

5 DESIGN & STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

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Design Facts:

- o Greater emphasis is being placed on good design by Government.
- o Promotion of Village Design Statements to be carried out by Parish Councils.

Introduction

5.1 The Island has a unique character both in terms of the built environment and the countryside and landscape in which development is set. For the purposes of this section design relates to the built environment, whether that be in towns and villages or more isolated developments, such as farm houses and scattered rural buildings. Issues relating to the landscape and countryside in general, are covered in the Countryside Section.

5.2 The Island as a whole has a distinctly rural character within which settlements have developed and grown over hundreds of years. Many towns and villages were originally founded on farming and fishing, but the most dramatic growth occurred during the Victorian era, leading to the development of coastal resorts such as Ryde, Shanklin and Ventnor as well as the more industrial based towns of Newport and Cowes. The legacy of the Victorians remains to this day.

5.3 More recently, development has been shaped by the need to accommodate the motor car as well as the trend for the standardisation of design and construction

methods on housing and industrial estates. This has too often produced bland suburban development and poorly designed buildings. This is not a problem purely associated with the Island as there has been a laissez-faire attitude to planning in general and design in particular, resulting in developers, planners and Government paying too little attention to the appearance of buildings.

5.4 Design, however, is now firmly back on the agenda as planning guidance has changed and developers start to see the advantages of well-designed and attractive buildings which are easier to sell or let. The revised PPGL places design as one of three themes which underpin the government's approach to the planning system. New buildings have an effect on the character of an area and their impact is a matter of proper public interest. Good design should be encouraged everywhere and poor designs should be rejected, with reasons supported by clear plan policies.

5.5 The Countryside Commission has recently produced a document called Design in the Countryside which provides solid principles for considering development

proposals in rural locations and is endorsed in the revised PPG7. This includes Village Design Statements which the Council is encouraging Parish Councils to prepare, and a Countryside Design Summary, which is produced by the Local Authority. The Council is also carrying out Conservation Area assessments which will identify the unique character of those areas so that the general principles above can be applied consistently.

5.6 The protection and enhancement of the built heritage are important aspects of the UDP. Heritage tells a story about the town or village and the Island in general. It provides continuity and reference points for future development and identifies what may be unique about the character of an area.

5.7 Design problems remain, particularly the need to resolve how the motor car and

Design in the Countryside

Our landscapes are precious and all too easily compromised by insensitive development, both in design and setting. Landscapes are dynamic systems, but change has accelerated over the last 50 years, many beyond planning controls. Development has contributed to this, often not through quantity but by its quality.

Government guidance, through PPG7, encourages the production of Countryside Design Summaries and Village Design Statements, as the techniques which seek to promote good design in rural areas.

A countryside design summary is produced by the local authority, and looks at what makes our Island landscapes special and distinctive. It helps resolve ways of integrating new development into rural landscapes by respecting local character.

Village Design Statements are produced by local communities, and take this overall guidance to a village scale. Settlements possess, through their evolution, scale, architecture and materials, individual characteristics. VDS identify elements which can help retain this individuality, and ensures new developments are in keeping with local character.

other modern requirements can be accommodated within the townscape. While new development in the countryside is being discouraged, there will be further requirements for redevelopment and infilling which will require stronger design guidance.

5.8 The aim, therefore, should be to protect the best of our existing environment whilst allowing change to take place in a sensitive and constructive manner. Design policies should therefore ensure that development promotes quality through the development process, so that buildings are attractive to users and the community as a whole and they contribute positively to the locality.

5.9 This section looks at overall standards of design, but does not include requirements for the layout or design of internal spaces of individual building designs. With the exception of Listed Buildings the appearance and ergonomics of internal layouts is largely a matter for the property owner, the developer, the market and the application of building control standards. Higher standards are required for Listed Buildings and development within Conservation Areas and these are detailed in the Building Conservation Section.

5.10 As new buildings have a significant effect on the character and quality of an area, all development should be of a high standard

Objectives:

The objectives of this section are as follows:

- o to encourage quality design in the built environment;
- o to promote and enhance the character of the Island's towns, villages and countryside;

- o to encourage the use of traditional Island materials;
- o to promote landscaping as part of development proposals.

Standards of Design

D1 Development will be permitted only where it maintains, or wherever possible, enhances the quality and character of the built environment. Planning applications will be expected to show a good quality of design and should conform with the following criteria:

- a respect the visual integrity of the site and the distinctiveness of the surrounding area;
- b be sympathetic in scale, materials, form, siting, layout and detailing;
- c of a height, mass and density which is compatible with surrounding buildings and uses;
- d provide for safe, convenient access and circulation for the public, including the disabled;
- e provide adequate daylight, sunlight and open aspects to the development and adjoining uses;
- f respect historic street and footpath patterns;
- g do not constitute over development leading to cramped appearance and obtrusiveness but include appropriate spacing between properties;
- h do not detract from the reasonable use and enjoyment of adjoining buildings;
- i do not adversely affect the visual amenity of occupiers of the same building or site;
- j retain, maintain, enhance and/or create open spaces, views or other features which significantly contribute to the area.

of design. It should appear to be in context when viewed from the surrounding area and improve the quality of the existing environment. Good design can attract further investment, help promote sustainable development, and reinforce civic pride and sense of place. In applying the criteria in the above policy the Council will consider each

case on its merits, whilst seeking to encourage innovation and distinctive approaches to design, especially those which reflect the character of the particular area.

5.11 When examining whether development should be approved, the Council will take into consideration how that

Standards for Development Within the Site

D2 Development approved by the Council will be required to create an interesting and attractive environment within the site by:

- a achieving a high standard of design and relating well to adjacent buildings;
- b taking account of views into and out of the site;
- c where possible incorporating existing landscape features and retaining existing trees, woodland, hedgerows, ponds, streams and water features;
- d taking account of changes in levels or slopes;
- e incorporating adequate landscaping proposals.

development relates with existing features of the site. The development should relate well to existing land form and seek to incorporate levels or slopes into the design.

account of how the development will be perceived from within and from outside the site.

5.12 Existing landscaping features may well be retained, giving the development a continuing relationship to the sites history and providing amenity or character to the final scheme. Proposals should respect adjoining or nearby buildings and take

5.13 The established local character of a town or village landscape can be easily harmed by the insensitive intrusion of buildings or structures which do not relate well to the design qualities of the area. Some towns and villages have been altered by incongruous or jarring designs which have

detracted from the settlement's distinctive character. In such areas, it may be considered appropriate to encourage new examples of good contemporary design to create, re-introduce or complement the traditional design characteristics of streets, open spaces and buildings and their relationship with each other. Context and

local identity are important in creating quality environments, and each settlement or site has its own distinctiveness and requirements

5.14 Landscaping schemes for new developments are a key element in ensuring a scheme is acceptable. The spaces between and around buildings and sites must be

Landscaping

D3 In appropriate cases, planning applications will be expected to be accompanied by appropriate landscaping as an integral part of the scheme and will be approved provided the following criteria are met:

- a the scheme reflects the existing features, character and locality;*
- b space has been allowed for a suitable landscape scheme to be implemented. The scheme should include details of hard and soft landscaping, natural features, the retention and management of trees, proposed changes to land drainage and levels as well as boundaries and parking areas;*
- c necessary provision is made for the future management and maintenance of the site.*

designed to the highest standards due to their importance both as a setting for new development and their impact on the wider area. In the past, the quality of some landscaping schemes has been inadequate because detailed aspects have not been included or incorporated at the planning application stage. To assist in achieving more appropriate solutions a landscape guidance document will be prepared detailing the type of landscaping acceptable and promoting a greater use of native Island species.

5.15 A thorough assessment of a potential development site will identify natural features worthy of retention which can be incorporated into a landscape scheme. Existing landscaping and trees may need to be reinstated and supplemented to achieve a more attractive local environment, whilst

failure to consider details of landscaping can often lead to water logging and other side effects, particularly during construction. These can result in the damage or destruction of vegetation and wildlife.

5.16 Landscaping schemes carried out in conjunction with a development must include measures for the future maintenance and management of the site to ensure they do not lapse into neglect or disrepair and within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, particular attention should be given to the AONB Management Plan.

5.17 The spaces between and surrounding buildings and their treatment are as important as the buildings themselves, as they have a collective impact on the local environment. Walls, railings, paving, street furniture, trees,

External Building Works

D4 Planning applications which involve external works will be approved where they:

- a retain and repair existing boundary walls, railings and pavings unless replacement would achieve higher quality;*
- b locate and design new walls, railings, street furniture and surface materials which relate well to the character of the area;*
- c minimise damage to landscape, wildlife, trees and other aspects worthy of preservation.*

all add to the visual interest and character of a particular area.

5.18 Consideration needs to be given to the existing features of sites, particularly in towns or villages where the site size may

reduce the ability to produce landscaping schemes. This may be due to the complex or compact setting and layout of the buildings and adjoining sites. In many cases, the preservation of existing patterns of enclosure, or the use of traditional surface materials will

be required to maintain the character and visual interest of the town, village or buildings to which the proposal relates.

village streets provide interest and detail for shoppers and the general public alike, and form an important part of the overall street scene. Through sensitive design, new shop fronts, shop signs and associated features

5.19 Shop fronts in the Island's town and

Shop Fronts and Signs

D5 Planning applications for new shop fronts and/or shop signs will be expected to fulfil the following criteria:

- a** that they are of a high standard of design and relate to the architectural composition of the building;
- b** that they are in keeping with the scale and townscape of the street scene;
- c** that they will not result in the loss of a traditional shop front;
- d** that they use appropriate materials;
- e** that the fascia and projecting signs are appropriately positioned and located and illuminated with respect to the locality;
- f** that blinds are appropriately designed and retractable;
- g** that security shutters, where considered appropriate, are not visually intrusive and are fully perforated to enable a clear view of the shop window when closed;
- h** that level access for people with disabilities and people with young children is provided;
- i** that they will permit access to the upper floors.

The following criteria will also be applied when considering proposals in conservation areas:

- j** features of historic or architectural interest should be retained;
- k** the proposal should be historically accurate and reflect the traditional character;
- l** traditional materials and finishes should be used.

can upgrade the shopping environment and enhance the historic and architectural quality of the street. In common with other areas, the Island, over recent years, has encountered a proliferation of standardised styles; aluminium shop fronts, wet lock canopies and projecting signs which have often been detrimental to the visual appearance of the Island's High Streets. In future, greater emphasis will be given to the preservation and the introduction of period shop fronts and less intrusive signs and detailing. This will not preclude good modern design, where appropriate.

5.20 Some shop fronts and signage found in Conservation Areas are inappropriate and do not reflect the special character of the area. Traditional details, hanging signs and hand painted signage along with timber shop fronts are more appropriate and should be encouraged. The Council has published, and will update, its current shop front guidance, Design Guidance for High Street Facades, to encourage better design and more traditional character. Subsidies, grants or other funding from various sources will be sought to allow the upgrading of existing

shop fronts within townscape schemes and specific enhancement projects, for the wider benefit of the community. As with all development in Conservation Areas, there is a need to preserve or enhance all the aspects of an area's character or appearance that define its particular special interest. Proposals will be treated on their merits, and in this respect the viability of the use of buildings will be treated alongside environmental factors as a material consideration.

5.21 People with disabilities and people with young children often find some shops difficult to access because of poor design. The Council is determined to ensure such fundamental barriers to movement are removed when new shop fronts are installed, and the provision of level access to shops is particularly important in achieving this aim.

Advertisements in Defined Settlements

D6 Planning applications for external advertisements within defined settlements will only be approved where they:

- a are of a high standard of design;*
- b relate well to the building on which they are fitted;*
- c are in keeping with and conserve the surrounding street scene;*
- d are located so as not to cause or create a safety hazard.*

5.22 The proliferation of advertisements and pressure to increase their size and visibility, can detract from the amenity of an area. It is desirable to avoid unnecessary clutter and confusion in what may already be a busy street scene, and to ensure signs do not obscure or intrude into other features of the environment, such as open spaces. Bright and distracting advertisements can

also endanger safety by, for example, confusing drivers at traffic signals or pedestrian crossings. The Council's detailed requirements are contained within supplementary planning guidance including Design Guidelines for High Street Facades. These will be updated as and when necessary.

Advertisements in the Countryside

D7 Outside the defined settlements the display of advertisements will only be approved where they are located on, or directly adjacent to, the premises to which the advertisement relates, or where they provide advance directions or warnings in the interest of public safety and:

- a they are appropriate and sympathetic to the surrounding area;*
- b they do not detract from the visual amenity of the area;*
- c they do not have an unacceptable impact on landscape and nature conservation interests;*
- d they are constructed of traditional materials and are of appropriate size and colour;*
- e that outside of street lit areas, they are not illuminated.*

5.23 All outdoor advertisements affect the appearance of the landscape and countryside. Most areas of the Island, outside of the principal town centres, fall within an Area of Special Control, under the Control of Advertisement Regulations. The above designation covers some 95% of the Island. The designation was made in 1951, under an Areas of Special Control order, by the Local Planning Authority, and approved by the Secretary of State, in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 1992. Where an area is in force, the local planning authority should consider, at least once every five years, whether it should be revoked and modified. Any changes or modifications that are then required have to be undertaken by a subsequent order, made by the Local Planning Authority and approved by the Secretary of State.

advertisement, together with the overall area of signage that can be erected within Areas of Special Control. Signs for shops, garages, holiday camps, pubs, rural businesses and events can be disruptive features, particularly in open countryside, AONB and Heritage Coast, although this could be partly solved by grouping or providing composite signs in village locations. Strong lighting can also be disruptive to nature conservation interests. Within the Areas of Special Control, the Council recognises the need for some business directional signs (in particular those for locations remote from the main transport routes), however, it wishes to keep these signs to a minimum and ensure their appearance is appropriate to the area. The intent of the policy is to restrict advertisements to the premises to which they relate. In this context premises means the building and associated land of the business in question. Traditional materials will normally comprise stained or painted wood, with painted letters.

5.24 The regulations control the type of advertisement, along with specific restrictions on the height of characters and symbols on the

5.25 The Council recognises the valuable

Telecommunications Equipment on Buildings

D8 Planning applications for satellite antennae and other telecommunications equipment on buildings will only be approved where they are installed so as to minimise the effect on the appearance of the building and/or the character and visual amenity of the local environment. Proposals will be resisted on:

- a visually prominent locations;*
- b Listed Buildings;*
- c sites where an over-proliferation of similar equipment would result.*

The favourable consideration of sites covered by categories (a) to (c) will only be given as a last resort in exceptional cases, where such a location is unavoidable for technical and operational reasons. Proposals for telecommunications equipment on listed buildings will be refused unless the Council is satisfied that proposals preserve or enhance the character of the building. Wherever possible the dual or communal use of facilities will be encouraged.

contribution to consumer choice of entertainment offered by satellite TV technology and would not wish to restrict Islanders access to it. However, the current size of dish for which planning permission is required can affect the quality of the streetscape and there is therefore a need to control their location, particularly on terraced properties. The Council will, in particular, encourage the communal use of equipment to minimise over proliferation.

5.26 The growth in the mobile phone network has also placed increased pressure on the Island's environment to accommodate transmitting and receiving equipment. With a number of different systems and pressures on rural locations as well as roof tops in town centres, the objective is to achieve the dual or communal use of masts to ensure the minimal impact of those structures whilst ensuring the quality of service provision.

5.27 In 1989 the Arts Council initiated its

Works of Art, Artefacts or Architectural Features

D9 Planning applications for major developments will be expected and encouraged to consider the need to include in the scheme, works of art, artefacts or features of architectural construction. These works would be approved provided they provide a positive contribution to the appearance of the scheme and the surrounding area.

Per Cent for Art campaign designed to encourage developers to voluntarily devote a percentage of their capital costs to the provision of new works of art in, on or around new buildings. Distinctive works of art can give a scheme or area a sense of place, can increase public pride and add interest to the street scene. Works of art can take many forms, from free-standing sculptures to murals and other artistic features. Each case will need to be considered on the relationship between the proposed work of art and the

building and/or area to which it relates. Particular importance will, however, be placed on major public and communal developments such as hospitals, libraries and offices which have a focal or prominent position. In cases where a work of art would provide a positive contribution to the surrounding area planning approval may be subject to conditions or Section 106 Agreements

5.28 The Council recognises its own

Street Furniture

D10 The Council, through planning applications and other means, will seek to ensure street furniture and signs are designed and located with due regard to the scale and character of the local streetscape or open space context. For example:

- a new street lamps should be sympathetic to their locality;*
- b direction signs should be well maintained;*

- c *post boxes, telephone kiosks, seating, bollards, litter bins and other street furniture should be well located to cause minimum disturbance to pedestrians, and in particular people with visual impairment, wheelchair users and push chairs;*
- d *seating should be well distributed in public areas to assist those with walking difficulties;*
- e *accompanying paving, surfaces and hard landscaping should be of appropriate design and materials.*

activities and those of statutory bodies can have a significant impact on the street scene although, often not requiring formal planning approval. Well located street furniture and equipment can greatly improve the appearance and functioning of an area. On the other hand, clutter on streets can often create difficulties for users. The Council

intends to continue its improvements to street furniture and thoroughfares (including resurfacing along main streets) and to cooperate with users to ensure the best location for all types of street furniture.

5.29 While the Council does not consider that urban design or development actually

Crime and Design

D11 Development proposals should be designed to reduce the opportunities for crime and should include measures to promote safe public access through areas and a high level of visibility into, out of and across both public and private areas.

promotes crime, careful design within and between development can reduce the opportunity for crime to go undetected. This may prove to be a deterrent. Good visibility over areas and adequate and appropriate lighting may have the biggest impact. The value of creating defensible private space and the need for both hard and soft landscaping within development layout also

needs to be taken into consideration. Secured by Design is a police initiative launched in 1989 which has the full backing of Chief Police Officers and the Home Office. The objective is to encourage the building industry to adopt recommended crime prevention guidelines.

5.30 When considering proposals for

Access for People with Disabilities to Buildings Open to the Public

D12 The granting of planning permission for new development, changes of use or alteration to buildings open to the public or used for office, educational, retail or transport purposes will be subject to the inclusion of appropriate provision, where practicable and reasonable, to meet the needs of people with disabilities, particularly in terms of access to and within buildings.

development of buildings to be used by the public, it is considered important that they should be truly accessible by as wide a spectrum of the public as possible, and that

particular groups should not be disadvantaged by inadequate access.

5.31 At a global level, the developed

Energy Conservation

D13 New development approved by the Council will be expected to conserve, or make efficient use of, energy resources by careful choice of location, layout, density, orientation, design and choice of materials.

countries are seeking to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the year 2000. While the promotion of renewable energy sources is one aspect of this policy, an equal or greater contribution could be made by making more efficient use of existing

resources. This may, for example, require the provision of adequate outdoor drying facilities (in residential development), rather than relying upon the installation of indoor mechanical drying facilities. While this policy relates to the Council's contribution to the

efficient use of energy, when considering new development, the Council will also encourage energy conservation through other

programmes such as Agenda 21.

5.32 The increased use of outdoor lighting

Light Spillage

D14 Planning applications for development which includes or requires external lighting, when approved, will be subject to conditions to ensure that:

- a** the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for the task;
- b** light spillage is minimised, particularly skyward;
- c** there will be no dazzling or distraction to drivers using nearby highways;
- d** the lighting is screened from view from coastal, estuarine and navigable waters;
- e** on the edge of settlements or in the countryside, the lighting is screened from view from neighbouring countryside;
- f** it is designed so as not to unreasonably affect neighbouring property.

within developments and along roads is increasing the amount of light spillage into surrounding areas and the night sky. Much of the spillage is a result of poorly designed, over-bright or misdirected light and is wasteful and intrusive. The light spillage can create safety problems or distractions for drivers, confusion for navigation at sea and light glow in the night sky to the detriment of astronomy. It is not suggested that safety or

security need be compromised by the use of better designed lighting or reduced dazzle, but the Council is seeking the proper consideration of the design and use of lighting within development. Guidance is provided in CPRE, British Astronomical Association and the Royal Fine Art Commissions publications.

