Draft Design guide

How to achieve quality in development for people, wildlife & the environment

NB Not all links are live in this draft document
1 Foreword

1.1 Design quality is vital to Cornwall’s planning agenda. There has never been a more critical time to create and take up opportunities to make new development better. Improving the quality of our places and buildings will help us to respond positively to climate change and the drive for our residents to lead healthier lives. We have a long history of Cornish ingenuity and creativity that can be continued to establish modern design solutions that enhance our environment, celebrate our heritage and culture and secure our resilience.

1.2 New development needs to establish good quality, empowering and distinctive places to live for all residents, both now and into the long term. Currently, over 3,000 homes are being delivered each year to meet the needs of Cornwall’s population but not all developments are reaching the high standards communities deserve. We need to find ways to make it possible to build high quality, attractive and efficient homes at a price that is affordable on a Cornish income.

1.3 Environmental growth is fundamental to boosting the quality of our lives and supporting Cornwall’s resilience. New development led by green infrastructure that provides the systems we rely on to live and thrive presents a considerable environmental growth opportunity.

1.4 Embedding great design practice involves change across all sectors and we have overhauled our guidance to provide a better way of communicating the components of good quality design and places. We are also reviewing the way that we specify and adopt highways and spaces. By clearly setting out what our standards are, we will create a level playing field for design in Cornwall.

1.5 We are not only committed to raising the bar but also improving engagement to achieve the best results. Good design responds to its context and can be subjective so I urge Cornwall’s residents, businesses and community groups to contribute by taking part in the preparation of this new Design Guide for Cornwall and to let developers and ourselves know what you make of individual building schemes whenever you have the opportunity.

Cllr Bob Egerton, Cornwall Council’s Portfolio Holder for Culture, Economy and Planning

This design guide has been produced as part of the Council’s involvement in the PERFECT Interreg Project
2 Executive summary

2.1 We want to improve the quality of our homes and surroundings in Cornwall for the benefit of residents and visitors as well as to enhance the distinctive aspects of our historic and natural environments. With the mounting pressures of climate change, this is more important and urgent than ever.

2.2 This Design Guide sets out 6 Priority Areas which each has a set of Outcomes we will be looking for in new developments. These Outcomes should guide the design process, masterplanning, detailed design and long-term stewardship of individual schemes.

2.3 Our 6 Priority Areas and 4 Golden Threads:

**Golden Threads**
- Environmental growth
- Health and wellbeing
- Inclusivity
- Resilience

**Effective Design Process**
We are looking for developers and their teams to thoroughly consider and reflect the context of a site from the earliest stages and to engage effectively with stakeholders and Cornwall Council throughout the design, planning and delivery stages to achieve the best solutions.

**Locally Distinctive**
We are looking for innovative designs that reflect the positive attributes of the site and its surroundings including the built and natural landscape. Schemes should celebrate Cornish heritage.

**Healthy, Green and Inclusive**
We are looking for enhanced networks of multifunctional green space to create opportunities for inclusive, active enjoyment of the public realm amongst space for food growing and nature that can also deliver sustainable drainage.

**Liveable Homes**
We are looking for homes that – indoors and out – offer the space and flexibility to accommodate healthy, comfortable and modern lifestyles and meet a household’s needs.

**Connected and Accessible**
We are looking for inclusive design and layouts that make methods of active travel and public transport use more attractive than private car journeys. For necessary vehicular parking, we are looking for spaces to be incorporated safely and sensitively.

**Climate Change and Community Resilience**
We are looking for new developments to not only reflect the pressures of climate change but avoid contributing to it. This includes using resources efficiently, ensuring durability and long term stewardship of public spaces.
3 Introduction

3.1 Vision

Cornwall’s developments will create welcoming, inclusive places with comfortable homes in surroundings that promote healthy lifestyles and foster green and resilient communities. Cornwall will have a built environment of a quality that complements, enhances and integrates with its outstanding and distinctive natural and historic environment. These fundamental attributes will stand the test of time, having been achieved through community engagement, best practice and a full appreciation of the local context.
3.2 **Introduction**

3.3 **Overview**

3.4 This document aims to support the Cornwall Local Plan by providing a comprehensive but non-prescriptive guide to delivering high quality places to live for Cornwall. The Cornwall Design Guide should be read alongside the National Planning Policy Framework, the Design: Process and Tools National Planning Practice Guidance, the National Design Guide, the Cornwall Local Plan, any design-related policies contained within a neighbourhood plan (if there is a neighbourhood plan) and any approved masterplans or design codes for a site.

3.5 Based on consultation, research and best practice, this Design Guide focusses on the processes as well as built outcomes needed to create and enhance the quality that everyone would like to see and experience. Underpinning our approach are four Golden Threads which are reflected throughout the document.

3.6 **Golden Threads**

3.7 **Environmental growth**

3.8 Environmental growth goes beyond the protection of a small proportion of our most important landscapes or biodiversity. It seeks to actively increase our environmental assets and makes better use of nature for drainage, food growing and creating great places to be. All new development must achieve biodiversity net gain and to ensure that all residents have access to good quality green spaces.

3.9 **Health and wellbeing**

3.10 The environment that we create shapes our experiences and lifestyle decisions. The design of new layouts and communities should include active, connected and healthy places to live with opportunities to grow our own food and to walk or cycle to work and local facilities.

3.11 **Inclusivity**

3.12 A successful community leads to nobody being unfairly disadvantaged. New places and buildings must work for everyone, meaning that people of all ages and abilities have the best chances of being included in society. Developments that are comfortable and safe places for children will also be great places for adults. Equally, additional measures to help meet the needs of those with limited movement, cognitive or sensory issues will also help to make life easier for all residents and visitors.

3.13 **Resilience**

3.14 Cornwall Council has recognised that our future living environment will be impacted by and can influence climate change. We must ensure that our natural and built environments are resilient to change and help to reduce our carbon footprint, both in terms of the physical fabric of buildings (including heating, lighting and ventilation) and the way that we use and access infrastructure and places.

3.15 **Appendix 1:** Schedule of Design Outcomes summarises the linkages to Cornwall Local Plan’s Strategic Policies, how our Golden Threads are manifested and links to useful standards.
3.16 **Role of the Cornwall Design Guide**

3.17 This new Design Guide has been informed by a range of sources and engagement responses. In particular, it is aligned with the National Design Guide and embeds key elements of Building for Life 12 and Building with Nature Standards. The document will sit alongside the new [Streetscape Design Guide](#) which has been developed in parallel by Highways colleagues to ensure an integrated approach through the design and adoptions process. There are a number of further project outcomes from the two design guides to provide supporting resources.
3.18 **The format of this document: Priority Areas, Topics and Outcomes**

3.19 Whilst the details of good design can be subjective, the layout, response to the surroundings, facilities, accessibility and feel of a place are all vital to fostering communities in which we want to live and work. This Design Guide is structured around six Priority Areas for development which each have a dedicated chapter:

3.20 **Priority Areas**

4. **Effective design process**
   *Context appraisals, design stages, documentation and effective engagement*

5. **Locally distinctive**
   *Responding to Cornish distinctiveness and heritage through innovative design*

6. **Connected and accessible**
   *Minimising the need for travel and sustainable modes*

7. **Healthy, green and inclusive**
   *Green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and healthy environments*

8. **Liveable homes**
   *Comfort, storage, adaptability and accessibility*

9. **Climate change and community resilience**
   *Future-proofing, resource efficiency, materials, layout and long-term stewardship*

3.21 Each Priority Area has a series of Topics with Outcomes that should serve as prompts for developers and designers. Some Outcomes are more appropriate for larger developments but most will have some relevance to schemes of all scales.

3.22 **Technical Guidance, Benchmark Tools and Resources**

3.23 Links are provided throughout this document where technical standards must be achieved, Cornwall Council encourages the application of established benchmark tools and additional resources are recommended which provide helpful advice to developers and designers. We also encourage great schemes to be put forward for recognition through awards to help celebrate the achievements and provide inspiration for future schemes. Some of the key examples are provided in the required standards pop up (top of this page).

3.24 **Updating this Design Guide**

3.25 This digital document is designed to be updatable at set intervals with the opportunity to include additional Priority Areas in the future.
4. Effective design process

4.1 Introduction

4.2 There are many factors to consider in designing a successful scheme, including the nature of the site itself, its surroundings, community needs and opinions, good design principles and local policies. These must sit in the context of viability, marketability and technical standards. To make sure that each of the considerations are given the attention they deserve at the right time, we consider certain stages should be followed, especially for larger and more complex schemes.

4.3 What’s included here:

4.4 This chapter sets out the stages that help to achieve good design that responds to the site, its context, the community, planning policies and professional critique. As part of this we provide advice on reflecting the design process in planning documentation which will help communicate the proposals and support a formal planning application:

**Process guide**
- Phase 1: Context appraisal
- Phase 2: Design
- Phase 3: Formal planning
  - Preparing a design and access statement
  - Preparing a heritage statement
- Phase 4: Delivery

**Community engagement and collaborative design**
- Engaged communities
- Design review and recognition
### Process guide

#### 4. Effective design process

4.5 **Process guide**

A summary of our approach, with links to further detailed guidance or requirements, is depicted to the right. The scale and complexity of the proposal will determine how each of the phases described will be applied. Even householder applicants are encouraged to bear these elements in mind as well as Outcome [FORM 3](#) and the other Outcomes that are relevant to their proposals.

4.7 Early and ongoing engagement with the community and Cornwall Council will help ensure the best outcomes and reduce the need to return to earlier phases.

### What we recommend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Community engagement</th>
<th>Design and implementation</th>
<th>Planning engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Context Appraisal</td>
<td>Pre-Application Community Engagement / local council engagement</td>
<td>Context Appraisal Pre-purchase assessment of site, surroundings and neighbourhood planning documents Inform viability and site price</td>
<td>Review planning policies and Cornwall Council guidance and consider early advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Design</td>
<td>Pre-Application Community Engagement / local council engagement / Community Liaison Panel / Events</td>
<td>Establish design principles and masterplan Detailed design stage</td>
<td>Pre-application advice service Planning Other teams e.g. Transport, Waste, Historic and Natural Environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Formal planning</td>
<td>Statutory consultation / local council engagement / Community Liaison Panel / Events</td>
<td>Planning application preparation and submission Submission of details to satisfy planning conditions Validation External and internal Cornwall Council consultations Formal decision-making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Delivery</td>
<td>Community Liaison Panel / local council engagement / Events / satisfaction surveys</td>
<td>Construction and adoptions Ensure implementation of standards Occupation / post-occupation Long term stewardship</td>
<td>NB material scheme amendments are likely to trigger earlier consultation and design stages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.8 **Phase 1: Context appraisal**

4.9 Prior to purchasing a possible development site it is important to appreciate its strengths, weaknesses and potential, taking into account the surroundings as well as the nature of the site itself. This will help you to ensure that you rule out unsuitable sites and pay an appropriate price for a site with potential so that the purchase cost reflects the assessments, works and mitigation measures etc that are likely to be required as well as the development opportunities.

4.10 It is important to maintain an open mind whilst the attributes of the site and the surroundings are investigated in order for the appraisal to be thorough and enable the most fitting solutions. In most situations, the general character of a potential development site and its vicinity can be represented within a short supporting document called a Context Appraisal. The Context Appraisal is critical to informing design options for sites with development potential.

4.11 The level of detail required in each Context Appraisal will depend on the scale of development and the sensitivity of the site or location. In all cases a visit(s) of site and surroundings will be necessary as well as a desktop review of existing information. The details required can usually be collated quite simply from a number of sources and the visit(s) and then presented using photographs, sketches and map extracts alongside simple explanatory text. For larger or more complex sites, the Context Appraisal may require more detailed studies and to reflect knowledge gained from engaging the local community on the significance of the site, any past or existing features, facilities, services and connections that are important.

4.12 Whenever a Design and Access Statement is required it must be underpinned by the Context Appraisal. Guidance on what to include in a Context Appraisal is set out via the links below:

- **Environmental**
- **Built form and materials**
- **Historic and local distinctiveness**
- **Functional and infrastructure**
- **Engagement**
- **Opportunities and constraints**

4.13 **Why understanding the context of any site is important:**

- Fully understanding the site and all of its opportunities and constraints ensures that the context can be respected, allowing an appreciation of how it interacts with the neighbouring settlement and to identify where opportunities exist to make the best use of land and to enhance the local area; and
- Fully understanding the constraints that exist on a site is vital for budgeting for how the site needs to be invested in. It also helps to reduce the risk of paying too much for the site.

4.14 **Context Appraisal: Opportunities and constraints**

4.15 Once the elements of the Context Appraisal set out at paragraph 4.15 have been completed it is important to conclude what the opportunities and constraints are that will need to be considered in the designing of the scheme. It is useful for these to be depicted illustratively as well as descriptively.
### 4.16 Details to inform the context appraisal and design outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Some design implications</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Priority area</th>
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</table>
| Context appraisal: Environmental | Habitat, hedges, trees, landscape character, land forms, topography, flood risk, drainage on and surrounding the site | The introduction of a requirement for biodiversity net gain will require the early understanding of habitat on site and how it can be retained and enhanced. This needs to be a consideration from the earliest stage of site selection.  
Mature landscaping is a real benefit to sites and can readily help new development blend into its context and create desirable residential areas. Cornish hedges, mature trees and other landscape features often have historical or cultural associations and bring distinctiveness and ecological benefits. The majority of 'major' development sites will require ecology surveys and these should be carried out as early as possible to inform the scale and type of development that a site is suitable for.  
Topography and land forms can present opportunities e.g. for views and should be incorporated into the design instead of relying on substantive engineering.  
Drainage is something that all development needs but it is often an afterthought. Designing drainage solutions early can mean that a more attractive and sustainable solution can be found | • Climate Change DPD  
• Landscape Characterisation  
• Ecology advice (will include revised biodiversity guidance) | Healthy, green and inclusive  
Climate change and community resilience  
Locally distinctive |

| Context appraisal: Built form and materials | Built form, materials, styles, forms and heights of existing buildings on and surrounding the site | All of our towns and villages have seen change over time, reflected in a mix of building types (differing in style, form, height and materials) and relationships in the form of gardens, streets and open spaces (differing in size, proportion, enclosure and materials) that provide their character. The relationships between buildings and spaces largely determine built character, even before architectural style is considered. Historically, many buildings were simply constructed from materials found on or near to the site, although as railways and shipping developed, materials choices started to increase through imports. Bear in mind that some existing buildings may be clearly uncomfortable within their surroundings and may not be the best place to start the design process. | • Distinctiveness Toolkit  
• Cornwall Stone and Materials Guide provides a useful digest of the occurrence of natural materials in Cornwall and suggests complementary materials, colours and finishes that are appropriate for each area. | Locally distinctive  
Liveable homes |
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<tr>
<td>Context appraisal: Historic and local distinctiveness</td>
<td>Historic buildings, boundaries, spaces and features on and surrounding the site</td>
<td>Development should be guided by an understanding of the character of historic and traditional forms of development, distinctiveness and space surrounding the site and reflections on the wider area that the development will take place in. This may include key views, landscapes and buildings that provide a tangible link to Cornish culture as well as ensuring that local place names and character are understood and form part of the development proposals. Particular attention should be paid to heritage assets, their distinctiveness and, where relevant, their setting – these will require a Heritage Statement.</td>
<td>• Distinctiveness Toolkit - Comprehensive guidance to help applicants understand and respond to Cornish distinctiveness</td>
<td>Locally distinctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context appraisal: Functional and infrastructure</td>
<td>How infrastructure and facilities are used in the area including existing activities and functions in the vicinity of the site: existing pattern of uses, footpaths, cycle paths, public transport connections, roads, employment, health, education and community facilities as well as open spaces on and surrounding the site</td>
<td>The most successful places include a mix of uses that help provide facilities and services for residents. Even where development is not of a scale that could provide a full mix of uses, residents will still want to access them in the local area. Understanding where facilities are located in relation to the site will help to plan accessible routes to them and address any identified shortfalls wherever possible. Ensuring that current and future residents will have opportunities to meet and socialise will help bond the new community.</td>
<td>• Interactive mapping • Active Travel Maps (main towns)</td>
<td>Connected and accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context appraisal: Engagement</td>
<td>Early engagement especially with the local community and Cornwall Council, neighbourhood planning documents, stakeholder responses to relevant previous proposals on or near the site</td>
<td>The views of the community will potentially cross-cut some or many of the other contextual considerations. A careful review of existing resources and early engagement feedback should be a starting point for understanding the vision and goals of the local community – where possible this should include potential new occupants as well as existing neighbours. Cornwall Council strongly encourages developers to seek pre-application advice from a very early stage, certainly before detailed designs are worked up, in order to help applicants prepare the best possible scheme.</td>
<td>• Pre-application advice • Pre-Application Community Engagement process • Neighbourhood Planning in Cornwall • Statement of Community Involvement</td>
<td>Engaged communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.17 **Phase 2: Design**

4.18 Development that respects and responds to its context will almost always be more appropriate and will also be easier to integrate with the surrounding area. It can also help to save money in development as working with the topography, retaining existing features and green infrastructure will help to reduce costs of engineering and replanting. The design work must therefore follow on directly and logically from the Context Appraisal. We strongly recommend the retention of the key architects and designers throughout the process, including discharging planning conditions and into the implementation stages to ensure that the design concept and standards are maintained.

4.19 **Initial design**

4.20 It is good practice to use the outcomes of the Context Appraisal to establish design principles for the amount, scale, layout, connections, public open space, landscaping/green corridors, biodiversity, drainage and appearance of proposals. Careful consideration should be given from this point onwards to the guidance in the following chapters of this document as well as being mindful of the requirements for the planning application, including the Design and access statement.

4.21 To achieve the optimal design for the site it is advisable to prepare and consult the community, stakeholders and Cornwall Council on a series of alternative initial masterplan proposals before selecting the best option to work up in more detail. Establishing the range of land uses, key access routes, a green infrastructure strategy and drainage requirements at this early stage is important as these features will normally require particular areas of the site and cannot be readily retrofitted. It may also be possible with some creative thinking to transform apparent constraints into celebrated features.

4.22 **Detailed design**

4.23 Developers and their design team should continue to use feedback from pre-application engagement with the community and Cornwall Council to draw up the details of the preferred masterplan. This stage will include refining the development zones and blocks, building heights, materials and landscaping approach, moving towards the details needed for a planning application. For larger or more complex schemes there should be opportunities for the local community to be engaged on the possibilities and timescales and further pre-application consultation with Cornwall Council is recommended.
4.24 **Phase 3: Formal planning**

4.25 For developments, a range of supporting documents will be required as part of a planning application. Please refer to the Council’s planning application guidance to determine what is expected. In many cases (see [When is a design and access statement required?](#)), a Design and Access Statement will be required which will need to be accompanied by a Heritage Statement where heritage assets may be affected. Some outline applications may benefit from an agreed design code where it is a large or complex site, depending on the extent to which matters are reserved.

4.26 The Design and Access Statement is the key opportunity to showcase the context, design work and community and Cornwall Council engagement that have led to the proposals to demonstrate how they achieve the best solution for the site and the community. The Design and Access Statement should therefore be the central piece for communicating the context and the scheme’s attributes (see [Preparing a design and access statement](#)).

4.27 A Heritage Statement will also be necessary where the application may positively or negatively impact a heritage asset, whether or not the asset is designated. This can be included as part of the Design and Access Statement (see [Preparing a heritage statement](#)).

4.28 Other planning application requirements can be identified through Cornwall Council’s validation guide. They include clear and informative drawings. Plans should be to scale, with architectural designs professionally drawn that are as easy as possible for professional and community stakeholders to interpret.

4.29 Although Cornwall Council will be undertaking statutory consultations it is important to include details of pre-applications consultations with the community and other stakeholders within the planning documentation to set out both the nature of the engagement and how this has shaped the proposals. Communications between the applicant or agent and Cornwall Council’s Planning and Sustainable Development Service should be maintained during the application process.

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4.30 **Preparing a Design and Access Statement**

4.31 Useful Design and Access Statements explain and justify the design and access principles and concepts on which a development proposal is based. This will use the Context Appraisal undertaken for the site at the beginning of the process and demonstrate how the challenges and opportunities have been responded to including community, stakeholder and Cornwall Council engagement.

4.32 The aim is to help ensure development proposals are based on a thoughtful design process and a sustainable approach to access.

4.33 A good Design and Access Statement will have three components:

- **Context Appraisal** – covering the site and its setting, consultation with the community and Cornwall Council, and key constraints and opportunities
- **Design** – covering the principles, amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance
- **Access** – covering inclusive access and connectivity to and within the site

4.34 We strongly advise applicants to use our [Design and access statement guidance and template](#) in preparing their design and access statement.
4.35 **Preparing a Heritage Statement**

4.36 Heritage Statements should comprise of a Statement of Significance and a Heritage Impact Assessment. The level of detail provided should be no more than is sufficient to understand the significance of the heritage assets involved and the potential impact of any proposals on that significance. Cornwall Council has developed online advice for different types of development.

- **Produce a statement of significance** – an initial stand-alone understanding of the site
  1. Identify the site, the heritage assets and their settings
  2. Assess heritage significance, including the distinctiveness of the identified assets and their settings, sensitivities and capacity for change irrespective of any known proposals.

- **Produce a heritage impact assessment**
  3. Summarise any proposals, assess impacts and harm to the significance – further detailed assessments may be required, as appropriate
  4. Design and Mitigation Strategy – show how the understanding gained from the various stages of assessment has informed the design and development process
    a. look for opportunities to avoid, minimise or mitigate impact
    b. look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance, create a more sustainable and interesting place
    c. justify any harmful impacts (in terms of sustainable development, the need for change, overriding benefits etc.)
    d. offset negative impacts through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical information

**Statement of significance + Heritage impact assessment = Heritage statement**
4.37 **Phase 4: Delivery**

4.38 Following the grant of planning permission it will be necessary to provide technical details to the Highways Department for those roads which are to be adopted as well as approval of details required under Building Regulations. Guidance on this is available in the Streetscape Design Guide, and the Adoptions Standards.

4.39 Consideration must also be given to ensuring the maintenance and long term stewardship of the public spaces and features of the development (see Climate change and community resilience).

4.40 It is advisable to maintain a close relationship with both Cornwall Council and the community even once approvals are in place to ensure that the approved scheme is successfully delivered and lived in (see Outcome ENGAGE 1).

4.41 **Community engagement and collaborative design**

4.42 The Outcomes in this Design Guide provide key ingredients for good design but are deliberately not prescriptive in order to allow opportunities for collaborative and innovative design involving both communities and Cornwall Council. This can be best achieved through meaningful, accessible and ongoing engagement from the earliest stage through to when the buildings have been completed and occupied.

4.43 Although most people will agree on the main principles of what makes a good place to live, design is subjective and there will be multiple options. The best and most innovative schemes respond positively to the nuances of local context, lifestyle patterns and local needs. These can only be fully understood by collaborating with stakeholders, many of which will already have a long term relationship with the site or may soon be using the site for years to come whether as residents, employees or visitors. Thought should be given to who is likely to be affected by the development and therefore who the most appropriate consultees are for developers to engage with. For example, for most schemes many of the new residents have moved from within a short distance so some of the current neighbours may well become the new occupiers of a site.

4.44 Developers are strongly encouraged to engage early and be flexible to respond to the needs and views of the community and Cornwall Council. Established pre-application and design review processes are on offer to offer independent and positive design advice that support innovative proposals. Where consultation is at a late stage or not representative there is a risk that views may necessitate a return to earlier design stages.

4.45 **What’s included here?**

4.46 We set out conditions which we believe will help foster trust and dialogue amongst and between communities and built environment professionals, including those at Cornwall Council.
4.47 Advantages of engaged communities and creating the conditions for collaborative design

- Ensuring **locally distinctive design** by incorporating a localised flavour.
- Achieving **higher quality, more innovative solutions** by drawing on lived and professional experience.
- Responding to local needs and opinions should foster a sense of **ownership** amongst stakeholders.
- Incorporating **infrastructure that people are likely to use and value** as it is based on a clearer understanding of existing patterns and needs.
- Creating **more cared for communities** by improving a sense of community ownership and reducing resident turnover.
- **Strengthening relationships and bolstering** trust between developers, the planning authority and the community.
- Making the **design and decision-making process smoother** as it helps developers to get things right first time and reduce their risks.

4.48 What do we mean by this?

4.49 Community engagement on proposals needs to go beyond statutory consultation. Genuine involvement is proactive, early and ongoing through the design and development process. It should enable stakeholders to have a voice that will be heard and that can influence the nature of the development and detailed design.

4.50 We also recommend that Cornwall Council is engaged as early as possible and that the community, developers and other stakeholders take every opportunity to respond to consultations on planning policy and development proposals.

**Outcomes that should be considered**

**ENGAGE 1:** Engaged communities

**ENGAGE 2:** Design review and recognition
4.51 **Outcome ENGAGE 1: Engaged communities**

Engagement cannot be rushed. It must be programmed in alongside each design and development phase. The appropriateness of the following points will depend on the scale and nature of the scheme.

4.52 **What we expect:**

- Engagement must be inviting, accessible and in an interesting format(s). Multiple methods may be needed to reach different ages and parts of the community including harder to reach groups.
- Developers should seek to raise awareness of proposals and engage with all those include all those affected by the development. These are likely to include any existing and identified future occupants of the site, neighbouring residents and organisations, the local Cornwall councillor, the local council and the neighbourhood planning group if there is one present. For larger and more complex or innovative schemes this should include representatives of particular user groups such as disAbility Cornwall and schools.
- Consideration should be given to how best to reach stakeholders of different ages and with different interests and levels of understanding e.g. attending or holding a local event.
- Use of technology e.g. up to date website and phone apps and creative methods should be considered for engagement as well as more traditional surveys and workshops.
- Opportunities for stakeholders to discuss their views with each other are encouraged.
- There should be opportunities for the community to have their questions helpfully answered.
- Feedback received and how it is affecting the design must be accurately reported back to the stakeholders in a user-friendly format(s).
- Consider following Cornwall Council’s Pre-Application Community Engagement. This brings together the community, the Local Member, interested parties and developers in order to engage the community at the earliest possible stage
- Consider establishing a community liaison panel, a newsletter and an online / social media presence to maximise your reach.
- During the construction phase stakeholders should continue to be

The Cranbrook Healthy New Town Programme co-created these real-time graphic illustrations of community conversations capturing what it is like to live there now and aspirations for the future. Drawn by ICE Creates graphic scribes. For more information please see [https://www.healthycranbrook.co.uk/cranbrook-together/](https://www.healthycranbrook.co.uk/cranbrook-together/)
kept up to date. Opportunities such as information presented on hoardings and viewing points are encouraged.

- Engagement should continue through to the occupation and post-occupation stages. Post-occupation surveys should be undertaken to inform necessary amendments and future phases and schemes. Positive, long lasting relationships with the community are encouraged.

- Developers should encourage ways for the new residents to develop its own sense of community and social capacity. Building on what already exists in the vicinity and depending on the scale and nature of the development, this may include spaces for socialising, volunteering, roles for local businesses, co-organising events and helping to establish a governance structure which may also assist long term stewardship.
4.53 **Outcome ENGAGE 2: Design review and recognition**

4.54 We strongly encourage developers of complex or larger schemes to liaise with Cornwall Council as early as possible, continuing this in parallel with community engagement and to help developers think creatively about the advice provided in this document and best practice both locally and further afield. Not only do the processes offer opportunities to resolve any design difficulties but they also lend support to high quality and innovation.

4.55 **What we expect:**

- Request pre-application advice from Cornwall Council as soon as possible. Pre-application advice can be sought at different stages and multiple times throughout the design process.
- Engage Cornwall’s Design Review Panel (CDRP). CDRP operates independently from the development management function of the planning authority to peer assess proposals. Its purpose is to encourage design excellence and draws on a pool of external design expertise. It should be seen as a forum within which developers and their teams are able to test and refine ideas and is therefore best consulted within the pre-application period and will often be included in Planning Performance Agreements. CDRP does not have any statutory planning function but its guidance reports are a material consideration in our decision-making.
- Consider achieving Building for Life, Building with Nature and other established development benchmarking schemes. Where certifications are achieved this should be promoted as they are recognised to add value and help raise the bar.
- Celebrate and help promote high quality and innovative schemes by submitting them to competitions such as the Cornwall Sustainability Awards and the RIBA Awards.
5 Locally distinctive

5.1 Introduction

Cornwall is a distinctive place with its own culture and built and natural heritage and the Cornish people have the only national minority status within what is now England. Our exceptional landscape and unique industrial, rural and coastal heritage and natural environment are reflected in designations for the Cornwall and Tamar Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site for example.

**Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)**

AONBs benefit from the same level of protection as a national park, with AONB management plans forming a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and in development plan-making. Cornwall features two AONBs. The [Cornwall AONB](#) covers 12 areas with a diverse range of landscapes varying from the rugged uplands of Bodmin Moor and West Penwith to the tranquil estuaries of the Fal, Helford and the Fowey. The [Tamar Valley AONB](#) straddles the Devon and Cornwall border extending north from the broad estuary at Plymouth to the intricate, deeply incised river that meanders just below Launceston.

**World Heritage Site (WHS)**

WHSs are considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. The [Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS](#) covers 10 locations reflecting the contribution Cornwall and West Devon made to the industrial revolution in the rest of Britain and to the fundamental influence the area had on the mining world at large. Cornish technology embodied in engines, engine houses and mining equipment was exported around the world. The WHS Management Plan is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and in development plan-making and the WHS also benefits from its own adopted [Supplementary Planning Document](#) which sets out in detail why the WHS is important and how it is to be protected through the planning system.

5.2 Cornwall is a distinctive place with its own culture and built and natural heritage and the Cornish people have the only national minority status within what is now England. Our exceptional landscape and unique industrial, rural and coastal heritage and natural environment are reflected in designations for the Cornwall and Tamar Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site for example.

5.3 Much has been lost or disturbed through inappropriate or insensitive development that has either disregarded or been oblivious to the qualities that make Cornwall an especially distinctive home. To maintain Cornwall’s distinctiveness, development should contribute to the sense of place; it should respond to the local historical, cultural and landscape context and enhance and feel part of the existing settlement and landscape. This can include responding to both built and natural attributes, for instance reflecting construction methods, built forms, field patterns and landscapes. It may also include retaining or enhancing key views, landscapes and buildings that provide a tangible link to Cornish culture as well as ensuring that local place names and character are understood and form part of the development proposals.

5.4 Cornwall has always been a place of innovation, shaping places and buildings to fit our circumstances. Distinctiveness is about establishing a connection with the local landscape, materials and traditions of Cornwall, not about an adherence to ancient forms or imitating historic architecture. Furthermore contexts evolve over
time, along with community aspirations. Cornwall Council promotes innovation in development and a ‘new Cornish vernacular’ that establishes development of modern construction that fits the local climatic, natural, social and cultural landscapes. Early contact with Cornwall Council and the use of the Distinctiveness Guide are strongly encouraged to establish a response that is appropriate – we relish considered challenge!

“‘enhancing’ distinctiveness means ensuring that the circumstances of today’s communities are represented alongside what is inherited, not producing a pastiche”

(Cornwall Council’s Distinctiveness Toolkit)

5.5 Why local distinctiveness is important:

- Good buildings and spaces that resonate with place and setting tend to feel responsive, sensitive and relevant.
- Local people and communities more readily accept, value and development stronger affiliations and a sense of ownership of new developments that become part of a place, respect its unique character and identify with the built and natural environment.
- Places that resonate and fit within a community are more likely to be cared for and better maintained.
- Cohesive, integrated and well-designed places are highly desirable places to live, work and visit and attract more investment.
- Good quality development is an investment with buildings and spaces retaining their value and relevance over time.
- Retaining site features can reduce development costs

This Chapter is divided into three topics

Each topic provides a brief explanation of what we are trying to achieve and a series of outcomes that we will use to determine planning applications for new development.

- Landscape and natural heritage
- Building form and materials
- Heritage, culture and language
5.6 **Topic: Landscape and natural heritage**

5.7 Cornwall’s amazing diversity of scenery that ranges from moorland to beach to soaring cliffs and gently rolling pastures reflects the incredible diversity of the underlying geology, expressed in changes in landscape, materials used for buildings and enclosures, and the mining and industrial sites that have exploited the geological resource for centuries. Around 30% of Cornwall is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and there are numerous other national and local landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity designations. Cornwall also has a richly diverse historic landscape with exceptional archaeological complexes and a multitude of natural and engineered features that speak of a culture forged in the sometimes harsh natural environment.

5.8 Trees and hedges have an important role to play in the distinctiveness and sustainability of our places. Cornwall is a land of ancient trees and hedges and the remains of plant hunter introductions. An icon of the Cornish landscape is the Cornish hedge, with some traced back 3,500 years. Each part of Cornwall has its own distinctive style of hedge construction.

5.9 Cornwall has distinctive ways of living and working in a beautiful, varied and often rugged environment and topography. This includes winding and often steep valley forms, sheer cliffs and an extraordinary landscape. Flat land is in short supply and Cornish settlements have adapted to building on steep slopes and making the most of every last piece of land available. Modern development methods have the ability to significantly alter the shape of sites to create flat, open spaces. However, this often results in the creation of significant retaining structures and development that fights its context.

5.10 There are distinctively Cornish means of adapting to the natural environment that reflect the diverse topography and geology. Good Cornish development has always lived closely and respectfully with nature. Whilst there is no one form of development that can be called distinctly Cornish, as most are particular to their smaller part of Cornwall, it is partly the sensitive responses to the natural conditions – geology, topography, vegetation and climate – that makes Cornwall what it is. There is further guidance in Climate change and community resilience on how to continue traditions in light of a changing climate.

5.11 New developments must contribute to place and visual distinctiveness, with the aim of creating places where people feel a sense of belonging and pride in their neighbourhood. Making sure that a new development both forms a new community and becomes part of the wider community is key to delivering successful places and enhances cultural distinctiveness.
5.12 **Outcome LANDSCAPE 1: Embedding landscape and natural heritage**

5.13 Places and developments that are distinctively Cornish are developed in harmony with their surrounding landscape, responding positively to natural features and incorporating reflective aspects within open spaces, gardens and spaces between buildings.

5.14 **What we expect:**

- The design and layout of the development is a response to the surrounding landscape as recorded in the Context Appraisal (see [Effective design process](#)).
- Distinctive forms of the landscape, including geological and natural features are reflected in the layout and design of the site, particularly through the response to retention of characteristic green infrastructure and working sensitively with slopes (see Outcome [LANDSCAPE 3](#)).
- Existing landmarks and features within or on the edge of the site (trees, hedgebanks, lanes, footpaths for example) form an integral part of the scheme design to reinforce a sense of place. This should include retention of trees and native plants where possible (see [Healthy green and inclusive](#)).
- Design of green spaces provides interpretation of the surrounding landscape and wherever possible links directly to it.
- Creative landscape design, incorporating wildflower meadows and nectar rich plants for pollinators rather than closely mown grassland.
- Development responds to the climatic conditions of the site and its surroundings, such as using the form of the landscape to create shelter and protection for new buildings, green spaces and gardens.
5.15 **Outcome LANDSCAPE 2: Trees and hedges**

5.16 Trees and hedges should where possible be retained and celebrated within or near development for the cultural distinctiveness and benefit that they bring. We recommend developers engage historic landscape advisers to help understand the significance and potential of hedges and other historic features.

5.17 **What we expect:**

- Existing trees are retained on site, especially where they reflect a deliberately introduced landscape or natural feature of distinctiveness, high biodiversity or landscape value, and enhanced by further tree and understorey planting. Mature trees are retained and new plantings made to create succession (see Outcome [GREEN 5](#)).
- Cornish hedges (and other designated and non-designated historic assets) are retained in the layout unless it is demonstrated that they need to be partially removed for an overriding reason, such as the wider benefits of a particularly distinctive layout.
- New Cornish hedges reflect the form, use of local materials and design of hedges in the locality.

*New Cornish hedges defining property boundaries using locally distinctive stone (Coast, Perranporth)*
5.18 **Outcome LANDSCAPE 3: working with topography**

5.19 Topography should not be over-engineered to make it easier to build standard housing types and topography should not be the driver of layout.

5.20 **What we expect:**

- Landforms are typically retained and respected, and not engineered away, unless there is a clear advantage in terms of coherence of layout why they should be modified. Work with the existing topography of the site as much as possible to reduce the need for large scale cut and fill.

- Manage height differences between existing and proposed developments. Create successful transitions by relating new development heights to those of the immediate context and surrounding area.

- Ensure that height differences between individual plots within the site are minimised, using characteristic methods such as rows or terraces running along contours and stepped terraces running up and down slopes, split level housing and reducing the need for tall retaining structures including walls and gabions.

- Explore opportunities to recycle building materials within the development and avoid transporting building waste and spoil off site. Planting may also help mitigate the visual difference.
5.21 **Topic: Building form and materials**

5.22 Cornwall has a wide variety of building types and architectural styles. It can be difficult to identify what is traditionally Cornish or what is traditional to the immediate locality, but most successful developments use materials that are available locally e.g. stone, slate and rendered finishes. There is a huge variety of building forms across Cornwall, but a recurring feature is the efficient use of land and use of often dense forms in towns and villages. There is wide use of terraced forms to respond to and take advantage of sloping sites. In more rural areas, small huddles of buildings and farmsteads nestle into the landscape, creating a pattern of development that looks at home in the landscape.

5.23 Materials are often the most immediately distinctive features and have a key influence on the form and appearance of buildings. As building techniques have evolved materials are often less directly related to the form of the building (and may not even be structural), providing more opportunity to innovate. Cornish buildings tend to be simple in their use of materials and finishes, rarely using more than two or three different materials in one building. Traditional and contemporary forms should take their cue from this and reduce the palette of materials used to avoid visual clutter.

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**Examples of building form and materials adapting to local context within Cornwall (images courtesy of Treveth Development). This illustrates how house types may be adapted. The most appropriate design response will vary between each site and must reflect the Context Appraisal**
5.24 **Outcome FORM 1: Building form**

5.25 Good design draws on the positive elements of buildings over time (traditional and more modern), reflecting the forms of development in innovative ways. Conversion and extensions to traditional buildings should be sensitive to the existing building.

5.26 **What we expect:**

- Innovation draws from and reinterprets traditional and ancient forms of Cornish building, introducing exciting but appropriate modern forms into the built and natural environment.
- Buildings, forms and materials respond to the local landscape, materials, historic features, traditions and climatic conditions, creating places that are comfortable to live in and easier to maintain which fit within the natural, social and cultural landscape of Cornwall.
- Existing insensitive development must not set a precedent for what is locally distinctive or acceptable.
- Designs and densities reflect and respect the character of the surrounding area, in terms of urban grain, street patterns and widths, massing of buildings, building lines, landscape, styles, to help integrate new buildings.
- Where locally appropriate there is a sense of variety within a residential scheme e.g. through architecture materials and layout.
- Designs reflect the importance of topography and scale, using height to establish a sense of place and support greater densities where appropriate to the context.
- The proportions and details of buildings, doors and windows are sensitive to the context.
- Roofscapes, rooflines and roof structures such as chimneys, vents and dormers are carefully considered.
- Traditional buildings should inform but not dictate the predominant new building forms of Cornwall (including incorporaing terraced homes where appropriate), whilst meeting the needs of modern life and climate resilience (see Liveable homes and Climate change and community resilience chapters).
5.27 **Outcome FORM 2: Using the right materials**

5.28 Materials that fit in their local context should always be used wherever possible (see Outcome [RESOURCE 5]).

5.29 **What we expect:**

- Traditional or complementary materials are used across all buildings, including modern building types and forms.
- Understand the local geology and use materials or colour finishes that match or complement those used in the area.
- The use of materials responds to localised building detailing and techniques.
- A limited mix of building styles, materials and colours are included to foster cohesion. No more than three different external building materials per building is usually sufficient.
- Materials are carefully selected and used in the right place on buildings – for instance slate hanging faces prevailing winds and detailed to fit with local tradition e.g. wet-laid slate may be appropriate in conservation areas (see [Liveable homes] and [Climate change and community resilience] chapters).
- External fittings such as drainpipes, gutters and meter boxes should be considered in the detailed design so that they do not overtly distract from the architecture.
5.38 **Outcome FORM 3: Domestic details, extensions and alterations**

5.39 The detailed design of a new home, or a domestic extension or alteration should reflect any original buildings to be retained and those of their surroundings in terms of period, detailing and distinctive features where these contribute positively to the essence of the place. It should be informed by the Context appraisal (proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme) and follow the other relevant Outcomes in this Design Guide, especially those in the Locally distinctive and Liveable homes chapters. Extensions and other alterations that detract from or conflict with the proportions of the original building are unlikely to be approved.

5.40 **What we expect:**

- Designs should fit with the proportion or character of property and surrounding properties and create symmetry unless there is a good reason not to.

- Extensions should not dominate the existing building in shape or size. In general terms extensions should be smaller than the original house and should be narrower in width, shorter in depth and lower in height than the existing property to keep a coordinated overall look.

- The roof of an extension should complement the original house in design. The ridge and eaves should be lower than the original building and the roof should maintain the same pitch (see Outcome FORM 1). At this stage it is important to ensure that it is possible to ventilate the roof void once complete. Flat roofs unless designed appropriately to a high standard are unlikely to be approved.

- Side extensions should step back from the original dwelling’s front elevation and rooflines should also step down unless this is a logical way to visually join the extension. Rear extensions should not be overtly evident when viewed from the front of the house.

- Extensions should not impact on neighbouring properties. An extension behind a line drawn at an angle of 45 degrees from the centre line of your neighbour’s nearest ground floor window is less likely to affect them. Two storey extensions are more likely to cut out
neighbour’s light than a single storey one and should not normally be built on the boundary (see Outcome INTERNAL 3).

- Privacy should be maintained between properties using design or distance (see Outcome INTERNAL 3).
- The size, colour and texture of the materials used on an extension should match or complement the existing building. The transition of materials between the original building and extension needs to ensure it is not visually intrusive. The materials and construction details should be robust to withstand weathering and maintain its aesthetic appeal in the long term (see Outcome FORM 2).
- Fascias should generally sit flush with the external walls and roofs should not overhang. Do not introduce boxy fascias as part of an alteration unless they are a characteristic of the property.
- Set windows back from the external walls by at least 50mm. This creates a shadow line and a sense of solidity. Windows in slate hanging however, are generally flush with the façade. Avoid the use of fake styles; they are never convincing. PVCu should not be used and balconies should typically be avoided in older properties. For extensions and alterations: windows, balconies and doors should line up with and follow the detail and proportions of those on the original house, particularly on elevations to be viewed by the public; new homes should consider these aspects in relation to nearby properties.

**Basic principles for appropriate inclusion of dormers in new and existing properties**

- Dormers should be set in from the ridge, the eaves and the side of the property. The shape of the dormer should reflect the shape of the roof, avoiding flat roofs unless it is a genuine period detail. Dormers should be considerably smaller in scale than the main roof. Smaller, separate dormers are preferred over a single large dormer.
- Roof lights should be located on less prominent roofs wherever possible and be limited in size where they are on more visible roofs. The correct flashing should be used for slate roofs so that the roof lights sit in the roof, not perched on the surface.
- A porch should not conflict or compete with the other architectural features of the property. It should be modest in size, and reflect the design and shape of the main roof on the house. Avoid flat roofs for porches unless it is a genuine period detail.
- Garages and outbuildings should not compete with the main building in terms of footprint or height (see Outcome PARKING 2).
- External fittings such as drainpipes, gutters and meter boxes should be considered in the detailed design so that they do not overtly distract from the architecture (see Outcomes FORM 1 and FORM 2).
- Existing amenity space should be retained relative to the needs of likely future occupants of the property (for example, a family sized dwelling should have family sized garden and storage, see Outcome EXTERNAL 1).
- Opportunities to improve the sustainability of homes including through materials, appropriate renewable energy generation and rain water harvesting as part of alterations requiring planning permission are encouraged where there is no overriding visual impact (see Outcome RESOURCE 2).
- Property boundaries should follow the vernacular construction styles that are typical to the locality. Consideration also needs to be given to the highway verge outside the property which in rural areas needs to remain natural, avoid the unnecessary use of mounding, bollards and close cut grass (see Outcomes STREETS 2, TRAVEL 1, PARKING 2 and STEWARD 1).

**Example town and rural boundary treatments – the design for each property should be reflect the local context**
5.30 **Topic: Heritage, culture and language**

5.31 Cornwall’s Celtic language, Kernewek, is still visible every day, especially in the names of places and is increasingly audible as people take up the language and so extend pride in Cornwall’s history, culture and identity. In some parts of eastern Cornwall medieval English names are the locally distinctive equivalent of Cornish, and in some marginal areas that were settled late there are distinctive English names that reflect this stage in our history. Given the national minority status, there is added impetus to celebrating and extending use of Kernewek, for example through its use in the naming of new places, including settlements, streets and buildings, and by providing Cornish translations alongside historic English naming.

5.32 The Cornish have created many ways of relating to form and place, maintaining ancient (and more modern) customs, traditions, festivals and gatherings that relate to the form and mystery of the land and places within it. Integration of things that are meaningful to Cornish culture into new developments helps to promote pride and sense of identity. The opportunity for new development to include places where people can gather and interact, though conversation, entertainment or sport, as has been traditional in Cornish settlements. Continuing this will reduce social isolation amongst people of all ages and will have a significant positive effect on physical and mental health.

5.33 Development should always look to weave Cornish and more local identity into development through retaining existing Cornish names and providing new Cornish names, maintaining cultural traditions and recognising the cues provided by historic development and building types and forms.

> “Cultural distinctiveness is not static, and neither is it based in the past alone, but goes on developing as society changes and grows”

* (Cornwall Council’s Distinctiveness Toolkit)

5.34 Villages and towns evolve and change, but valued qualities and distinctive characteristics need to be retained and reinforced, even when there is significant growth and development. Historic buildings, boundaries and spaces, whether they are statutorily protected or not, should all be assessed carefully in site selection and scheme design to ensure that they are protected and enhanced. For the larger settlements, Cornwall Council has already completed work on Historic Characterisation and many settlements have Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans to aid understanding and sensitive development in historic places.

*Cornish (Celtic) language in place-names*
Outcome that should be considered in your design

HERITAGE 1: Celebrating Cornish heritage

5.35 Outcome HERITAGE 1: Celebrating Cornish heritage

5.36 New developments must enhance their historic context and character, adding further richness, diversity and quality, creating a dialogue with established places.

5.37 What we expect:

- Identify, protect and enhance key views and landmark buildings.
- Consider how the site is distinctive in terms of place names and associations and how this should be reflected in the form and layout of the development.
- Recognise and sustain distinctive forms of development and respond to local features highlighted as distinctive by local statements such as Neighbourhood Plans and raised through community engagement.

Interpretative board celebrating local history, Boscawen Park, Truro

Cornish street names incorporated into buildings on Delabole slate. For more information on street names at Nansledan please see https://nansledan.com/about/cornish-language/.
6 Connected and accessible

6.1 Background

6.2 Cornwall’s new neighbourhoods should be located and designed to ensure travel is minimised, movement on foot and by bike is an inviting and convenient option, and public transport is within walking distance. Residential streets must be inclusively and attractively designed to encourage social interaction and maximise biodiversity potential.

6.3 Footpaths, cycle paths, public transport potential, streets, and appropriate cycle and car parking are fundamental aspects of any masterplan. They all enable connections and the streets and paths help define the areas where buildings and open spaces will be placed. They also contribute substantially to the public realm including both its appearance and how it functions.

6.4 Getting the connections between places right is critical to the successful movement and inclusive integration of communities as well as safe and healthy lifestyles. It is extremely difficult to retrofit additional transport linkages within and adjoining a site once a development has been built so they must be carefully planned from the very beginning. Railways, streets and even paths are likely to outlive many of their accompanying buildings and may create a legacy that lasts hundreds of years which reinforces the need for futureproofing for foreseeable needs and offering adaptable spaces.

6.5 Neighbourhoods should be designed around existing or new communities, retail and service hubs; providing opportunities to cater for residents’ essential needs (such as food shopping or accessing a library or nursery), employment and social, cultural and leisure activities. Ideally, there should be a range of such functions within a 5 to 10 minute walk. Residents of a new neighbourhood should not have to travel by car to access essential services. A well designed neighbourhood should significantly reduce the need for long trips for day-to-day activities for its inhabitants. This will enable residents to have lifestyles with a lower carbon footprint, better physical and mental health, and greater opportunities for forming attachments with their local community.
6.6 **What’s included here?**

6.7 Travel infrastructure is much more than just steel and tarmac. Particularly for residential and high streets, travel planning must be focused on the human experience. Public transport stops, roads, paths and parking should respond to their surrounding uses, integrating with planned and existing development and responding to the needs of the community and environmental pressures. In new residential developments this means a close relationship between sustainable modes of travel, key destinations such as community facilities, green infrastructure and spaces for social interaction, all supported by a layout which is both permeable and legible. The Outcomes set out in this Priority Area are the factors that will help realise this approach.

6.8 **Why are connected and accessible places important?**

- Active travel promotes regular physical activity which is essential for good physical and mental health and provides opportunities for socialisation and more cohesive communities.
- Walkable neighbourhoods with easy access to facilities increases inclusivity and boosts life chances, bearing in mind that 17% of Cornwall’s households do not have a car.
- Reducing the prevalence of and dependence on cars creates more attractive, safer and cleaner environments which contribute less to the climate change emergency. It also frees up space for other uses and features such as green infrastructure.

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1 Cornwall Local Insight 2017, OSCI and Local Insight
6.10 **Topic: The right streets for the right places**

6.11 **What do we mean by this?**

6.12 Streets should be designed to respond to their setting and required function. The diagram below illustrates the types of roads that are needed according to their role and location.

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![Diagram: appropriate outcomes movement and place](image)

**Diagram:** Appropriate outcomes movement and place

- **Role of movement**
  - **Link Corridors**
  - **Activity Streets**
  - **Local Streets**
  - **Streets for People**

- **Role of place**
  - Important for movement/public transport routes/freight routes
  - Lots of activity/high streets/commercial
  - No or very little through-movement/people on foot/slow speed
  - The majority of streets/minimal through-movement/slow speeds

6.13 For residential streets this means prioritising the human experience over vehicular flow, providing enticing and user-friendly walking and cycling opportunities, and attractive spaces which people enjoy using. Developments should be permeable for active travel, whilst car traffic and parking should be limited to the minimum needed. Computer modelling software can help to establish an understanding of proposals’ future impacts on local travel networks and travel patterns to help developers select the best option.

6.14 Innovative layout solutions that prioritise non-vehicular movements and parking being positioned so that it does not impede other users or the attractiveness of the development are encouraged. This could include for example, certain streets being pedestrianised with parking being sensitively located away from heart of the development.

6.15 Ideally, residential developments will be car-free or partly car-free, with roads at the periphery of a neighbourhood and not structuring its internal layout. This model can allow for greater open space and green infrastructure, and safer and more attractive active travel alongside higher density residential development. Through traffic should definitely not be encouraged to use new residential areas.

6.16 The design of new streets must be inclusive, taking into account the needs of all occupiers and visitors including those at different life stages and those with disabilities. Consultation and a well-considered strategy is needed to address the needs of different user groups and potentially conflicting requirements for utilities, street furniture, trees and parking (see Outcomes ENGAGE 1 and ENGAGE 2).

6.17 High quality public spaces with well-placed street trees, street furniture, public art and signage are encouraged to help create opportunities to rest and socialise, to reinforce a sense of place and aid way-finding. Thought should be given to how features may be integrated into the fabric of buildings themselves to create a character or unique feature.

6.18 Some of the most effective examples of way finding infrastructure are very simple and rely on colour coding to show particular routes or a theme, such as a separate colour for services, recreational routes, direct routes etc.

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Bronze with Cornish tin art embedded into granite, Falmouth
6.19 These features are often best fixed to walls and buildings at levels where they can be clearly seen and can give people confidence to walk or cycle in unfamiliar surroundings.

Outcomes that should be considered in your design

**STREETS 1:** Ensuring connectivity from the beginning

**STREETS 2:** People-friendly streets
6.20 **Outcome STREETS 1: Ensuring connectivity from the beginning**

6.21 Connectivity for all travel modes must be designed in for new and potential development at the earliest possible stage.

6.22 **What we expect:**

- A clear and appropriate street hierarchy - streets should be identified either as primarily residential or transit routes and designed accordingly.
- The designing of individual streets and paths must take place in tandem with their adjacent uses.
- A residential street and path layout which maximises connections and promotes integration with adjacent neighbourhoods and settlements and key destinations within and near the site.
- Where a development site is adjacent to a site that may be developed in future, potential access points to that land must be included, including active travel links.
- Within the site there must be a legible and permeable layout, especially for walking and cycling, to avoid circuitous routes. Cul-de-sac development is absolutely discouraged and unless it is part of a modal filter which restricts motorised transport but provide active travel access.
- Active transport routes should reflect desire lines.
- Wherever possible, each property should have seamless, reasonably direct access by active travel modes to community facilities, services and other key destinations such, including green space, public transport and local employers.
- Homes are within a convenient, safe and attractive 400 metre (ideally 200 metre) walking distance of an existing or new public transport stop wherever possible, accessible from a legible and reasonably direct path.
- Current and planned public transport stops including rail services are to be exploited wherever they exist within or near the site to reduce the need for car transportation and must be clearly signposted.
- Where streets are used by buses they should be laid out to provide a reasonably direct route in, through and out of the development. Detours through the development should be avoided.

- New residential developments are to avoid attracting unnecessary through-traffic and consideration should be given as to whether any streets could be pedestrianised to allow for social activities and green infrastructure.
- Residential streets should have a design-speed of up to 20mph to encourage active travel precedence over car traffic.
- Residential streets and junctions should use features such as non-linear streets, layout, corners, materials and planting to slow traffic by highlighting the multifunctional nature of the road rather than purpose-built traffic calming measures.
- Roads, including their entrances and exits, must be designed to enable access by emergency vehicles, waste collection vehicles and where applicable buses, at all times whilst avoiding opportunities for informal parking that can hinder their access.
6.23 **Outcome STREETS 2: People-friendly streets**

6.24 To maximise active travel and social interaction, the human experience needs to be prioritised. This includes making the streets and their settings inclusive spaces which people find attractive and where they enjoy walking, cycling, socialising and playing.

6.25 **What we expect:**
- For residential streets, design priority should be given to establishing safe, inclusive, comfortable and attractive spaces which foster activity and social contact by encouraging opportunities for walking, cycling and play.
- All streets should maximise opportunities for green infrastructure to help create character, manage drainage and reduce the apparent width. This can be through the use of street trees and/or shrubbery and Cornish hedge planting. Plants must be protected by carefully choosing their location, species and root barriers where relevant.
- There must be particular place-making emphasis in sensitive locations such as within or in the setting of conservation areas, protected landscapes and strategic open space. This should include consideration of the local street pattern (see **FORM 1**).
- Well designed and high quality street furniture and signage should be included where it has a clear and necessary function. Public art is encouraged where it is of a high quality and enhances the sense of place.
- Street features including furniture, art and plants should be meaningfully placed to create a sense of place without impeding visibility for those crossing the road, blocking routes, creating a sense of clutter or presenting a trip hazard. They must be carefully planned alongside each other as well as cycle and car parking requirements and utilities to avoid potential conflicts and to result in a meaningful scheme.
- Future technology infrastructure, such as smart street lights, smart street furniture and electric vehicle charging infrastructure must be planned for from the outset so that it can be successfully integrated into new streets and spaces without disrupting the public realm including its planting (see Outcome **PARKING 2**).
- If features are required to reduce informal parking, where possible use planting instead of bollards as these can inhibit direct routes for

**Tree-lined boulevard with pavements and green open space, Bourneville**

**Insufficient planning results in conflicts between planting, walkways, parking and roads**
those on foot. Guard rails must never be installed because they block pedestrian access.

- Consideration needs to be given to the colours, patterns and type of materials to be used. They should respond to and complement the specific built/landscape settings as well as meeting the needs of vulnerable user groups. A consistent approach to materials and street furniture should be used to define different features e.g. to help reinforce the street hierarchy or define parking spaces.

- Consideration should be given to the potential for conflict between the provision of tactile surfaces that are designed for the blind or partially sighted, and the implications of such surfaces on accessibility for less mobile people, who may be using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or walking aids.

- Non-traditional, more open layouts including shared streets may be appropriate on short sections of small, low-traffic streets e.g. ends of residential streets. This will be subject to appropriate gateway indicators which announce the start and end of the shared street, as well as appropriate delineators (which may be a kerb) that define any required comfort spaces for pedestrians. The design of any such scheme must be tailored to the location, giving full consideration to inclusive access. It may form part of a wider open plan scheme which includes squares and other communal or public amenity space.
6.26 **Topic: Prioritising active travel and encouraging public transport use**

6.27 **What do we mean by this?**

6.28 The environment plays a key role in influencing people’s decisions on how to travel as well as how far they need to go. A new residential development presents a considerable opportunity to reset people’s lifestyles as they must re-evaluate how they will travel for education, work, shopping and leisure. Locating community facilities near residents and near to each other is part of the answer but the details of the routes between destinations are also key.

6.29 We want walking, cycling and other forms of active travel to be the most attractive options for reaching local destinations so opportunities to enhance Cornwall’s walking and cycling networks must be embraced. Ideally any new neighbourhood should contribute by integrating into the wider Cornish and local pedestrian and cycling networks. The active travel routes should also be welcoming to visitors to the development to reduce car dominance and to help it integrate more thoroughly with the existing settlement.

6.30 Public transport use should also be specifically encouraged, whether as part of shorter local journeys or longer journeys using different modes of transport. It is not enough for active travel and public transport stops to simply be there, they need to be convenient, attractive, safe, comfortable, inclusive and legible. They need to be fully integrated into a development and connect with other modes of travel to maximise uptake.

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**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

**TRAVEL 1:** Prioritising active travel

**TRAVEL 2:** Encouraging public transport use

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Footpath surrounded by green infrastructure and connecting new homes with neighbouring streets, amenity space and the countryside, Centenary Way, Truro
6.31 **Outcome TRAVEL 1: Prioritising active travel**

6.32 To create a successful, healthy and integrated community, it is essential to prioritise active travel including on foot and by bicycle.

6.33 **What we expect:**

- Build on and connect to the wider existing network of paths including the public rights of way network. Larger developments will benefit from using GIS analysis to understand local active travel routes and potential.
- Footpaths and cycle paths within the site must where possible connect with nearby networks, homes, existing nearby neighbourhoods, key destinations (e.g. schools and large workplaces), community facilities including shops and open spaces, the countryside, other potential development sites and public transport. They must not end abruptly in unhelpful locations.
- Key routes between houses, schools and other facilities should be designed to allow children to move actively and with minimal or no supervision.
- Footpaths and cycle paths must be inclusive, attractive, interesting and welcoming spaces.
- Where it is unsafe to cross a road, planting should be used to define the path. Grass should be avoided as this can be readily traversed and may become worn by desire lines.
- Footpath and cycle route design must take into account safety, topography, desire lines, appropriate shelter, wayfinding, the need for seating/quiet resting/playing points and the desirability of traffic free routes to encourage uptake. They must be wide enough to allow...
Active travel routes should be accessible to and suitable for users of all ages and a range of abilities. In some cases this may result in the creation of less direct but flatter paths, making a good use of local topography, with rest points if there are lengthy or steep sections.

Where active travel and vehicular routes are going between the same destinations, they may run alongside each other in residential streets.

Ensure good accessibility and multiple pedestrian and cycle access points to residential areas from major arteries and hubs of activities wherever possible.

Wheel channels to assist bike access where steps are still needed (i) Almere; and (ii) in granite, Plymouth (image courtesy of Sustrans)
6.35 **Outcome TRAVEL 2: Encouraging public transport use**

6.36 To help combat climate change, reduce congestion and support more vibrant, inclusive communities, public transport opportunities for local and longer distance travel must be embraced. Public transport in Cornwall includes rail, bus, park and ride and ferry services.

- Co-locate public transport stops at or within a short walk of facilities. (see Outcome [STREETS 1](#))
- Where public transport cannot stop immediately next to facilities, there should be adequate signage between the stop and the facilities.
- Public transport stops must be accompanied by comfortable waiting areas which benefit from natural surveillance.
- For new public transport routes, stops should be provided where they will maximise uptake including key intersections with the local pedestrian network.
- Take advantage of planned transport improvements by ensuring they are integrated with the site including with all other modes of transport and the location of facilities. Unless significant congestion is likely, bus stops should be on street (not be located in laybys) in residential areas.
- Easy and well signed access to the nearest public transport stops and hubs should always be provided, using active travel modes.
- For large development, developers must show proposed bus service provision in their planning applications. They may need to provide a subsidised bus service in the early years when the residents start to move in; this helps to establish the habit of using public transport from the outset.
- Bus routes should be efficient and not circuitous.
- Whenever a neighbourhood’s own active travel network can connect other built up areas with public transport, it should do so...
6.37 **Topic: Providing appropriate cycle and car parking**

6.38 **What do we mean by this?**

6.39 Parking is important to the social and economic infrastructure of Cornwall. Well planned residential parking involves delivering the right number of spaces in the right places. People need to have confidence that they can leave their bicycle or car in a convenient, safe and secure manner when they reach their destination. Planning for this will help ensure bicycles and cars are parked efficiently, in appropriate locations.

6.40 In order to anticipate cycle and car parking demand and achieve the right parking solutions it is important to understand the nature of the surrounding uses, opportunities for active travel, nearby public transport connections and frequency, and local car ownership trends. Cycle and car parking should be an integral part of street design; designed in alongside other features such as walking and cycling routes, street trees, street furniture and utilities to avoid conflicts and particular care must be taken to ensure that active travel dominates over cars.

6.41 Cycle parking is important in encouraging uptake of active travel. It should be designed into developments offering bicycle storage for homes, businesses, schools, community facilities, visitor attractions and public spaces to ensure it is available at both ends of a journey. It should be in a prominent, accessible location which is preferably more convenient than the car parking.

6.42 Getting the level of car parking right is particularly important. Over provision of car parking should be avoided as it can lead to unattractive streets, smaller gardens, less green infrastructure, unsustainable transport habits and unhealthy lifestyles. Delivering enough car parking is also important to ensure that roads and spaces around them are used as they were designed to be and safety and access are not compromised. Developments with no car parking are also encouraged where they are carefully planned with Cornwall Council services to deliver the intended benefits in terms of sustainability and wellbeing without creating parking overspill issues.

6.43 Good car parking design should incorporate a mixture of on and off street parking provision designed in the context of soft and hard landscaping which does not dominate the streetscape and offers inclusive and flexible use. Unless they are supporting car-free streets, large car parks are to be avoided as these do not offer a convenient or attractive solution.

For efficient use of the space and to accommodate blue badge holders, deliveries and visitors, on street parking should be unallocated.

6.44 Electric charging points for cars and provisions for other low emission vehicles are encouraged. Where they are not initially provided, car parking spaces and roads should be designed to be able to offer electric charging in future.

6.45 Potential future reductions in demand for parking as a result of potential modal shifts mean that spaces may need to be repurposed and the layout chosen for development must anticipate and allow for alternative uses of these spaces.

**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

**PARKING 1:** Cycle parking

**PARKING 2:** Car parking
6.46 **Outcome PARKING 1: Cycle parking**

6.47 Convenient and secure cycle parking is essential to supporting active travel.

6.48 **What we expect:**

- Cycle parking should be provided for new homes, schools, places of work, community facilities including open spaces and key public transport stops.
- Cycle parking must be as convenient and secure as possible e.g. in a private or semi-private space for homes, schools and places of work and benefit from natural surveillance in the public realm.
- Wherever possible outdoor cycle parking should be covered.
- Cycle parking in the public realm should benefit from natural surveillance and be carefully placed so that it is close to cycle routes but does not impede the flow of people, bicycles or vehicles.
- Charging facilities for electric bikes are encouraged.

6.49 **Outcome PARKING 2: Car parking**

6.50 Car parking must realistically meet demand without impacting on the appearance and safety of a development or actively encouraging car use over other modes of travel.

6.51 **What we expect:**

- Preference is given to on-street parking followed by parking on plot and then small blocks of off-road parking. A combination of parking solutions may be appropriate according to the context, type of housing and other land uses.
- Where rows of narrow terraces are proposed, consider positioning parking within the street scene, for example a central reservation of herringbone parking.
- Where on-plot car parking is shown to be appropriate, it should be integrated into the design and not reduce garden space available to residents or dominate the front elevation of the dwelling. Where possible, parking spaces should be to the side of properties.
- Where parking is positioned to the front of the property, ensure that there is at least an equal amount of the frontage allocated to an enclosed, landscaped front garden in order to reduce vehicle domination.
• Garages do not count as a parking space as they are commonly repurposed by residents: They must be as close to their corresponding home as possible and preferably within the curtilage in line with or behind the main building line. Rows of garages must be avoided.

• Potential to use space over garages for offices and play rooms for example is encouraged and may assist with natural surveillance in appropriate parking courts.

• Any off-road parking areas should be located as sensitively as possible and ideally be pepper-potted throughout the development with clusters of no more than 5 parking spaces. Exceptions to this are where car-free streets are proposed which necessitate larger parking areas.

• Carefully designed rear parking courts may be appropriate where they benefit from natural surveillance and facilitate more people-friendly streets.

• Where there is sufficient space, rear parking courts can be effective points for waste storage and collection, electric vehicle charging points and connecting utilities and meter boxes.

• Car parking needs to be designed with security in mind, including natural surveillance. Make sure people can see their car from their home or can park it somewhere they are confident it will be safe.

• Where possible parking space surfacing should be permeable. Good quality materials should be used to define parking spaces rather than white paint.

• Landscaping and tree planting should be used to reduce the visual impact of parked cars and inappropriate parking (avoid bollards and never install railings for this purpose as they block pedestrian access). This must also be considered alongside utilities and public realm features such as street furniture and public art and ensure inclusive access.

• For higher density schemes, underground parking with a landscaped deck above can work well.

• Provision of sufficient parking space for visitors and, where demand is anticipated and may help reduce overall car travel, car clubs.

• Consideration should be given to solutions for the charging of electric cars. Ideally as a minimum, new residential parking should be provided with the necessary infrastructure for electric vehicle charging to be available to each residence (including on-street provision).

• Consideration should be given to creating parking areas that can be relatively easily repurposed in the event of reduced parking demand.
Healthy, green and inclusive

Introduction

Where we live influences our life choices. Numerous studies have concluded a direct link between the quality of living environments – especially access to green space – and happiness. Furthermore, inclusive development that truly integrates nature and green space is also more sustainable and delivers important environmental, physical and mental health, social and economic benefits as well as increasing property values. More natural spaces are also easier to manage over the long-term and offer multiple benefits as long as they are maintained correctly. Long term management details therefore need to form an integral part of all development proposals.

New development must ensure neighbourhoods enable people to live healthier lives, promote active lifestyles and facilitate opportunities for people to interact with each other and nature. Green space, trees and plants should be delivered as a community resource and designed to help bring communities together. They should also provide a number of practical benefits including recreation, helping us move around, drainage, tackling climate change, food growing and providing habitat for different species.

Activity is vital to a healthy lifestyle and the way that development is laid out has a direct impact on how easy it is to move around on a day to day basis and reduce car use, particularly for short journeys. Cycling and walking paths are an integral part of green places and are vital in encouraging active modes of transport, healthier lifestyles and improved accessibility. Public spaces and the paths between them must be designed to welcome people with the broadest range of needs as possible. We consider how best to deliver this in this chapter as well as the Connected and accessible chapter.

Nature has been in decline across the UK as a result of a number of factors, but it is increasingly vital that we ensure that all new development helps to deliver more, better and bigger green infrastructure and increases biodiversity. Cornwall Council adopted one of the first Environmental Growth Strategies in the country in 2016 and is committed to ensuring that the environment is left in a better state than we inherited it. The Council has now introduced a requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain for all major development in Cornwall and encourages all scales of development to consider how nature can be supported. We also encourage developments to apply Building with Nature standards, which set benchmarks to ensure the provision of good green infrastructure in development.

The Council supports the Government's Healthy New Towns programme and is applying the recommendations of ‘Putting Health into Place’ into this guidance. This chapter covers outcomes related to social spaces, activity, healthy eating and play and leisure.
What’s included here?

It is important to make sure that the components are right and that we reduce social and health inequalities through new development, enabling people to live more active and connected lives. The full integration of Cornish culture into new developments also helps to promote pride and sense of identity. The opportunity for new development to reduce social isolation amongst people of all ages is particularly important as this has a serious impact on physical and mental health.

Green infrastructure is a term that describes the creation or enhancement of a functional network of public open spaces, natural and semi-natural green (land) and blue (water) areas designed and managed to deliver a wide range of life supporting services such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation and climate mitigation and adaptation. It is about the creation of networks of green rather than the creation of isolated open spaces or spaces that are designed for only one purpose. It is vital that we plan positively for increases in natural environments and nature in new places for the benefit of the environment, biodiversity and human health and wellbeing.
7.12 Why greener, healthier and more inclusive places are important:

- Ensuring a development is inclusive supports reductions in inequality, less isolation, a more balanced society and stronger communities which benefits everyone.
- Developments that incorporate meaningful amounts of green space, trees, amenities and areas that communities can meet in are consistently popular, offer greater return on investment and sell faster than those without.
- Active environments promote regular physical activity which is essential for good physical and mental health. Well planned places make walking, cycling and public transport the first choice for everyone.
- Spending time in green spaces and natural environments has benefits to mental health, including reduced anxiety, increased self-esteem and wellbeing, improved mood, and improved academic performance.
- Colourful and interesting built and green spaces help to build a sense of civic pride.
- Enabling people to eat a balanced and healthier diet is a key part of tackling health inequalities and improving environments. Careful place-making can introduce residents to the ingredients needed for healthy eating through fruiting trees, gardens and allotments.
- Playful surroundings promote leisure and activity and social interaction. Good place making and playful environments encourage people of all ages and abilities to come together, be active and enjoy leisure time collectively.
- Sports provision is an important part of nurturing activity and building and maintain fitness.
- Well-designed multi-functional green spaces can deliver environmental functions such as helping to mitigate flood risk, provide room for nature, reduce stress levels, regulate summer heat, purify air and water purification and provide carbon sequestration.

This Chapter is divided into three key topics:

**Everyday and inclusive green spaces**

**Places for healthy living**

**Ensuring space for nature**

Each topic provides a brief explanation of what we are trying to achieve through and a series of benchmarks that we will use to determine planning applications for new development.

Visual and accessible amenity space with connecting path, natural surveillance, lighting, hedges and trees, College Way, Gloweth. Additional biodiverse planting could further raise the value of this space.
7.13 **Topic: Everyday and inclusive green spaces**

7.14 **What do we mean by this?**

7.15 Often, greenery in new developments has been provided as a series of incidental and poorly connected spaces such as verges, play areas or left over areas from the layout of housing. Where play areas have been provided, they are often aimed at the youngest residents with little or nothing to interest children over the age of eight or encourage different generations to socialise in the same space. Gardens tend to be small and their shape and form dictated by the housing and road layout.

7.16 Green spaces within developments must contribute to place distinctiveness, with the aim of creating an accessible place where people feel a sense of belonging and pride in their neighbourhood. Making sure that a new development both forms a new community and becomes part of an existing wider community is key to delivering successful places.

7.17 Changing the way that we think about green space is important. Requirements for green space can often be met in a variety of flexible ways and led by the needs of the community and the context of the site. Wherever possible, spaces should not be single purpose. Key considerations must be how these spaces create opportunities for leisure and biodiversity and how they will be maintained in the long term (see Outcomes STEWARD 1, STEWARD 2 and STEWARD 3).

7.18 Multi-functional green space, provided as a network rather than a single large space, can get better value out of our green spaces by making them do more than one thing: connect habitats, enable recreation, encourage walking and use land more carefully. Features which maximise benefits include areas for play, seating, planting and gardening opportunities.

7.19 New development in Cornwall is expected to enhance the green networks and spaces that make our environment so distinctive, whilst ensuring that the spaces provide appeal to the widest possible number of people. This means that spaces that are designed to be publically accessible must be attractive to and accessible by all residents, regardless of culture, age and ability.

Diaspora Garden, Heartlands, featuring native Cornish species which were transported overseas plus interpretation, accessible paths and seating.

7.20 Everyday green space is also about ensuring that each home has both access to green space (preferably in the form of a well-proportioned garden) and also a view of greenery from principal rooms, whether this is a green private garden, street trees, hedges or even green walls and roofs. Where private gardens are not provided, such as in relation to apartments and older persons accommodation, there should be views and access to communal green spaces (see Outcome EXTERNAL 1).

Initial desktop analysis of existing habitat corridors and public rights of way using Cornwall Council's Interactive Mapping resource: [Interactive Mapping](#).

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Initial desktop analysis of existing habitat corridors and public rights of way using Cornwall Council's Interactive Mapping resource: [Interactive Mapping](#).
Outcomes that should be considered in your design

GREEN 1: Everyone has ready access to nature and green open space
GREEN 2: Playable spaces
GREEN 3: Spaces to encourage social interaction
GREEN 4: Space for sport
GREEN 5: Landscaping, planting and trees

Views of trees and greenery from a home can reduce stress and improve mood as well as boost natural surveillance and community cohesion, community green space in Biscovey, Par.

Back garden, Halbullock View, Gloweth and a pocket park provided as part of a more dense residential scheme, Derwenthorpe

Communal garden with seating, accessible paths, raised planters, trees and natural surveillance, Prince Charles House, St Austell
7.21 **Outcome GREEN 1: Everyone has ready access to nature and green open space**

7.22 Each property should have easy access to nearby green space, particularly where these promote walking and cycling and play, from the earliest stage of construction to ensure that healthy lifestyles are available to early residents and users.

7.23 **What we expect:**

- To encourage usage, green spaces should be influenced by the community wherever possible. Where the community doesn’t already exist on a new development, land should be provided and a secure mechanism should be developed to allow the space to be set out later following engagement with the new residents.
- Where development is phased, accessible green space is provided in early phases with appropriate protection for new planting, to promote access to green space and nature from the earliest time.
- Each individual green space does not have to be huge, but it does need to be well-proportioned and part of a network of green and should have a purpose (not just easy to mow areas of grass).
- Green spaces are designed to be multifunctional and flexible, allowing for adaptation (presently and over time) to allow for a range of uses by people of all ages and abilities.
- Inclusive greenspace is designed to be accessible to a wide range of people, irrespective of age or physical ability, including the creation of step free access, tactile surfaces or sensory areas (see Outcome STREETS 2).
- Design of spaces provides wayfinding cues and sensory stimulation to provide reassurance to older people and those with dementia.
- Ground surfaces for paths and social spaces should be considered from the outset to ensure that patterns, colours and materials suit users are designed to be adopted and easily maintained.
- Orchards, community gardens, allotments, spaces for games and events and wildflower meadows are popular multi-generational spaces and are encouraged (see Outcome STEWARD 1).
- There should be public space to sit and gather and the locations for seating should be thought about – sheltered from the rain and wind and warmed by the sun where possible.

Successful public spaces can provide a range of trees, flexible equipment and seating opportunities as well as place to play.
To make public and communal spaces feel safe and reduce vandalism, there should be natural surveillance and – where necessary – artificial lighting for security and evening use. If lighting is needed then there should be a Lighting Impact Assessment to identify wildlife-friendly solutions.
7.24 **Outcome GREEN 2: Playable spaces and found throughout the development**

7.25 Good development should be designed around the needs of a range of people and not rely on the provision of single function or designated spaces for play. The whole layout should be designed to be playable ensuring that journeys to destinations are pleasurable and fun.

7.26 **What we expect:**

- Development creates ‘playable spaces’ that are designed to appeal to both adults and children with cross-generational interest and encourage them to interact.
- Play is approached in a holistic manner, for example by creating opportunities for natural play, interpretation or playful art features across an entire development or series of spaces rather than formal equipped areas of play.
- Natural play is encouraged through the design of the landscape using play boulders, re-profiled land and mounds, balancing logs, stepping stones and other landscaping. This type of environment serves as a play space which increases interaction with nature and where designed to be maintained, is also more attractive to other generations and more cost-effective (see Outcome STEWARD 2).
Informal walking helps reconnect with nature and improves mental wellbeing

- Linear green spaces are well-proportioned and created with activity along the route to encourage movement and opportunity for play.
- Green corridors are created with green areas to sit or areas for tree/shrub planting and amenity alongside routes to provide respite from hard landscaping, slowing traffic and creating pleasant ‘moments’ on journeys.

Natural play infrastructure in a residential setting, incorporating both wood and granite, Freiburg

Playable seating opportunity near natural play equipment, Boscawen Park, Truro
7.27 **Outcome GREEN 3: Spaces to encourage social interaction**

7.28 Green spaces should be designed to encourage their use by as many people as possible.

7.29 **What we expect:**

- A variety of accessible green spaces are available on or close to the site, parks, garden squares, shared gardens and allotments to encourage community interaction through plant and food growing and active outdoor lives.
- Seating is designed to be used for all ages and spaced around the site, taking in views rather than being focussed on play areas.
- New green links are provided from the development to existing sustainable travel/active transport routes to help keep people active.

*Interesting seating in sociable layouts with planting along key routes, Leeds*

*Green corridors proving active travel routes linking housing to other areas and services, Truro*
7.30 **Outcome GREEN 4: Space for sport**

7.31 Not every development is large enough to provide formal sports pitches or provision on site, but all development should consider how residents will access such space.

7.32 **What we expect:**

- Routes from housing to sports facilities and pitches should be clearly signed and generally traffic free to encourage active walking and cycling. Facilities should be accessible to people with a range of abilities.
- Wherever possible, sports facilities should be multi-functional with biodiverse planting at the margins and naturalised drainage (see Outcome [ADAPT 1](#)).
- Formal sports provision is located to benefit both new and existing development and populations and is easily accessible from outside of the site.
- The improvement of existing formal open spaces (such as pitches and playgrounds) that are well related to the development is prioritised where it would enhance or increase the capacity of that facility and meet the needs created by the new development.
- Formal open spaces are designed to form an integral part of the wider green network and are easily accessible by foot and cycle, but with parking for disabled users.
- School pitch provision should be designed to provide facilities for communities to use outside of school hours.
- Sports hubs and changing facilities should be designed to be multi-use, combined with community meeting or café facilities to provide day to day presence in the community and casual security for pitches and facilities.
7.33 **Outcome GREEN 5: Landscaping, planting and trees**

7.34 The impact of the built environment on the local environment must be mitigated with well-planned green infrastructure that helps to soften impacts of new buildings and bring the surrounding landscape into the site.

7.35 **What we expect:**

- Green networks should be designed around existing assets such as trees and hedges and allow them space to breathe. Mature landscaping should help form the basis of development form and character (see Outcomes LANDSCAPE 1).

- Landscape proposals complement and draw from the positive aspects of the site, wider landscape setting and other elements identified through landscape or townscape character assessment (see Phase 1: Context Appraisal).

- Existing planting, trees, tree groups, woods, copses and hedges are retained and enhanced through the filling of gaps and understorey planting to create space for growth and protection. Mature trees are retained through proactive management practices and new planting made to create succession.

- Where tree loss is unavoidable, replacement tree planting (proportionate to tree loss) shall be incorporated within the development (or off site) to ensure that over time the development shall result in an overall increase in tree canopy.

*A mixture of tree and shrub species increases resilience and adds interest.*

*Wildflower area for pollinator species with accessible path.*

*Retained mature landscaping including established trees and Cornish hedges.*

*Understorey planting to existing mature trees.*

*Mature and new trees surrounding public space, Treffry Road, Truro*
• Tree and shrub species are appropriate to the area, fitting in scale and colour, climatic requirements and growth habits, creating a diversity of species to respond to climate resilience, pests and diseases. They are of value to local wildlife. Large trees are planned to deliver greater water management services.

• Planting is used to improve the micro climate by providing windbreaks, reducing heat loss, offering shade in summer and reducing the effects of air pollution and noise.

• Landscaping proposals provide a strong element of naturalised pollinator friendly plantings.

• Combined sustainable urban drainage systems (see Outcome ADAPT 1) and tree planting systems are used where possible.

• Street trees are included wherever possible and other greening is integrated into street design and public spaces. Trees have light and space to grow and where in or close to footways, are in a tree pit or trench that is appropriate and capable of adoption. Root barriers are used adjacent to surfacing and footways, to prevent damage or distortion to surfacing (see Outcome STREETS 2).

• Tree planting is informed by existing utilities and informs utility provision to avoid later conflicts.

New Cornish hedge defining property boundaries using locally distinctive stone with early planting (Coast, Perranporth)

Established Cornish hedges planted with a mix of species
• Where space is limited, opportunities are taken for green roofs, gardens and planted walls.

• The future management and maintenance of green spaces and infrastructure, including trees, is wildlife friendly and fully considered at the planning stage (see Space for nature and Outcomes STEWARD 1, STEWARD 2 and STEWARD 3).

• Proposals must include adequate provision for tree protection before and during construction in line with BS5837.
7.36 **Topic: Places for healthy living**

7.37 **What do we mean by this?**

7.38 New development in Cornwall is expected to contribute to the conditions required for healthy lifestyles, ensuring that residents have opportunities to meet, be active and grow healthy food.

7.39 Regular physical activity is essential for good physical and mental health. Research shows that when physical activity is incorporated into our daily routines, the likelihood of that activity being sustained is significantly increased. New development creates an opportunity to influence this as new residents re-evaluate their travel and lifestyle patterns. This is not about people being really sporty or requiring organised events, it’s about the small steps to make life more active. This can be encouraged by providing easily accessible and pleasant routes to nearby services and facilities.

7.40 Enabling people to eat a balanced and healthier diet, and making it easy and affordable to do so, are also key to tackling health inequalities and improving environmental sustainability. Careful place-making, urban design and partnership working can help give residents easier access to nutritious ingredients for home cooking, and to healthier food when they are out, whether at school, work or leisure. Limiting access to less healthy foods, from fast food takeaways for example, would strengthen this approach.

7.41 Housing quality is also a key determinant of health. New development may sometimes be sited near to sources of noise and air pollution. There are statutory tests and processes to cap noise, light and air pollution for example however some impacts may still be felt from roads and other uses and additional mitigation is desirable to minimising health issues. Residential areas should be planned to help minimise pollution exposure and sleep deprivation through effective screening and careful placement of lighting and the positioning of rooms within homes (see [Everyday green and inclusive spaces](#) and [Liveable homes](#)).

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**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

**HEALTH 1:** Encouraging activity and social interaction

**HEALTH 2:** Growing healthy food

**HEALTH 3:** Addressing pollution
7.42 **Outcome HEALTH 1: Encouraging activity and social interaction**

7.43 Good development should maximise activity and social interaction by meeting the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

7.44 **What we expect:**

- Sociable spaces, including areas for games and events, should be provided throughout development to encourage people to meet and socialise.
- Community buildings are located at the heart of development and are designed around the needs of communities, offering flexible space and appealing to a wide range of interests.
- Green corridors are created with open green areas to sit or areas for amenity value alongside other routes to provide respite from hard landscaping, slow traffic and create pleasant ‘moments’ on journeys.
- Public green space is accessible to a wide range of people living in all parts of the development, including step-free access, tactile surfaces or sensory areas.
- The design of green and non-green public spaces should encourage maximum use, including enjoyment at all times of the year and cross-generational interest, through the choice of materials, arrangement of seating that helps conversations and overlooks vistas, provision of shelter from wind and rain (warmed by the sun if possible), natural surveillance and, where appropriate, installation of lighting.
- Where major developments are planned they should engage existing communities to understand the need for new community facilities or spaces that might appeal to new and existing residents.
- There should be social spaces for younger people that do not conflict unduly with residential amenity.
- Where provision is made for informal ball games, it should be on flat land and limit impact on surrounding uses, especially residents’ homes and gardens.
7.45 **Outcome HEALTH 2: Growing healthy food**

7.46 Healthy eating patterns are based on a range of experiences, including the availability of space to grow food at home or in the community, the availability of healthy food shopping and the availability of food bearing trees and plants used in landscaping schemes.

7.47 **What we expect:**

- At least the majority of private gardens on site provide sufficient space for food growing (see **EXTERNAL 1**).
- The development provides spaces for community growing space, allotments and orchards (as appropriate to the context and form of the site and any other evidenced local demand).
- Fruiting and nut bearing varieties of trees are used in public spaces, hedges and private gardens to encourage healthy eating and food for nature.
7.48 **Outcome HEALTH 3: Addressing pollution**

7.49 Pollution can be avoided through careful planning and siting of buildings and planting from the earliest stage. Thought should also be given to whether new external light is necessary and how it is used, especially where this may impact on human health, wildlife and areas of dark night sky.

7.50 **What we expect:**

- Planting and building orientation are carefully planned to improve air quality, minimise noise and shield unhelpful light to create quieter environments for leisure, sleep and wildlife. Tree planting must however avoid overshadowing homes and allow sufficient room for growth.
- Where homes are sited near acceptable noise generators such as roads, habitable rooms including bedrooms are sited to avoid noise impact (see Outcome **INTERNAL 3**).
- Proposals minimise the need for external lighting.
- Where external lighting is required (e.g. street lighting) it should be located so that it is not a nuisance to bedrooms, it does not spill upwards, it is not blue-white in colour and where possible timers or sensors are used to limit switching to when the lighting is required.
Topic: Space for nature

7.51 What do we mean by this?

7.52 Making space for nature means providing safe, unlit quiet spaces and movement corridors where wildlife will be undisturbed by people, dogs and (if possible) cats. Increases in biodiversity should be encouraged through the protection of habitat, choice of planting and by provision of green routes that link green spaces and areas of habitat. Natural habitats can significantly increase the quality of new development and have the potential to raise value, appealing to a wide range of people.

7.53 Green infrastructure provision helps to strike a balance between the needs of humans and nature. For instance, planting, particularly trees, can reduce the risk of flooding, contribute to pollution control, provide shade and reduce the effects of wind created by streets. New linear routes such as footpaths and cycleways and roads provide particular opportunities to provide and enhance routes for nature as well as people.

Outcomes that should be considered in your design

NATURE 1: Retention, protection and enhancement of habitat

NATURE 2: Securing Biodiversity Net Gain
7.54 **Outcome NATURE 1: Retention, protection and enhancement of habitat**

7.55 The best way to ensure biodiversity thrives on site is to ensure that habitat is retained and enhanced as part of a green network across sites, with linkages maximised to countryside and other green spaces. The Context Appraisal for the site should consider its ecology from the earliest stage. Appropriate ecology surveys must be undertaken at the earliest stage possible and inform decisions relating to acquisition and planning of sites.

7.56 **What we expect:**

- Existing habitat is assessed at the earliest stage of design through context appraisals and ecological surveys (see [Effective design process](#)).
- The layout of development is informed by the retention of existing trees and hedges and other areas of habitat (including water bodies) wherever possible.

- Opportunities for supporting and increasing existing biodiversity are maximised particularly through protection and enhancement of networks of habitats to prevent fragmentation and isolation. Existing gaps in hedges are filled wherever possible to enhance networks.
- Where new gaps need to be created or hedges lost, translocation (managed movement) is the first option considered and planned for in the layout.
- Opportunities for buildings to support biodiversity and integration of habitat into buildings have been maximised. Consideration should be given to the use of living roofs and planting on facades, roof terraces and balconies through the provision of climbing wires and planters.
- Fruiting varieties of trees are used in public spaces and hedges to encourage food for nature and humans, whilst ensuring that their position is carefully considered to avoid nuisance from falling fruit.
- Wild planting schemes that maximise opportunities for pollinators are used wherever possible in the landscaping scheme.

- New routes (including roads, foot and cycleways) provided through sites are used as opportunities for creating linked habitat and wildlife corridors.

- Planting schemes help provide habitat and food sources for birds and bats and bird and bat boxes are integrated into buildings and structures to provide additional roosts.
- The Ecological Strategy for the site informs a Scheme of Management, which should be provided to demonstrate how any habitat or vegetation is to be established and managed in the future. This should be based on information from ecological surveys and the Ecological Strategy (see [Validation guide](#)).
- Management plans set out how soils are removed, stored and retained on site correctly.
Outcome NATURE 2: Biodiversity Net Gain

Cornwall Council has adopted a requirement for all major development to provide 10% biodiversity net gain. This means that all development proposals will need to record the type and condition of existing habitat on site and consider how existing habitat can be retained, any losses required and how these will be mitigated and new habitat gained.

Development in the United Kingdom must consider how proposals follow the mitigation hierarchy. This requires consideration of how losses may be avoided and allows only for removal and replacement of habitat where there is no other option. Cornwall Council requires submission of information in the form of a standard metric (see resources pop out) that shows how all existing habitat has been considered in the creation of the scheme. This metric also shows where habitat needs to be created.

What we expect:

- Proposals retain existing habitat and create additional space for nature.
- The scheme has carefully considered the space required on-site for providing a net gain in biodiversity and ensured that it can be provided in the right place (particularly where it is dependent on topographical or other locational constraints).
- Measures are taken to enhance biodiversity by creating varied habitats and a rich diversity of trees and planting throughout the built environment.
- Drainage schemes consider opportunities for wetland habitat and creation of blue networks across sites (see Outcome ADAPT 1).
- Landscaping schemes assess how green spaces and habitats within the locality can be linked to provide corridors for the movement of wildlife.
- Creation or recreation of habitat is led by a sound management structure to ensure that it is established and maintained properly into the future (see outcomes STEWARD 1, STEWARD 2 and STEWARD 3).
- Offsetting and removal of habitat off-site is only proposed for exceptional reasons rather than based on unrealistic expectations of the amount of development that can be accommodated on site.
8 Liveable homes

8.1 Introduction

8.2 This chapter relates to the quality and design of new homes. People's health is greatly influenced by their living environment. According to NHS England, more than 90% of our time is spent indoors (either at home or in workplaces, schools and other institutions); therefore we cannot underestimate the importance of the quality of buildings on our health and wellbeing.

“In homes, sufficient space, daylight levels, ventilation, outlook and privacy are essential for good health. In workplaces, schools and other institutions, there are many opportunities to support health through building design and management, and through the activities of the organisations that occupy them. Central to this is enabling people to gather and socialise, and to enjoy quiet reflection. Buildings that are comfortable, offer character and cultivate a sense of community and pride have a positive impact on people's health. Such buildings are also likely to be resilient to social and technological change.”

NHS England, 2018

8.3 Ultimately, the homes being built in Cornwall should be easy to live in and to help people to live happy and healthy lives. The homes that are being built now should still be around in 100 years’ time. So, it is important to ensure that they are attractive, efficient to run and maintain, have enough space to live comfortably inside and out and incorporate enough storage for everyday needs. Another important consideration is the flexibility of the space for people with different needs and different lifestyles. Homes should be designed to be accessible and adaptable so that they can meet the needs of future occupants or adapt with the changing needs of the existing residents.
8.4 What’s included here

8.5 The quality of the built environment has a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents. As it stands, there are a number of common issues with some of the homes that have been built in recent years, which include: insufficient space to live comfortably; insufficient space to store things internally and externally; difficulty maintaining a comfortable temperature; a lack of storage space for waste and recycling; and limited potential for future adaptations.

8.6 A research study was carried out with residents of new builds in Cornwall by students at the University of Exeter and Oxford Brookes in 2019. The results indicated that 65% of the people surveyed felt they had little or no other choice than the house they purchased and 45% of people surveyed said they wouldn’t wish to make the same choice again. These results demonstrate why change is needed and why it is so vital that the homes being built in Cornwall are of a good quality, are fit for purpose and are attractive, both now and in years to come. This chapter provides guidance on how to avoid the issues that are causing people to be unhappy with their homes and achieve more liveable homes through better design.

8.7 There are other issues which affect liveability that are covered in other chapters for example [Connected and accessible](e.g. people-friendly streets), [Healthy, green and inclusive](e.g. access to open spaces and nature and green space), [Climate change and community resilience](e.g. energy efficiency and layout).

8.8 Why liveable homes are important?

- Homes that are designed to be flexible and adaptable are more likely to **stand the test of time** so that they are better able to meet the needs of current and future residents.
- Homes that are designed with enough internal storage and space enable a **better quality of life** and **reduce the need to move house**.
- Homes that provide sufficient external storage help residents to lead **more active lifestyles and encourage recycling**.
- Privacy (visual and audio), light and climate within dwellings can have a significant effect people’s **health and wellbeing**.
- Adaptable, flexible homes which will not require costly alterations to **adapt to changes in technology and lifestyles**.

This Chapter is divided into three topics

Each topic provides a brief explanation of what we are trying to achieve and a series of outcomes that we will use to determine planning applications for new development.

- **Internal space and layout**
- **External storage, refuse and recycling**
- **Accessible and adaptable**
8.9 **Topic: Internal space and layout**

8.10 **What do we mean by this?**

8.11 This is about ensuring that the houses that are built in Cornwall are fit for purpose. Good housing cannot be made from spaces that are too small yet 42% of new build residents in Cornwall surveyed by students at the University of Exeter and Oxford Brookes (2019) said they did not have adequate space to suit their everyday needs. 58% of those respondents cited a lack of storage as the main issue.

8.12 All new homes should be designed and built to be large enough to accommodate the maximum planned number of occupants and all rooms should be large enough to fulfil their intended purpose. All homes need private spaces as well as room for residents (and their visitors) to be together in. Houses that are too small have negative impacts on people’s health and wellbeing, for example, a lack of proper storage can mean that it is difficult to keep a house clean and tidy, and overly small bedrooms can mean children have less opportunity to play, create and learn.

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### Outcomes that should be considered in your design

- **INTERNAL 1:** Space to live
- **INTERNAL 2:** Storage
- **INTERNAL 3:** Outlook, light and privacy
- **INTERNAL 4:** Comfort
8.13 **Outcome INTERNAL 1: Space to live**

8.14 Homes must be designed with liveability in mind and be able to meet the demands of contemporary lifestyles. This includes sufficient internal space for everyday activities (see [Accessible and adaptable](#)).

8.15 **What we expect:**

- Room functions have been considered carefully in the design, providing space and functionality to meet the needs of a range of occupiers.
- Living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens and bedrooms are big enough to accommodate standard sized furniture to meet at least the minimum expected needs of an occupier, without covering a window or radiator or obstructing a door.
- The dining area is big enough to fit a table and chairs for the maximum expected number of occupants.
- Children’s rooms have space for a desk and/or play space in addition to a bed and storage.
- The accommodation being provided has considered how both private and affordable accommodation could meet Nationally Described Space Standards.

8.16 **Outcome INTERNAL 2: Storage**

8.17 Storage is an important aspect of home design which enhances lifestyle options and quality of life.

8.18 **What we expect:**

- The likely storage needs of residents has been considered carefully in the design.
- Bedrooms allow sufficient space for storage of clothes and possessions.
- There is readily accessible internal storage for day to day needs, including cupboards for storage for household cleaning items, spare towels and sheets etc and space to store everyday coats, shoes and bags downstairs (e.g. porch, cloakroom, under stairs cupboard and/or generous hallway – plus utility space).
- Where garages are provided, they allow for the parking of a family sized car and storage space. Storage space may be in the roof space.
- There should be sufficient space/capacity for waste segregation in the kitchen of properties including separate food waste collection.
- Where there is no garage. There should be additional internal or external storage for lifestyle items (this could include shared storage spaces) for flats.

Hallway storage for coats and shoes etc.
8.19 **Outcome INTERNAL 3: Outlook, light and privacy**

8.20 Having plenty of natural light, a sense of privacy and a pleasant outlook from your home are important elements of liveability, enabling residents to feel comfortable and happy in their home (see Outcome [GREEN 1](#) and [FORM 3](#)).

8.21 **What we expect:**

- Windows are sufficiently large to allow natural lighting of the room. The Building Research Establishment sunlight and daylight standards as set out within *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice (2011)* are applied (see Outcome [RESOURCES 1](#)).
- Habitable rooms are orientated to maximise their view.
- In principal rooms windows should be set low enough to allow a view out from sitting height.
- Windows are not be positioned to look out at a wall (with the exception of bathrooms, ensuites etc).
- The layout ensures adequate levels of privacy and outlook for occupants of the new housing and existing residents surrounding the site whilst facilitating natural surveillance of communal and public spaces.
- Where the distance between facing habitable rooms is less than 21 metres design principles ensure that privacy will be maintained.
- Sufficient sound insulation is incorporated to reduce noise pollution between properties and increase privacy for occupants.
- Internal layouts are designed to limit noise from adjoining properties in sound sensitive rooms of the home (examples include arranging bedrooms of adjoining properties beside each another and arranging hallways, kitchens and cupboards next to adjoining walls).
- Bedrooms are arranged to face quieter external space (such as rear gardens) where possible.

8.22 **Outcome INTERNAL 4: Comfort**

8.23 Homes should be designed with the comfort and wellbeing of residents in mind to enable them to live happy and healthy lives (see Outcome [RESOURCES 1](#)).

8.24 **What we expect:**

- Homes are designed and built to be naturally ventilated and avoid sick building syndrome by ensuring appropriate heating, thermal efficiency, ventilation and the use of non-polluting or building materials low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
- Where homes are oriented in a way that could lead to overheating in summer, design features are used to prevent overheating in rooms, e.g. brise soleil on south facing windows, vertical shading on east and west-facing windows, recessing windows, eaves, porches, shutters or pergolas.
- All rooms have an opening window to allow fresh air and ventilation into the room.
8.25 **Topic: External amenity, storage, refuse and recycling**

8.26 **What do we mean by this?**

8.27 We want new developments to deliver all residents external amenity space which is designed to adapt to individual household’s needs – both in terms of wellbeing and practicality. In particular it should help foster privacy, make recycling easier and enable people to lead active lives. This includes ensuring there is sufficient, well designed external storage; not only for houses, but for flats, apartments and communal properties as well. As Cornwall moves to a fortnightly refuse collection and a recycling service that is weekly and collecting a wider range of materials in 2020, this will become even more important.

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**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

- **EXTERNAL 1:** Gardens and balconies
- **EXTERNAL 2:** Refuse and recycling
- **EXTERNAL 3:** Leisure equipment storage

Sufficient and well-proportioned private garden space allows for flexibility of use including play, relaxation, drying washing, storage of equipment and multi-purpose garden rooms.
8.28 **Outcome EXTERNAL 1: Gardens and balconies**

8.29 External space should be incorporated into all new homes with sufficient space for flexibility of use.

8.30 **What we expect:**

- The boundaries between private and public spaces are clearly defined with clear vertical markers such as railings, walls or robust planting such as a hedge. Closeboard fencing should not be installed alongside the public realm.
- Front gardens are provided as at least a small defensible space to allow for a planted area, planned waste and recycling storage and to encourage social interaction.
- All homes have access to a well-proportioned and well-orientated garden to the rear of the property that provides for a range of activities such as clothes-drying, relaxation, play and food-growing. For flats, this will be communal space (and ideally also a balcony or patio space).
- Where houses do not have a garage, there is enough space in the garden for a shed without compromising the usability of the garden.
- There should be more than one access point to rear gardens (i.e. not just through the house, this could be a side access or a rear access) to encourage residents to use bikes and other lifestyle equipment that supports more active lifestyles.
- Rear gardens to houses are at least equal in size to the footprint of the house. Triangular or irregular shaped gardens are to be avoided where they rarely offer a practical, usable space.
- Rear gardens should not be overlooked from the ground floor of other homes. Overlooking from upper storeys of nearby properties should be avoided wherever possible.
- Rear gardens must not be excessively shaded, with the majority benefitting from sunlight for at least part of the day. The Building Research Establishment overshadowing standards as set out within Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice.
- Rear gardens must not be steeply sloping; where necessary terracing within gardens can be acceptable to allow use (see Outcomes LANDSCAPE 3).
Incorporating space for nature around homes (courtesy of Treveth Development)

### Vegetation

**Trees**
- Provide food, shelter, shade & nesting/roosting sites
- Reduce pollution & create oxygen
- Native species will support more wildlife
- Birds & bats use green corridors, flying between trees for feeding & nesting

**Hedges**
- Define boundaries, provide screening & natural shelter
- Provide food, shelter, shade & nesting sites
- Native species will support more wildlife
- Non-native species like Leyland Cypress grow fast & have limited wildlife value

### Waste Reduction & Sustainability

**Compost Bin**
- Recycles food & garden waste, without packaging & food miles
- Helps to create a healthy nutritious soil
- Shelters insects & other small animals e.g. slow worms & grass snakes

### Helping Wildlife

#### Bird Boxes
- Boxes attached to trees, hedges etc to encourage birds that nest in holes & crevices e.g. Robins, blue tits & wrens
- Boxes incorporated into the house/brick work to encourage birds like swifts, swallows, house martins & sparrows etc

#### Bat Boxes
- Provided on houses adjacent to green routes in key locations
- Bats have different roosting sites & move between them at different times of the year

#### Hedgehog Holes & Habitat Boxes for Wildlife
- Holes in fences allow hedgehogs & other small mammals to easily move between gardens to find food & shelter
- Habitat boxes for hedgehogs & other small mammals, such as dormice provide shelter
• Where full balconies and winter gardens are used, there is enough space to sit and to grow plants.

• The privacy of a balcony or winter garden and that of properties neighbouring the balcony or winter garden has been maximised, e.g. through insetting or placement in relation to other balconies, windows and passers-by.

• Where Juliet balconies are used they are accompanied by full height, inward-opening doors.

• All or a majority of homes have a view of green infrastructure such as trees, hedgerows, biodiverse open space, naturalised drainage system or a similar natural feature.
8.31 **Outcome EXTERNAL 2: Refuse and recycling**

8.32 The storage of waste must be within a property’s boundary. It is important to the sustainability of a development that there is sufficient external space and storage for a wheeled bin, recycling box and bags. We want it to be easy and convenient for people to recycle as much as possible and for streets to be kept clean, tidy and uncluttered.

8.33 **What we expect:**

- The storage requirements for recycling and refuse are factored into the design and provided in a manner that makes recycling easy and convenient.
- All new homes have a designed external container or structure with sufficient space to store a wheeled bin and a range of recycling (this can be a garage). The external storage space will be able to accommodate:
  - 1 x 180 litre wheeled refuse bin
  - 1 x set of dry recycling containment – 2 x 60 litre bags; 1 x 34 litre bag; 1 x 55 litre black box
  - 1 x 32 litre external food waste caddy
  - 1 x 240 litre garden waste wheeled bin per dwelling with a private garden to enable residents to utilise Cornwall Council’s garden waste service if they wish to do so.
- The space should be flexible enough to cope with future changes in waste and recycling equipment
- Where storage for refuse and recycling is designed as part of a garage, there should also be sufficient space to park a standard sized family car.
- Wherever possible flats and apartments will have their own containment, as detailed above. To enable this residents must have dedicated refuse and recycling areas (this can be communal), which are conveniently accessible from all dwellings. Residents should have to walk no more than 30 metres from their front doors carrying their waste to a communal location. The storage areas will have to provide sufficient space for the bins/containers as detailed above for each property. Larger bins can be used (bulk bins) but they must be of the following:
  - Refuse must be stored in a bulk bin no bigger than 1,100 litres per bin; and
  - Dry recycling must have individual bulk bins for individual waste streams (one for paper, one for card etc) and each bin must be no greater than 360 litres. Collection crews will provide a large sack to fit inside the bin for easy emptying.
- Communal and recycling facilities are fit for purpose. The space must allow head height for access and be step free with appropriate screening, surfacing, lighting, ventilation and wash down facilities.
- Sufficient space is allowed for a waste truck to get close enough to collect the waste. Drop kerbs should be provided to allow ease of access and movement of bulk bins for loading onto the waste vehicles by waste collection crews.

8.34 **Outcome EXTERNAL 3: Leisure equipment storage**

8.35 To enable people to live active lives, it is important that there is sufficient external storage for them to store leisure equipment; this could include bikes, fishing gear, kayaks, surf boards, golf clubs and camping equipment for example.

8.36 **What we expect:**

- There is easily accessible, secure storage for bikes, scooters and other leisure items for all housing developments; including flats and apartments. This can include communal (e.g. bike shelter, communal storage room) and individual storage (e.g. garage, shed). Large space bicycle storage buildings that do not benefit from good natural surveillance should be avoided.
- Where there is no garage, there should be additional internal or external storage for lifestyle items (this could include shared storage spaces).
- Where the only storage for such leisure items is in a rear garden, there is external access to that garden so that equipment does not need to be carried through the house.
- Where storage is in a garage, there should be both sufficient space to park a standard sized family car and have a reasonable amount of leisure storage.
8.37 **Topic: Accessible and adaptable**

8.38 **What do we mean by this?**

8.39 The homes that we build should have the flexibility to adapt with us as our lifestyles change and for the needs of different people. This means an internal layout that is easy to change, the scope to make a home wheelchair accessible or install a lift, or the ability to extend or incorporate home working.

8.40 Increasingly homes need to be multi-generational, whether this is young adults staying at home with their parents for longer or older family members moving in with their adult children. Research into changing patterns of household composition suggests that there could be 2.2 million people living in multigenerational homes and 3.8 million 21-34 year olds living with their parents by 2025.

8.41 In Cornwall, as in the rest of the UK, our population is also aging and we need to make sure that we are providing the right type of homes to enable our residents to lead full and happy lives as they get older. This can take many forms, including co-housing, supported housing, extra care facilities or multigenerational and flexible homes. Research identifies the right type of housing as one of the fundamental tenets of happiness in older age; highlighting loneliness and a loss of independence as causes of unhappiness that can be helped with the right sort of housing.

8.42 A flexible building is one that can be extended and modified to increase its life span and is more likely to be a desirable home in 100 years, reducing the need for demolition or major structural alteration. Home working can support family life balance, reduce costs of and emissions from commuting and help support services such as shops and post offices in villages and suburbs.

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**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

**ACCESSIBLE 1:** Accessible homes and spaces

**ACCESSIBLE 2:** Flexibility

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1. NHBC (2018): *Futurology: the new home in 2050*

2. All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration (2018): *Healing the Generational Divide*

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“**In the next 30 years we will witness substantial changes to home-life through technological advancement in response to societal, demographic and climate changes. The family home of the future will evolve to be more resilient and more adaptable to society’s ever-evolving needs. We will see a resurgence of the ‘multigenerational’ home, a flexible home where the young can live into adulthood and where the elderly members of the family can be cared for.”**

*NHBC, 2018*
8.43 **Outcome ACCESSIBLE 1: Accessible homes and spaces**

8.44 It is important that accessible homes are well thought through in all elements of design and that communal spaces are designed to be easy to use for all people, including those with limited mobility and disabilities (see Outcome [GREEN 5](#)).

8.45 **What we expect:**

- Accessible homes are built in the most accessible of locations on a development, avoiding areas with topography that makes life difficult for those with mobility problems, such as steep gradients.
- Ground floor flats and apartments are fully accessible – this can count towards the 25% target under [Cornwall Local Plan](#) Policy 13.
- The provision of bungalows is considered in the majority of schemes. They are an important part of the housing mix and are often an attractive option for older people and for people with disabilities.
- Site/plot layouts and floor plans demonstrate how someone with impaired movement, use of a wheelchair or sight loss could safely access and use a building, including above ground floor accommodation and car parking.
- Details such as door furniture are located at mid-height level for ease of reach.

8.46 **Outcome ACCESSIBLE 2: Flexibility**

8.47 Homes should be adaptable and flexible to accommodate the lifestyles of different people, with different physical or cultural requirements.

8.48 **What we expect:**

- Residential developments aspire to Lifetime Homes’ standards.
- The construction and configuration of the building will allow for the internal reorganisation of rooms or the extension of the dwelling.
- Homes offer flexible spaces that can be adapted to meet the needs of multiple generations (e.g. to accommodating an ageing parent or a young adult unable to afford their own space) or to facilitate homeworking.
9 Climate change and community resilience

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Relatively rapid changes in the climate have implications for all elements of life in Cornwall. They will not only impact the environment, but also society and the economy. As an extreme Atlantic coastal area, Cornwall currently has a generally temperate maritime climate but wetter, stormier winters and hotter drier summers will directly affect, biodiversity, water resources, infrastructure, health, tourism and agriculture for example. Increased rainfall, storminess and sea level rise have great significance in terms of Cornwall’s vulnerability as a particularly exposed peninsula.

9.3 Climate change is a global problem, with significant impacts that will be experienced locally. Changes likely to be experienced in the south west by 2100 are:

- Temperature – average warming of 1.0 to 2.5°C, very warm years becoming more frequent
- Precipitation – 5-15% wetter winters, 15-30% drier summers, heavy rainfall more common, significant decrease in snowfall, greater contrast between summer and winter seasons
- Cloud cover – reduction in summer and autumn cloud cover, small increase in winter cloud cover
- Extreme flooding events – more severe and frequent events such as river and coastal flooding
- Sea levels around 1 metre higher than today

9.4 These changes present a range of risks to us and our natural and built environments. It is vital to consider how a building and its surroundings can both minimise contribution to and adapt to climate change at an early stage in the design process in order to achieve more resilient, sustainable developments.

9.5 The homes that we build today should still be around in 100 years. At present, all too often the schemes that are built meet minimum standards; we need to encourage more innovative, high quality schemes that will stand the test of time. The way in which a development matures and adapts, the opportunities and the lifestyle...
that it offers its residents are key to its long-term success.

Coastal flooding, Fowey (2008)

River flooding, Helebridge (2004). Climate change is likely to lead to more extreme weather events in Cornwall

9.6 Creating resilient places is not just about good design, but also about stewardship and the long term maintenance of shared spaces. Cornwall Council has recently introduced a requirement for Biodiversity Net.

Gain from all major development and promotes the use of Building with Nature standards, which sets benchmarks for the provision and maintenance of multi-functional green infrastructure. Biodiversity and green infrastructure are vital in creating resilient places (see Healthy green and inclusive chapter for further details).

9.7 What’s included here:

9.8 This chapter provides guidance on how to make sure our homes and shared open spaces are low maintenance, high quality, sustainable and adaptable in terms of climate change and to meet the demands of changes in our lifestyles and technology.

9.9 Why climate change and community resilience are important?

- Design which meets the challenges of our changing climate will minimise flood risk, storm damage or cliff falls and the associated socio-economic impacts, as well as help homes to be a comfortable temperature.
- Lower maintenance natural solutions for shared open spaces are not only more cost effective, but can have significant benefits to biodiversity, drainage and carbon offsetting.
- Well maintained shared open spaces contribute to the visual amenity of the development, create a sense of place and encourage leisure and recreation activities.
- More efficient homes can help to reduce fuel poverty and generate a more resilient economy through better energy security.
- Easily maintained homes look better and are more sustainable and cost effective for residents.

This Chapter is divided into three topics

Each topic provides a brief explanation of what we are trying to achieve and a series of outcomes that we will use to determine planning applications for new development.

Climate change adaptation

Resource efficiency and zero carbon

Long term stewardship of open spaces
**9.10 Topic: Climate change adaptation**

**9.11 What do we mean by this?**

**9.12** Climate change is expected to mean wetter, stormier winters and hotter drier summers in Cornwall. Therefore, proposals must ensure that they are designed to cope with higher temperatures and greater volumes of rainfall. Furthermore, development should not be allowed in areas that are identified as being vulnerable to coastal erosion or sea level rise. Measures to deal with surface water should not seek solely to manage water on the proposed site but also seek to improve the flood resilience of neighbouring communities.

When considering drainage, sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) should be used in all circumstances unless there is a clear reason why this is not feasible. Often SUDS are over engineered and hidden underground. We encourage natural systems that can be incorporated into other green spaces and be used alongside roads and paths. It is important that where a SUDS solution is implemented that it delivers community and environmental benefits as well.

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**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

**ADAPT 1:** Integrated drainage

**ADAPT 2:** Coastal change

“SUDS mimic natural drainage processes to reduce the effect on the quality and quantity of runoff from developments and provide amenity and biodiversity benefits. Early consideration of the potential multiple benefits and opportunities will help deliver cost effective SUDS scheme with the best results”

susdrain, 2019
9.14 **Outcome ADAPT 1: Integrated drainage**

9.15 Drainage should be one of the first considerations when designing site layouts and the use of natural sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) should be used in all circumstances unless there is a clear reason why this is not feasible.

9.16 **What we expect:**

- As the adopting authority, Cornwall Council is involved as early as possible to discuss the acceptability of any proposals.
- Road surfaces and drainage systems are designed to cope with more frequent episodes of extreme heat and rain.
- Surface water run-off is managed and reduced through the use of SuDS, which should:
  - be designed to maximise the benefits to the sense of place, amenity and biodiversity;
  - be designed and constructed to reduce the overall level of flood risk on the site and the surrounding areas;
  - not increase flood risk elsewhere; and
  - provide for simple and straightforward maintenance.
- As part of the SUDS design, development proposals provide detailed information on:
  - the general drainage and impact of flooding on both existing and proposed development;
  - the existing and proposed ground conditions and ground water conditions;
  - information on rights of discharge; and
  - future management and maintenance.
- Drainage systems are above ground and located in the most appropriate place and as visible features rather than being tucked to the edge of sites or squeezed into leftover spaces.
- Drainage is incorporated into the design of green spaces and roadside landscaping, including rain gardens, ponds, swales, leats and other natural forms rather than crated or buried systems.
- Existing water features, natural springs, ponds and boggy areas are retained and enhanced as part of the scheme.
- Systems are kept as natural as possible with shallow sides to reduce the need for handrails and barriers and to support biodiversity.
- Surface water run-off systems should be designed to minimise flood risk and increase biodiversity.
- Hard landscaped areas must be designed to hold water temporarily in high intensity rain events.
- Permeable paving and other measures to slow water run-off are employed in the site design.
- Paths and driveways do not slope or step down into properties.
- Green roofs and rain gardens are integrated into the design where possible to reduce run-off.
- Tree pits are utilised for drainage on roads and other hard surfaced areas (see Outcome GREEN 5).
- Linked systems are used across developments and designed to be extendable to maximise benefits and allow for flexibility and changes within the built environment.
- Retrospective SUDS are incorporated to improve the flood resilience of neighbouring communities (especially where the development is in a critical drainage area) where appropriate. Developers could consider giving on-site SUDS proposals sufficient capacity to enable separation and diversion of surface water run-off from neighbouring combined sewer outflow systems.
9.17 **Outcome ADAPT 2: Coastal change**

9.18 Development should take account of the predicted changes to our coastline and avoid proposals in areas identified as being at risk or that might impact upon vulnerable coastal habitats.

9.19 **What we expect:**
- Inappropriate development in vulnerable areas should be avoided (see the [Shoreline Management Plan](#)).
- Any development that might impact on coastal habitat and exacerbate coastal squeeze should be avoided.

*Erosion at Maer Cliff near Bude (image courtesy of Kris Inch)*
9.20 **Topic: Resource efficiency and zero carbon**

9.21 **What do we mean by this?**

9.22 More than a quarter of the UK’s carbon emissions comes from the energy we use every day to heat, light and run our homes. The embedded energy and environmental impact of producing and transporting materials can also be significant. The quality of new homes and buildings is therefore of fundamental importance if Cornwall Council’s goal of net zero carbon by 2030 is to be reached. New development should follow the energy hierarchy. Intelligent design, improved building materials, insulation, energy efficient systems and appliances and renewable energy technology will not only reduce carbon emissions, but also help to address fuel poverty.

**The energy hierarchy**

9.23 It is not only energy that is important to consider, but the efficient use of water and the choice and reuse of building materials to minimise environmental impact and reduce long-term costs. New buildings need to be constructed from materials that are designed for Cornwall’s damp, maritime climate, to ensure that they stand the test of time. Development proposals will be expected to prioritise lower maintenance solutions and the use of high quality materials which will last longer and/or require less maintenance but be repairable when needs be.
9.24 **Outcome RESOURCE 1: Energy efficiency**

9.25 Homes should be designed to be as resource efficient as possible (see Outcomes [INTERNAL 3](#) and [INTERNAL 4](#)) and refer to the Government’s emerging [Future Homes Standard](#).

9.26 **What we expect:**

- Proposals reduce the energy load of the development through good layout, orientation and design to maximise natural heating, cooling and lighting, and reduce the heat loss area.
- Buildings are positioned within their plots so they get maximum sunlight in rear gardens and plenty of daylight inside.
- Opportunities for solar gain are maximised by orientating blocks within 30 degrees of the east-west axis.
- Living rooms are positioned to the south of a building to get the best natural heat and light. Service rooms and circulation areas are positioned to the north.
- For major developments, a solar master plan shows how access to natural light has been optimised in the development.
- Shading is provided to south facing windows to prevent overheating in the summer months.
- Materials with high thermal mass are included within the building structure to absorb the sun’s heat energy.
- Insulation is installed in all main elements of the building: walls, roof and floors so that all sections overlap with no breaks in the thermal envelope. Insulation is fitted correctly to avoid thermal bridges (cold spots).
- Insulating products are as environmentally friendly as possible for example recycled newspaper and hemp.
- Windows and doors are double or triple glazed.

*Optimal orientation in relation to the sun and prevailing winds (image courtesy of Treveth Development)*
9.27 **Outcome RESOURCE 2: Renewables**

9.28 The adoption of renewable technologies must increase as we move towards zero carbon. The design of new homes should reflect this and refer to the Government’s emerging [Future homes standard](#).

9.29 **What we expect:**

- The use of renewable energy technologies in new development is encouraged and provision should be made for the easy adoption of renewables in the future, e.g. make sure that roofs are strong enough to hold a photovoltaic system and that the design allows for system maintenance and connections for electric vehicle charging.
- Where rooftop solar photovoltaics are included, panels are positioned on building surfaces that face south within 90 degrees and are not overshadowed and ideally on a pitch of between 30 and 40 degrees.
- Solar panels and rooftop technology should be integrated into the design and not appear as an after-thought, ideally being flush with the roof surface.
- Future proofing new homes that have a gas boiler installed by ensuring radiator systems are sized to run at low temperature (<55°C), making them heat pump and heat network ready.
9.30 **Outcome RESOURCE 3: Water efficiency**

9.31 Homes should be designed to be as resource efficient as possible.

9.32 **What we expect:**

- Proposals include water meters, water saving devices, efficient fixtures and appliances, such as dual flush/low flush toilets, aerated spray taps, low flow showers and low volume baths.
- Rainwater harvesting systems are installed for rainwater to be used in non-potable application such as toilet flushing, laundry, cleaning and garden use, e.g. water butts.
- Grey water recycling systems are used where basin and shower water is filtered and treated for use in the toilet and garden.

Rain gardens help to slow down surface drainage and provide green interest.
9.33 **Outcome RESOURCE 4: Land and materials resource efficiency**

9.34 The British Research Establishment define material resource efficiency as ‘Doing more with less’. This is an essential element of long term resilience.

9.35 **What we expect:**

- Efficient layouts which allow for ready access to services whilst minimising the area of land needed to be built on and maximising green spaces without compromising on aspects such as liveability, daylight and distinctiveness.
- Proposals outline the approach for using materials in the most sustainable manner. The preferred option is not to produce waste, followed by reuse and recycling. i.e.
  - Take the opportunity to re-use natural materials found on site, either as a result of demolition or excavation.
  - Reusing existing buildings
  - Using materials that are reclaimed or that have a higher recycled content
  - Using fewer materials
  - Optimising the use of local materials
  - Preventing waste throughout the supply chain and development
  - Proposals prioritise the use of locally sourced materials with low embodied energy where feasible.

Path made from recycled straws, community orchard, Nansledan, Newquay (courtesy of ADAM Architecture)
9.36 **Outcome RESOURCE 5: High quality and low maintenance materials**

9.37 High quality materials should be used wherever possible on homes and in the public realm to minimise ongoing maintenance. It is also important to consider the implications of site layout on the durability of the building materials (see Outcome [FORM 2](#)).

9.38 **What we expect:**

- Developments use high quality, durable, natural materials that are locally distinctive, require less maintenance and are recyclable.
- Surface materials allow for ease of access of access and be easy to maintain and repair.
- Materials used are resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Materials are chosen to withstand the damp, maritime climate, e.g. render/paints should be anti-algal, external fixtures and fittings must not be prone to rust.

- Houses are not built so close together that a lack of air circulation or light can encourage external damp, discolouration or mould on walls and windows.

*Staggered gable ends can be difficult to access and less likely to be maintained; using slate is preferable, as shown as Chy An Dowr, Falmouth*

*Mismaterials and treatments should be selected to avoid unsightly algae*
9.39 **Topic: Long Term Stewardship**

9.40 **What do we mean by this?**

9.41 The way in which a development is managed, in particular how shared spaces are managed, will have a big impact on people’s quality of life, community cohesion, the sense of place, biodiversity and drainage. Good long term stewardship means the ongoing, effective management of high quality shared open spaces.

9.42 When designing new shared open spaces their location, use and future management should be considered to make sure they are viable and sustainable and where appropriate links to existing community groups are created or enhanced. New development will be expected to prioritise lower maintenance solutions and the use of high quality materials which will last longer and require less maintenance.

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**Outcomes that should be considered in your design**

**STEWARD 1:** Designed for long term maintenance

**STEWARD 2:** High quality and low maintenance

**STEWARD 3:** Community involvement

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An open space in Hayle transformed from grass to a lower maintenance, more biodiverse community area through the Making Space for Nature Programme.
9.43 **Outcome STEWARD 1: Designed for long term maintenance**

9.44 It is vitally important for the success of the development that long term maintenance is considered from the outset.

9.45 **What we expect:**

- Green spaces should be designed to allow for effective long-term management and maintenance, but not be defined by it.
- Landscapes, planting and species are designed and selected for future operation and maintenance as well as distinctiveness and green infrastructure benefits (see Outcomes LANDSCAPE 1, LANDSCAPE 2 and GREEN 5).
- The principles of long term management and care of public and shared open spaces are established before the planning stage and planning submissions detail how this will be achieved e.g. through a trust.
- Measures are in place to support the retention of biodiversity, drainage and other resilience features are retained on private property.

Wildflower meadow created in Hayle through the Making Space for Nature Programme

An open space in Redruth transformed from grass to a more attractive, biodiverse community area whilst retaining the football pitch through the Making Space for Nature Programme

- There is a long-term stewardship model which has been discussed with Cornwall Council to adopt networks of assets (drainage, highways and green infrastructure); this must take a long-term strategic approach to the maintenance and management of these assets.
9.46 **Outcome STEWARD 2: High quality and low maintenance**

9.47 Equally as important as planning in long term maintenance is the use of low maintenance, high quality solutions to minimise the need for ongoing maintenance.

9.48 **What we expect:**
- Natural and lower maintenance solutions are employed in public spaces: for example low growth grasses, hedgerows, wildflower strips/meadows which can also support biodiversity including wildflowers and pollinators.
- The long term management and compatibility with other species is a factor when selecting screening and softening plants and trees.
- Street trees are of a suitable species and specification and planted in appropriate pit structures to avoid future conflicts with services and hard surfaces in the long term (see Outcome GREEN 5).
- There is minimal need for artificial irrigation and mains water supply to feed plants (grey water/rain water is used) (see Outcome RESOURCE 3).
- Equipment and play features are predominantly natural and robust to reduce the need for future replacement and reduce ongoing liability (see Outcome GREEN 2).
- The whole life cost of infrastructure has been considered and a higher quality/ lower maintenance approach should be encouraged and rewarded with lower costs associated with adoption.

9.49 **Outcome STEWARD 3: Community involvement**

9.50 In order for the development to be a success, the open spaces must be designed to be appropriate to the local character and needs of the population (see Effective design process and Locally distinctive chapters), be accessible to all and usable all year round. This will help to foster a sense of community and lead to numerous health and wellbeing benefits.

9.51 **What we expect:**
- Public and shared open spaces meet the needs of new and existing occupants and are appropriate to the scale of development.
- Public and shared open spaces integrate new and existing development and where applicable expand existing public realm to improve connections for people and wildlife.
- Residents and community groups have the opportunity to get involved in voluntary activities relating to public and shared open spaces.
- Contracts for ongoing management and maintenance include the ability for the local residents to get involved in the way that their green spaces are managed, including (where the contract has been awarded to a third party) the right to take over the contract at defined intervals (Community Step in Rights).
- Where provided, indoor facilities such as community centres, schools, cultural centres and health centres should be designed flexibly to support different activities that allow community interaction.
10 Appendices

10.1 Design and Access Statement guidance and template

10.2 When is a Design and Access Statement required?

10.3 A Design and Access Statement is required for the following planning applications:

- Applications for “major development” \(^1\) (typically 10 or more dwellings, 1000sqm of new floorspace, or sites of 1ha or more);
- Applications for development in a World Heritage Site or conservation area, where the proposed development consists of one or more dwellings or 100sqm of new floorspace;
- Applications for listed building consent.

10.4 Applications for a material change of use, waste development, engineering operations, mining operations or amending planning conditions do not need to include a Design and Access Statement.

10.5 For smaller proposals including those for one or more dwellings, a Design Statement will be required. As with a full Design and Access Statement, this should draw on the principles raised in this Design Guide, albeit expressed in a manner proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposals.

10.6 What does a Design and Access Statement do?

10.7 The Design and Access Statement is an applicant’s opportunity to demonstrate how together the design process and proposed development reflect the context of the site, community and Cornwall Council engagement and design policy/guidance (national, local and neighbourhood) to achieve the best design solution.

10.8 How should it be prepared?

10.9 The Design and Access Statement should be concise but proportionate in length to the scale and complexity of the scheme, clearly written and well-illustrated for all stakeholders to accurately interpret the proposals. We strongly recommend that our Design and Access Statement Template is used as the basis for all Design and Access Statements; making adaptations only where necessary to suit the nature of the proposals.

10.10 Design and Access Statement template

10.11 A Design and Access Statement should begin with an appraisal of the site, its surroundings and feedback from engagement. This should then form the basis for design work, allowing the design and access elements of the statement to naturally follow on. Equally, whilst addressed separately overleaf, design and access should be integrated aspects of any scheme. Many of the subjects set out in the recommended template below will benefit from labelled photographs and illustrations. Technical and architectural diagrams should be professionally and accurately drawn. The template includes links to particularly relevant parts of the Design Guide.

10.12 Download an editable Word version of the template.

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\(^1\) Refer to definition in article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015
### Context Appraisal

For fuller guidance on completing a Context Appraisal refer to the Phase 1: Context appraisal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Recommended points to include</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental context</td>
<td>• identify habitat, hedges, trees, landscape character, existing land forms, topography, flood risk and drainage – on and surrounding the site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Built form and materials context</td>
<td>• identify built form, materials, styles, forms and heights of existing buildings – on and surrounding the site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic and local distinctiveness context</td>
<td>• identify historic and cultural buildings, boundaries, spaces and features and their significance – on and surrounding the site, refer to a Heritage Statement if one is required to provide further detail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Functional and infrastructure context</td>
<td>• outline on-site and local infrastructure and facilities and how they are used including existing activities and functions; identifying existing patterns of uses, footpaths, cycle paths, public transport connections, roads, employment, health, education and community facilities as well as open spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>• outline relevant requirements of any neighbourhood plans and any other contextual information provided within neighbourhood planning documents, outline the stages and dates when stakeholder and Cornwall Council engagement occurred, the formats of engagement and in broad terms how feedback influenced the design process and scheme (more detail can be included under the relevant sections for Design and Access below), outline community feedback to any relevant previous proposals on or near the site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context evaluation</td>
<td>• summarise constraints and opportunities, N.B. applicants should avoid working retrospectively i.e. trying to justify a pre-determined design through subsequent site appraisal and evaluation.</td>
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### Design

Relevant to all chapters in the design guide.

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design principles and concepts overview</td>
<td>• explain how broad options were generated and selected, • set out the overarching principles for the amount, scale, layout, landscaping and appearance of the scheme and how they relate to the Context Appraisal, explain how any heritage and landscape assets are to be treated, explain how the design principles relate to Local Plan policy and guidance and any Neighbourhood Planning policy and guidance</td>
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<td>Amount</td>
<td>• explain and justify the quantum and density of development proposed and how that relates to the site’s current state and surroundings, any features to be retained and the site’s surroundings</td>
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<td>Layout</td>
<td>• explain and justify the choice of development zones and blocks or building plots proposed including the layout including, • the relationship between buildings, uses and public and private spaces within and around the site, how distribution and siting relate to community facilities within and near the site, how topography has been addressed, how crime prevention has been considered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>• explain and justify the height, width, depth and massing of buildings proposed, how particular heights have been settled upon and how the proposed scale relates to the surroundings and any features to be retained, explain and justify the size of building features, particularly entrances and facades and how they will relate to the human scale, explain how homes will be well proportioned to support modern, healthy lifestyle</td>
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### Landscaping

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- explain and justify the landscaping of private and public spaces and their relationship to the surrounding area
- illustrate how any green networks will be enhanced or created
- show how the design of outside spaces will make them attractive, multifunctional and sustainable including making space for nature and biodiversity net gain
- set out how public spaces including planting and street furniture etc will enhance the scheme and be maintained in the long term

### Appearance

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- explain and justify the appearance of the proposed buildings and their settings including
- how they relate to the character of the development’s surroundings and enhance local distinctiveness
- how architecture and public realm provides interest
- the palette, colour and use of materials
- how appearance changes throughout the day and seasons

### Efficiency

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- outline how buildings are designed to be efficient and easy to maintain in terms of land, materials, water and energy

### Access

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- explain how access arrangements will ensure that all users (regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping) will have equal and convenient access to buildings and spaces and prioritise active travel and public transport use over private vehicular travel including:
  - adherence to Local Plan policy and guidance and any Neighbourhood Planning policy and guidance
  - any consultation on access issues that has been undertaken and how this has influenced the proposal
  - how prospective users will access the development and why the main access points have been chosen
  - legibility, signage and lighting
  - how any potential barriers to inclusive access have been addressed, including access to active travel options and the public transport network
  - how decisions about materials and appearance have considered inclusive accessibility (including the use of colour, tone and lighting in relation to entrances, circulation routes etc)
  - how features which ensure access will be maintained, including egress routes from buildings in case of emergency and adoption intentions

### Consultation Draft

Access refer in particular to Design Guide Chapters on Connected and accessible, Healthy, green and inclusive and Liveable homes.
Draft Design guide

How to achieve quality in development for people, wildlife & the environment

NB Not all links are live in this draft document