Playford

Design Guidance and Codes

Final Report

February 2022

Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Check by	Approved by
Nicholas Tobias Graduate Urban Designer	Ben Castell Director, UK & I Town Planning Team Lead	Keith Carson Playford Parish Council
Chatnam Lee Graduate Urban Designer		

Contents

Introduction

01

1. Introduction

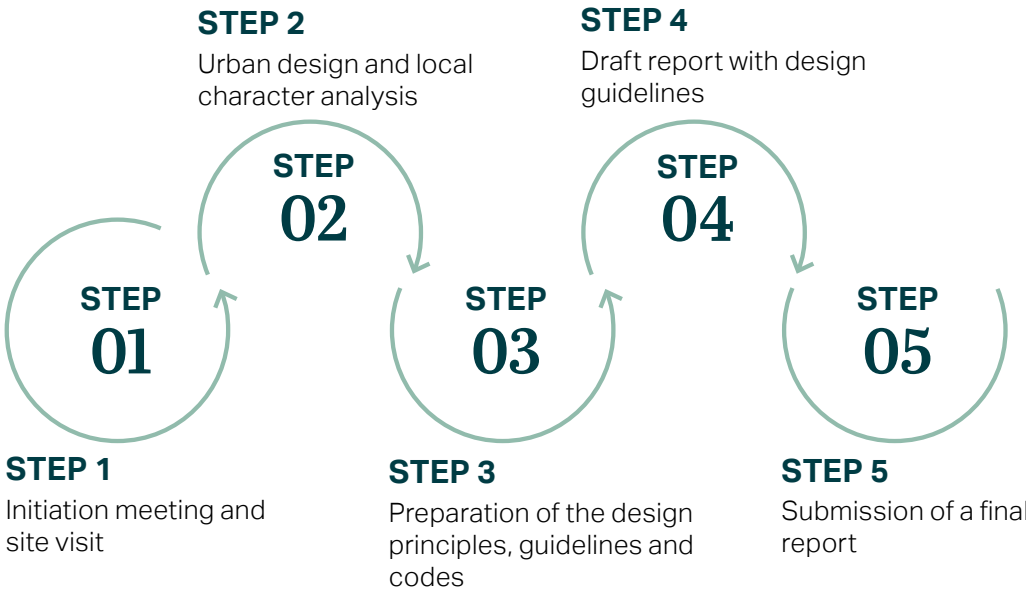
Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Playford Parish Council. The support is intended to provide design guidance and codes based on the character and local qualities of the area.

1.1 Objectives

The main objective of this report is to develop design guidelines for Playford that any future development within the parish should follow in order to retain and protect its rural character whilst accommodating local housing needs. In line with the vision of the parish steering group, the following objectives have been adopted:

- Protect the Identity of Playford as 'The Village in the Valley';
- Protect the important landscape character of the village;
- Deliver small scale development on appropriate sites; and
- Improve access to the countryside.

To achieve these objectives the following steps have been taken:



1.2 Area of study

The area of study for this report is the Playford Neighbourhood Area as designated by East Suffolk Council. This is the same boundary as Playford parish and is shown in figure 01 below.

Playford parish lies on the outskirts of Ipswich within in the East Suffolk district of Suffolk county. It mostly comprises countryside with a small village, of the same name, situated in the heart of the parish. The entire parish is designated as countryside in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan adopted by East Suffolk Council in 2020.

The surrounding area around Playford is home to archaeological finds dating back to the Bronze age which suggests early inhabitants formed settlements along the area's rivers. However, it is the Anglo-Saxon artefacts found in the area that point to the period of origin for Playford.

Indeed, by 1086, in the Domesday Book, Playford is mentioned as a village, appearing as 'Plegeforda' meaning "the ford where sports were held" in old English. As such, Playford may have developed owing to the abundance of water assets in the area, including the Fynn River and Playford Mere. While neither are visible from the village today, the latter is still regarded as a landmark for Playford, connected to the village by a Public Right of Way that approaches the water body from the west.

Playford is located in the Fynn Valley which consists of green rolling hills, water meadows and ancient woodland. This forms the backdrop for the village which is built up around a small network of roads. It is home to 215 residents according to the 2011 Census with a variety of professions.

Playford village is around a 15-minute drive from Ipswich city centre and is currently serviced by a few bus routes that connect to the town and some neighbouring villages. In addition, there is a school bus service for kids to be dropped in neighbouring Kesgrave and Farlingayes.

The Playford Village Hall and St Mary's Church are the two community assets in the village. The hall supports locally organised community events and classes such as pilates and yoga through to toddler group meetups while the church, dating from the 13th century, provides a service on Sundays.

Aside from the amenity open space outside the village hall, there are no other amenities in the village save for the natural environment within its surroundings. These surroundings contribute to the rural character of the village and offer views across meadows and arable land that border its streets.

Public Rights of Way weave through the village and into the surrounding landscape providing connections between the village, the natural surroundings and neighbouring built up areas. Some of these paths are used for the daily commute to nearby schools.

F.1 **Figure 01:** Map showing Playford parish, the study area for this report, and its surroundings.

1.3 Planning policy and guidance

1.3.1 National policy and guidance

As the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 126) notes, "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".

National and local policy documents can provide valuable guidance on bringing about good design. Some are there to establish adequate planning regulations to ensure development is both fit for purpose and able to build sustainable, thriving communities. Other documents are more technical and offer specific design guidance which can inform design codes and masterplanning activities.

Developers should refer to these key documents when planning future development in Playford. The following documents at a national level have informed the design guidance within this report:

2021 National Model Design Code DLUHC

This report provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.

2021 - National Planning Policy Framework DLUHC

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life Homes England

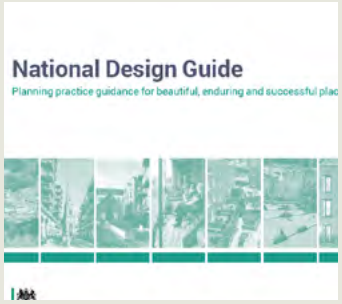
Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the crucial role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing.

2019 - National Design Guide
DLUHC

The National Design Guide (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2019) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

2007 - Manual for Streets
Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts and promote active travel.



1.3.2 Local planning policy context

Local planning policy can provide design guidance that is tailored to the context of the development and supported by analysis that is taken directly from the area. Therefore, it is vital local policy is considered in the event of future development in Playford.

2020 - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan
East Suffolk Council

This is the district Local Plan which covers Playford Parish and, as such, directly affects the study area. It sets out a district-wide urban planning strategy designed to provide a cohesive vision for East Suffolk up to 2036, addressing issues such as housing needs, infrastructure provision and conserving both the natural and historic environment. Policies set out in this document should be considered by developers when planning to develop in Playford. The plan designates Playford as countryside which restricts what can be built within the parish. This document should be consulted when assessing whether development is viable.

Neighbourhood Area Context Analysis

02

2. Neighbourhood Area Context Analysis

This section outlines the broad physical, historic and contextual characteristics of Playford parish.

2.1 History and built heritage

2.1.1 Historical Development:

The origin of Playford can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon times as suggested both by the artefacts uncovered in the village and records in the 1086 Domesday Survey. Records of Playford Hall can be found in the Domesday Book, where it was described to be a large farmhouse with farmland attached and occupied by the Lord of the Manor, with the rest of the village developing around the Hall.

2.1.2 Built heritage:

Playford includes a selection of Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings which serve as key landmarks for the village, whilst contributing to its character. Some notable built heritage includes Playford Hall which can be dated back to the late 16th century and the Church of St Mary (c.1400) – both of which are Grade II* listed buildings.

The moated area around Playford Hall is designated as a scheduled monument, whilst the bridge connecting Playford Hall with the moat, and the surrounding stable and coach house are designated as Grade II listed structures.

Playford Hall is also historically associated with Thomas Clarkson – a renowned slave trade Abolitionist, who resided in Playford Hall during 1816 – 1846. To commemorate Clarkson's good deeds, a granite obelisk was erected and remains in the village churchyard to date as a Grade II listed structure in the village.

Figure 02: Photo of Playford Hall from a neighbouring field. Photo taken by Andrew Hill.

Figure 03: Photo of the Grade II listed monument to Thomas Clarkson, 10 metres from the Church of St Mary.

Figure 04: Photo of the Church of Saint Mary.

Figure 05: Photo of a listed residential building on Church Lane.

Figure 06: Map showing the location of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and ancient woodland within and around the Playford study area.

2.1.3 Playford village and the surrounding area:

According to figures published by East Suffolk Council in 2019, Playford has a population of 215 people, in 93 dwellings within a 5km² area. The average age of inhabitants stands at 42.5 with more middle-aged members and young children and fewer teenagers and young adults. The vast majority of the dwellings contain at least one car with an average of 1.76 cars per dwelling.

Playford village is formed along a small network of roads loosely resembling a 'rectangle' shape. There is not one nucleated centre though the Playford Village Hall off Butts Road can be considered a centre of the community. According to the 2011 Census the predominant house types in the village are detached and semi-detached with only one terraced house and one flat. Since 2008, there have been a total of three new homes built in the area.

Notable buildings in the village include Playford Village Hall, the Church of St Mary, Playford Hall to the south-west of the village and a few listed buildings which are all highlighted on the map in figure 9.

The surrounding area around Playford is predominantly arable land with some areas with rich natural features such as the Playford Mere. Public Rights of Way and minor roads connect Playford to adjacent settlements such as Little Bealings and Great Bealings. One such path is shown in figure 7.


F.7


F.8

Figure 07: Photo showing a track in Playford with an entrance to a footpath leading away from the village.

Figure 08: Photo showing football and basketball facilities outside Playford Village Hall.

Figure 09: Map showing the layout of Playford Village and notable buildings and features.

2.2 Green infrastructure and the natural environment

Playford, set in the picturesque countryside of Ipswich and the valleys of the River Flynn, is characterised by open fields interspersed with woodlands that serve as biodiversity-rich green infrastructure for the village. This backdrop contributes positively to Playford's rural character.

2.2.1 Open spaces and designations

Many of the open spaces found in the parish are open fields that are accessible via a well-connected network of Public Rights of Way including footpaths, a byway, heading to Rushmere St Andrew, and a bridleway. Some of the key open spaces within the village include playing fields and a playground to the front of Playford Village Hall and the churchyard of St Mary's Church.

Playford falls within the Landscape Character Types of "Rolling Farmlands and Furze", "Ancient Rolling Farmlands" and "Estate Sandlands" in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment. Within these landscape character types are some priority habitats and designated protected areas, including the Sinks Valley, Kesgrave Site of Special Scientific Interest in the south-western part of the parish, floodplain grazing marshes, acidic grassland and deciduous woodlands interspersed across the parish. Playford boasts a rich and high-quality ecological network which should be adequately protected and managed to maintain its environmental sustainability.

2.2.2 Key views

Playford lies within an area of rolling hills which offers opportunities for views and vistas in some parts of the parish. The key views within Playford are from the village into neighbouring farmland, such as from Hill Farm Road facing towards the south, shown in figures 10 and 11.

Figure 10: Photo showing farmland adjacent to Playford village.

Figure 11: Photo showing green space adjacent to Playford village with a bench overlooking a pond.

F.12 | **Figure 12:** Map showing green infrastructure and natural features in and around Playford parish.

2.3 Movement and access

Playford is located to the north-east of Ipswich, north of Kesgrave and is in close proximity to nearby villages – Little Bealings and Great Bealings to the east. Running north-south across the village is Butts Road and Church Road – which are connected by Church Lane and together with Hill Farm Road form an east-west axes of the village. Butts Road and Church Road reaches Bealings Road, connecting Playford towards Ipswich to the west and Great Bealings village to the east.

Branching out from these key routes is a simple network of lanes and cul-de-sacs that provide access to residential areas and farmhouses of the village. Playford also boasts an extensive network of Public Rights of Way weaving through the village, providing easy access for walkers and cyclists to nearby fields, farmlands, and villages. There is a gradual transition from the rural landscape and character of Playford and surrounding area into the higher density suburban character of Ipswich to the west and Kesgrave to the south along Bealings Road and Butts Road.

2.3.1 Car parking

Public parking is provided at the Playford Village Hall car park which is at the side of the hall. On-street parking is also available for visitors on some roads, although due to the narrow widths of most roads in Playford, extensive on-street visitor parking could result in congestion. Residential parking is generally provided at the front of houses and many houses have driveways that could allow parking for 1-2 vehicles. Some houses are fitted with garages - offering sheltered parking solutions. On-street parking is also common for households that don't have a driveway or a garage.


F.13

Figure 13: A photo of Butts Road heading south. It has the characteristics of a rural country road with an unmarked carriageway and no footpaths or car parking allocation.


F.14

Figure 14: Photo of a typical Public Right of Way in Playford.

2.4 Built form

A number of housing styles can be found across Playford which contributes to its character as a rural village, despite having a relatively small settlement area and population. While Playford is largely residential in character, there are religious uses and civic uses such as Church of St Mary, shown in figure 12, and the Playford Village Hall, shown in figure 13, that adds variety to the village's uses and built form.

2.4.1 Building heights and housing Typologies

The housing stock in Playford varies from single storey bungalows to semi-detached and detached houses 2-3 storeys tall, all with ample rear garden spaces. The majority of housing stock in Playford was built and completed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with some pockets of newer developments from the recent decade interspersed across the village.

Figure 15: Photo of the Church of St Mary in Playford.

Figure 17: Photo of a two storey dwelling in Playford with a red brick and off-white render facade.

Figure 16: Photo of Playford Village Hall.

Figure 18: Photo of a more recent single storey development in Playford.

2.4.2 Building orientation and boundary

Orientation of buildings varies across the village, with most buildings fronting onto residential roads and cul-de-sacs, and a few addressing the street with their end gable. Most houses are appropriately setback from the street and buffered by green verges, trees, or hedgerows, with the exception of a few that are fronting directly onto the street with little setback. Back gardens are generally buffered and screened by hedgerows and foliage to provide a good level of privacy.

Figure 19: Photo of a two storey dwelling in Playford with garage and on-plot front parking along with no boundary treatment for the front of its plot.

Figure 20: Photo of a more recent single storey dwelling sat back away from the street.

Figure 21: Photo of a two stroey dwelling sat close to the street with a well defined boundary in the form of a low brick wall and vegetation.

2.4.3 Roof profile

There is a variety of roof profiles seen on houses across Playford. Recurring styles include pitched roofs with tiles and chimneys, as well as tiled hipped roofs. Some larger houses are seen with cross-gabled roofs, especially ones that have extensions. In some of the newer housing stock, flat roofs and a hybrid of multiple roof profiles are observed – adding variety to the built form in Playford.

2.4.4 Fenestration

Common fenestration styles found in Playford are mostly variations of casement windows, including ones with wooden frames and more modern finishing. Vasistas windows and floor-to-ceiling windows are also commonly featured on newly finished houses. Dormer and Bay windows are also used but are less commonly featured.

Figure 22: Photo of a dwelling with a gabled red-tiled roof and red brick chimney in Playford.

Figure 24: Photo of a typical pitched roof in Playford.

Figure 23: Photo of a dwelling in Playford with a hipped, concrete-tiled roof.

Figure 25: Photo showing a bungalow with casement windows.

2.4.5 Architectural details and materials

A broad range of architectural details and materials featured in Playford parish can be used as reference for future developments as means to preserve and accentuate its rural character. Different shades of timber boarding, as well as beige and red brick are particularly popular materials used by houses in the village. Not only do they provide a coherent character for the village as a whole, they also allow houses to embed into the surrounding rural landscape.

In addition to this, white and off-white render are found on whole facades or on extensions with the main building consisting of a different material. In Playford, the mixing of materials is common and acts as an interesting feature in Playford's architectural character.

Finally, while the colour palette varies from building to building, earth colours appear more frequently in Playford with beige, red, off-white and brown, being the most common colour's seen.

Figure 26: Photo of a dwelling with a mixture of red-brown weatherboarding, red bricks and white render.

Figure 28: Photo of a dwelling with off-white weatherboarding and brown detailing.

Figure 27: Photo of a dwelling with a red brick facade with extensions with off-white render.

Figure 29: Photo of a dwelling with a red brick facade and matching extension, as well as a light blue front porch canopy.

Design Guidance & Codes

03

3. Design guidance & codes

This section sets out the principles that will influence the design of potential new development and inform the retrofit of existing properties in Playford parish. Where possible, local images are used to exemplify the design guidelines and codes. Where these images are not available, best practice examples from elsewhere are used.

3.1 Introduction

The following section describes a set of design codes that have been put together based on the existing context of Playford.

These codes will aim to guide any changes or development within the village to ensure the local character is respected whilst still allowing space for innovation within the built environment.

The design codes have been split into four sections. All four sections relate to the whole of the parish and generally start on a broader scale and head towards more detailed codes.

3.1.1 The importance of good design

As the NPPF (paragraph 126) notes, "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".

Research, such as for the Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, The Value of Good Design[1]) has shown that good design of buildings and places can:

- Improve health and well-being
- Increase civic pride and cultural activity
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Reduce pollution.

This document seeks to harness an understanding of how good design can make future development as endearingly popular as the best of what has gone before.

3.1.2 Placemaking and design codes

These design codes are underpinned by a set of placemaking principles that should influence the design of future development areas, public realms, homes and green spaces, and the interfaces between them.

What designers and planners call 'placemaking' is about creating the physical conditions that residents and users find attractive and safe, with good levels of social interaction and layouts that are easily understood.

The placemaking principles set out in the following pages should be used to assess the design quality of future development or regeneration proposals. These key principles should be considered in all cases of future development as they reflect positive place-making and draw on the principles set out in many national urban design best practice documents including the National Design Guide, Building for a Healthy Life and the Urban Design Compendium.

The guidelines developed in this part focus on residential environments. However, new housing development should not be viewed in isolation, but considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context.

The local pattern of lanes and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of a development.

It is important with any proposal that full account is taken of the local context and that the new design embodies the 'sense of place'.

Reference to context means using what is around, shown in the first two chapters, as inspiration and influence and it could be a contemporary solution that is in harmony with the surroundings.

3.1.3 Structure of the design codes

Based on the understanding gained in the previous chapters, this section will identify design codes for future developments to adhere to. As identified in the diagnostic report, the following design codes have been created to apply to the whole of the parish though some codes will be more relevant to built up areas such as Playford village.

The design codes are split into four sections as follows:

OS	Open space and the natural environment
DC	Design in context
BF	Built form general rules
SD	Sustainable design

The sections are arranged from codes that deal with larger scales in the first two sections to more detailed design codes in the latter two sections. Prefixes are assigned to each section and each code is numbered to help with future referencing.

Both national and local guidance, outlined in chapter 1, should be read in conjunction with these codes. These codes act as a support to these documents and should not be considered in isolation.

OS 3.2 Open space and the natural environment

The following set of design codes pertain to the green infrastructure and natural environment in and around Playford. They provide guidance on how to enhance and preserve existing natural features whilst strengthening the relationship between the built and natural form. This includes key guidance such as preserving views and protecting biodiversity.

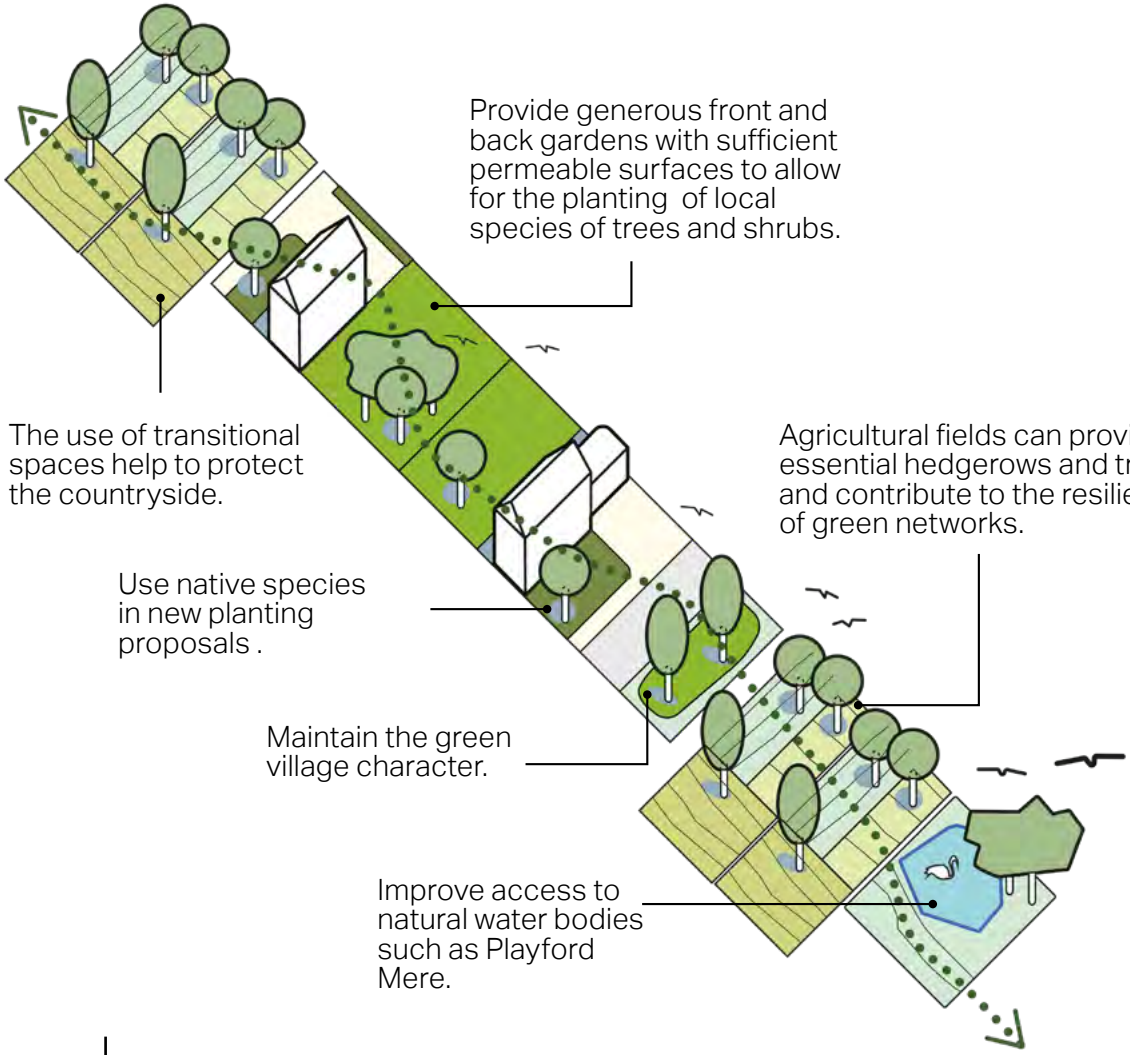
Figure 30: Photo of green space which is overlooked by Playford village and forms a key part of the village's identity.

OS

3.2.1 Connecting the natural environment

The countryside within Playford parish is highly valued and must be protected from development which detracts from its appearance and threatens natural ecosystems. The designation of some parts of the parish as being environmentally sensitive areas places added importance in this regard.

Playford Mere and the habitats and environment it creates should be protected with any new development ensuring that access to footpaths and open spaces are preserved or increased.



F.31 **Figure 31:** Illustrative diagram showing connections between a section of village and countryside.

OS

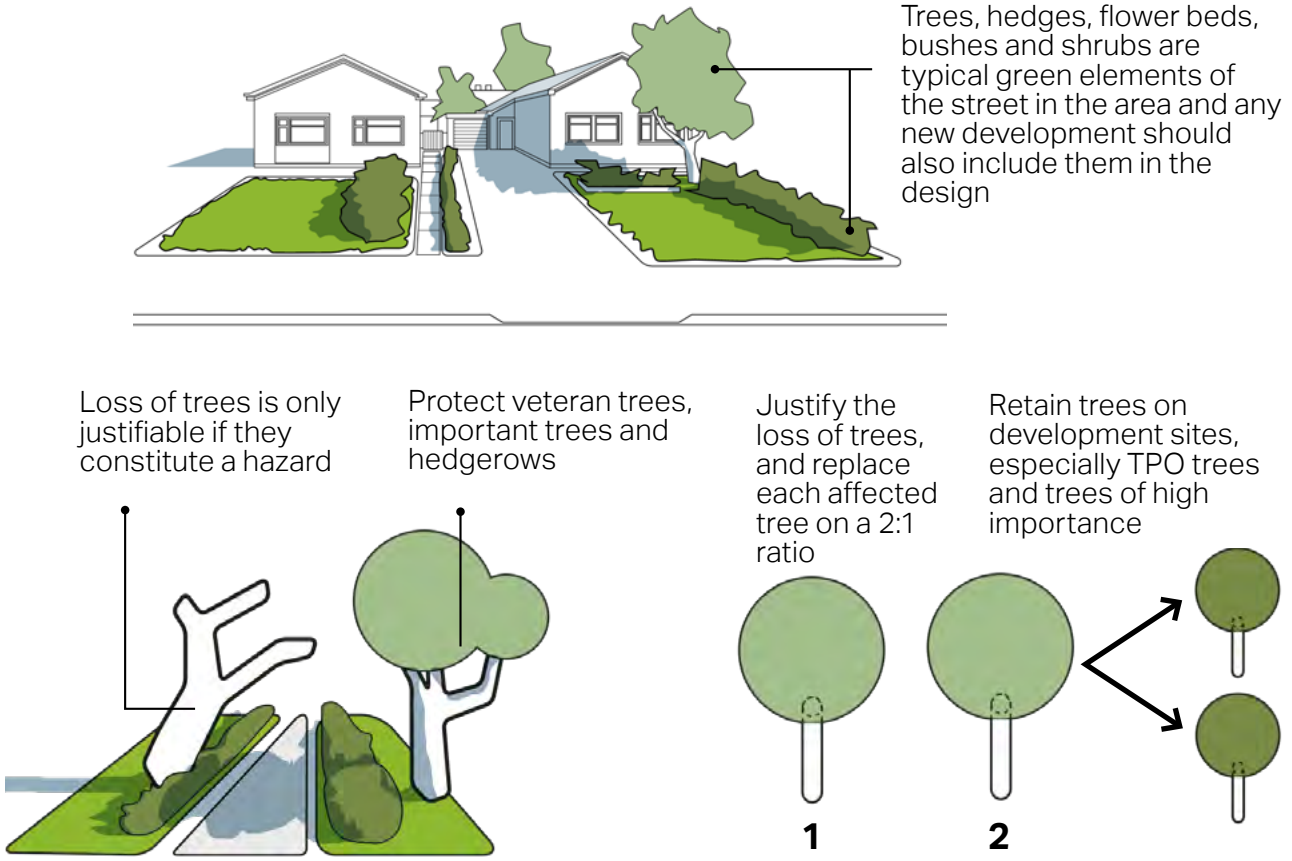
3.2.2 Woodlands, trees and hedgerows

Trees are crucial to the integration of Playford into its physical context. Therefore, new developments and any change in the physical environment should:

• Incorporate existing native trees and shrubs and avoid unnecessary loss of flora.

• Replace any tree or woodland lost to new development. Native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the more rural character of the area.

• Promote rich vegetation in front and rear gardens to improve the visual impact and mitigate air pollution. New and retained vegetation at the edges of new developments are particularly important for their successful integration into the wider landscape.



F.32

Figure 32: Diagram to highlight some guidelines related to tree preservation.

OS

3.2.3 Biodiversity

Playford has many natural features and assets, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, verges, front and back gardens. They all contribute to provide habitats for biodiversity to flourish.

- Development must protect and enhance woodlands, hedges, trees and road verges, where possible. Natural tree buffers should also be protected when planning for new developments.
- Development must avoid abrupt edges to development with little vegetation or landscape on the edge of the settlement and, instead, aim for a comprehensive landscape buffering.
- Development should seek to achieve biodiversity net gain in accordance with government regulations and provide new habitats and wildlife corridors.
- It is important to ensure existing habitats are buffered. Widths of buffer zones should be wide enough and based on specific ecological function.
- Development should, as appropriate, create wildlife corridors in the surrounding countryside by proposing new green links and improving the existing ones. This will enable wildlife to travel to and from foraging areas and their dwelling areas. An example of this are hedgehog corridors which should be incorporated into new developments to ensure relevant habitats for hedgehogs are maintained and enhanced.
- Development must protect mature and veteran trees, wide green verges and species-rich hedgerows as they are essential for biodiversity. Hedgerows are a particularly good habitat for fauna and also prevent soil erosion.
- Development should show that it has considered opportunities to incorporate nature friendly ideas such as bird boxes, bee bricks, bug-houses, swift bricks or ponds. To illustrate, swift populations are in decline in the UK as more development and a move towards air-tight buildings has resulted in a loss of habitat. To encourage swifts to live and breed in the area Swift bricks should be considered as they are easily installed, fitting within a multiple of standard UK brick sizes.

F.33

Figure 33: Example of a swift brick under an eave.

F.34

Figure 34: Example of a hedgehog corridor within in a garden fence.

OS

3.2.4 Green spaces and the community

Playford has several public open spaces located around the village. Footpaths linking the village with surrounding open space and countryside should be enhanced to promoted better connections between these areas of green infrastructure.

Some guidance on the preservation and enhancement of Playford's open spaces are as follows:

- Existing open spaces should be protected and future open spaces are encouraged.
- New development should not occur on existing public open space and should seek to provide new open spaces with connections to existing space where possible.
- New open spaces should not be designed as an afterthought but should incorporate opportunities for nature, play and recreation.
- New open spaces should retain all woodland, hedgerows and trees within their layout with new planting to supplement existing vegetation.
- Proposals for allotments, community gardens and flexible space for events will be encouraged.

Figure 35: Photo of open community space outside the Playford Village Hall.

Figure 36: Photo of open space at the junction of Butts Road and Hill Farm Road which acts as a welcoming point to the village.

DC 3.3 Design in context

The following design codes offer guidance on designing the built environment to consider contextual features which in the case of Playford is the rich natural environment within the parish.

In addition, consideration when undertaking new development is outlined so that future development does not diminish Playford's rural character.

Figure 37: Photo showing an example of a dwelling in Playford in the midst of a rich natural setting.

DC 3.3.1 Consider the context

The following are considerations that should be taken into account when understanding and learning from Playford's context:

- New development must demonstrate an understanding of the landscape sensitivities and designations of the area and make sure any design proposal is a good fit in the surrounding context and respects the existing character.
- New development must respect the existing street patterns and evaluate any traffic issues in the area in order to better address them. New design should enhance the existing street patterns, improve connectivity and avoid causing traffic pressure on the existing street networks.
- New development should prioritise creating a well-connected green system. New design should propose new links to the surrounding countryside and integrate the existing ones as well as improving connectivity and promoting alternative ways of transportation.
- New development should respect the character of each area within the village in terms of scale, building orientation, enclosure, facade rhythm, architectural details.
- Development which is high density and does not reflect the current grain of the village shall be avoided. Proposals need to consider existing density and the relationship between buildings and plot sizes.
- The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape.
- Boundaries such as walls or hedgerows, whichever is appropriate to the street, should enclose and define each street along the back edge of the pavement, adhering to a clear building line that can allow minor variations for each development group.
- Where appropriate, new properties should aim to provide rear and front gardens. Where the provision of a front garden is not possible, small buffers to the public realm such as planting strips are beneficial.
- Interfaces between the existing settlement edges and any village extension must be carefully designed to integrate new and existing communities.
- Edges must be designed to link rather than segregate existing and new neighbourhoods. A belt of hedges that defines the existing settlement edge can be integrated into a new neighbourhood by providing a shared back hedge.
- Development should have a considerate scale, massing and style which does not impede on key features of views into the village. This includes new buildings not extending above the green canopy and skyline.

DC 3.3.2 Scale form and massing

The majority of buildings in Playford do not exceed two storeys in height. Therefore, new buildings in Playford should be sympathetic in mass, height, and scale to the existing context.

The existing context needs to be considered and new development needs to react sensitively to preserve and enhance the best characteristics of a place ensuring a harmonious relationship with neighbouring buildings, spaces and streets.

Subtle variation in height is encouraged to add visual interest, such as altering eaves and ridge heights. The bulk and pitch of roofs, however, must remain sympathetic to the tree canopy and local vernacular, Another way to achieve visual interest could be by varying frontage widths and plan forms. The application of a uniform building type throughout a development must be avoided.

The massing of new buildings should ensure a sufficient level of privacy and access to natural light and avoid overshadowing existing buildings. This is particularly important in areas of historic character.

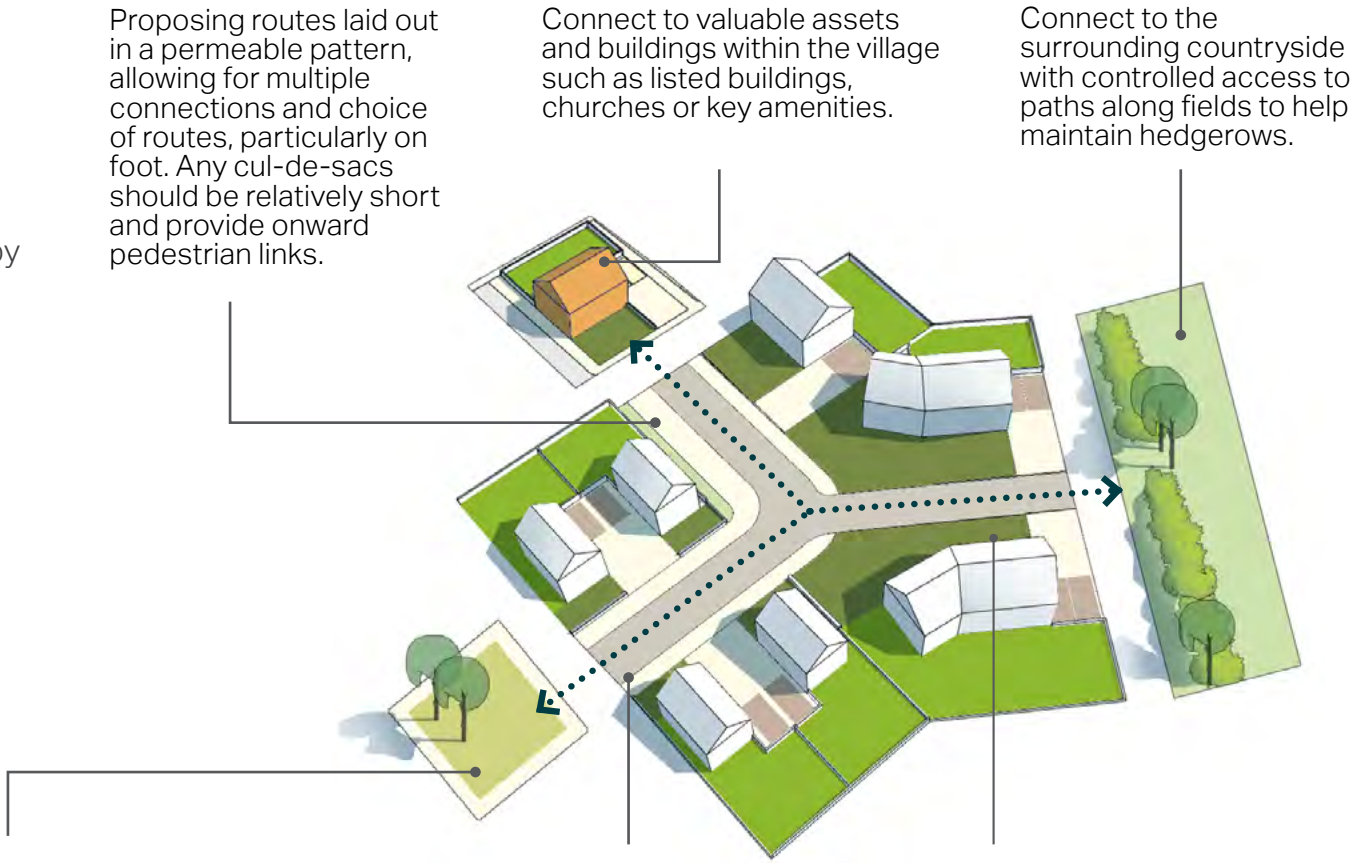
- The scale and massing of new buildings should be consistent with the form and massing of neighbouring properties - although it does not have to be the same.
- New developments should seek to respond to the surrounding context by using similar configurations with a modern interpretation. Buildings and developments that do not respect the existing townscape should be avoided.
- The height of new buildings should respond to the surrounding context and should not be over-bearing or dominant in the existing street scene.

DC

3.3.3 Provide meaningful connections

Streets connections should be strengthened and different travel options and routes should be considered. Good practice favours a generally connected street layout that makes it easier to travel by foot, cycle, and public transport.

A more connected pattern creates a 'walkable neighbourhood', a place where routes link meaningful places together. The permeability of Playford's street network can be improved to create these connections.



F.38 **Figure 38:** Diagram illustrating meaningful connections within Playford.

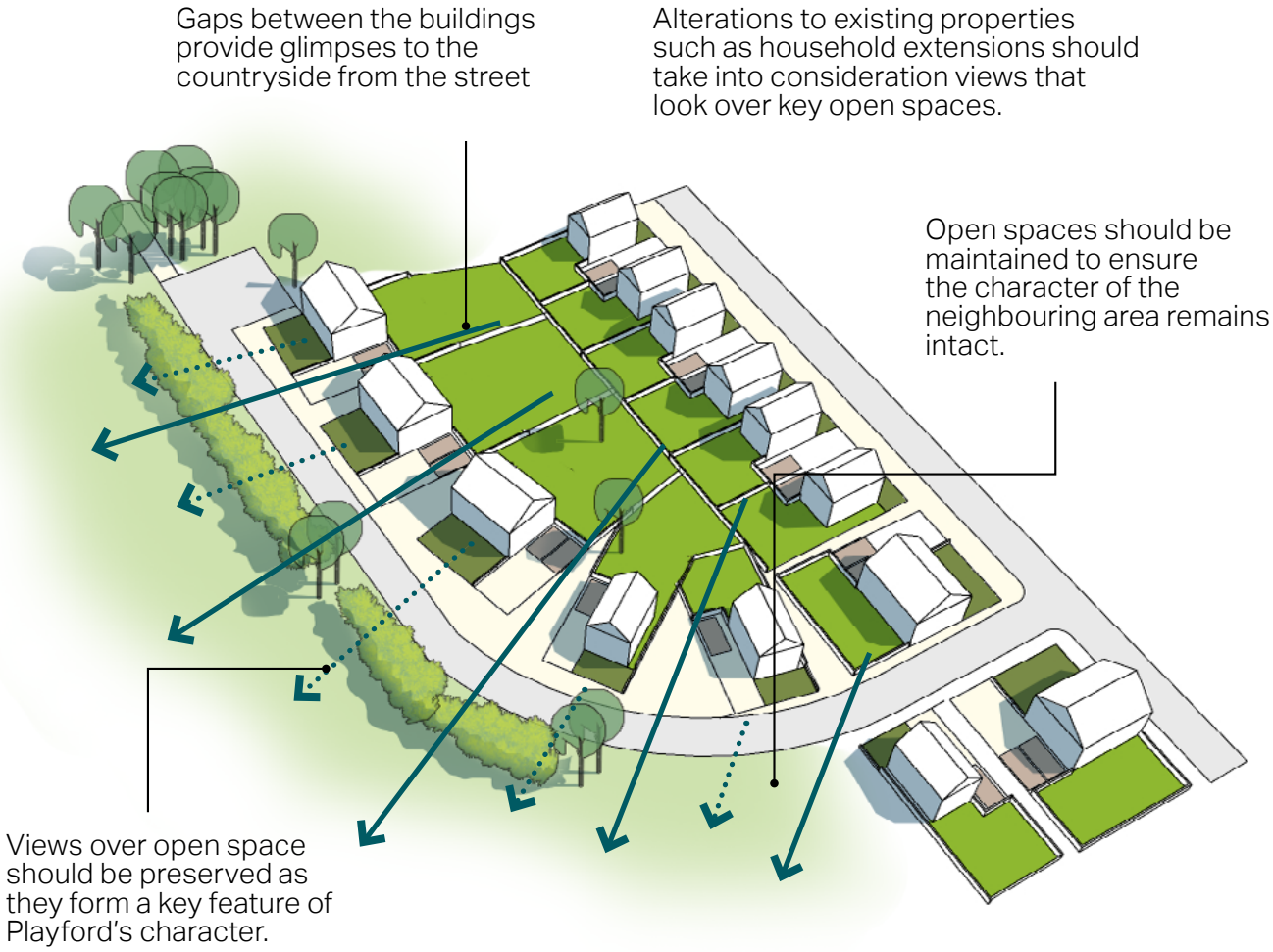
DC

3.3.4 Gaps and views

Views are important as they provide framed moments within the built environment of either landmarks or the open countryside. Playford village has charming views over neighbouring countryside and therefore views form part of its character and should be protected.

Important views should not be obstructed and development should not negatively affect either views out to the countryside or views into the village.

Generous gaps between buildings should be created to provide glimpses and filtered views to the countryside beyond. This will connect people with nature and contribute to the general feel of openness.



F.39 | **Figure 39:** Illustrative diagram of the gaps and views in a residential area.

BF 3.4 Built form general rules

The following design principles describe the elements that contribute to Playford's character and new development should pay particular attention to the layout, form, scale, materials and detailing.

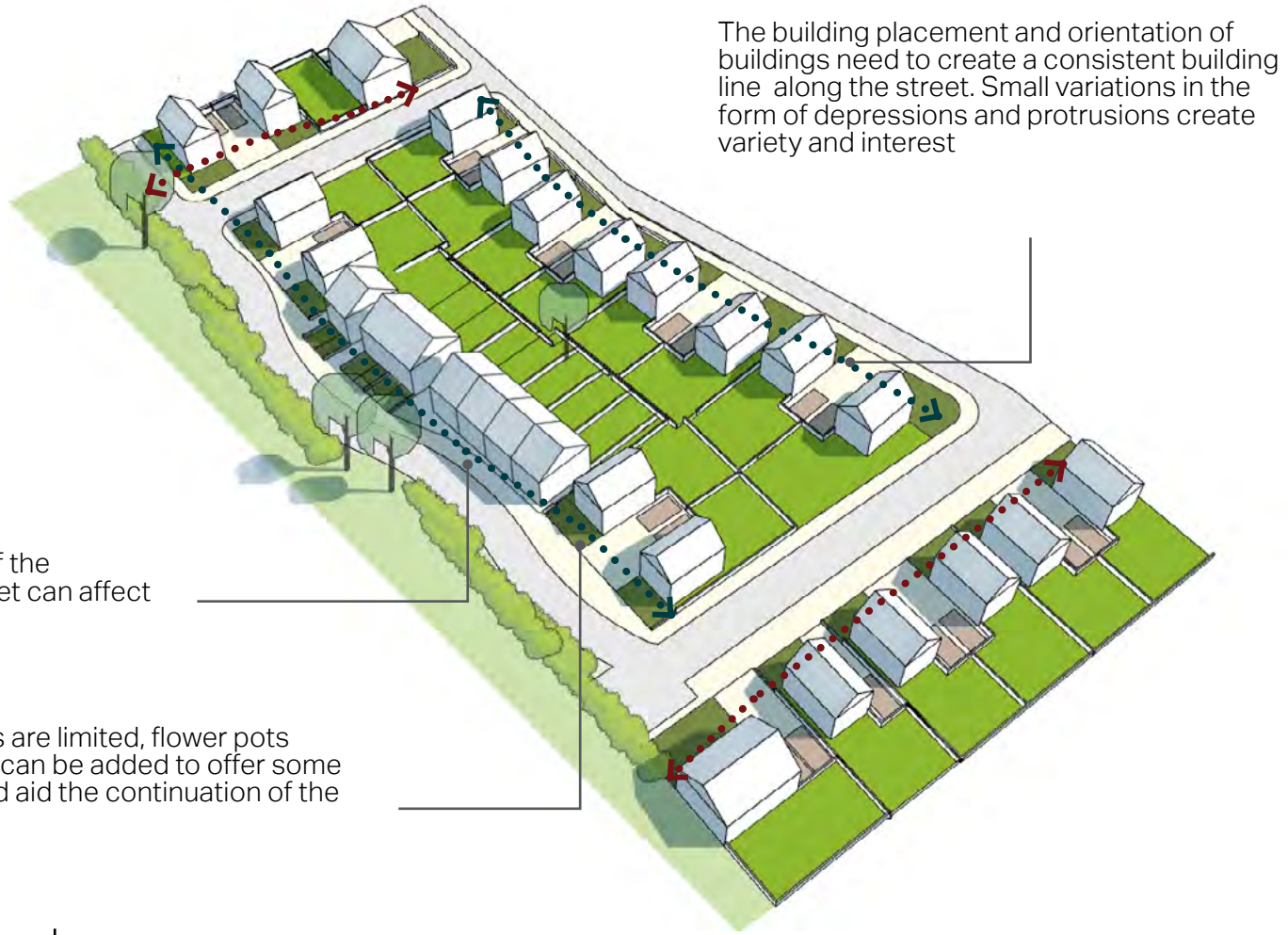
New buildings should contribute to the local character considering details such as materials, colour palette, facades and fenestration. This also applies to extensions which should be designed with an appropriate scale.

Figure 40: Photo traditional form with contemporary features, Playford.

BF 3.4.1 Building line

Boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate for the character of the village.

The building line along a street should generally be consistent and form a unified whole but allow for subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions. This provides variety and movement along the street.



F.41 **Figure 41:** Diagram illustrating a consistent building line.

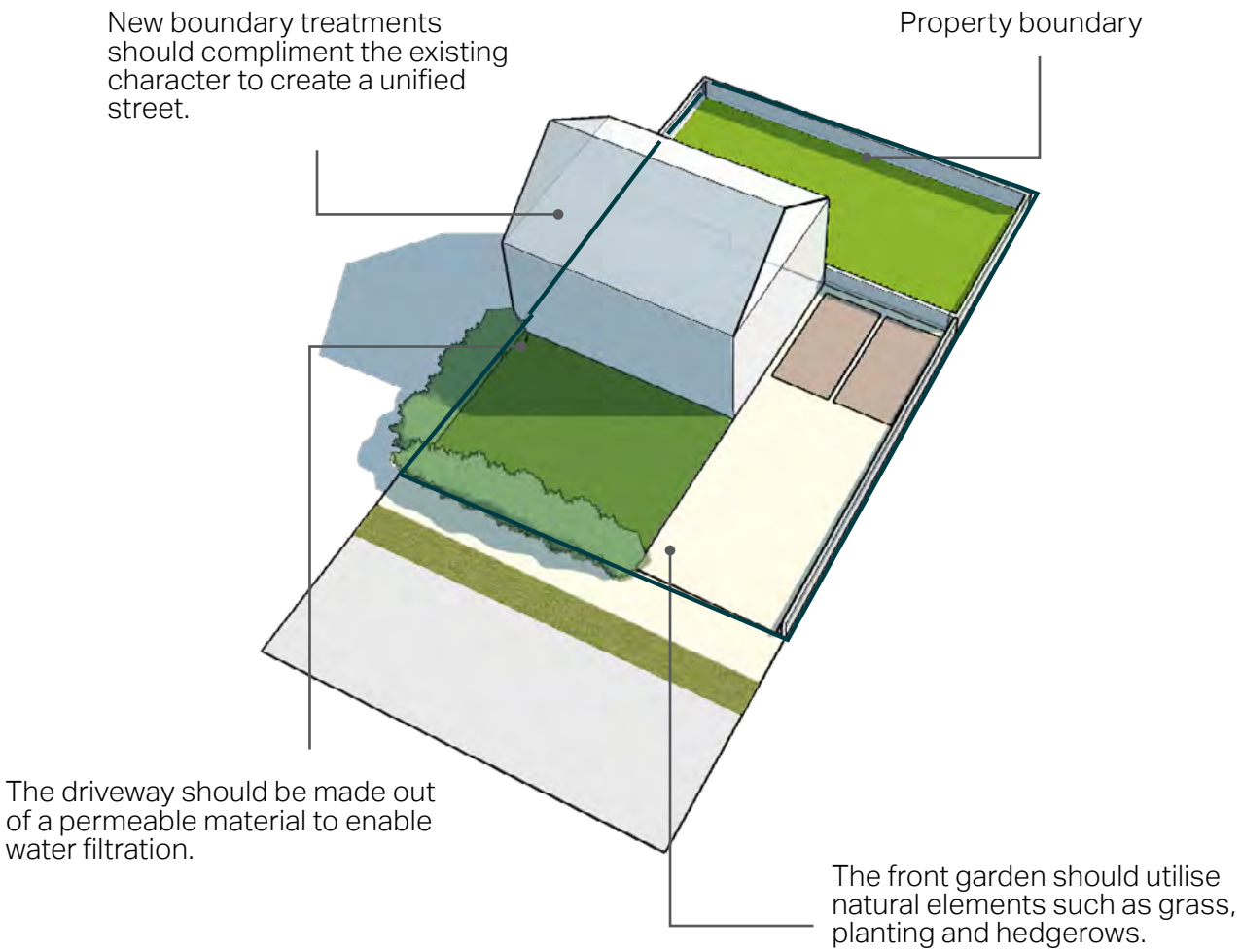
BF 3.4.2 Boundary treatment

Boundary treatments should be used at the plot edge to provide a sense of continuity and cohesion along the street as well as providing separation between the public and private domains.

As such, not having a form of boundary should be avoided. Properties should have a front garden or privacy strip ranging from 1 to 6m in depth to create the desired amount of enclosure along the street.

Using a range of high-quality materials such as brick, hedgerows, ironmongery, planting or a combination of these along the boundary edge, can bring cohesion to the street and the village, whilst still providing visual interest.

In addition, the heights of boundary treatments should make sure not to intrude on neighbouring views and lighting.



F.42

Figure 42: Illustrative diagram of the boundary treatments of a typical plot.

BF 3.4.3 Car parking

Car parking areas should make a positive contribution to the design and setting of a development, taking account of its townscape character.

A good mix of parking typologies should be deployed, depending on, and influenced by; location, topography and market demand.

The main types to be considered are shown on this page and the next.

- For family homes, cars should be placed at the front or side of the property. For small pockets of housing a front or rear court is acceptable. Multiple garage parking is encouraged.
- Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles.
- Parking areas and driveways should be designed to minimise impervious surfaces, for example through the use of permeable paving.
- When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend in with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting, and use of differentiated quality paving materials.
- According to the Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2019), there should be a minimum of one space per dwelling for one bedroom dwellings, two spaces for two and three bedroom dwellings and three spaces for four or more bedroom dwellings.
- Cycle parking should be integrated into all new housing.

Figure 43: Example of on-plot front parking in Playford.

Figure 44: Example of on-plot garage parking in Playford.

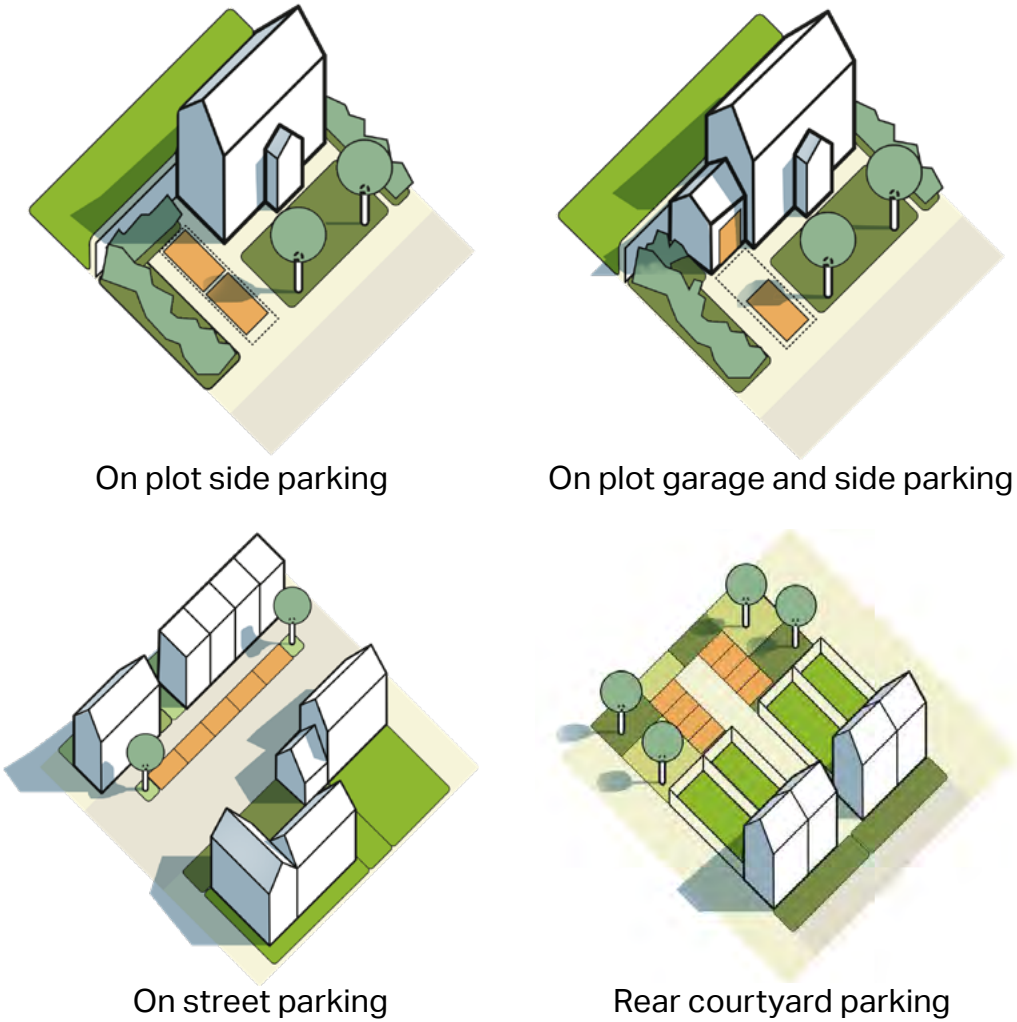
On plot side or front parking

On-plot parking can be visually attractive when it is combined with high quality and well designed soft landscaping. Front garden depth from the pavement back should be sufficient for a large family car.

Boundary treatment is the key element to help avoid a car-dominated character. This can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high quality paving materials between the private and public space.

Driveways should be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off.

Any rear parking courtyards should be small, overlooked and not be at the expense of rear gardens.



F.45 | **Figure 45:** Illustrative diagrams showing parking typologies.

BF 3.4.4 Household extensions

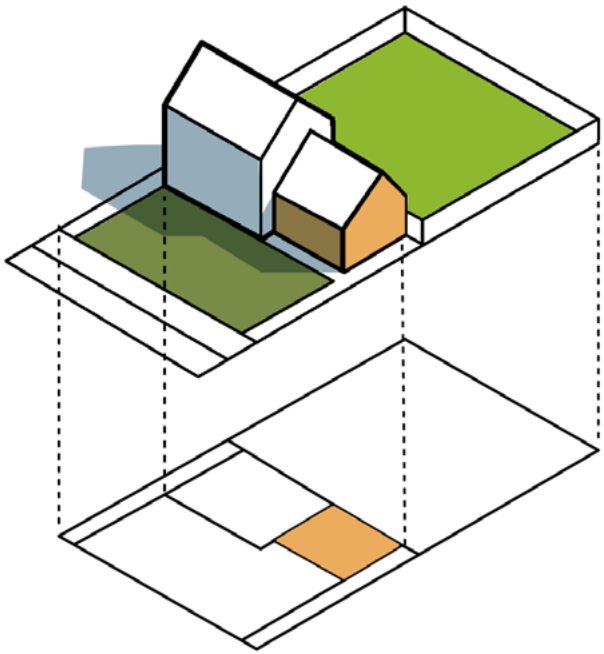
There are multiple ways to create extra space within a building using different types of extensions. Extensions must be designed to an appropriate scale and be secondary to the original building. The pitch and form of a building's roof forms part of its character; therefore, extensions should respond by enhancing the existing character.

Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features and proportions of the original building and be designed to complement these existing elements.

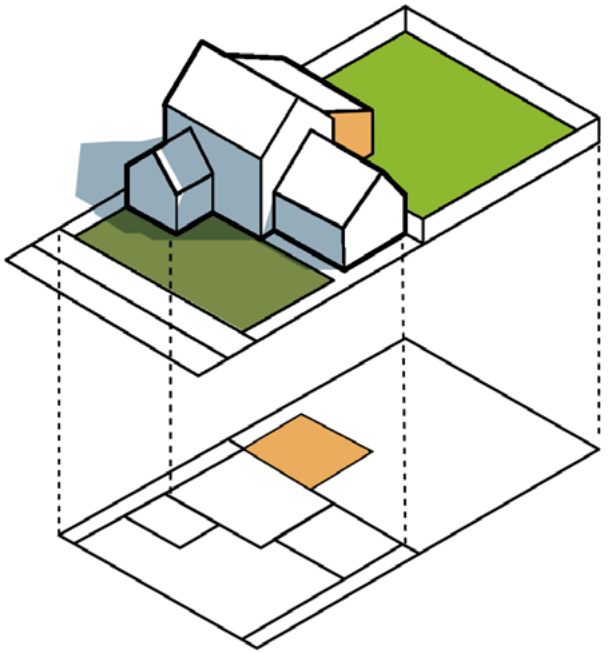
Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, meaning that they do not need planning permission though there are exceptions.

- The character of the existing building, along with its scale, form, materials and details should be taken into consideration when preparing proposals for alterations and/or extensions.
- External extensions should respect or enhance the visual appearance of the original buildings and the character of the wider street scene.
- Extensions should be subordinate in term of scale and form and shall not be visually dominant or taller than the existing building.
- Extensions should be recessed or in line with the existing building facade and shall use lower ridge and eaves levels to ensure that the length and width of the extension are less than the dimensions of the original building.
- Extensions should be designed using materials and details to match the existing building or alternatively, use contrasting materials and details with a contemporary design approach. However, in either case, extensions should create an overall harmonious composition and a strong degree of unity with the original building amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Extensions should safeguard the privacy and daylight amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Extensions should retain on-site parking capacity and a viable garden area to meet the needs of future occupiers.
- Extensions of existing buildings should help to reduce carbon emission by complying with high energy efficiency standards and utilising low energy design.
- Side extensions should be set back from the main building and complement the materials and detailing of the original building, particularly along the street elevation. The roof of the extension should harmonise with that of the original building; flat roofs should be avoided. Side windows should also be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that they would not overlook neighbouring properties.

- Single storey rear extensions should be set below any first-floor windows and designed to minimise any effects of neighbouring properties, such as blocking daylight. A flat roof is generally acceptable for a single storey rear extension.
- Double storey rear extensions are not common as they usually affect neighbours' access to light and privacy, however, sometimes the size and style of the property allows for a two- storey extension. In these cases, the roof form and pitch should reflect the original building and sit slightly lower than the main ridge of the building.



F.46 | **Figure 46:** Example of single storey side extension.



F.47 | **Figure 47:** Example of double storey back extension.

BF 3.4.5 Architectural details, materials and colour palette

Playford village has a varied architectural style though there are some themes with which to build upon.

Gabled roofs are the predominant roof type in Playford along with instances of hipped roofs. Both pantiled and concrete roofs are common and are are mostly of a red or grey colour palette. In addition, the roofs tend to be steep pitched with brick or stone chimneys. This should be considered for future development.

Facades are also varied though different coloured bricks, such as red and beige, and white and off-white renders are seen in Playford. Facade materials can vary within a single building and this is a common feature in Playford. This is especially seen with extensions.

Detailings are varied with no specific style. Common colours for detailing include black and brown.

F.48 **Figure 48:** Examples of roof materials and colour palette in Playford.

SD 3.5 Sustainable design

This section introduces examples of energy efficient technologies and strategies that could be incorporated into new and existing buildings. Although these do not constitute a policy requirement, new development would be highly encouraged to embed these guidelines into their proposals.

It is reccommended that new developments should encourage and support innovative and proactive approaches to design and opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems powered by a renewable or low carbon source and associated infrastructure, including community-led initiatives.

Furthermore, new developments should strive for good quality design that meets climatic targets for CO2 emissions and that can be constructed sustainably and maximising opportunities for recycling.

Figure 49: Solar panels added to an older building in Playford.

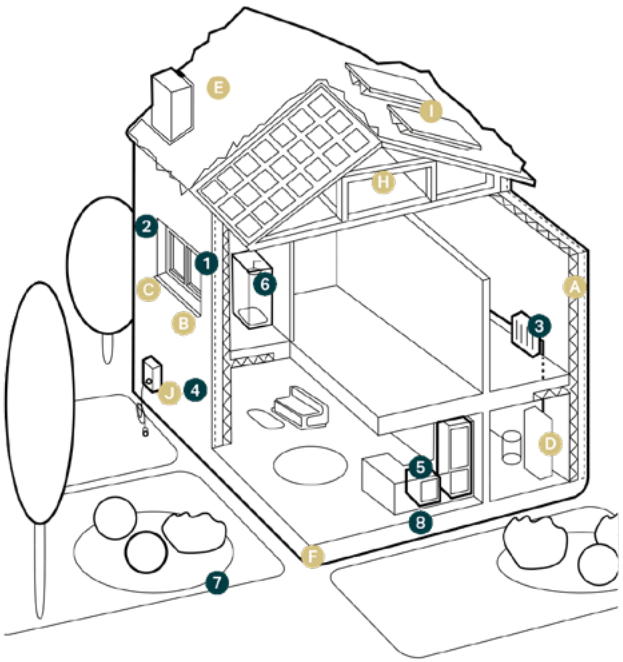
SD 3.5.1 Features in dwellings

The following section elaborates on energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated in buildings and at broader Parish design scale as principles.

Use of such principles and design tools should be encouraged in order to contribute towards a more sustainable environment

Energy efficient or eco design combines all around energy efficient appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar electricity and/or solar/ water heating.

Starting from the design stage there are strategies that can be incorporated to include technologies such as passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient landscaping which are determined by local climate and site conditions.



Existing homes

1. **Insulation** in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)
2. **Double or triple glazing with shading** (e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)
3. **Low- carbon heating** with heat pumps or connections to district heat network
4. **Draught proofing** of floors, windows and doors
5. **Highly energy-efficient appliances** (e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)
6. **Highly waste-efficient devices** with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats
7. **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)** to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating
8. **Flood resilience and resistance** with removable air back covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors

Additional features for new build homes

- A **High levels of airtightness**
- B **More fresh air** with the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling
- C **Triple glazed windows and external shading** especially on south and west faces
- D **Low-carbon heating** and no new homes on the gas grid by 2025 at the latest
- E **Water management and cooling** more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs and reflective walls
- F **Flood resilience and resistance** e.g. raised electrical, concrete floors and greening your garden
- H **Construction and site planning** timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)
- I **Solar panels**
- J **Electric car charging point**

F.50 | **Figure 50:** Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

SD 3.5.2 Building fabric

Thermal mass

Thermal mass describes the ability of a material to absorb, store and release heat energy. Thermal mass can be used to even out variations in internal and external conditions, absorbing heat as temperatures rise and releasing it as they fall. Thermal mass can be used to store high thermal loads by absorbing heat introduced by external conditions, such as solar radiation, or by internal sources such as appliances and lighting, to be released when conditions are cooler. This can be beneficial both during the summer and the winter.

Thermal storage in construction elements can be provided, such as a trombe wall placed in front of a south facing window or concrete floor slabs that will absorb solar radiation and then slowly re-release it into the enclosed space. Mass can be combine with suitable ventilation strategies.

Insulation

Thermal insulation can be provided for any wall or roof the exterior of a building to prevent heat loss. Particular attention should be paid to heat bridges around corners and openings at the design stage.

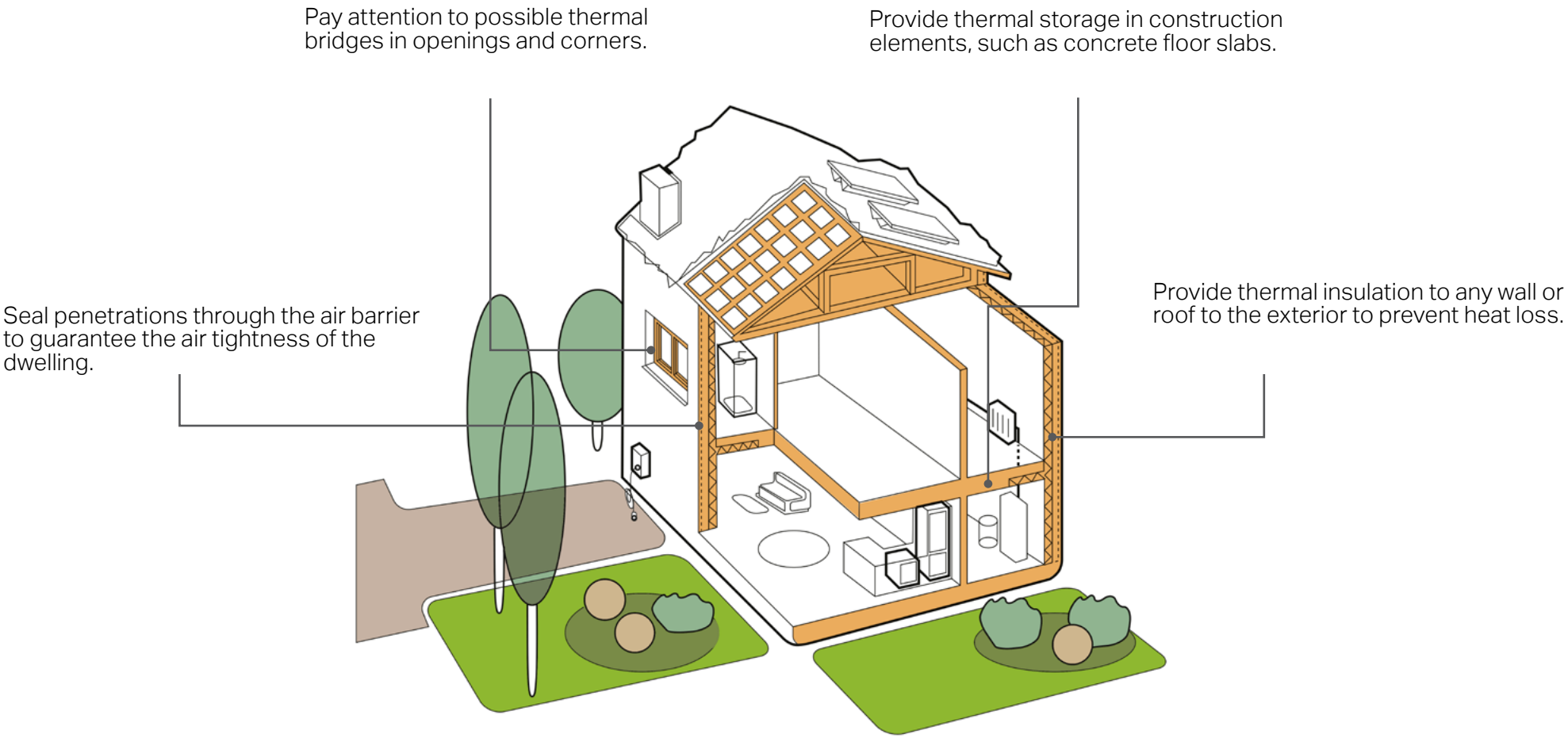
Provide acoustic insulation to prevent the transmission of sound between active (i.e. living room) and passive spaces (i.e. bedroom). Provide fir insulation and electrical insulation to prevent the passage of fire between spaces or components and to contain and separate electrical conductors.

Airtightness

Airtight constructions help reduce heat loss, improving comfort and protecting the building fabric. Airtightness is achieved by sealing a building to reduce infiltration- which is sometimes called uncontrolled ventilation. Simplicity is key for airtight design. The fewer junctions the simpler and more efficient the airtightness design will be.

An airtight layer should be formed in the floor, walls and roof. Doors, windows and roof lights to the adjacent walls or roof should be sealed. Link the interfaces between walls and floor and between walls and roof, including around the perimeter of any intermediate floor. Seal penetrations through the air barrier. Consider waster pipes and soil pipes, ventilation ducts, incoming water, gas, oil, electricity, data and district heating, chimneys and flues, including air supplies to wood burning stoves, connections to external services, such as entry phones, outside lights, external taps and sockets, security cameras and satellite dishes.

The diagram on the following page illustrates some of these key considerations.



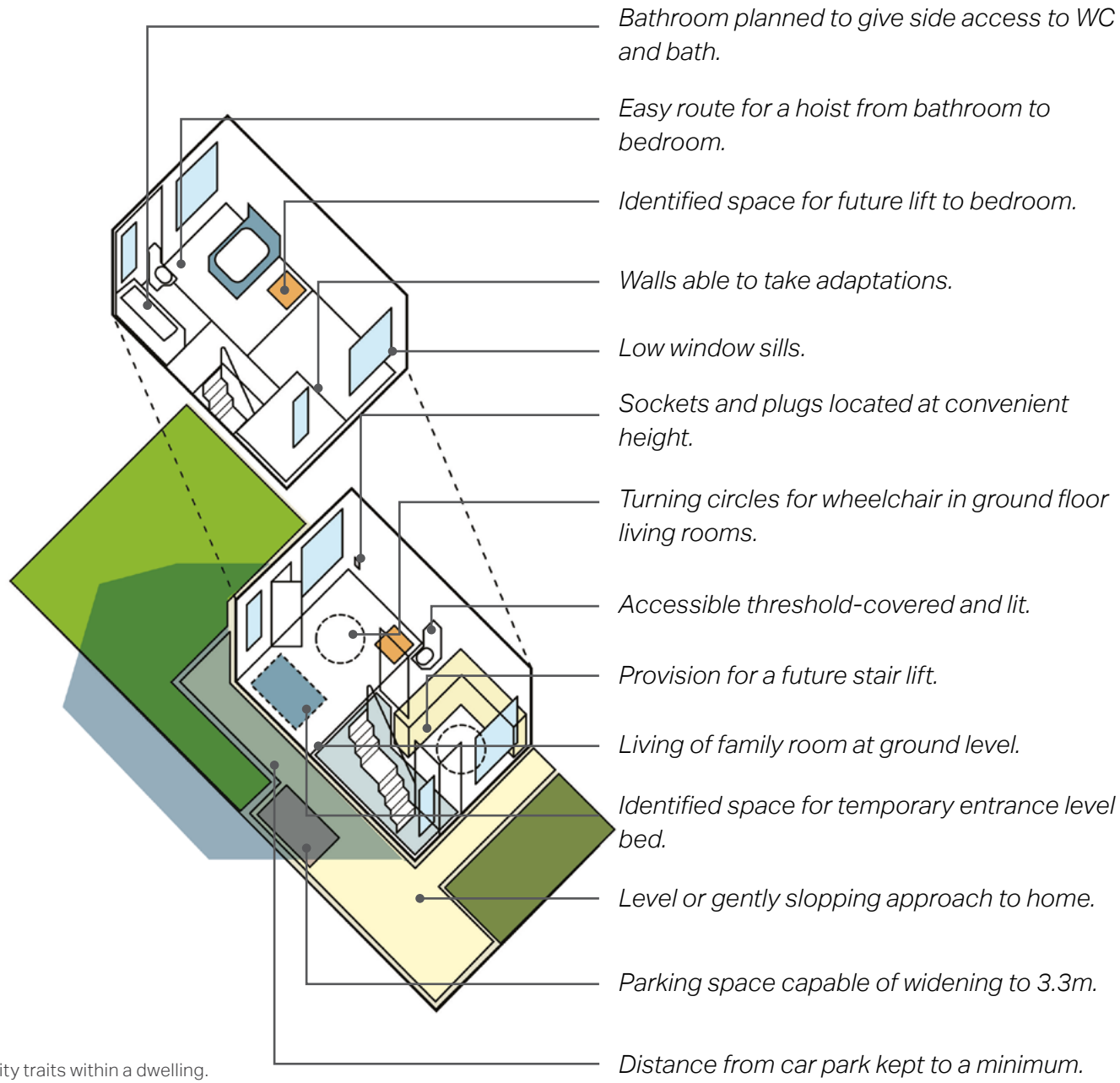
F.51 | **Figure 51:** Diagram illustrating aspects of the building fabric to be considered.

SD 3.5.3 Adaptability

Houses should be designed to meet the differing and changing needs of households and people's physical abilities over their entire lifetime. This is an important aspect of making homes sustainable and durable.

One way to achieve this is to incorporate all the standards- M4(1), M4(2) and M4(3)- of the approved document M4 of the Building Regulations in the design of new homes and to assess whether they can be retrofitted in existing properties.

The diagram to the right illustrates the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, adaptability and sustainability in a dwelling.



F.52 | **Figure 52:** Diagram illustrating adaptability traits within a dwelling.

SD

3.5.4 Rainwater harvesting

Rainwater harvesting is a system for capturing and storing rainwater as well as enabling the reuse of in-situ grey water. Some design considerations include:

- Concealing tanks with complementary cladding.
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes, unsightly pipes should be avoided.
- Combine landscape or planters with water capture systems.
- Use underground tanks.

Figure 53: Example of a rainwater harvesting tank in the shape of a bee hive.

Figure 54: Example of a modular water tank.

SD

3.5.5 Renewable low carbon energy solutions

Solar panels

Solar panels should be designed to have a minimal visual impact on the roof of a building. New builds should incorporate solar panels from the beginning and form part of the design concept. Some attractive options are solar shingles, photovoltaic slates or tiles. Solar panels can also be used as a roofing material in their own right.

When retrofitting existing buildings the proportions of the roof and building should be considered to identify the best location and sizing of the panels. Tiles or slates of different colours can be added to the roof to better integrate the solar panels.

Figure 55: Example of solar panels on a roof within Playford.

Ground heating systems

Heat pumps involve using a system to capture heat from outside the home and move it inside. Electricity is used to do this though the quantity of heat generated is greater than the quantity of electricity used to power the system. As a heat pump captures heat that is already present in the environment, the system itself emits no carbon dioxide emissions.

Figure 56: Example of a ground source heating system.

3.6 Checklist

Because the design guidelines and codes in this document cannot cover all design eventualities, and are intended to leave some leeway for the talented designer to respond to context in imaginative ways, this chapter provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

The checklist can be used to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

The checklist commences on the following page.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3 (continues)

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5 (continues)

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

10

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place and street scene?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Are electric vehicle charging points proposed?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

Delivery

04

4. Delivery

4.1 How to use this guide

The Design Guidelines will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development within Playford parish. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table.

Actors	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: Delivery

About AECOM

AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivaled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a *Fortune 500* firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of $13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at aecom.com and @AECOM.

aecom.com

Printed on recycled paper.