Design and Planning Process
A Guide to Good Practice

Good urban design and well designed buildings and spaces are no longer luxuries. They are essentials, and are required by national planning policies and the local policies of Oldham and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Councils.

This Design and Planning Process: A Guide to Good Practice aims to assist all those involved in the process of designing and constructing buildings, streets and spaces to create good quality places, and compliments the series of Design Guides which has been produced jointly by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, and the Oldham Rochdale Partners in Action Housing Market Renewal. These guides, which are informed by planning policies in the two Borough's Unitary Development Plans (UDPs), include an overall Urban Design Guide that provides guidance for all forms of development throughout the two Boroughs.

"Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted." Planning Policy Statement 1

"While the planning system has a key role to play in delivering better design, the creation of successful places depends on the skills of designers and the vision and commitment of those who employ them." By Design

1   Introduction

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It is possible that other guidance will be produced in the future, and this will also have to be taken into consideration.

In May 2006, the government introduced changes to the planning application process. These included the requirement for Design and Access Statements to be submitted with all planning applications, with the exception of changes of use, engineering or mining operations, or individual householder applications. This requirement is reflected in Policy D1.1 and Policy BE/2 of the respective Oldham and Rochdale Adopted UDPs.

A Design and Access Statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way. A good Design and Access Statement therefore needs to be based on:

- a well considered design process, that integrates access issues from the start; and

- a sound approach to planning, that ensures that the proposals can be supported by planning policy and meet the submission requirements set out by local and national government.

This guide provides advice on good practice for both of these processes, as well as what should be in Design and Access Statements.

The guidance will need to be interpreted to the appropriate level of detail for each individual application – for example, technical consideration of highways, ecology and drainage may be much simpler for a small development of, say, six houses than for a large scale, mixed-use development. Similarly, the design options available for small sites are likely to be much fewer than for a large site, and so consideration of alternatives will be a very small part of the design process. Much of the guidance applies not only to developers and their architects producing schemes for sites, it will also be useful for planning officers producing site-specific Development Briefs.
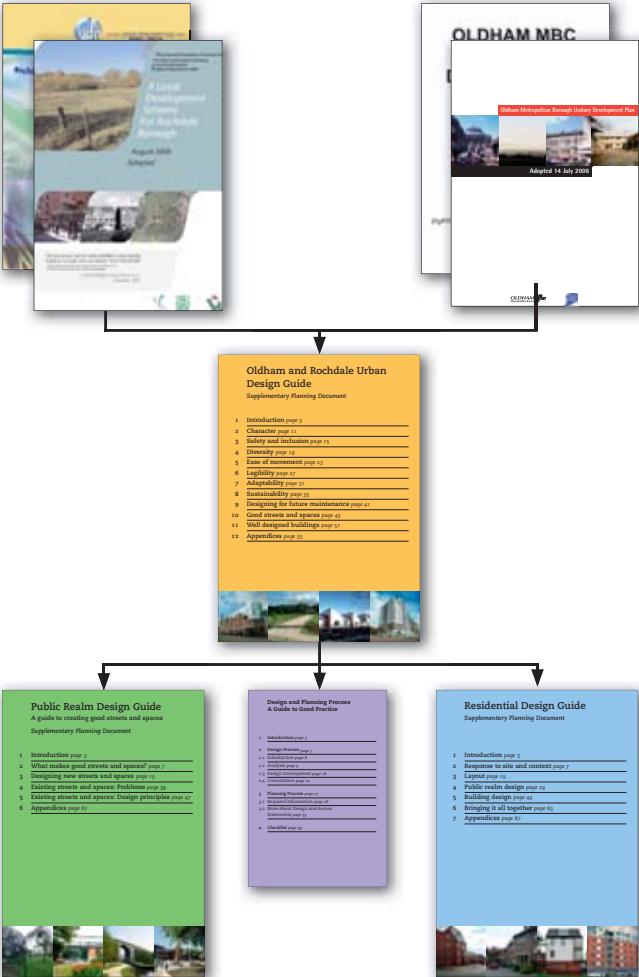
Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide
Supplementary Planning Document

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A Guide to Good Practice

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Diagram showing how the Design Guides relate to local planning policy.

This guide is divided into two sections:
Design Process and Planning Process.

The Design Process Section has three chapters which address the key stages of design:

- analysis of the site and its context;
- design development, including exploration of development options; and
- consultation.

The Planning Process section provides an overview of the different types of planning application and sets out:

- the information required with a planning application; and
- more detail about Design Statements.

This guide concludes with a checklist of both the Design and Planning Processes.

The key messages in this guidance are:

- developers should appoint a design team (including architects and landscape architects) with appropriate skills and experience to deliver quality design;
- develop and communicate a clear brief for the project;
- start by developing a good understanding of the site and its context, and make sure the proposed development responds to it; and
- begin discussions with the Local Planning Authority at an early stage and certainly well before submitting a planning application.

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2 Design Process

A well-considered design process is essential to developing good quality designs of buildings and spaces

2.1 Design Process: Introduction

Introduction

A well-considered design process is essential to developing good quality designs of buildings and spaces. The process will consist of a number of stages, including:

- analysis of the site and its context;
- design development, including exploration of development options; and
- consultation.

Analysis will, of course, come first. However, consultation often needs to be done in parallel, and not only after the design is finalised.

Design Process

Analysis

Development

Consultation

2.2 Design Process: Analysis

Analysis

Analysis should include:

- an urban design and landscape analysis of the site;
- an urban design and landscape analysis of the wider context of the site;
- an assessment of technical issues; and
- a review of planning policy affecting the site.

To illustrate a typical good practice approach to analysis, we use an imaginary inner-urban site as a case study along with illustrations of schemes from throughout England.

The imaginary site is located in an inner-urban area. It is surrounded by predominantly residential areas, ranging from turn of the century terraced housing to more recent cul-de-sac development. To the west is a busy main road, and some local facilities in the form of shops and a doctor's surgery are located here. There are several derelict industrial buildings on the site, none of which are of architectural importance. The site includes a number of mature trees and areas of scrub. Some unattractive yet well-used pedestrian routes connect across the site.
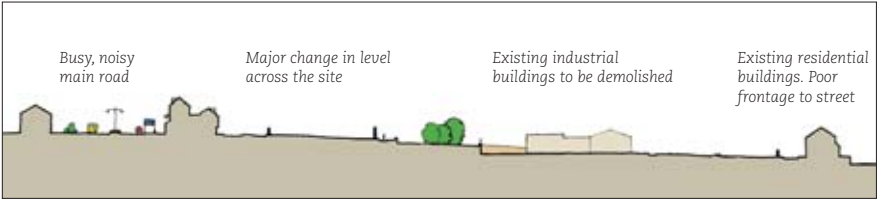
Site analysis plan

Vacant single
warehouse building

an route po...
ov... ...ng ... use

B...

Industrial buildings
form poor edge to
predominantly
residential street

...ith views
... yard. Poor
...dge to street

High brick wall

Existing mature
trees to be retained

...w pavement
...usy road.
...environment
...destrians

Section A-A

Run down 2-3
storey retail

Rough open ground

Existing building:
single storey brick

Existing pub

Derelict house

Key

predominantly 2 storey buildings

predominantly 3 & 4 storey buildings

important destination

existing buildings on site

existing open space

existing trees

site boundary

existing pedestrian desire line

noisy road: need to protect new
development from traffic noise

Busy, noisy
main road

Major change in level
across the site

Existing industrial
buildings to be demolished

Existing residential
buildings. Poor
frontage to street

An urban design analysis of the site should include:

- What happens at the edges of the site – *e.g. backs of existing houses, where privacy will need to be maintained; a busy street that needs a good frontage but will also need to minimise noise for the occupants of the new development; an open space, where there is an opportunity to improve safety by providing overlooking.*

- Topography – *does the site slope? How will this affect the type of development that can be located on it?*

- Micro-climate – *where will the sunny parts be? Which areas will be overshadowed and when? Is it exposed to the wind?*

- Landscape – *what trees and other greenery are on or immediately adjacent to the site? Are they of good quality? Can existing landscape be integrated into the new development?*

- Buildings – *are there existing buildings on the site? Will they be retained? If so, where are the windows and entrances, how high are they etc?*

- Views – *what are the opportunities for responding to views into and out of the site?*

- Access – *where can vehicles access the site? Are there additional linkage possibilities for cyclists and pedestrians?*

The site fronts onto a busy main road.

Existing pedestrian route across the site.

Existing buildings.

An analysis of the site's context should include:

- What are the local destinations (such as shops, schools and bus stops) that occupants of the new development will be wanting to get to? How can the new development be best linked to them to encourage walking and cycling?
- Are there facilities lacking from the local area that could be provided by the new development? These might include, for example, shops, a doctor's surgery, open space, or a type of housing not available in the area, such as apartments.
- Does the local area have a positive or a negative character? Or is it neither, being rather ordinary? What are the positive characteristics that could be reflected in the new development? These might relate to:
  - building form and massing;
  - vertical and horizontal rhythms of buildings;
  - building heights;
  - roof forms;
  - window and door openings; and
  - materials and detailed design.
- Where the proposed development is within a conservation area or affects the setting of a listed building, a more in-depth analysis of the context will be required.

The nearby school is a key destination.

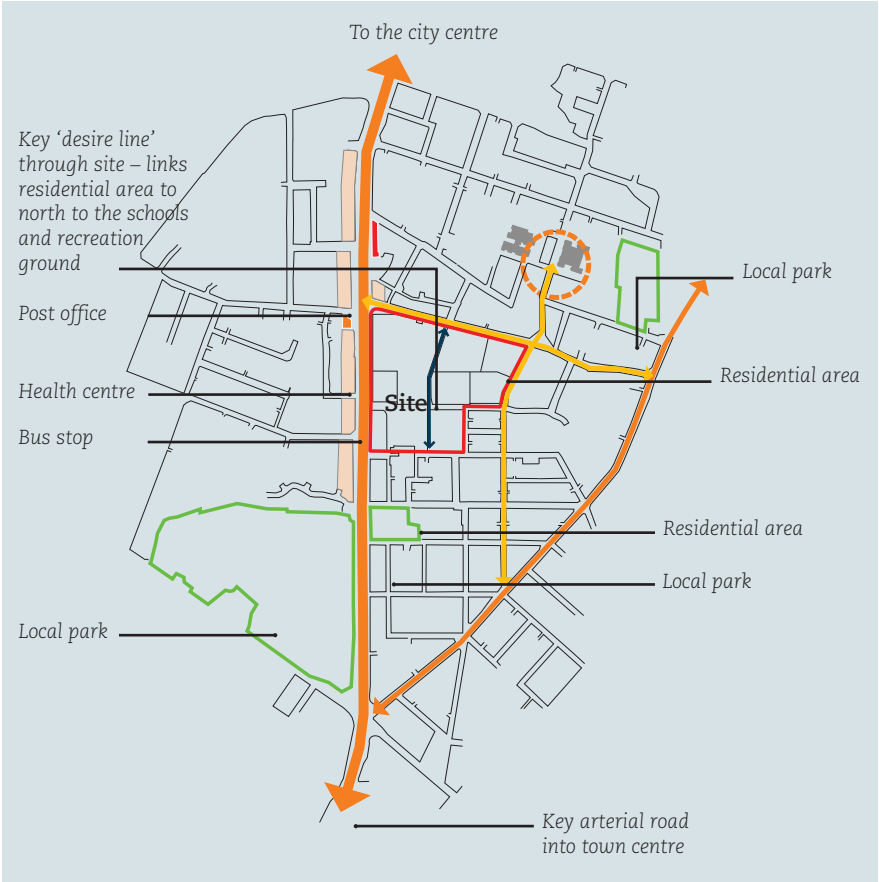*The local park acts as a 'breathing space' in an otherwise urban area.*

Local facilities are good, but could be reinforced.

Most of the local housing is low-quality terraces.

The site context

To the city centre

Key 'desire line' through site – links residential area to north to the schools and recreation ground

Post office

Health centre

Bus stop

Site

Local park

Local park

Local park

Local park

Residential area

Residential area

Key arterial road into town centre

Key

local shops		*Main roads*	
School		*Important local route*	
Focus of community activities		*Desire line through site linking towards schools*	
Neighbourhood parks			

Technical Issues

Sites vary in their complexity, so not all of the technical considerations listed opposite will affect every site. However, it is worth establishing at least an overview of the potential technical issues that may affect development at an early stage so that they can be built into the design process.

The level of detail to which these technical considerations are explored will depend on the nature of the site, the size of the development (i.e. is an Environmental Statement required?) and the type of planning permission that is being sought. For an outline planning application, a combination of desktop studies and basic site investigations may provide sufficient information. For detailed planning applications, more detailed site investigations will be needed. For reserved matters applications it is likely that many technical issues will have been resolved at the Outline Planning Application stage, and the focus will be on providing more detail on specific matters – e.g. detailed drainage and landscape considerations.

Are there areas of ecological importance on the site or adjacent to it? Can they be protected and integrated into the development?

What transport is available? Are improvements required to existing roads, public transport services or facilities to aid pedestrian and cycle movement?

Is there potential for contamination? Will special foundations be required? Are there likely to be areas of archaeological importance?

Are there sources of noise close to the site? How severe is the problem? Can the problem be overcome? How?

Key technical issues

- Highways – *where will vehicular access to the site be provided? How can road safety be enhanced? Are the sight lines satisfactory? Will junction improvements be required? Is a secondary emergency access needed? Where will this be?*

- Transport – *what forms of transport will people use? Are there bus routes/ stops, railway stations or Metrolink stops close to the site? How frequent are public transport services in the area? Is there sufficient public transport capacity? Are improvements to provision of public transport services required? What cycle and pedestrian facilities exist? Are any improvements required?*

- Traffic – *what effect will the new development have on traffic? Do the existing roads and junctions have the capacity to take additional vehicles? Are there off-site improvements that need to be made to the highway as a result of the proposed development? What level of car parking should be provided?*

- Drainage – *how will surface water be dealt with? Will on site drainage features (such as attenuation ponds) be required?*

- Flooding – *is the development site within a flood plain? What measures need to be taken to reduce the risk of flooding?*

- Services – *are the services (gas, water, foul drainage, electricity, telecoms) in the local area adequate for the proposed development? If not, what improvements will be required?*

- Ecology – *is there valuable flora on the site? Could it be incorporated within the development? Is there any rare fauna on or adjacent to the site? Even sites within the inner-urban area can have ecological value.*

- Archaeology – *is there likely to be anything of archaeological importance on the site? Are detailed investigations necessary? A simple desk top study early in the design process can be invaluable in highlighting potential issues.*

- Ground conditions – *what's the potential for contamination? Have there been previous uses that may have polluted the site? What is the underlying geology? Will special foundations be needed?*

- Noise – *are there noise problems that may affect the site? (e.g. a busy railway line next to it). How severe is the problem? Can it be overcome through design – e.g. by avoiding openable windows onto the noise source.*

- Existing buildings – *are there existing buildings to be retained and refurbished? What is their structural condition? Are there party wall issues with buildings adjacent to the site?*

  These are common technical issues – there may well be others.

Planning Policy

A review of planning policy at an early stage can help avoid abortive work on schemes that would not be supported by planning policy. Development is expected to conform with:

- Local planning policy;
- Regional planning policy; and
- National planning policy.

Most relevant policy issues will be set out in the local policies of adopted Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) and new emerging policies. These should reflect National and Regional Planning Policy, but an analysis of National Planning Policy is also desirable as there may be new government policy guidelines not yet built into local planning policy.

Local Planning Authority Officers will be happy to discuss planning policy with developers at an early stage.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy is set out in a series of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) that relate to individual topics. These are gradually replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). They are easily downloaded from the Department for Communities and Local Government website, and the key documents in relation to design quality are:

- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, *which sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It should be read in conjunction with other national planning policies.*
- PPS 3 Housing, *which aims to promote more sustainable forms of development and make better use of previously developed land;*
- PPS 6: Planning for Town Centres, *which aims to promote the vitality and viability of town centres by encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment; and*
- PPG 15: *Planning and the Historic Environment, which provides guidance on policy in relation to listed buildings and conservation areas.*

Local Planning Policy

- Is the site allocated for a particular land use or form of development?
- Are there any site-specific designations affecting the site? For example, is it within the Green Belt or next to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?
- Is the site within a conservation area?
- Are there any listed buildings on or near the site?
- What policies affect the type of use proposed for the site – e.g. minimum densities for residential development / types of employment use / car parking?
- Are there other Supplementary Planning Documents, Area Action Plans, development briefs, masterplans or related documents prepared by the Council that affect the site and/or the type of development proposed?
- Are there other local documents pertinent to specific areas of the Boroughs?
  For example:
  – the Peak District National Park Authority Design Guide; and
  – the Rochdale Development Agency's Public Realm Handbook.

2.3 Design Process: Design Development

The process of developing a design will vary according to the nature of the site, and the type and complexity of the proposed development. However, there are some common stages to all design development:

- developing and communicating a clear brief;
- establishing a clear set of design principles and/or a development concept for the development; and
- developing and testing a design informed by the brief, site analysis, design principles and development concept.

Developing a Clear Brief

A good Brief for development is not created in one go, but evolves during the early stages of a project.

At the start, a Brief is likely to be written by the client for the project. The client may be a housing developer, an owner of a business looking to construct a new building, the Local Authority, a housing association and so on. The Brief will include:

- identification of the site;
- a description of the type of development required – e.g. an office building to house a certain number of workers, and the functions it needs to accommodate;
- a description of the desired quality and image – e.g. an office building that promotes a hi-tech image of a developing company, or traditional housing that reflects the historic character of the local area;
- targets for sustainability – e.g. Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5; and
- the budget for the project, and the timescale for completion.

The responsibility for developing the Brief should then normally rest with the design team. The team should work closely with the client and other stakeholders as appropriate to develop and refine the Brief. Initially, the development of the Brief will allow the team to respond to the site analysis, which may bring new issues to light that will inform the Brief. The Brief may well need to be revisited several times during the process of developing the design.

It is important that the Client agrees to and signs off the Brief at each stage that it is developed, so that there is clarity on what is intended.

Establishing Design Principles and Development Concept

Once a clear initial Brief has been established and the analysis of the site undertaken, a set of design principles can be set out to guide the design of the proposed development. These can be simply expressed as a series of bullet points, such as those for the imaginary site, below.

A development concept will take these principles and demonstrate how they could be applied to the site. There are many ways of communicating a development concept, but it is often useful to produce an annotated diagram as shown on page 22. Note that these do not show detailed designs, but instead set out spatially the broad principles that should inform designs for the site. This type of drawing is not only useful as part of the design process for developers, it can also be used by Local Authority officers in producing site-specific development briefs or action plans to guide future development.


Design Principles: an example for the imaginary site

- Character and density of development to reflect urban character of site context.
- New buildings to front onto existing streets, and to be located at the back edge of pavement. Buildings to be of similar scale to adjacent buildings.
- Land uses to be predominantly residential, with mixed-uses onto main road.
- Landmark buildings to be located to respond to key view lines into the site.
- Existing pedestrian routes across the site to be retained and integrated into the new development.
- Building fronts to overlook all routes and spaces to provide safety and security.
- New greenspace to be created on key routes incorporating existing trees.
- Privacy of housing to the north to be protected by retaining existing trees and backing new development onto this area.

These simple sketch options for mixed-use development of a brownfield site provide sufficient information to test its technical feasibility in terms of vehicular access and circulation, and to test its economic feasibility.
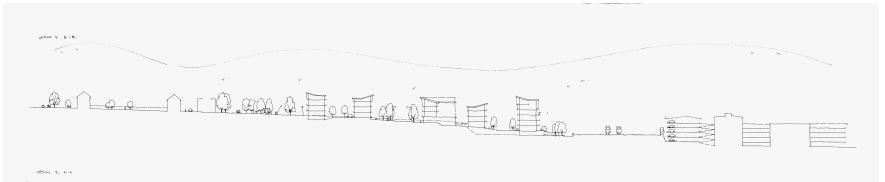
A very detailed development concept for a residential scheme on the edge of a village.

The preferred masterplan for the scheme after testing of options.

Developing and testing the design

There will always be several ways in which a site may be developed and still fulfil the design principles set out in the development concept. Designers will therefore need to explore sketch options to test out the ways in which the site may be developed. The testing will include questions such as:

- Does it reflect the design principles and development concept?
- Is it technically feasible?
- Does it stack up economically?
- How could it be improved?

The complexity and range of options will of course vary according to the proposed development and the nature of the site. For a small site, there may be very few alternatives. For a large, complex mixed-use development there may be a broad range of options that could all fulfil the design principles.

It can be useful to share the process of developing and testing options with local planning authority officers and, where appropriate, local people as part of a consultation process. In particular, consult highway officers and those who will be responsible for the maintenance of the scheme's public areas early in the design process.

The testing will enable a preferred way forward to be selected, and the design can then undergo a process of refinement as it is developed in more detail.
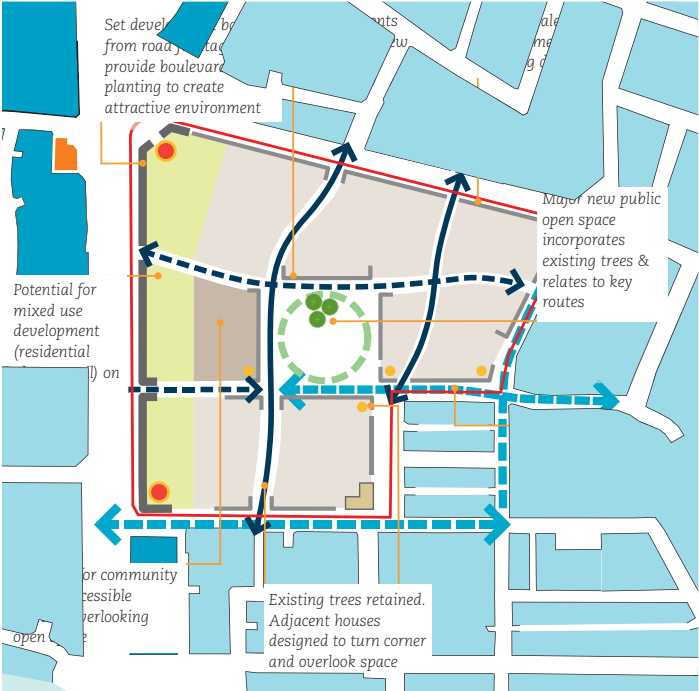

A broad development concept for a mixed-use scheme next to a railway station

The preferred masterplan for the scheme after testing of options.

Design concept

Set develop... b... ...nts ...ale from road f...tag... ...w provide boulevar... ...ng ... planting to create attractive environment

Major new public open space incorporates existing trees & relates to key routes

Potential for mixed use development (residential ...l) on

...r community ...cessible ...erlooking open s... ...e

Existing trees retained. Adjacent houses designed to turn corner and overlook space

A typical Design Concept diagram, where the design principles are applied to the site to set out a clear strategy for development.

Key

☐	Predominantly 2 storey buildings	●	Buildings designed to respond to prominent corner locations
☐	Predominantly 3 & 4 storey buildings		
☐	Potential mixed use development	◪	Opens space as new neighbourhood focus
☐	Potential community use	●	Existing trees retained
☐	New residential development	→	Existing routes integrated into development
▬	Strong frontage onto main road		
☐	Key building frontages	⇢	New routes link across site
●	Opportunity for distinctive building designed to respond to key position on main road	→	New north-south routes link into the wider area
		◪	Existing public house retained

An initial sketch scheme provides the basis for testing the design and checking the capacity of the site.

At the earlier stages of design development, it can be helpful to use images of existing development to communicate the type of place that the developer is intending to create.

2.4 Design Process: Consultation

Why consult?

There are several reasons to consult on development proposals during the design process and prior to submitting a planning application, including:

- checking with the local authority that you have taken all issues on board, have understood planning policy correctly and have an appropriate approach to highway design;
- building support from officers by involving them early in the design process – this helps officers understand the scheme thoroughly;
- letting local people know what is going on, so helping to reduce rumours about the scheme; and
- where appropriate, involving people who will be affected by the development in the design process can lead to a real sense of ownership.

With the Local Authority

Local Authorities are often under-resourced and it is not always easy for officers to find the time for pre-application discussions on potential applications. However, the local authorities realise that pre-application discussions improve the quality of applications, and can help to reduce work down the line following submission. Oldham and Rochdale MBCs therefore encourage potential applicants to discuss proposals with officers prior to submission. Depending on the complexity of the scheme, there may be just one pre-application discussion or a series of meetings.

Whatever the size of the application, it is useful for applicants to not just bring their proposals but 'tell the story' of the proposed development through site and contextual analysis; technical constraints; and development concept.

With other agencies and bodies

The Local Authority will be willing to provide details of bodies and agencies that should be consulted during the design stage for specialist advice. Examples include: Greater Manchester Police on designing out crime, and the

Greater Manchester Ecology, Geological and Archaeological Units, on wildlife and conservation issues. Issues concerning the maintenance of open space, buildings and landscaping should also be discussed with those agencies responsible for maintenance or who may need access to services.

With local people

The process of consulting with local people will vary according to the nature of the project. At one extreme, regeneration of a residential area must involve close consultation with the people living in the area; at the other, a small infill development should involve communication with neighbouring residents and businesses about what is proposed. The planning process will involve statutory consultation with neighbours, but developers are encouraged to speak to local people and groups during design and before the planning application is submitted.

Approaches to Consultation

Large scale projects such as regeneration schemes have their own special needs, and a good consultation process will normally be integrated with the design process itself. For example:

- Initial consultation with local people should form part of the 'analysis' stage of the project. What are the problems and opportunities facing the local area as seen through the eyes of local people? Involving people at an early stage can be very helpful, as it can help to identify problems that outsiders may not be aware of.

- For consultation to be meaningful, people need to have a genuine input into the design and decision-making process. Involving local people in looking at options for the area is one way of doing this, and this can form part of an 'options testing' stage.

- Requesting feedback on final draft designs prior to submission for planning helps to ensure that local people see the outcome of the consultation process, and have an opportunity to provide feedback.

Less intensive consultation may be more appropriate for schemes that do not affect people's lives so significantly. Again, consultation will need to be tailored to the specific situation.

Examples include:

- Where the local area is particularly sensitive (e.g. in a conservation area), it can be helpful to demonstrate to local people how the design responds to the character of the place. The design work on site and context analysis, development concept, and final designs should form a strong rationale for the development. This can be used in a leaflet or at an exhibition to invite local people to comment on a scheme prior to submission.

- For a small infill development, discussions with the occupants of neighbouring buildings about the nature of the development can help to allay concerns. Informally sharing information about the design prior to submission for planning permission is also useful.

3 Planning Process

A sound approach to planning, that ensures that the proposals can be supported by planning policy and meet the submission requirements set out by local and national government.

3.1 Planning Process: Required Information

What type of planning permission are you applying for?

There are essentially three types of planning application that most applicants come across:

- Outline planning applications, where the principles of development are established. Some elements of the design (such as means of access) may be determined at this stage, or they may be reserved for later.
- Detailed (or full) planning applications, where full details of the proposed development are submitted so that, for example, the form, massing and appearance of the proposed buildings are clearly set out.
- Reserved matters applications, where more detailed submissions are made for individual elements of a development following the grant of outline planning permission. For example, the buildings and landscape for a residential or business park development may not have been designed in detail at the outset, and may be submitted as a reserved matters application.

You may also need to submit applications for various other types of consent, including Listed Building Consent, Conservation Area Consent, and Advertising Consent. Planning Officers can provide advice on these.
The information that you submit with your planning application will vary according to the scale and complexity of the proposed development and the site conditions. Applicants may also be required to submit other documents with their applications, such as flood risk assessments and contaminated land surveys, depending on the circumstances. Planning authorities can advise on what is likely to be required.

Environmental Statements

For some types of development, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) may be required and an Environmental Statement (ES) submitted with the planning application. The ES is a document setting out the developer's own assessment of a project's likely environmental effects, and the actions proposed to mitigate adverse impacts.

A Transport Assessment may form part of the ES or may be provided as a separate document.

Developers are advised to consult the local planning authority well in advance of submitting an application where there is the possibility that a proposed development will require an environmental impact and/or transport assessment. This Guide to Good Practice does not give advice on the form and content of Environmental Statements.

Outline Planning Applications

Outline Planning Applications (OPAs) tend to relate to larger scale developments that will not be designed in detail in one go. Typically, these might be larger scale residential developments of, say, more than 150 houses, mixed-use regeneration projects, or major new employment areas.

It used to be that an outline planning application consisted simply of a red line drawn around the site along with a description of the development (e.g. 200 houses and open space to be developed). However, more detail is now required to at least set the broad parameters for the development – and this is set out in Circular 01/2006 Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System. This greater amount of detail:

- enables meaningful environmental impact assessments of proposed developments to be undertaken as potential impacts can be more clearly understood;
- provides the basis for better informed community involvement in the planning process; and
- enables the applicant to demonstrate that the proposals have been properly considered in the light of relevant policies and the site's constraints and opportunities.
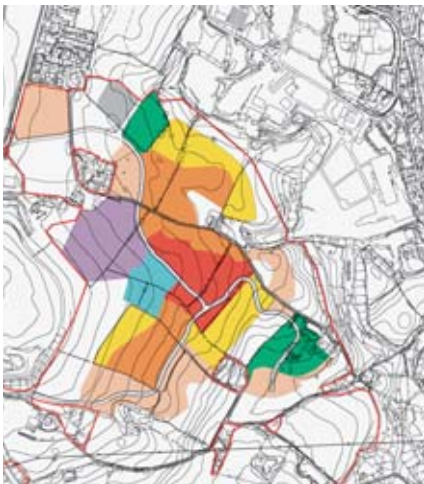
Setting the land use and density of the built development. This outline planning application for 800 homes at Lightmoor in Telford set the broad principles for the development through a series of simple plans.

The Illustrative Masterplan for Lightmoor shows how the development might look, but does not form part of the application itself.

Each outline planning application will be different, and developers should discuss the drawings and documents they propose submitting with planning officers before making a planning application. Typically, the following plans and reports would be submitted for a reasonably large scale, complex development:

- a site location plan at a scale of 1:2500 or 1:1250 as appropriate outlining the application site in red, and any other land owned or controlled by the applicant in blue (informally referred to as the 'red line plan');

- plan(s) setting out the key parameters to be fixed as part of the outline consent. These might include: land use and density; open space and landscape; access and circulation;

- a planning statement, setting out a description of the development and demonstrating how it meets with local, regional and national planning policies. The planning statement should also identify whether there are any departures from policy, and give reasons for these.

- a Design and Access Statement, describing the site and its context, and showing how the proposals relate to the local area; and identifying how inclusive access arrangements, including disabled access, will be incorporated. The Design and Access Statement and the planning statement may be combined into a single document;

- a Transport Assessment, where required, to indicate how the proposed development will impact on existing and future highway and public transport networks. It should set out any specific measures proposed to deal with movement in a sustainable manner.

- an Environmental Statement, where required, that assesses the potential impacts of the development proposals on a full range of environmental, ecological, socio-economic, historic and cultural factors.

Detailed Planning Applications

With detailed (or full) planning applications, the intention is that all the information needed to enable the planning authority to make a decision to grant or refuse permission is submitted in the one application.

The information formally required to be set out in the application form and in accompanying drawings and documents comprises:

- the specific uses proposed and the quantum of development in each use and in total (expressed as units or floorspace as relevant);
- the exact siting of buildings and open spaces within the site;
- the exact size of buildings (height, width and length) and how the accommodation within them is arranged;
- detailed access arrangements for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and vehicles onto the site from the public highway network. Details of the internal circulation, parking and servicing arrangements;
- details of the proposed design of the buildings: facades, roofs, doors and windows, architectural features, building materials and finishes; and
- details of the proposed design of open spaces and the public realm (streets, squares etc). This should include hard and soft landscape elements, street furniture, lighting, paving and surfacing materials.

Detailed planning applications must be accompanied by the necessary plans to clearly identify the above, and these would normally include:

- a 1:1250 site location plan outlining the application site in red, and any other land owned or controlled by the applicant in blue (informally referred to as the 'red line plan');
- a site layout plan, normally at 1:500 or 1:200;
- plans showing existing and proposed site levels, along with finished floor levels;
- floorplans for every storey of each building, usually at a scale of 1:100; and
- sections and elevations showing the proposed buildings in relation to each other and to the neighbouring context.

Detailed planning applications must clearly explain the design of buildings.
(© Wimpey West Midland / CHBC Architects)

As with Outline Planning Applications, detailed applications will normally have to be accompanied by supporting documents, including:

- a planning statement;
- a Design and Access Statement (which may be combined with the planning statement);
- a Transport Assessment; and
- an Environmental Statement.

Reserved Matters Applications

Reserved Matters applications will be required to provide similar information to detailed planning applications. However, they will need to:

- set the planning and Design and Access statements in the context of the outline planning consent to which the reserved matters application relates; and
- identify any conditions attached to the outline consent that are intended to be discharged through the submission of the reserved matters application.

An Environmental Assessment and Transport Assessment will have been submitted with the outline planning application and will not be required with the reserved matters application. However, where necessary, the planning statement accompanying the application should identify any issues in the Assessments that the application addresses.

All applications should be accompanied by:

- a brief covering letter from the applicant or the applicant's agent;
- the appropriate number of planning application forms, completed and signed;
- where appropriate, application forms for additional consents such as Listed Building consent;
- the relevant certificate relating to land ownership; and
- the planning application fee.

Planning officers will be happy to provide applicants with advice on what forms are required, the number of copies of drawings and documents that need to be submitted, and the planning application fee.

3.2 Planning Process: More about Design and Access Statements

What's the purpose of a Design and Access Statement?

Statements are documents that explain the thinking behind a planning application. They should show how the proposal has achieved good design, and explain how it relates to planning policy. This will help the local planning authority, councillors, neighbours, the public and yourself to fully understand the proposals.

Design and Access Statements are required for all planning applications, except for those involving only a change of use, engineering or mining operations, or individual householder applications. Failure to submit a Statement when one is required will mean that the application cannot be registered, and so officers cannot get on with the process of determining whether or not it should be granted planning permission.

What should be in it?

This Guide sets out a best practice example of how the process of design should be undertaken, which is essentially:

- analysing and understanding the site and its surroundings;
- setting out the design principles that will inform the development; and
- creating design solutions.

If this process is followed, it gives a good basis for a Design and Access Statement that clearly 'tells the story' of the application by:

- setting out the site and context appraisals;
- explaining how the constraints and opportunities of the site and its surroundings have influenced the design of the proposals;
- setting out the design concept and principles that have informed the design;
- describing the outcomes of any consultation undertaken and explaining how this has influenced the design;
- where relevant, illustrating the design options that have been explored and explaining why the preferred approach was chosen; and
- explaining how the planning application proposals meet the planning authority's policies for inclusive access, sustainable development and urban design.

The planning application proposals can be easily explained with reference to the application drawings, using plans, elevations, sections and sketches. Annotation of these drawings in the Design and Access Statement to explain key points can be very effective, and is recommended.

The analysis and principles can be simply explained through the use of diagrams, plans and photographs as demonstrated in this Guide.

CABE's guidance on Design and Access Statements gives useful advice on the access element of the Statement:

"Statements will need to cover two potential aspects of access: vehicular and transport links, and inclusive access. That is not to say they are separate, and the Statement should show that all access issues have been considered together. This section should explain the movement pattern around and through the site. It should show how everyone can use the place comfortably, safely and easily. Readers may be looking for a variety of things, for example, highway engineers may read this section to help them check the safety of the planned road access, and access officers may be looking to see if there is appropriate wheelchair access or facilities for people with visual impairments. The Statement shows how the design has considered all access issues together."

Most of CABE's publications can be downloaded free of charge from its website (www.cabe.org.uk).

What should it look like?

There is no standard format for a Design and Access Statement, as they vary according to the type and size of the scheme for which planning permission is being sought. However, good Design and Access Statements are more than just text – they also include photographs and plans of the site and surroundings, and illustrations of what is proposed. The use of colour will make the Statement easier for people to understand.

There is no standard length for a Design and Access Statement. The level of detail provided in the Statement should correspond to the scale and complexity of the development. For a small, straightforward scheme they might consist of fewer than 10 pages. For large-scale, very complex developments of several hundred houses, for example, the Design and Access Statement may be anywhere between 30 and 100 pages.

Some examples of typical pages from Design and Access Statements are shown below and overleaf, and these illustrate the balance between text and illustrations that is often required to adequately explain a scheme.

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1.4.19 Whilst the design of Lightmoor Village has been influenced by the significant site constraints, it has also been informed by a range of urban design principles. This section provides a summary of the broad principles that have informed the overall form and layout of the village at a strategic level. The District Design Codes and General Design Guidance provide more detailed urban design principles.

1.4.20 These other influences are the generic urban design principles that are identified in Section 1.2: Vision; and the design principles set out in Tibbalds TM2's study of Shropshire Villages that was carried out at the beginning of the detailed masterplanning stage.

GENERIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1.4.21 There are three key generic urban design principles influencing our approach to the strategic level of masterplanning. These three principles are interlinked, and are:

- creating a compact village, so that pedestrians can easily access the various facilities within the village;
- providing a central location for the main mixed use elements of the village (i.e. the primary school, shops, village hall, and learning centre) so that they are as equally accessible to all parts of the village as possible; and
- maximising residential densities so that a mixed-use centre can be sustained.

SHROPSHIRE VILLAGES STUDY

1.4.22 Tibbalds TM2's Shropshire Villages Study identifies examples of good urban design common to 12 villages and small towns close to Lightmoor. The villages were selected on the basis that they share the same basic urban structure as that proposed at Lightmoor: a settlement linked together by a single high street. Many of the urban design principles that come out of the study relate to the character of the High Streets, and the way in which they contribute to the identity of a place. These principles are not unique to Shropshire and can be found in many places throughout England. They may be grouped under two headings: progression and sense of arrival.

1.4.23 The way in which the character of a high street changes from outside the village towards the village centre has a significant effect on the identity of different parts of the village. A typical progression of a High Street is illustrated in the sketches, right, and this includes:

- Landscape dominates buildings on the edge of the village, and the character of the landscape is informal and rural.
- As one enters the village, buildings and landscape are mixed together more equally. Buildings are normally set back from

the street, and the character of landscape begins to change from rural to urban.

- Approaching closer to the village centre, the density of buildings increases with detached forms being replaced by terraces, and buildings being located closer to the street, increasing the sense of enclosure.
- Key transition points between areas of different character are often marked by an abrupt change, e.g. buildings step forward to form a 'pinch point'.
- The centre of the village is tightly enclosed by continuous building edges, and there is little soft landscape. The highest building densities are usually found in the centre.

1.4.24 In the villages with the most positive character, there is a clear sense of arrival at the heart of the settlement. Elements that contribute towards this sense of arrival include:

- a public square (sometimes no more than a widening of the street);
- a cluster of shops, offices and other uses generally not found elsewhere in the village;
- some taller buildings of three and sometimes four storeys, contrasting with smaller scale development of principally two storeys elsewhere in the village; and
- there is often a greater variety of building form found in the village centre with contrasting materials and different roof forms. Elsewhere in the village, built forms are more consistent.

1.4.25 These two sets of principles have helped to modify the overall form and layout of the village as determined by the site specific design influences. The result is the Development Concept Plan shown opposite.

Figure 19: Landscape dominating buildings on approach to village

Figure 150: Buildings forming 'pinch point' at start of village centre

Figure 171: High Street tightly enclosed by buildings in the village centre

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crestwood community school,   design and development brief

- A strategic pedestrian/cycle route to Eastleigh town centre follows Woodside Avenue to the west, providing access to the bus stops and the bridge link across Woodside Avenue, located to the south of the development site.

- The site overlooks playing fields on two sides and has views to the school and new sport/community facilities.

- Playing fields could produce occasional noise during the day.

- Mature trees and shrubs create strong landscape buffers to the northern and western and southern boundaries of the site. Plus there are a number of mature trees within the surplus site boundary.

- An existing open space adjoins the north eastern boundary of the site. A pedestrian footpath links the site to this open space.

2.7   summary of key site opportunities

2.7.1   The analysis of the site's constraints and its urban design characteristics has led to the identification of a number of key development opportunities, which are identified in the diagram opposite and include:

- Provision of a new vehicular access from Woodside Avenue;

- Creating a strong gateway feature to the site's access from Woodside Avenue by locating landmark buildings and forming a 'pinch-point';

Figure 2.14 - constraints & opportunities diagram

Legend	
Landmark features	Views to landmarks/spaces
Public open spaces within development	Clear view from development to playing fields
Landmark building frontage	Overlooking
Other frontages	Visibility splay at junction
Landscape edge and boundary allowing visual connection	Pedestrian links to existing network
	'Pinch-points' formed by built form

Opportunity to create a public space and landmark frontage visible through the trees from Woodside Avenue

Opportunity to create a landmark frontage that overlooks playing fields and is a strong feature visible from the greenway to the east

Opportunity to provide a new link to the existing pedestrian/cycle network

Opportunity to form gateway at entrance to development

Opportunity to introduce new landscape into a new public space

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4 Checklist

4 Checklist

These checklists provide a summary of the key stages of the design process and the main issues to consider in making a planning application. However, they are not exhaustive and should be tailored to the individual needs of your project.

Design Process Checklist

Have you:

- undertaken an urban design analysis of the site?
- carried out an assessment of the technical issues?
- carried out an analysis of the site's wider context?
- reviewed planning policy as it affects the site and the proposed development?
- developed a clear Brief?
- set out design principles to guide the development?
- established a clear development concept?
- tested alternative ways of meeting the design principles?
- developed and refined the preferred approach?
- undertaken a consultation process appropriate to the project?

Planning Process Checklist

Have you:

- met with planning officers prior to submitting the application?
- submitted the correct type and number of application forms and certificates?
- submitted the correct number of drawings that set out the scheme to an appropriate level of detail?
- submitted relevant supporting documentation, which must include a Design and Access Statement?
- provided the correct application fee?

If you would like to receive this information in another format, such as large print, Braille, audio or alternative languages, please call Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council on 0161 770 4151, 1672 or 1670, or Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council on 01706 924369.