vertical timber boarding, with straight or natural, uneven (wany) edges.</p>	<p>Found primarily in Lyme Regis and Charmouth</p>
<p><b>Slate hanging</b> Decorative and plain slates, Welsh or Cornish beneath projecting bay windows but also on entire elevations. Shapes vary but usually are diamond, fishscale or rectangular nailed to battens.</p>	<p>Found primarily in Lyme Regis, particularly along Marine Parade and the west side of Broad Street, and more occasionally elsewhere.</p>

## 7. The Building

- 7.8.3. More information on local materials is provided in the character assessments (see section [2.9])
- 7.8.4. Brick and block cavity wall construction, and traditional stone buildings generally have high thermal mass. Additional thermal mass may be needed in light weight buildings to avoid overheating and reduce heat loss, to negate the need for air conditioning in summer and venting of excess heat in the winter. Cellular glass and blown extruded polystyrene insulation should be avoided because of their poor environmental performance<sup>62</sup>.

### 7.9. What roof forms and materials are likely to be appropriate?

- 7.9.1. Traditional roofing materials are slate, clay tiles including double Roman pantiles, thatch and stone slates. The design of the roof form should take into account local character and neighbouring properties, and give consideration to what opportunities there may be to use solar energy, the potential for future extensions to the building, and likely future maintenance requirements to ensure the building's appearance does not deteriorate significantly.
- 7.9.2. Flat and shallow-pitched roofs are not typical of West Dorset, particularly not on residential properties, and their justification needs careful consideration. Parapets can also create maintenance problems. There may be opportunities to accommodate green roofs in the right locations. For example, green roofs have been permitted on new single storey dwellings at Lyme Regis where they blend into the landscape.
- 7.9.3. Traditional roofs in West Dorset are predominantly between 30° and 50° and are generally pitched, pyramidal, hipped, half-hipped or less commonly, mansard in form. Requirements for solar energy can normally be met by most roof forms. The style of eaves can vary greatly, although boxed eaves are not typically found in West Dorset. Deeper eaves can help reduce the impact of rain and provide some shading.
- 7.9.4. On an extension, the main consideration will be how well the new roof would relate to the existing building, taking into account the building's form and character. Loft extensions that would alter the roof form should avoid creating rooflines that appear overly bulky, and particular care is needed where such developments may set a precedent for nearby properties that cumulatively would have an adverse impact. Guidance on windows and rooflights is given in section [7.13].



Consider how pitch relates to adjoining buildings



Avoid overly bulky loft extensions

<sup>62</sup> Green Guide to Specification, BRE, online version 2008 [www.thegreenguide.org.uk](http://www.thegreenguide.org.uk)

## 7. The Building

### 7.10. Should my building have a chimney stack?

7.10.1. Chimney stacks not only add interest and variety to the skyline, but are purpose built flues for heating appliances and can function as vents for ventilation. As such, chimneys should be included in most building types, and designed to be operational. Throughout the district, chimneys are predominantly built of brick. The introduction of GRP (Glass Reinforced Plastic) pre-formed chimney stacks or similar products will not be permitted.

7.10.2. The design and placing of the chimney can reflect local character. As a general principle, avoid understated, small, thin chimneys, which are unconvincing and fail to make a meaningful contribution to the design. Detailing at the top of the chimneystack and the type of chimney pots used can help prevent damp penetration and add individuality to the design.



Chimneys can provide interest, Bridport



Contemporary chimney vents in new build, Sherborne

### 7.11. Should my building have an entrance porch?

7.11.1. Entrance porches provide shelter from the weather, act as draught lobbies to reduce heat loss from buildings, and can add to the character of a building. The porch area can also be designed to provide valuable storage space within its flank walls without compromising security. In commercial buildings, particularly shops, where the building is directly on the pavement, the door can be recessed, providing relief to the shop front as well as shelter.

7.11.2. A porch may not be appropriate if buildings in the local area do not have them and there is little local variation in style. Where a porch is appropriate, its scale, form and materials should be in keeping with the building, and the local character of the area. Other methods, such as the use of painted timber doorcases or stone canopies on console brackets, may be considered as a means of enhancing the main entrance to the house and adding prestige to the doorway, where these would be suitable to the overall design of the property. 'Stick on' mouldings and features that are not built to last should be avoided.



Porch covers in Sherborne



## 7. The Building

### 7.12. Where should doors and windows be placed?

7.12.1. Doors and windows provide natural light and ventilation. Their design and placement can help establish a vertical or horizontal emphasis or pattern that is visually attractive and locally distinctive. This should also take into account:

- disabled users needs (see section [7.13]).
- fire exit/safety requirements
- the need for natural surveillance and privacy
- opportunities to increase the energy efficiency of the building.



a) comparable designs show how windows in these homes...



b)...could have been better aligned and defined

### 7.13. What types of doors and windows are likely to be appropriate?

7.13.1. The main traditional material for doors and windows in West Dorset is timber. Modern UPVC windows are more reflective (and more prominent) in wider views, and due to their greater bulk, they do not reflect the character of traditional windows in historic areas. They have also not been proven to last as long as properly maintained high quality wooden frames<sup>63</sup>. Powder coated aluminium clad softwood windows and heavier (over 1.08 kilograms to the metre) powder coated aluminium windows perform badly in terms of their wider environmental impact<sup>64</sup>. It is important to consider the likely future maintenance requirements, to ensure that the quality and appearance of the scheme can be sustained.

7.13.2. The opening size and proportions should take into account the character of the building and the local area, the opportunities to utilise solar energy without overheating, and the need for adequate levels of daylight within the building. There are a variety of traditional window styles in the district. Advances in technology and glass production means that glass has become a much more versatile building component than it has in the past. However, large undivided areas of glass are not in keeping with local character in West Dorset and should as a general principle be avoided on elevations seen from the street (with the exception of shopfronts). In alterations to an existing building, or an extension to it, new doors and windows should respect the character of the original building and the design of its existing doors and windows.

<sup>63</sup> research by English Heritage has shown that over the lifetime of a typical mortgage, the installation and maintenance costs of high quality timber windows actually works out cheaper than UPVC (Conservation Bulletin, Issue 14, June 1991 Framing Opinions supplement)

<sup>64</sup> Green Guide to Specification, BRE, online version 2008 [www.thegreenguide.org.uk](http://www.thegreenguide.org.uk)

## 7. The Building

7.13.3. Secondary, double and triple glazing to improve energy efficiency should be possible on most buildings. Fitting secondary glazed units is reversible and may provide the most appropriate solution for protecting the character of historic buildings.

7.13.4. The extent to which a window is recessed within the wall is another key factor. Traditionally windows placed in solid masonry walls are set back from, rather than flush to, the wall. This gives the building more character (through the shadow lines created) and also has better weather protection and provision for shading.

7.13.5. South facing windows should be designed to avoid the need for an internal cooling system. Careful consideration should be given to the appearance of external blinds or shutters used on street elevations.



Traditional blind mechanism

7.13.6. The use of dormers within loft extensions should respect the proportion of the existing window openings and scale of the property by being narrower and shorter to avoid the dormer dominating and unbalancing the roofscape. The use of rooflights (that sit flush with the existing slope of the roof) in historic building should where practicable be on the rear roofslope and use of metal rooflights that are similar to traditional cast iron rooflights, are preferred.



A hotchpotch of loft conversion styles



Sympathetic rooflights, Pyemore

7.13.7. To meet disabled needs, it is important that the threshold to all doorways is level. The Lifetime Homes Standard requires that the route from the car parking space into the home should be level or gently sloping, and this applies to all parking spaces provided. Steps are only acceptable on an alternative or secondary route (in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations). Thresholds higher than 15 millimetres should be avoided. UPVC doors with high thresholds cannot be easily adapted for wheelchair access without complete replacement of the door frame, and therefore should be avoided. Doors should have a minimum clear opening width of 750 millimetres (800 millimetres at the front entrance) to comply with Building Regulations for Disabled Access. Windows and doors should be easy to open for disabled users, and it is advisable that the locks meet current security standards, and



## 7. The Building

consideration given to using doors and windows that are certified to offer enhanced resistance to intrusion<sup>65</sup>. Window sills should be no more than 800 millimetres above internal ground floor level to allow for better views out for those confined to chairs where this can be achieved without compromising local character or, in the case of an extension, the character of the original building, and in accordance with Building Regulations. Frameless glass doors should be avoided as they are dangerous for the young and people with partial sight.

### 7.14. What level and type of architectural detailing is appropriate?

7.14.1. The level and richness of detailing should be appropriate to the status of the building within the street, and local character. In the case of extensions, the detailing should match or respect that on the original building.

7.14.2. Quirky or interesting features provide buildings with a degree of individuality. However, they should not result in a cluttered appearance, be out of proportion with the rest of the building, or be difficult to maintain to a good standard. Local examples include:

- Loading doors and hoists, particularly in old stores or warehouses
- Verandas, bay windows, first floor balconies
- Gate piers
- Slate hanging on projecting bays
- Carved or decorative barge boards
- Decorative ridge tiles
- Decorative fanlights
- Weather vanes

7.14.3. Where signs are needed, these provide an opportunity for creativity, for example by using symbols to portray the type of goods or service the shop provides. Projecting signs are traditionally hung at right angles to the fascia, from decorative metal fixings. Clutter through the proliferation of signs and other features should be avoided. Projecting box signs are not appropriate in historic areas.



Example of detailing at Poundbury



Example of detailing at Charlton Down



Lack of any detailing or interest is unacceptable

7.14.4. 'Stick on' mouldings and features that are not built to last should be avoided.

<sup>65</sup> Compliance with 'secured by design' New Homes Part 2 (Physical Security) qualifies for percentage points under the Code for Sustainable homes Further details can be obtained at [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)



## 7. The Building



Example of a local traditional sign, Bridport



Example of a traditional hoist, Dorchester



Hanging sign, Sherborne

### 7.15. What scope is there to improve the energy efficiency of a Listed Building?

7.15.1. The range of Listed Buildings are vast, varying from 12th Century or older churches to mansions, simple cottages and barns. Because of their long life spans, many would be considered inherently sustainable. There is also general consensus that many Listed Buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration. However, because even minor works which may seem of little importance can be very destructive to a building's special interest, each case will need to be considered on its own merits.

7.15.2. Experience has shown that, as a general guide, the types of improvement that are

most likely to be effective and compatible with a Listed Building are as follows:

- Improved draught proofing
- Increased insulation
- Installation of secondary glazing
- Installation of an energy efficient boiler
- Installation of solar panels or photovoltaics
- Installation of a ground heat source pump

7.15.3. English Heritage set out the following tests for assessing the installation of small-scale renewable energy systems attached to a listed building<sup>66</sup>.

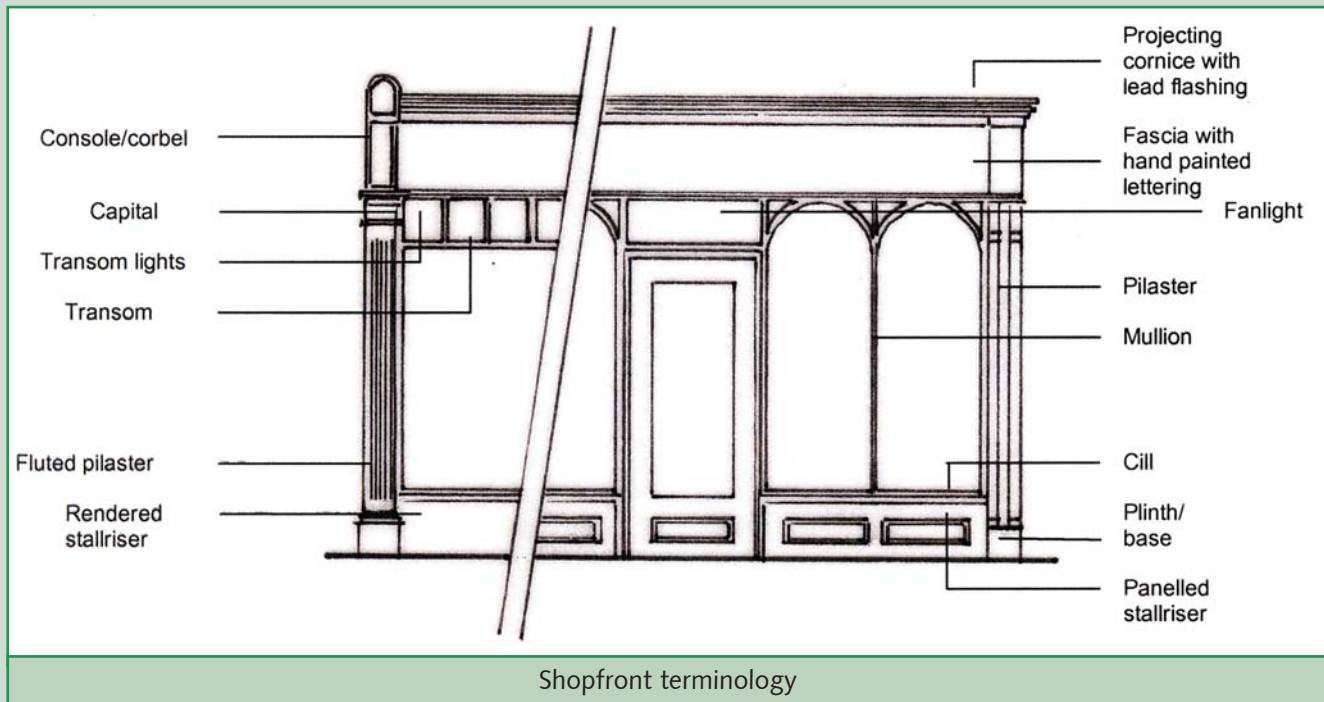
- Significant parts of the historic fabric will not be irreversibly damaged and any impact on it will be limited
- Views of the building would not be compromised (views from public places are particularly important)
- No practical alternatives exist that would not require intervention in the historic fabric
- Efforts have been made to lessen impact by design, location, choice of materials, colours etc

7.15.4. The council advises that anyone considering how best to improve their Listed Building obtains expert advice from a suitably qualified architect or surveyor. The council has produced further advisory information on sustainable or green technologies that is available on-line and from the council offices.

<sup>66</sup> Further advice and case study examples are included in the publication *Microgeneration in the Historic Environment*, English Heritage, 2008

## 7. The Building

### 7.16. Is there any specific guidance for shop fronts or advertisements?



7.16.1. The shop front should not be designed in isolation, but should be considered as part of the overall architectural composition of the property, respecting the period and style of the host building. The design of the shop front should also take into account the adjacent building styles and shop fronts in the street, the vertical and horizontal elements, the variety and also any recurring characteristics, patterns or details. Where a shop front is to be expanded to occupy more than one building, every effort should be made to retain the original proportions of each building in the overall design of the new shop front scheme, so that from the outside the individual shop front units are retained in relationship to the accommodation above.

7.16.2. Very few early shop fronts survive, but where they do, special care is needed to ensure they are protected and restored sensitively with careful attention to detail. Where the existing shop front contributes to the character of the building or area or is listed, it should be maintained in a

good state of repair and refurbished rather than replaced. More recent shop fronts can also be of interest, designs incorporating Art Deco detailing are often of high quality, constructed from materials such as bronze or chrome, sometimes forming part of the design of an entire façade and these should be retained wherever possible. If a traditional shop front is to be fitted, it must be architecturally and historically accurate, old photographs and records from the library or archives can sometimes be very useful.



a) Early shopfront, Sherborne



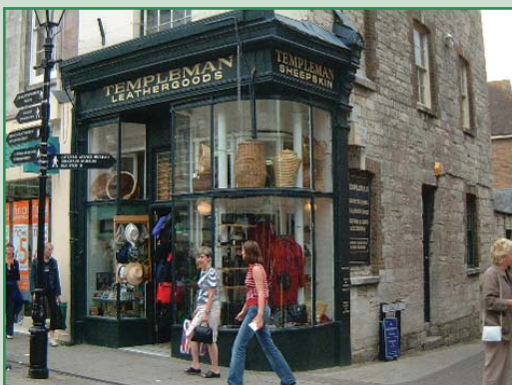
## 7. The Building



b) Georgian Shopfront, Beaminster



c) Regency shopfront, Bridport



d) Victorian shopfront, Dorchester



e) Edwardian Shopfront, Sherborne



f) Art Deco modern shopfront, Sherborne



g) Contemporary shopfront, Beaminster

7.16.3. Fascias should be kept in proportion to the shop front and placed well below first floor window sills. As a general principle, a depth of around 40 centimetres is normally about right, but this will depend upon the scale and proportions of the building to which it is applied. Overly deep fascias should be avoided. Excessive amounts of lettering and signs on the fascia or display windows which would clutter and block the shop front design and window displays should be avoided.

7.16.4. In circumstances where lettering is attached directly to the building (in the case of there being no shop front or fascia board) provision should be made for attaching and re-attaching signs or letters that does not interfere with the fabric of the building. This enables the name or style to be changed without causing irreparable damage to the building. It is sometimes useful to use a single fixed bar to attach letters to avoid damaging the wall surface. Signs may



## 7. The Building

not need special illumination if the level of local lighting is adequate. Any lighting should be discreet.

7.16.5. Corporate images can be adapted to fit in to an historic environment without compromising the basic design principles of good shop front and signage design. Modern glossy materials such as perspex, acrylic and plastic sheeting can appear garish and are normally unacceptable, especially in historic areas.

7.16.6. Where it is necessary to insert a cash dispenser into the front of a building, provided there is sufficient space available to ensure immediate privacy for users, it should be positioned where it is naturally overlooked. They should be designed to appear as an integral part of the building.



Cashpoint integrated into window design

### 7.17. Can I add security features (lighting, shutters, CCTV)?

7.17.1. In general, good design should avoid the need for additional security features. However, where security measures are justified, they should be designed so as to avoid being overly intrusive in the street scene. Any attachments such as CCTV, alarm boxes and external wires should be discreetly placed and removed without

harm to the fabric of the building if they become redundant.

7.17.2. Solid security shutters should be avoided as they have a dramatic deadening effect on the street scene, especially at night. Where security is a risk there are other ways of protecting the stock by using laminated glass or internal lattice grilles. The use of a stall riser can provide a greater degree of security and avoid the need for bollards or full-length shutters.

### 7.18. Do I need planning permission to make minor alterations to my house?

7.18.1. You can make certain types of minor changes without needing to apply for planning permission. These are called permitted development rights, and can vary, depending on whether you live in the Dorset AONB, a Conservation Area, or if the property is a Listed Building or a flat in which case permitted development rights might have been removed. Because the system is undergoing a review by the Government, and there are local variations, please contact the council to discuss your proposal before any work begins. We will be able to tell you if you need to apply for planning permission for all or part of the work. And regardless of whether you need permission, the issues raised in these guidelines should be of use in ensuring the end result is a good and durable design.

### 7.19. Who is responsible for on-going maintenance?

7.19.1. Although the upkeep of the exterior of buildings will impact on people's enjoyment of streets and spaces, this is the responsibility of the owner and cannot generally be enforced through the planning system.

## 8. Internal Layout

### 8.1. Things to consider

8.1.1. The internal layout of a building is not generally controlled through planning, however some issues do affect the external appearance and design of a building. Because the council wishes to encourage good practice (which may go beyond the minimum standards required), advice on internal layouts is contained in this chapter.

8.1.2. The next sections answer the following frequently asked questions:

- 8.2. Who do I need to involve?
- 8.3. Does it matter how I subdivide a house?
- 8.4. Does it matter how the rooms are distributed?
- 8.5. What else do I need to consider?

### 8.2. Who do I need to involve?

- 8.2.1. Because the design should ensure that the building is accessible to everyone, early consultation with disabled representatives is advised.
- 8.2.2. Information on building regulations may be obtained from the district council's Building Control Service.

### 8.3. Does it matter how I subdivide a house?

8.3.1. The subdivision of homes will have a bearing on the overall occupancy level and internal room sizes. Homes with small rooms may in the longer term be less sustainable. This is because they have limited scope to support the needs of growing families or people wishing to work from home. They may also be difficult to adapt to meet Lifetime Homes requirements. Whilst the council wishes to see a variety of home sizes, as a general principle the internal floor area should be at least the following size to

accommodate a certain number of bedrooms:

over 50 square metres internal floor area  
= 1 bedroom home

over 65 square metres internal floor area  
= 2 bedroom home

over 90 square metres internal floor area  
= 3 bedroom home

over 105 square metres internal floor area  
= 4 bedroom home

Consideration should be given to ensuring the main living rooms are placed where they may contribute to creating active and overlooked public areas, and ideally benefit from passive solar design (see section [7.7]).

- 8.3.2. Sufficient turning space should be provided in the lobby area at the main entrance, and within the main living areas, for wheelchair users. Living rooms should be a minimum of 3.6 metres by 4.2 metres<sup>67</sup>.
- 8.3.3. As stairlifts may need to be installed for disabled users, the design of the staircase should be carefully considered, with suitable width and bulkhead height to accommodate stairlifts, and space at the top and bottom for safe use. Staircases that are straight can be more readily have stairlifts fitted, and the stairlifts can be re-used in similar properties. Where possible, the opportunity to install a platform lift from a ground floor living space to a bedroom area should be encouraged, as in some cases a disabled or elderly person cannot regularly transfer on and off a stairlift.
- 8.3.4. Bathrooms should be designed to accommodate disabled users. They should be of sufficient size to allow for wheelchair transfers on to a bath aid, and

<sup>67</sup> current British Standard BS8300 minimum size

give carers space to attend to their needs.

- 8.3.5. Where possible, space should be provided at the main entrance point that can be used to store bicycles, or used for a pram, buggy, wheelchair or electric mobility scooter. Alternatively, provision may be made within the plot (see section [5.4]). Consideration will also need to be given to the storage of waste for recycling and disposal.

### 8.4. Does it matter how the rooms are distributed?

- 8.4.1. The distribution of different room types should take into account the need for privacy and daylight. The least private rooms (such as living rooms) are more appropriately placed at the front of the building, with more private rooms (such as bedrooms and bathrooms) that are less likely to contribute to overlooking better suited to the backs.
- 8.4.2. For properties without permanent, entrance level bedrooms, a space at entrance level that can be used as a bed-space temporarily should be included (and with good design this may also provide the home office credits in the code for sustainable homes<sup>68</sup>). Having a ground floor room with a toilet is a requirement of current Building Regulations.

### 8.5. What else do I need to consider?

- 8.5.1. Consideration should be given to how technologies that could potentially help disabled or other user be retro fitted into homes. For example, skirting ducts could be designed to allow new cabling to be installed with minimal disruption.

### 9.1. What we will consider

- 9.1.1. To ensure policies continue to be effective, we need to understand whether they work effectively, and consider what implications there may be in light of changes in overarching planning policy or, indeed, changes in building practice and technology, the state of the environment and the national and local economy.
- 9.1.2. The council produces an Annual Monitoring Report which reports on data and trends which may influence planning policy, and examines the need for review or alteration. The sustainability appraisal of these planning guidelines has identified a number of indicators to assist in monitoring its effectiveness and any significant adverse impacts.
- 9.1.3. This document gives more details for the policies in the West Dorset District Local Plan 2006. When new planning policy is introduced (the Core Strategy), the design guidelines will need to be reviewed to make sure they comply with the new policies. As a result, this document may be changed. If the Government does not make the anticipated changes to building regulations to help progress towards zero-carbon development, this document will also need updating.
- 9.1.4. Any proposes to change this document will be publicised and shown on [www.dorsetforyou.com/ldf/west](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/ldf/west).

<sup>68</sup> Category Ene 9 - Home Office.



## Appendix 1: Additional reading

The following is a list of documents and papers that provide useful background reading, and may have been footnoted in the main document.

- **Active Design**, Sport England, 2007, <http://www.sportengland.org/active-design-final.pdf>
- **Adapting to climate change impacts - a good practice guide for sustainable communities**, DEFRA and the Three Regions Climate Change Group, 2006, [http://www.defra.gov.uk/science/project\\_data/DocumentLibrary/GA01073/GA01073\\_4083\\_FRA.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/science/project_data/DocumentLibrary/GA01073/GA01073_4083_FRA.pdf)
- **Better Places to Live by Design: A Companion Guide to PPG3**, DCLG, 2001, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/betterplaces>
- **Biodiversity By Design, A Guide For Sustainable Communities**, Town and County Planning Association, 2004, <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/publications.asp>
- **Building for Life - Evaluating Housing Proposals Step by Step**, CABE, 2008, <http://www.buildingforlife.org/>
- **Building Health - Creating and Enhancing Places for Healthy, Active Lives**, National Heart Forum in partnership with Living Streets and CABE, 2007, [http://www.heartforum.org.uk/publications\\_nhfreportsarchive\\_pub\\_buildhealth.aspx](http://www.heartforum.org.uk/publications_nhfreportsarchive_pub_buildhealth.aspx)
- **Building Regulations (parts A - P)**, (date varies according to part), DCLG <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/1115314110382.html>
- **By Design, Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice**, CABE and DETR, 2000 <http://www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/1818.pdf>
- **Climate Change Adaption By Design**, A Guide For Sustainable Communities, Town and County Planning Association, 2007, <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/publications.asp>
- **Code for Sustainable Homes: Technical guide** (dates vary as reviewed yearly), DCLG, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/codeguide>
- **Dorset Rural Roads Protocol**, Dorset County Council, April 2008, <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/ruralroads>
- **Energy conservation in traditional buildings**, English Heritage, 2008, [http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk/live/content\\_pdfs/94.pdf](http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk/live/content_pdfs/94.pdf)
- **Green Guide to Specification**, BRE, online version [www.thegreenguide.org.uk](http://www.thegreenguide.org.uk).
- **Inclusive Mobility**, DfT, 2005, <http://www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/peti/inclusivemobility>
- **Lifetime Homes, 16 design standards developed in the 1990s by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation** Lifetime Homes Group, [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk) and [www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/2.asp](http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/2.asp)
- **Manual for Streets**, DfT, 2007, <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/>
- **Places, Homes, People - Policy Guidance - English Partnerships' Quality Standards**, English Partnerships, 2007, <http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/publications.htm#bestpractice>
- **Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development**, DCLG, 2005, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements/planningpolicystatements/pps1/>

## Appendix 1: Additional reading

- **Planning Policy Statement: Planning and climate change - supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1**, DCLG, 2007  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppsclimatechange>
- **Planning for Renewable Energy, A Companion Guide to PPS22**, ODPM 2004,  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningrenewable>
- **Safer Places - the Planning System and Crime Prevention**, ODPM and Home Office, 2004,  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/147627.pdf>
- **Secured by Design: Design Guides and Publications**, ACPO Crime Prevention Initiatives,  
<http://www.securedbydesign.com/guides/index.aspx>
- **Streets for All South West**, English Heritage, 2005, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.10766>
- **Sustainable design, climate change and the built environment**, CABI, 2007,  
<http://www.cabi.org.uk/AssetLibrary/10661.pdf>
- **Sustainable Energy By Design**, A TCPA 'By Design' Guide For Sustainable Communities, Town and County Planning Association, 2006, <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/publications.asp>
- **Urban Design Compendium 1: Urban Design Principles**, English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, 2000, <http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/qualityandinnovationpublications.htm>

## Appendix 2: The code for sustainable homes and breem

The Code for Sustainable Homes was first published in April 2007. From May 2008 all new homes being sold will have a code rating (or a nil-rated certificate in those circumstances where the code has not been built to a recognised code standard). It means that home builders can clearly demonstrate the sustainability performance of their homes, and differentiate themselves from poorer designs.

The code measures the sustainability of a home against nine design categories. Each category includes a number of performance targets, against which the home can score credits, which when a weighting factor is applied provide a percentage point score. These targets are more demanding than current Building Regulations or other legislation, but are proven to be technically feasible and deliverable.

Category	Performance targets	Mandatory	% Points
Energy and carbon emissions	Dwelling emission rate	Targets for each level	18.83
	Building fabric		2.51
	Internal lighting		2.51
	Drying space		1.26
	Energy labelled white goods		2.51
	External lighting		2.51
	Low or Zero Carbon technologies		2.51
	Cycle storage		2.51
	Home office		1.26
Water	Internal water use	Targets for each level	7.50
	External water use		1.50
Materials	Environmental impact	Basic level	4.50
	Responsibly sourced building elements		1.80
	Responsibly sourced finishing elements		0.90
Surface water run-off	Management of run-off	Basic level	1.10
	Flood risk		1.10
Waste	Storage of household waste	Basic level	3.66
	Construction waste management	Basic level	1.83
	Composting		0.91
Pollution	Global warming potential of insulants		0.70
	NOx emissions		2.10
Heath and wellbeing	Daylighting		3.50
	Sound insulation		4.67
	Private space		1.17
	Lifetime homes	Level 6 (reducing to 3)	4.67
Management	Home user guide		3.33
	Considerate constructors scheme		2.22
	Construction site impacts		2.22
	Security		2.22
Ecology	Ecological value of site		1.33
	Ecological enhancement		1.33
	Protection of ecological features		1.33
	Change in ecological value of site		5.33
	Building footprint		2.67



## Appendix 2: The code for sustainable homes and breeam

Subject to the mandatory requirements, properties are rated as follows:

- at least 36 percentage points = Code Level 1 (★)  
*10% more energy efficient and 20% more water efficient than most new homes*
- at least 48 percentage points = Code Level 2 (★★)
- at least 57 percentage points = Code Level 3 (★★★)  
*25% more energy efficient than most new homes*
- at least 68 percentage points = Code Level 4 (★★★★)
- at least 84 percentage points = Code Level 5 (★★★★★)
- at least 90 percentage points = Code Level 6 (★★★★★★)  
*carbon-zero (the net carbon emissions over the course of the year would be zero).*

The rating for each home is done by an independent, trained and accredited assessor. An initial rating is given at the design stage, and a post-completion check is carried out to confirm the code rating.

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method) sets the standard for best practice in sustainable design for non-residential buildings, and the BREEAM Ecohomes can be used to assess major alterations to homes. There are specific manuals for a range of building types, including offices, shops, schools and industrial premises. There is also a 'bespoke' manual for building types that do not fall within the categories covered.

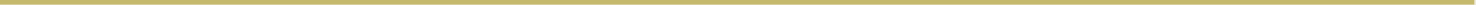
A BREEAM assessment is very similar to the Code for Sustainable Homes, in that credits are awarded in nine categories according to performance. These credits are then added together to produce a single overall score on a scale of Pass, Good, Very Good, Excellent and Outstanding. There are various mandatory requirements covering a range of themes, particularly for achieving a 'Very Good' rating or higher.

### **For further information**

Code: visit the DCLG website

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/buildingregulations/legislation/englandwales/codesustainable/> or email the helpdesk [csh@bre.co.uk](mailto:csh@bre.co.uk)

BREEAM: visit the website [www.breeam.org](http://www.breeam.org) or email the helpdesk [breeam@bre.co.uk](mailto:breeam@bre.co.uk).





West Dorset District Council  
Stratton House, 58/60 High West Street  
Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ

Tel: 01305 251010 Fax: 01305 251481  
Typetalk calls welcome

[www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com)

*Working for West Dorset*