

# STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE LIVING

## AN INTRODUCTION

**Stockport Town Centre is changing.** Our town centre revival kick-started in 2018, with the announcement of a Mayoral Development Corporation, a radical new approach to tackling future housing needs and the changing role of town centres. Now it's full steam ahead, with a radical and exciting £1billion programme of investment in the town centre over the coming years. In our town centre you'll find beautiful heritage buildings next to great new architecture. Businesses are relocating here, residents are moving in and jobs are being created. Public spaces are improving, transport connections are being boosted and a buzz is in the air. There are some amazing local people and transformational projects that are making this change happen.

The ambitions of the [Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation \(MDC\)](#) and the vision for the wider town centre set out in the [Town Centre Living Development Framework \(TCLDF\) \(2018\)](#) recognises the potential for the town centre to become an attractive location to live, work and play, and to contribute to the delivery of new homes in Stockport.

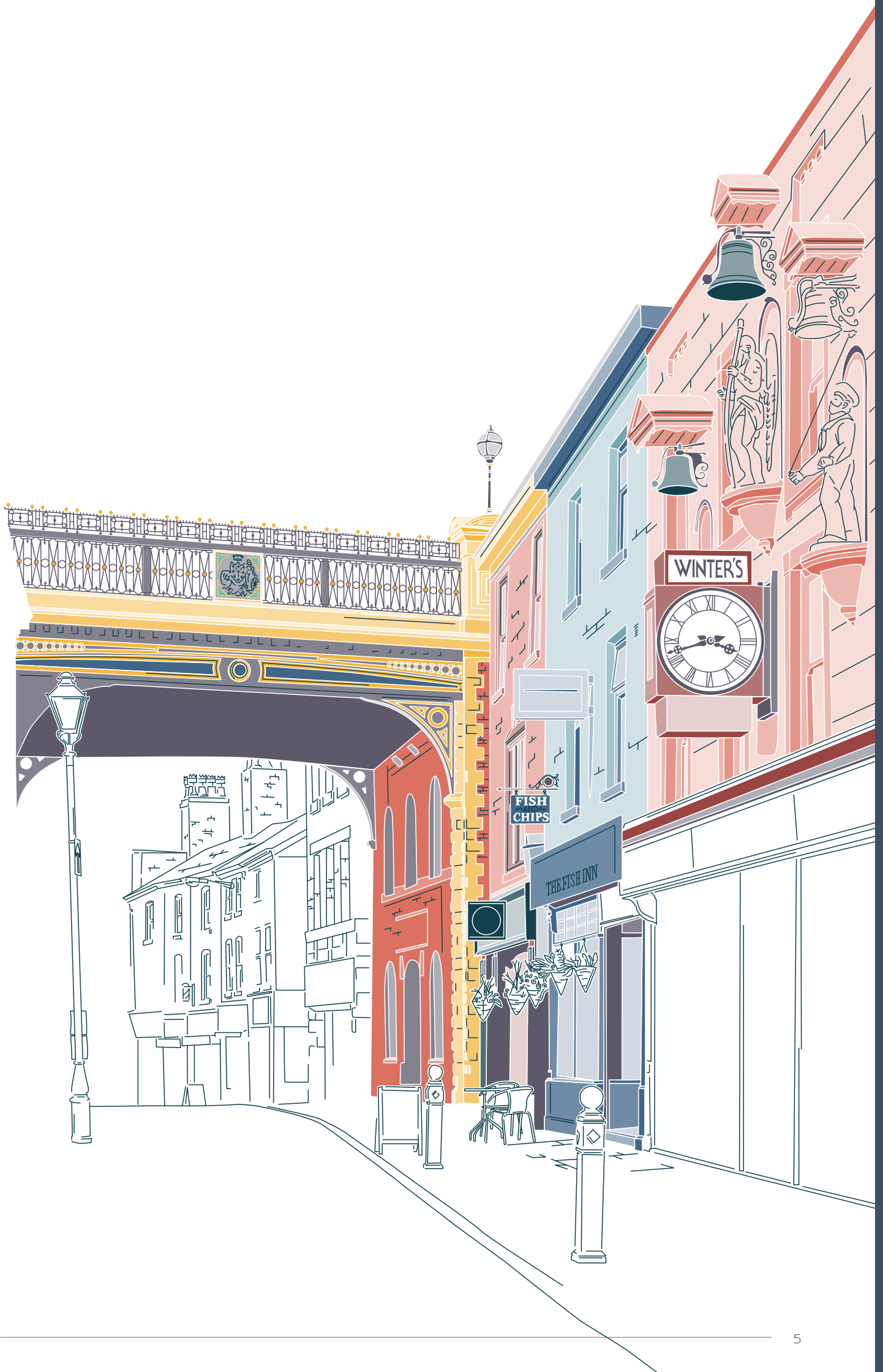
The TCLDF provides a vision for future living in Stockport Town Centre, outlining the challenges and potential solutions to achieving sustainable residential growth. This document prescribes a series of measures, including direct local authority intervention and market-reactive planning policy, that will seek to create a more welcoming investment environment for prospective developers. This is an essential step to take in ensuring Stockport Town Centre reaches its growth potential.

The town centre has already begun its transformational journey of change. The massive investment over recent years has bolstered its leisure offer, improved strategic connectivity and created high-quality commercial facilities. Many projects have already been completed as part of the [Town Centre Access Plan](#), and the development of a new transport interchange is nearing completion. Stockport Town Centre is already becoming a desirable location to live. High-quality design will help accelerate this process of change, delivering an innovative and unique set of homes to match the growing ambition of Stockport Town Centre.

The town centre also has a vital role to play in [Stockport's response to the climate emergency](#) and in ensuring that we mitigate climate change and are resilient to its effects.

We must make sure the high-quality and sustainable design aspirations envisioned at the outline planning stage of the development process are realised in delivery. Stockport is changing. This guide is a starting point to make sure that change is for the better.





# PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This guide will be essential in achieving a more sustainable, more liveable Stockport Town Centre, ensuring future residential development delivers a compact urban form that responds sensitively to the existing historic townscape.

## WHY A DESIGN GUIDE, AND WHY NOW?

The guide is key to achieving emerging Local Plan policy aspirations - to maximise brownfield land in sustainable, accessible locations. Whilst it is easy to view residential density as a number, it is far more difficult to envisage how that number comes to fruition. This guide addresses this issue, **illustrating what we believe sensitive and sustainable high-density residential development really means.**

The objective is to guide the creation of sustainable communities, within a dynamic, green and liveable town centre. The size and variety of homes are important, encouraging and enticing a broad range of demographics into urban living within the town centre. The creation of truly mixed communities, fully invested in their place, is arguably the most important factor in the long-term success of any residential development.

National policy is now placing a greater focus on well-designed places. The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) sets out a new requirement for authorities to produce design codes for their whole area. As such it is intended that this document will be used by policy planners as the foundations for future design coding work in the town centre.

## WHAT IS INCLUDED?

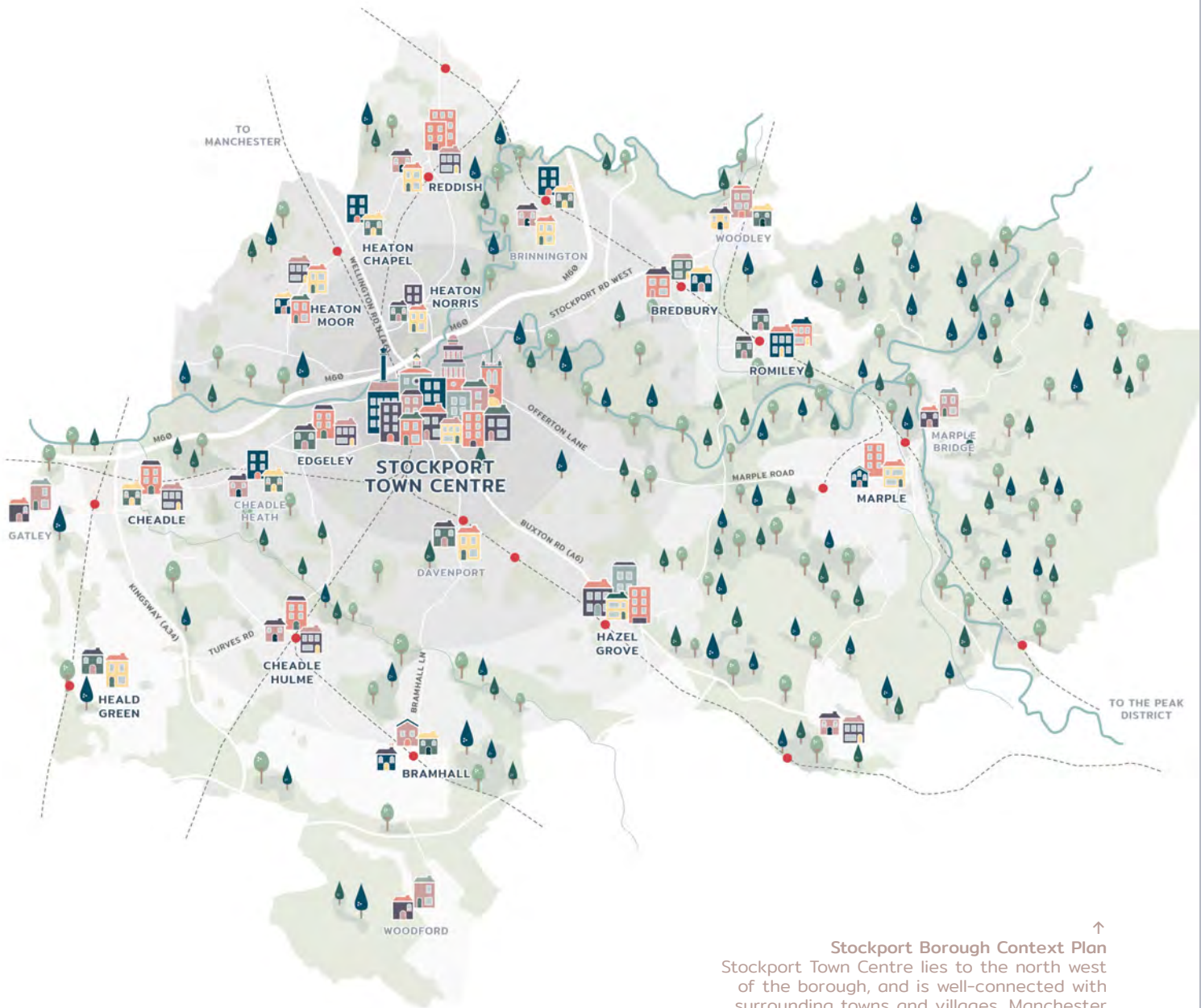
In order to drive a step change in design quality within the town centre, and a catalyst for positive change across the borough, the guidance in this document focuses on the most salient topics and issues associated with modern day urban living - creating a template for resilient, sustainable and practical future homes.

It is acknowledged that great design cannot be achieved where it is stifled by bureaucracy. Creativity and freedom are essential in delivering the desired design quality. Therefore, this document does not prescribe a set of ubiquitous spatial standards or specific architectural styles. It outlines the core expectations of future development to ensure it contributes to achieving our vision for the town centre - allowing innovation to thrive and driving value in the town centre market.

## WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

Developers and their design teams should use this guide through all stages of the development process, applying guidance to their site appropriately throughout the design process to ensure the final product aligns with the council's ambitions.

This guidance will also be used by the council as a decision-making tool to hold individual planning applications to account, again ensuring individual proposals contribute to achieving the vision for a more sustainable and liveable town centre.



↑

Stockport Borough Context Plan  
 Stockport Town Centre lies to the north west of the borough, and is well-connected with surrounding towns and villages, Manchester City Centre, strategic open space destinations and the Peak District to the east

## ! PLANNING STATUS

This document is planning guidance. It provides guidance and advice on how to improve design quality in the town centre. It also makes reference to the relevant policies set out in the [Stockport Core Strategy \(March 2011\)](#) might be met.

The council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for Stockport which will replace the Core Strategy. The guidance in this document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term once the new Local Plan is in place. The process of preparing this guidance has helped to inform some of the emerging policies in the Local Plan that relate to Stockport Town Centre and design matters more generally.

The guidance forms a material consideration in the council's determination of planning applications. We expect all future residential proposals to have regard to the principles set out within the guidance.

**This document will also provide a baseline to inform area-wide or site-specific design codes within the town centre if they are prepared in the future, in accordance with guidance outlined in the [National Model Design Code](#).**

# DOCUMENT APPROACH AND NAVIGATION

## APPROACH

Design guidance within the document has been organised into two tiers.

**Tier 1 presents the 'Key Components' of successful town centre living**, providing guidance on key topics associated with modern day living, such as sustainability, access and movement, and public realm. The Key Components and accompanying guidance points should be considered by all future town centre proposals, and are prerequisites to achieving high-quality design.

**In Tier 2, design guidance is developed for each of the town centre character areas.** This ensures a place-specific approach, guiding a future development form that responds to its immediate surroundings and context.

## USING THE GUIDANCE TIERS

The tiers of guidance should not be viewed in isolation. **Applicants must use both tiers of guidance.**

### TIER 1

First, applicants should test the design proposal against each **Key Component**, ensuring the proposal is meeting all relevant guidance points.

### TIER 2

Second, applicants should identify which **Character Area** the site is located in and ensure proposals adhere to additional and more specific guidance for the relevant area.

Where a **'Stockport Asset'** is present, proposals should explicitly state how their proposal considers and enhances the asset.

# THE GUIDANCE TIERS AND WHAT THEY COVER

## SECTION 3

### SUCCESSFUL TOWN CENTRE LIVING KEY COMPONENTS

PAGES 22-69

#### TIER 1 DESIGN GUIDANCE

**The Key Components** provide design guidance relating to key themes and topics associated with delivering high-quality, sustainable town centre development.

Guidance considers key challenges in delivering sensitive, sustainable density and high-quality design within Stockport Town Centre.

**Guidance covers:**  
The minimum expectations of future design proposals  
Guidance by topic and theme  
Core Strategy Policy

## SECTION 4

### THE STOCKPORT ASSETS

PAGES 70-79

**The Stockport Assets** are iconic individual landmarks and key features that are unique to Stockport Town Centre. High-level guidance is presented to ensure future development protects and enhances these features, steering a complementary design response.

Guidance considers and responds to key challenges in delivering sensitive, sustainable density and high-quality design within Stockport Town Centre.

**Guidance covers:**  
Protecting and enhancing townscape assets

## SECTION 5

### CHARACTER AREA GUIDANCE

PAGES 80-157

#### TIER 2 DESIGN GUIDANCE

**The Character Area Guidance** steers a contextually-sensitive form of development, ensuring future proposals respond to the key challenges, opportunities and assets presented by each character area.

Guidance encourages 'sensitive' densification of the character areas, providing steer on:

- Opportunities to rebalance key streets and spaces.
- Plot design - relating to the prevalent 'type' of development site in each area.
- Specific locations where increases in scale and density may be appropriate.
- Sensitive and complementary responses to townscape or landscape assets present in each area.

**Guidance covers:**  
Scale and massing  
Plot design  
Contextual response  
Street and space design

# DEFINING THE TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY

The Stockport Town Centre boundary, as defined in the adjacent plan, has been selected based on a number of criteria.

## TOWN CENTRE EDGES

A variety of both landscape and townscape features define the edges of the town centre. The majority of boundaries are delineated by major roadways or motorways, acting as clear dividers in the urban form, as well as natural containers of the urban core.

With regards to landscape, the steep banks of the River Goyt to the northeast clearly define the edge, whilst Hollywood Park to the west acts as a natural transition between town centre uses and the adjacent residential neighbourhood, Edgeley.

## THE TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY

The presented boundary diverges from that presented in the Town Centre Living Development Framework (TCLDF) in two areas. Along the eastern edge, where topographical change and woodland edges present a more logical landscape boundary to the centre than St Mary's Way. The western boundary aligns with that presented by the emerging [Stockport Town Centre West Strategic Regeneration Framework \(SRF\) \(2020\)](#), ensuring consistency in approach.

The town centre boundary highlighted on the plan overleaf represents the town centre at the time this document was produced. It should be noted that the town centre boundary will likely evolve over time

## STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE WEST STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

The guidance presented within this document acknowledges and aligns with the design principles outlined within the Stockport Town Centre West Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF).

**This document supports the SRF by providing additional detail on how design can help achieve the vision and objectives outlined within the SRF.**





↑  
**Study Area Boundary Plan**  
 The study area boundary presented in the plan contains the town centre commercial and retail core, as well as surrounding residential and industrial neighbourhoods within the town centre living boundary.

**KEY**

- Stockport Town Centre boundary
- Stockport Town Centre West SRF boundary



# STOCKPORT A CHANGING TOWN CENTRE

This section provides a summary of the environmental, social and economic factors that underpin the importance of this guidance document for our town centre.

These factors fall along a scale, ranging from the national to the local. At the national level, changing consumer habits and the continued growth of online retail have fundamentally impacted the retail performance of British town centres and high streets. This has brought about a need to reconsider the role of town centres within a shifting and changing economy, producing new strategies that will help support their long-term sustainability. Futureproofing Stockport Town Centre as a thriving community and civic hub within the wider borough is of vital importance to us as a council.

While securing long-term economic prosperity of Stockport Town Centre is a key goal, we must also consider our duty to deliver new housing stock for existing and future communities. Our commitment to brownfield development, a key objective in the emerging Local Plan, provides a sound grounding for a town centre focused residential delivery strategy. Furthermore, it highlights our long-term commitment to Greater Manchester's target of becoming carbon neutral by 2038.

Stockport is rapidly becoming a vibrant and well-connected town centre. Ongoing investment in transport and highways infrastructure highlights our commitment to creating a highly accessible town centre. Coupled with an emerging independent economy and ongoing investment in leisure and commercial facilities, it is clear that Stockport Town Centre is developing into a place where people want to spend their time.



# TOWN CENTRES A PLACE TO LIVE

The issues faced by British town centres and high streets as the retail economy shifts towards online sales are both well-documented and visible. Whilst the 'Town Centre Living Development Framework' summarises much of the thinking behind a change in approach in Stockport Town Centre, this guidance presents one of the first steps in facilitating positive change through the delivery of high-quality design.

## THE DECLINE OF UK HIGH STREETS

As summarised in the [High Streets and Town Centres in 2030 \(2019\)](#) report published by the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee, the 2018 retail performance of British high streets stood at a long-term low. Whilst 20% of all UK retail sales in December 2018 were recorded online (Office for National Statistics, 2018) a 16.9% increase in store closures was suffered by town centres within the same year.

This trend has only accelerated in recent years. In February 2024, 25.7% of all UK retail sales were recorded online - while 13.9% of UK high street properties were recorded as vacant in 2023 (British Retail Consortium, 2023).

This document does not seek to provide an in-depth summary of the issues faced by British high streets. The data provided does, however, provide important background and context, which underpins our new approach to the town centre.

## A NEW APPROACH

Changing demographics, steadily rising suburban house prices and new lifestyle choices over the course of the 21st century have resulted in shifts in where people want to live. Major growth in city centre living has characterised these shifts. According to Office for National Statistics census data the population for Manchester and Salford local authorities, representing the urban core of the city region, increased by 9.7% and 15.7% respectively between 2011 and 2021, clearly presenting a desire for urban living.

The pull factors underpinning these trends are also clear. In UK cities, an increase in the availability of high-skilled, high-wage professional jobs has contributed to increasing urban populations. The appeal of short, traffic-free commutes and proximity to a host of amenities, a market for which is created by an increase in population, further adds to the appeal.

Whilst town centres cannot and will not seek to compete with neighbouring city centres, their draw is of a similar nature. Town centres are increasingly well-connected with major cities by multiple modes of transport, with trains running regularly between Stockport and Manchester City Centre on a daily basis, getting you there in ten minutes or less.

Furthermore, residents are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of suburban living and urban sprawl, which has seen shifts towards more sustainable lifestyle choices. Characterised by an increase in the number of people choosing to walk and cycle, the desire to be close to local amenities has and will continue to increase. Town centres are increasingly seen as offering urban living without the scale and pace of the city. They often sit in close proximity to parks, gardens and other local green spaces, offering their own unique identities and local economies, and serving as community hubs to wider localities.

The 'High Streets and Town Centres in 2030' report describes future town centres as 'activity-based community gathering places, where retail is a smaller part of a wider range of uses and activities'. We agree with this narrative and believe residential development has a major role to play in creating community-oriented town centres of the future. It is vital that a high-quality design agenda underpins future development, setting a new benchmark for Stockport Town Centre. Whilst new homes will help to put community at the heart of our town centre's next chapter, it is high-quality design that will drive market value, create investor confidence and establish the conditions required to accommodate a new demographic and social mix within our town centre.

# A BUDDING MARKET TOWN

## AN EMERGING INDEPENDENT ECONOMY

**Stockport presents a mosaic of creativity, culture, food and drink.** Centred around the Market Place and Underbanks, the independent economy is thriving, providing residents and visitors with a rich experience of place.

**Stockport's Old Town** plays host to an inventive food and drink economy. The twisting streets of the Old Town are lined with aromas of freshly ground coffee beans through the day, and cookery of the highest quality by night. '[Where the Light Gets In](#)' has put Stockport on the food map of the north west, with new restaurants and outlets popping up frequently. Events such as [Foodie Fridays](#) and the Stockport Food and Drinks Festival bring the streets to life, whilst our museums continue to celebrate our history.

Stockport Underbanks is going through a period of revitalisation. [The Rediscovering the Underbanks project](#) has transformed Stockport's historic high street into a vibrant destination for residents and visitors.



Where The Light Gets In

© Image Source - Stockport Council



Foodie Fridays Events

© Image Source - Stockport Council

## A REGIONAL TRANSPORT HUB

**Stockport is a key strategic public transport hub and the key southern gateway into Greater Manchester.**

By train, passengers can be in London in under two hours, and in Manchester in less than ten minutes. The station acts as a regional interchange, highlighting its importance within the wider network. A bold [Rail Station Masterplan](#) and [Stockport Town Centre West SRF](#) set an ambitious vision for the future, proposing connectivity through the station area to connect the town centre from east-to-west.

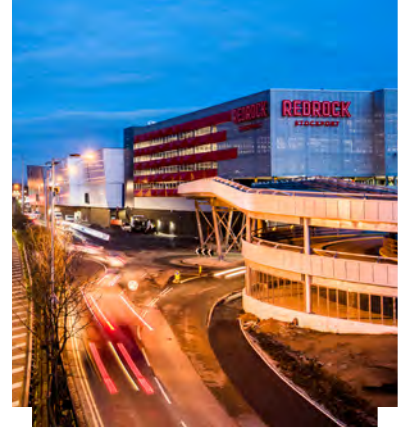
**The new [Transport Interchange](#) is now complete,** delivered in partnership with TfGM. The interchange will offer state of the art facilities, improved bus services and access, as well as a 2-acre rooftop park including a direct cycle link to the railway station. There is also a strong ambition to introduce the Metrolink network to Stockport, which will further enhance the area's strategic accessibility.



Stockport Exchange and Station Gateway

© Image Source - Stockport Council

# STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE – EMERGING DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT



Redrock and Access Improvement  
© Image Source – Stockport Council

## ONGOING INVESTMENT IN THE TOWN CENTRE

A £1 billion investment programme in Stockport Town Centre has begun the town's revival. Several 'Town Centre Access Plan' projects are already completed, easing congestion through the town centre and improving the walking and cycling environment.

Stockport Exchange is moving forward, with '3 Stockport Exchange' now complete and future development phases being readied. The business and commercial hub creates a fitting sense of arrival to the town when travelling by train, and has truly rejuvenated this section of the town centre, offering Grade A offices a stones throw from the station, a new hotel, active ground floors and a new square.

Redrock Stockport has revitalised a part of the town centre that had struggled for years, including The Light Cinema, several restaurants, a high-quality gym facility and new pedestrian-friendly streets.



Stockport Exchange  
© Image Source – Stockport Council

## EMERGING RESIDENTIAL PROPOSALS

This investment, alongside a clear strategic vision for the town centre, has encouraged investor confidence in the town centre, with an influx of high-quality, high-density residential proposals coming forward.

These proposals will be the first of many, in a town centre rife with development potential accompanied by a commitment to delivering the infrastructure required to support sustainable residential growth and create low carbon neighbourhoods of choice.

A summary of emerging and consented proposals is provided here, outlining some of the key characteristics and qualities we expect future development in the town centre to deliver, supported by this guide.

Residential density throughout the document is measured using dwellings per hectare (DPH), the most commonly used metric for measuring density. Where a 'DPH Gross' measure is used, this summarises the number of homes against the overall site boundary, without subtracting other elements within the site such as streets, public open space or semi-private spaces.

## EMERGING DESIGN THEMES

The below themes and qualities summarise analysis of emerging proposals.

- A **low number of private car parking** spaces per home.
- Increased **numbers of communal and private cycle parking** facilities.
- **Stepping building heights** in higher density schemes, with sensibly located taller buildings.
- Sizeable areas dedicated to **high-quality, green public and private community spaces**.
- A **range of active land uses** are proposed in appropriate locations on ground floors.
- **Perimeter blocks are formed around generously sized courtyards** and lined with large windows, balconies and front doors to activate surrounding streets.
- Housing mixes are weighted towards **1 and 2 bedroom apartments**.
- **Existing heritage assets are retained and refurbished** into new homes



2 - 4 STOREYS



58 DPH (GROSS)\*

\*The development achieves a lower DPH measure as the care facility is not included in the calculation

© Image source via planning application documents (PRP, 2020)

## ST THOMAS HOSPITAL

Architect - PRP  
Landscape Architect - Urban Green

**76 homes (68 affordable/ 8 supported living units)**

**0.3 cycle spaces per home**

**0.4 car parking spaces per home**

**Large communal gardens and courtyards**

**Intergenerational living - including an 80-bed care facility**

Renovated and enhanced heritage buildings

4 - 14 STOREYS



261 DPH (GROSS)

© Image source via planning application documents (BDP, 2021)

## WEIR MILL

Architect - BDP  
Landscape Architect - Planit

**253 homes**

57% 1 bedroom / 42% 2 bedroom / 1% 3 bedroom

**142 new trees**

**0.4 cycle spaces per home** 1.26 per home including integrated wall storage in apartments

**11 disabled car parking spaces** 0 private car parking spaces

**0.6 Ha** of multifunctional public open space including **120m active river-front**

5 - 15 STOREYS



447 DPH (GROSS)

© Image source via planning application documents (Leach Rhodes Walker, 2022)

## WARREN STREET

Architect - Leach Rhodes Walker  
Landscape Architect - Layer.studio

**563 homes**

40% 1 bedroom / 47% 2 bedroom / 4% 3 bedroom / 6% townhouse

**300 Sq m/2** commercial along active ground floors

**0.2 parking spaces per home**

**1 cycle parking space per home**

**High-quality public realm**, communal gardens, green streets, and **activated river edge**

**New landmark** gateway building

# TOWARDS SENSITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DENSITY

High-density residential development can be achieved using a number of approaches, often driven by specific site constraints and the location of the development site within its locality.

Housing density is ultimately just a number - the approach to achieving the number, however, can have a major impact on the people that call a place their home, as well as the physical environment in which a development is located.

A qualitative approach to achieving high-density development is therefore required, considering the impact of a proposal on people, place and planet. Sensitive density refers to a compact urban form, achieving liveable homes and neighbourhoods and a high number of homes per hectare, without having to resort to towers.

Case studies presented here offer a glance at how sensitive density can be achieved without compromising on design quality, space standards or appropriate building heights. Guidance throughout the document provides detail on how this can be achieved in Stockport Town Centre.



Roof form and materiality complement the areas heritage



Front doors, windows and habitable rooms address the street

**Fine grain streets, tight urban blocks and experimental housing typologies** deliver a compact, high-density neighbourhood which responds to its industrial heritage. A range of land uses are integrated into converted heritage buildings, activating new public spaces. Private and communal amenity spaces are delivered on rooftops or podiums, providing strong city views.



2 - 5 STOREYS

100-150 DPH GROSS

CITU  
**LITTLE KELHAM SHEFFIELD**

Architect - Bauman Lyons

**Approx. Site Area** 0.41 ha

**164 homes**

48x 1 bedroom, 97x 2 bedroom,  
16x 3 bedroom, 3x 4 bedroom

**Private Amenity**

Roof terraces and balconies

**Communal Amenity**

Garden decks above undercroft parking areas

**1 car parking space per home**





3 - 7 STOREYS

200-250\* DPH GROSS

Image source: ©2023 Aerodata International Surveys, Lantmateriet/Metria, Maxar Technologies, Scankort, Map data ©2023

COPENHAGEN CITY & PORT DEVELOPMENT  
**NORDHAVNEN COPENHAGEN**

COBE architects, SLETH and Polyform

**Approx. sample area** 2.6 ha

**Mix** 520 apartments (2-5 bedroom)

**Private Amenity**

Large balconies, roof terraces and ground floor garden terraces.

**Communal Amenity**

Central green courtyards with playground.

**0 car parking spaces / home**

(on-street visitor parking)

**1.5 cycle parking spaces / home**

\*estimated based on sample of neighbourhood

High-density is achieved using **efficient, compact perimeter blocks of medium-rise apartments** laid out on a grid of tight-knit, people-oriented streets. Large balconies, windows and roof terraces create light homes with significant private and communal amenity space. A range of active uses activate public squares, boulevards and street corners.

The DPH measure is a gross measure, which includes streets and public spaces, lowering the DPH total. **When measured individually to the back of the footpath, urban blocks can deliver well over 300 DPH.**



Each home is provided with private amenity space



Medium-rise apartment blocks incorporate dual aspect apartments, large balconies and active ground floors



Streets designed to enhance biodiversity and improve the experience of pedestrians and cyclists





Image source: Imagery ©2023 Google, Imagery ©2023 The Geoinformation Group, Map data ©2023

BARRATT HOMES  
**CAMDEN COURTYARDS LONDON**

Architect - Sheppard Robson  
 Approx. Site Area 0.41 ha

**164 homes**

48x 1 bedroom, 97x 2 bedroom,  
 16x 3 bedroom, 3x 4 bedroom

**Private Amenity**

Recessed balconies and roof terraces

**Communal Amenity**

Internal courtyard and rooftop green space  
 with playground

**0 car parking spaces / home**

**Communal cycle stores** in buildings  
 (1 cycle parking space per home)

A range of tenures and typologies (including 50% affordable provision) delivered on a small sized plot. **A very high DPH measure is achieved using highly efficient and tight perimeter blocks**, including raised amenity spaces, variations in private balcony and play areas at rooftop level. Importantly, high-density and high-quality homes are achieved without using towers, but through innovation and considered design.

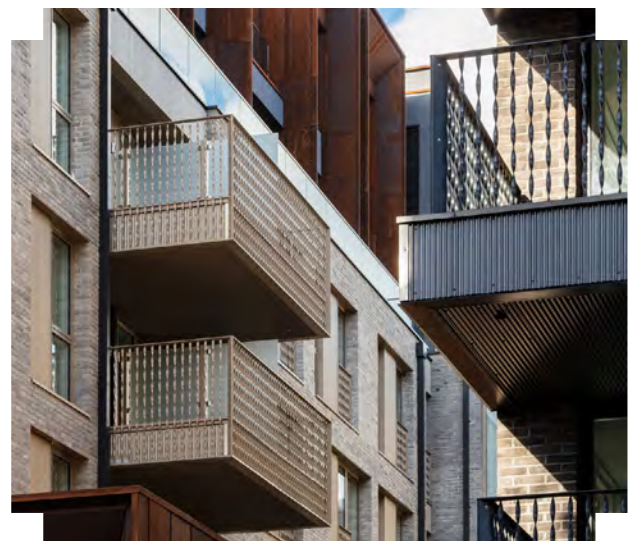
All apartments are dual aspect, with habitable rooms fronting the street. This allows for a reduced back-to-back distance at the centre of the block. The massing of the building is broken down using inset balconies and recessed upper storeys.



A range of complementary materials, generous windows and inset balconies create depth in the elevation

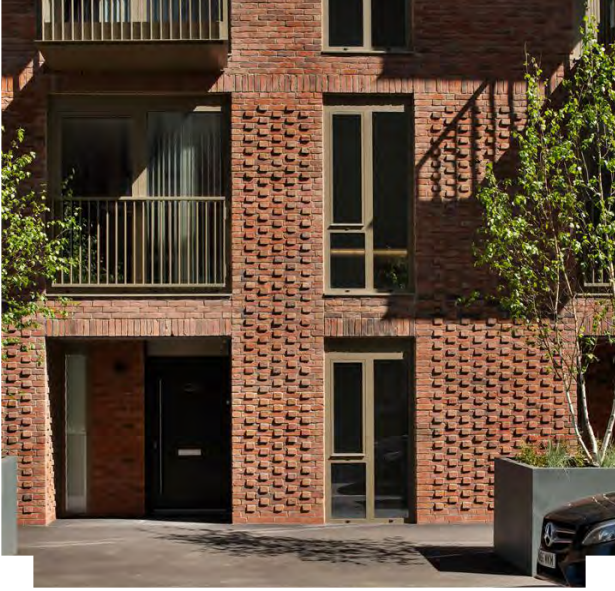


Windows and doors address a green communal courtyard (Photography © Simon Kennedy)



A range of balcony approaches provide private amenity to residents (Photography © Simon Kennedy)





Perforated brick detailing at lower levels creates visual interest along the frontage



Two-storey townhouses with front doors address the street, with apartments located above

## QUALITIES OF SENSITIVE DENSITY

The following design features are common in successful high-density development.

- **Variety in tenure and typology delivered vertically.** Blocks create homes for a range of demographics, including families and elderly.
- **Multifunctional, communal spaces containing adaptive and biodiverse green infrastructure.**
- **Public spaces activated by mixed use ground floors.** A range of retail, commercial and social infrastructure are integrated into mixed-use building footprints.
- Building elevations and roofs are used to deliver **elevated private and communal amenity space.**
- Building **heights subtly step up and down** across blocks. Massing is broken up through a range of measures, creating depth and visual interest in façades, and a human-scale at street level.
- The **number of private parking spaces is low**, with a strong focus on active travel and cycle parking.
- **Streets achieve a fine urban grain**, incorporating a range of functions and amenity spaces.



SALBOY

### LOCAL CRESCENT SALFORD

Architect - 5Plus Architects

Approx. Site Area 0.7 ha

#### 399 homes

134x 1 bedroom , 232x 2 bedroom,

26x 3 bedroom, 7x 3 bedroom townhouse

#### Private Amenity

Communal internal courtyard, green rooftop space, balconies, swimming pool and spa, cinema room, multiple lounge areas

#### Communal Amenity

Public landscaped courtyard, array of retail spaces to activate the street

**0.14 car parking spaces per home (59 overall)**

**0.44 cycle parking spaces per home (179 overall)**

**GIA per dwelling (average) - 70.5m<sup>2</sup>**





# SUCCESSFUL TOWN CENTRE LIVING

## KEY COMPONENTS

The Key Components provide design guidance to promote a sustainable, compact and contextual urban form in Stockport Town Centre. They are the essential ingredients in delivering a more liveable town centre; one which meets the needs of residents and addresses the complex challenges faced by the planet.

The guidance is not an exhaustive list of requirements, but presents the 'minimum expectations' of future development in Stockport Town Centre. Guidance is focused around key topics, helping to overcome the challenges associated with delivering a dense, yet liveable urban form that responds appropriately to its context.

Photography of design best practice is provided throughout to support guidance points. Whilst photography is useful as a visual aid to the written guidance point, it is accepted that any design approach should be contextually appropriate, and as such proposals will be primarily judged on their ability to respond appropriately to their context.

The Key Components directly relate to the character area guidance presented later in the document. Whilst guidance in this section covers key design topics and challenges, character area guidance applies and develops the most salient points at the local level.

Successful application of the Key Components is also linked to meeting a number of Stockport Core Strategy policy requirements, with relevant policies listed at the end of each Key Component section.

Design guidance in this section relates to the design of buildings and their interior, and external spaces around the building or in the public realm.

The colour of prefixes for each guidance point outlines whether the point refers to the design of **buildings** (eg. **PE-14**) or **outdoor spaces** (eg. **PE-7**) respectively.



### THE BUILDING

Design guidance on elements located within the building footprint.



### OUTDOOR SPACES

Design guidance on external public, semi-private or private spaces.



### USING THE KEY COMPONENTS

We expect the Key Components to be applied to all future residential proposals. Whilst it is accepted that some components will be more relevant to an application than others, developers and their design teams must provide evidence of their consideration.

This stance derives from the council's ambitions for our town centre, and key to this is the requirement to deliver. We must see a commitment to Stockport, a demonstration that the quality of a scheme will be upheld from inception through to completion.

Proposals failing to comply with guidance will be expected to provide sufficient justification for variance, as deemed by the council.

# KEY COMPONENTS



The Key Components provide design guidance which promotes a sustainable, compact and contextual urban form in Stockport Town Centre.



**MAKE SURE IT'S  
A PLACE FOR ALL**

Promote interaction, foster a sense of community, ownership and mixed neighbourhoods.



**MAKE SURE IT  
ANIMATES THE PUBLIC  
REALM**

Active frontages and surveillance, threshold and boundaries, active streets, materiality, and lighting.



**MAKE SURE IT'S  
GREEN, BLUE AND  
SUSTAINABLE  
PUBLIC REALM AND  
BUILDINGS**

Parks and open spaces, green streets, courtyards, SuDS, tree planting, biodiversity, and sustainable building measures.



**MAKE SURE IT  
PRIORITISES  
PEDESTRIANS  
AND CYCLISTS**

Mobility Hubs, rebalanced streets, parking, healthy streets, and street materiality.



**MAKE SURE IT  
RESPONDS TO  
CONTEXT AND  
CHARACTER**

Responding to landscape and topography, urban grain, scale and massing, legibility, building materials, architectural detailing, heritage and land use.

**MAKE SURE IT'S  
PRACTICAL**

Waste and recycling, cycle storage and parking, car parking and servicing, emergency access, integrating plant and externally mounted equipment



**MAKE SURE IT'S  
HIGH-QUALITY  
ARCHITECTURE**

Ground floors and entrances, façade and elevation, materiality, tall buildings and building typology



**MAKE SURE IT  
CREATES A HOME**

Space and daylight, internal circulation, internal storage, adaptive design, personalisation, private amenity, privacy and neighbourliness



**MAKE SURE IT'S  
DELIVERABLE**

Construction, viability, scrutiny and maintenance and management



The guidance is not an exhaustive list of requirements, but presents the 'minimum expectations' of future development in Stockport Town Centre.



## MAKE SURE IT'S A PLACE FOR ALL

Future residential development in Stockport Town Centre must focus on the creation of sustainable communities, providing for a diverse population bound by a shared love for their neighbourhood.

We want Stockport Town Centre to be a place where people of all ages, demographics and levels of mobility enjoy a high quality of life. The design of new residential buildings and neighbourhoods is absolutely vital to achieving this aim.

Collectively, planners, designers and developers have a duty to create town centre residential neighbourhoods that foster resilient mixed communities. As Stockport develops and diversifies, the importance of creating environments for people to bond, exchange and co-exist increases.

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

#### ← Deliver accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods for everyone

**PE-1** Ensure all buildings, streets and public spaces are fully accessible for everyone, regardless of age and level of mobility.

**PE-2** New buildings should be designed in consideration of universal design principles, considering the individual needs and requirements of multiple user groups, including people with: visual impairments, wheelchair users, users of mobility scooters and individuals with neurodivergency.

**PE-3** Consult and engage with diverse stakeholders at an early stage of the design process, including but not limited to groups representing older adults, children and young people, and people with disabilities.

**PE-4** New development will be expected to be built to [Building Regulations M4\(2\)](#) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. Schemes which meet the optional standard in [Building Regulations Part M4\(3\)](#) for wheelchair user housing will be supported.

**PE-5** Design should achieve accessible gradients within streets, public spaces and routes leading to building entrances in accordance with [British Standard 8300 \(BS 8300\) Part 1](#) guidance on maximum gradients.



The route provides steps and a gently sloping accessible ramp to mitigate the level change and provide inclusive access along the same path | Battersea Power Station, London



A combination of steps at the top of the slope and a level route at the lower level provides access to the building for people with different levels of mobility | Middlewood Locks, Salford





Formal or informal children's play areas could be integrated into the design of roof spaces  
Nordhavnen, Copenhagen



**PE-6** Where a site is subject to steep slopes and level changes, proposals are expected to take a sensitive and innovative approach to achieving accessible street gradients and level access to buildings. Design should work with the natural topography where possible, using a range of steps and gently sloping paths to ensure at least one part of a route achieves gradients below BS 8300 maximum gradients. Large blank retaining walls and poorly-integrated ramp features should be avoided.

**PE-7** A range of features should be considered in the design of streets and public spaces, contributing to a fully inclusive and accessible public realm. This includes but is not limited to the following features, sensitively integrated as part of a holistic and place-responsive design solution:

- Handrails and seating, creating resting areas at regular intervals along the route;
- Alternative routes and building access points catering for different levels of mobility;
- Non-slip surface materials and tactile paving;
- Create clear sight lines along streets and in public spaces, avoiding 'hidden' areas which aren't overlooked by surrounding buildings and homes;
- Clear and easy-to-read signage at regular intervals and at key decision-making points along routes, such as junctions or near to key building entrances; and
- Appropriate street lighting, avoiding dark or shaded areas after dark.

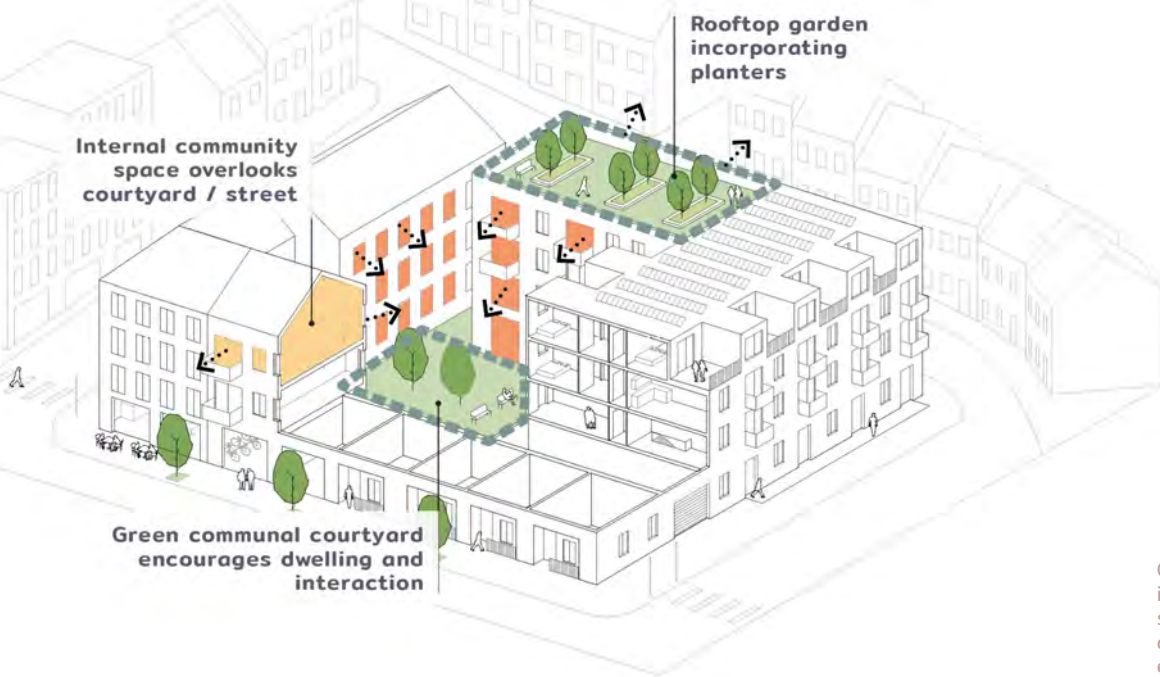
**PE-8** Future proposals should consider the requirements of the elderly at an early stage, creating safe, welcoming and inclusive neighbourhoods of choice in close proximity to existing public transport nodes and town centre amenities.

**PE-9** In line with our ambition to increase the number of families living within the town centre, we expect proposals to create homes and environments which cater for family life. This includes but is not limited to:

- Including larger family homes within the residential mix. Larger homes should be integrated into a well-considered higher density design solution, maximising land use efficiency on sites in close proximity to public transport nodes, existing amenities and social infrastructure;
- Where gaps in existing provision are identified in the analysis process, developers should work closely with relevant public sector organisations to create space within buildings or neighbourhoods for new social infrastructure;
- Creating well-overlooked and safe streets and spaces, identifying streets and spaces for children and young people's play facilities; and
- Utilising building roof spaces or internal areas to create informal children's play areas, located in close proximity to larger family apartments.

Further detail on the design of family-friendly urban neighbourhoods is presented across the following pages, and other relevant key components within this chapter.

## SECTION 3 KEY COMPONENTS



→ **Artist's Impression**  
Ground level, rooftop and indoor communal amenity spaces are provided, creating a range of functions which encourage interaction



Large communal area promotes interaction, incorporating a range of functions including children's play, formal and informal seating areas | New Garden Quarter, London



Verdant green courtyard, with space for informal seating, sufficient lighting and orientated to maximise sunlight | Blackfriars, Salford

### ← Deliver communal spaces which encourage interaction

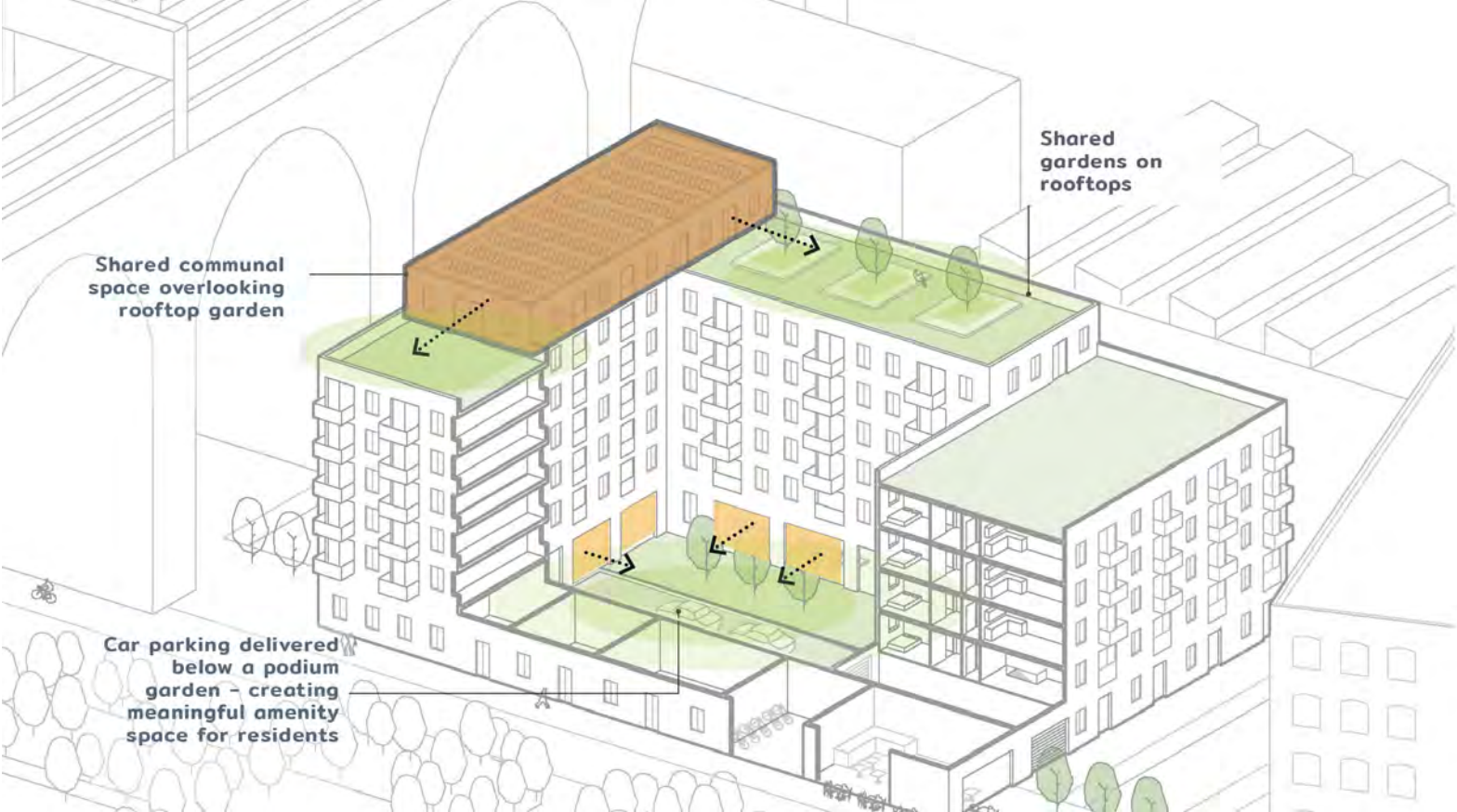
**PE-10** Create shared communal spaces at a range of scales, including but not limited to roof gardens, co-working areas, shared gardens and internal common areas. These spaces should be easily accessible and well-overlooked by surrounding homes.

**PE-11** Communal spaces should be welcoming and attractive, taking a landscape-first approach and maximising the use of ecologically-rich green infrastructure and planting. They should be designed to support a range of social functions and activities, using flexible furniture that encourages interaction. Simply providing an open area will not be sufficient to satisfy the requirements for amenity provision.

Communal spaces should integrate formal or informal children's play facilities, located in close proximity to larger family apartments.

**PE-12** Orientation and the sun path is important when considering the climate of external amenity spaces. Spaces that are sheltered from prevailing wind and avoid shade are likely to be better utilised by residents.





**PE-13 Car parking proposals can have a negative impact on the value and quality of communal amenity spaces.** 'Courtyards' as envisioned can become surface level car parks without a clear and carefully-considered design rationale. The design of external communal spaces should take a 'landscape-first' approach, where the primary design objective is to create a beautiful, practical and usable amenity space for residents.

- Where surface level car parking is proven to be necessary within the design, it should be subtly integrated as part of a considered spatial design. Bays should be demarcated using a subtle and complementary change of surface material and permeated by green infrastructure.
- Large areas of tarmac and painted lines to demarcate spaces should be avoided.
- Long rows or large clusters of car parking spaces within communal spaces should be avoided.

**PE-14 Encourage chance meetings.** For example, frequently pairing front doors, using low-set curtilage boundary treatments, creating dwelling spaces within the building threshold and shared routes to access and egress points within higher-density apartment developments.

**PE-15 Provide new areas of public realm, designed to be accessible, easy to find and well-overlooked by surrounding homes.** Spaces should be designed to encourage activity and serve a clear function, incorporating green features such as trees or rain gardens, to maximise biodiversity value.

**PE-16 Create streets and spaces that are focused upon the community they serve.** Streets should prioritise pedestrian activity and human life, providing a range of street furniture to encourage dwelling, play or connection with green infrastructure. Great streets are the key to a successful neighbourhood, and the lifeblood of any community.



Car parking designed to the edge of communal courtyard maximises the amenity value of the space  
Great Kneighton, Cambridge



Car parking is designed away from the street, creating a people-orientated space which encourages neighbourliness | Copenhagen, Denmark



↓ → **Foster a sense of community and ownership**

**PE-8** Positively engage existing local communities and key stakeholders at an early stage of the design process.

**PE-9** Create shared facilities, including carpool schemes and cycle hubs, to encourage sociable commuting habits and interaction when planning daily activities.

Schemes proposing car clubs and other shared mobility facilities will be supported.

**PE-10** Space for communal gardening and food production should be considered, either at ground or rooftop level. Communal beds or planters should be integrated into the design of external communal spaces, orientated to maximise direct sunlight and surrounded by seating and planting to facilitate dwelling.

**PE-11** Internal and external common spaces should provide facilities to cater for families with children, including play or crèche facilities.

**PE-12** Consider using new technology in order to create more inclusive new places and forums for interaction.

**PE-13** A community group and governance structure should be established in new developments, giving residents an element of collective ownership of their communal spaces. Community groups should work with other private management partners to create a range of regular social events for residents - encouraging people to get to know their neighbours, interact and share experiences.



A spacious internal common area designed at upper levels creates space for year-round events  
VOX, Manchester



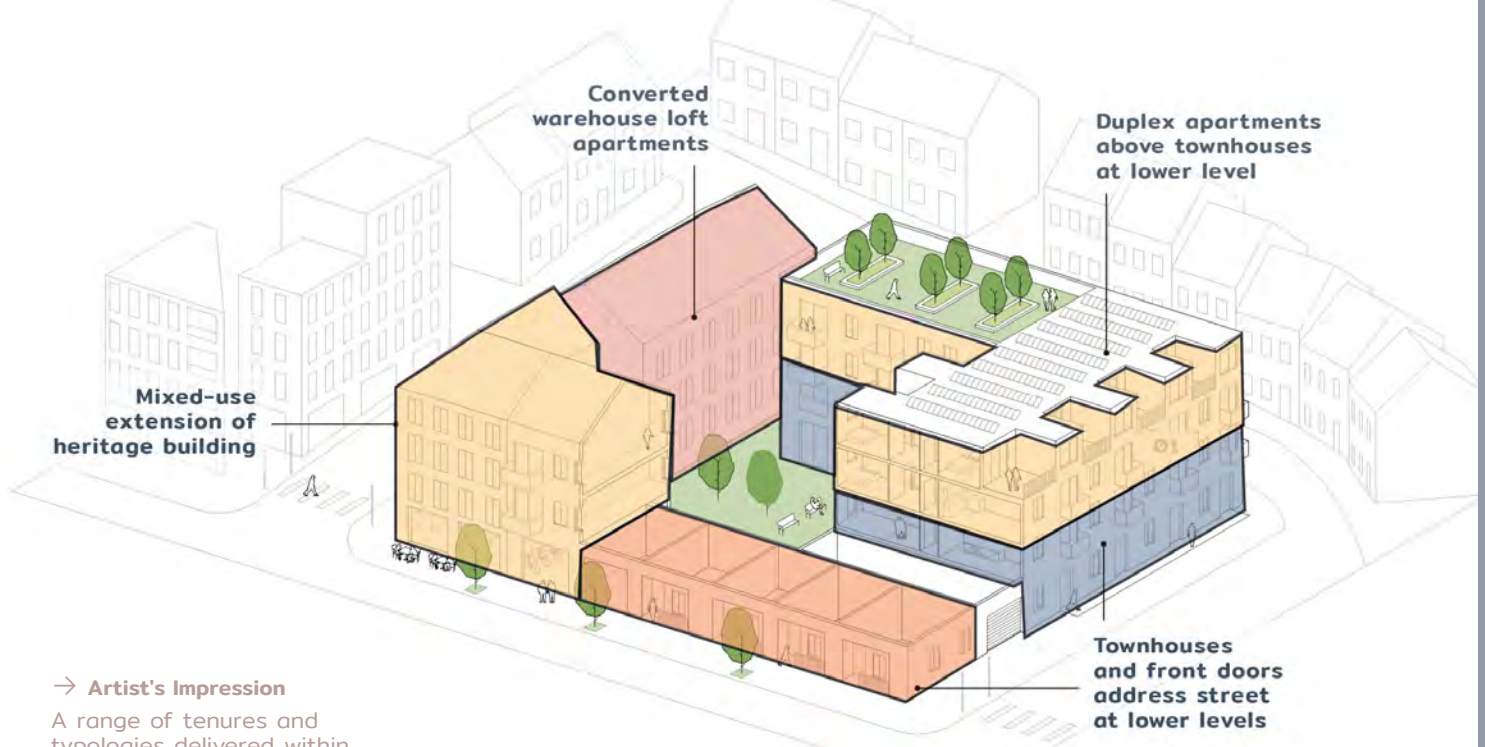
Communal gardens and growing space incorporated into a central courtyard space | Martin Luther King Park, Paris



Community stewardship and governance should be considered from the start of the design process, encouraging communities to take ownership of their neighbourhood | Sadler's Yard, Manchester



On-site growing spaces could inspire social events focused around food grown within the neighbourhood  
Standish, Gloucestershire



→ **Artist's Impression**

A range of tenures and typologies delivered within a compact urban block



A range of tenures and typologies mixed as part of a tenure-blind neighbourhood block  
New Islington, Manchester

↑ **Create mixed neighbourhoods**

**PE-14 Provide a mix of residential tenure and typologies**, integrated and mixed around the block, plot or wider neighbourhood. New residential development should create 'tenure-blind' neighbourhoods, including appropriate provision of affordable housing (to be agreed with the council).

**PE-15 Consider housing provision for all age categories**, encouraging intergenerational mixing, considering senior-living homes and extra care units integrated into larger proposals.

**! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements:

**SD-1** 'Creating Sustainable Communities'

**CS2** 'Housing Provision'

**CS3** 'Mix of Housing'

**CS4** 'Distribution of Housing'

**H-1** 'Design of Residential Development'

**H-3** 'Affordable Housing'

**CS8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-2** 'Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

**CS10** 'An Effective and Sustainable Transport Network'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

**ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance during concept and detailed design stages.

[Living Closer - the many faces of co-housing \(Studio Weave, 2018\)](#)

[Practical Guide to Cohousing \(UK Cohousing Network, 2022\)](#)

[HAPPI: Housing for Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation \(DCLG, 2009\)](#)





MAKE SURE IT  
**ANIMATES THE  
PUBLIC REALM**

Public space performs an increasingly important role for communities inhabiting denser urban environments, providing amenity space for residents where private spaces are inevitably smaller than traditional suburban neighbourhoods. Be it to move, dwell, play, observe or communicate, public realm is undeniably an essential platform for everyday life.

Residential development should breathe life into the public realm, inviting residents into streets and spaces and creating vibrant, green and healthy spaces to act as an extension of the home. Adjacent buildings should animate and complement the space, further encouraging people to spend time outside. Guidance here represents our commitment to creating human-focused places that prioritise and encourage public life.



Space for businesses at ground floor, transparent frontages and balconies above encourage an animated streetscene | Elephant Park, London

**DESIGN GUIDANCE**

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

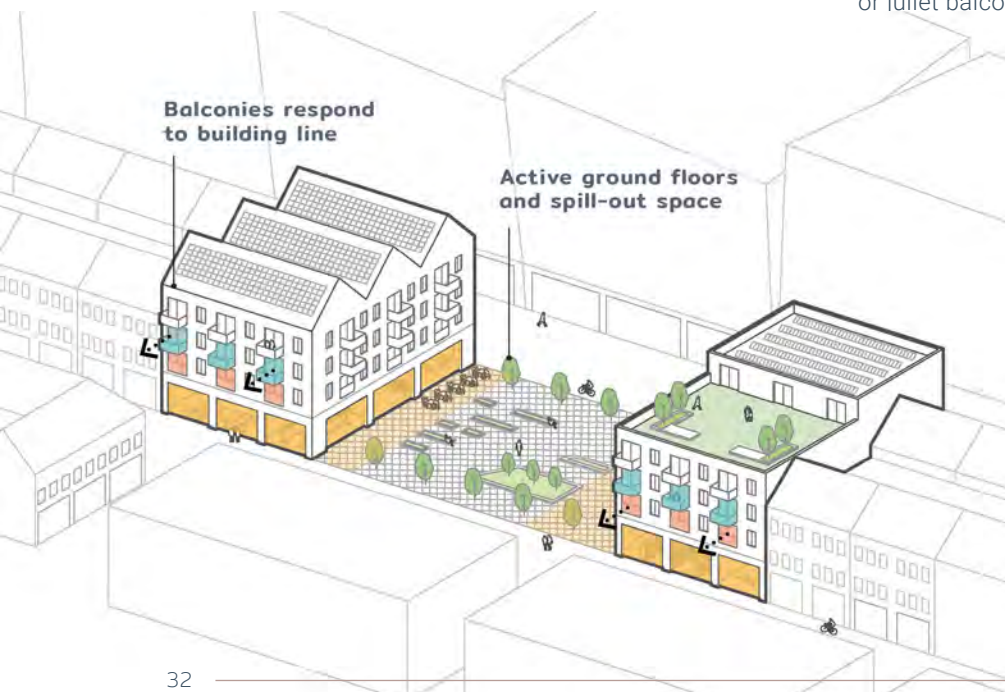
← **Deliver active building frontages**

**APR-1 Create flexible and active ground floors,** incorporating a range of active uses where relevant. Where ground floor retail use is considered, proposals should seek to provide ample spill-out space.

**APR-2 Increase the transparency of the façade, especially along the ground floor.** Façades should provide large windows, as well as front doors and entrances at ground floor level along the length of the building frontage, where homes are proposed at ground floor level. Building entrances to apartment blocks should be clearly distinguished and generously sized.

**APR-3 Facilitate upper storey passive surveillance,** including the provision of balconies, roof terraces or Juliet balconies. Balcony treatment should

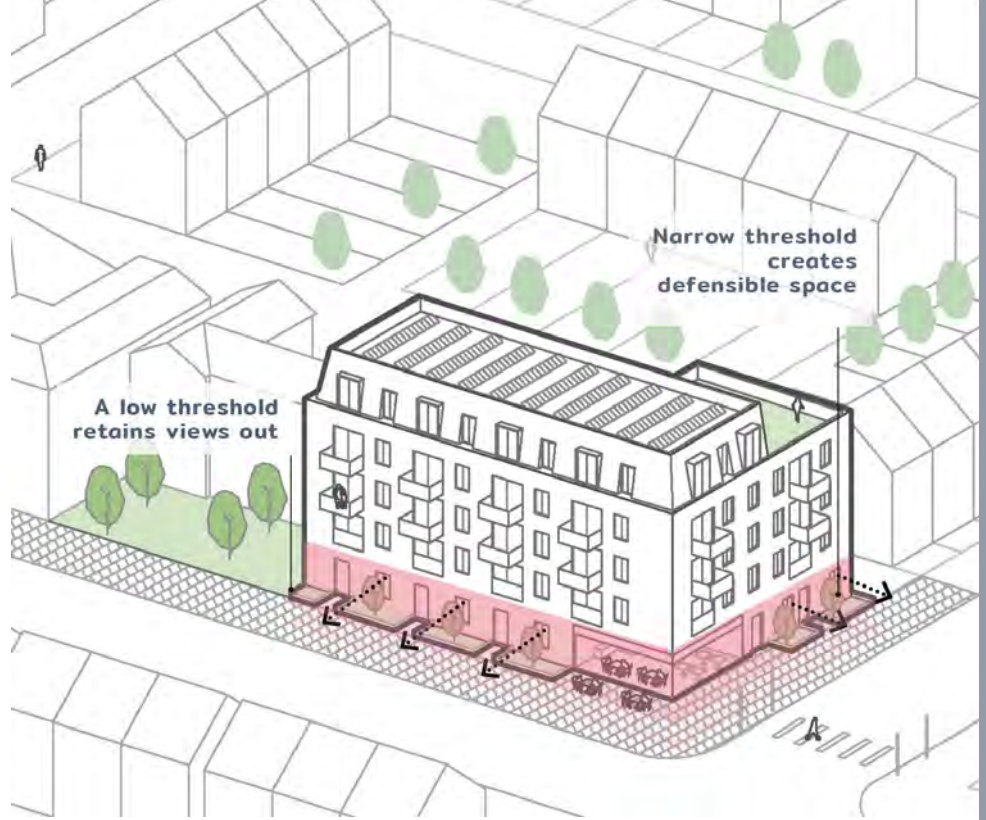
respond to the rhythm and building line of the building and soften the level of separation between the building and the public realm.



← **Artist's Impression**

Active and transparent ground floors and a range of balcony treatments address the street





→ **Artist's Impression**

Narrow building thresholds and low boundary treatments protect the privacy of residents' at street level whilst maintaining visual connection with the street



Large windows and front doors address the street, with a low hedgerow boundary ensuring a visual connection between home and street | Middlewood Locks, Salford

↔ **Create appropriate building thresholds and boundaries**

**APR-4** Clearly define public, private and semi-private spaces, using sensitive boundary treatments and integrating green and blue infrastructure where possible.

**APR-5** The width of building thresholds and the height of boundary treatments should respond to the proportions of the street. Where a new street is proposed, a narrow yet functional threshold should be delivered, contributing to a fine urban grain and creating a positive relationship between building and street.

**APR-6** Building threshold should provide residents with space for dwelling and personalisation, with space to integrate green infrastructure. Boundary treatments should protect residents' privacy, whilst retaining a visual connection between ground floor windows and the street.



Tall and transparent entrance area creates a sense of arrival and forms a positive relationship with adjacent public space | Blackfriars, Salford



A narrow, low-set building threshold and recessed front door creates defensible space, whilst retaining visual connection between home and street | Embassy Gardens, London





→ **Artist's Impression**

Incidental public courtyard incorporates seating and green infrastructure, addressed by front doors and large windows

↓ **Create streets that serve as an extension of the home**

**APR-7** Create incidental public spaces within new masterplan layouts, providing points of orientation. Spaces should serve a clear function, with the size of the space responding to existing local provision and the prominence of the location within the masterplan.

**APR-8** Streets and spaces should be people-oriented and pedestrian-friendly, designed to encourage a range of activities and functions. A range of street furniture should be integrated to facilitate residents' amenity, including informal children's play, seating, appropriate lighting and public art.

For further detail on balanced street design, please refer to [pages 46-49](#).

**APR-9** Integrate green infrastructure into the streetscene, including planting within curtilage boundaries to enhance the ecological value of the street.

For further detail on urban greening, refer to [page 36](#).

↓ **Consider materiality holistically**

**APR-10** Consider materiality holistically, complementing and enhancing the setting of heritage assets and new buildings. Materials should be high-quality, durable and low-maintenance contributing to streets and spaces that prioritise people over vehicles. For further details on materiality see [page 47 \(Balanced Streets\)](#) and [page 52 \(Heritage\)](#).



People-oriented street includes seating, informal play facilities and planting | Wharf Road, London



Sufficient space for children's play incorporated into the street design | Elephant Park, London



Green infrastructure and integrated seating encourages dwelling within the space | Whitfield Gardens, London



Linear feature lighting creates rhythm along a pedestrian street | Battersea Exchange, London

### ↑ Use lighting to enhance character and mood

**APR-11** Streets, walkways and cycleways should be well-lit, using low-carbon lighting solutions to create rhythm in the street and ensuring public spaces feel safe and accessible after dark. Sensitive lighting strategies should be developed to ensure new development does not have a detrimental impact on local wildlife.

**APR-12** Use lighting of varying tones, colours and lumens to enhance the character and distinctiveness of a space after dark, creating drama and interest, celebrating interesting architectural features, archaeology or public art.

**APR-13** Consider using smart technology to manage lighting, allowing flexibility for different events, seasons, or times of day, reducing energy consumption and supporting the borough's net zero-carbon aims.

**APR-14** Lighting elements should be carefully located, within 'zones' allowing clear movement and sight lines.

**APR-15** Consider building / wall mounted lighting and other types (ie. catenary) where possible in order to reduce clutter at street level. This should also be used to illuminate building entrances and front doors after dark.



Subtly integrated bollard lighting along green pedestrian route | Charter Square, Sheffield

## ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy](#) policy requirements.

**SD-6** 'Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change'

**CS8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment'

**CS11** 'Stockport Town Centre'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following guidance.

[Manual for Streets \(1 and 2\)](#)

[Better Residential Streets \(CABE, 2009\)](#)

[Slow Streets Sourcebook \(Design London, 2015\)](#)

[An introductory guide to low traffic neighbourhood design \(Sustrans\)](#)

[Streets for All - Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places \(Historic England, 2018\)](#)

[Easy Access to Historic Landscapes \(Historic England\)](#)

[The Setting of Heritage Assets \(Historic England, 2017\)](#)

[Inclusive Mobility - a guide to best practice on pedestrian and transport infrastructure \(Department for Transport, 2021\)](#)





MAKE SURE IT'S

# GREEN, BLUE AND SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC REALM

There is significant opportunity to integrate green and blue infrastructure into streets, spaces and private outdoor areas of Stockport Town Centre; maximising the carbon sequestration potential of surfaces, managing water and contributing to a softer, greener and more biodiverse town centre.

Integrating biodiverse and wildlife-friendly green and blue infrastructure - across a range of scales and levels brings with it a number of social, health and environmental benefits. Importantly, it also assists in managing water to reduce flood risk and improves water quality.

## DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

### ↓ Enhance biodiversity

**GES-1 Development must deliver 10% biodiversity net gain as set out in The Environment Act 2021.** We encourage developers to go beyond this minimum standard, using green and blue infrastructure as a foundation for healthy and sustainable new neighbourhoods.

**GES-2 Enhance and add to the existing network of green open spaces.** Green open spaces should be designed to be multifunctional, providing multiple benefits such as: shade, cooling, recreation and various habitats for wildlife.

**GES-3 Maximise the biodiversity value of new and existing open spaces,** contributing towards a biodiversity net gain across the town centre. New green spaces should be wildlife-friendly, delivering a range of habitat types and prioritising the use of native planting species; unless a justified alternative is proposed.

**GES-4 Green spaces should layer vegetation to create diverse ecological structures,** incorporating: trees, shrubs, ground covers and other plant types to enhance the biodiversity value of the space.

By softening the urban environment, and using a range of design measures within new green spaces to enhance biodiversity, we can encourage wildlife into the town centre; creating rich and diverse habitats to co-exist alongside new homes and human activity.

The integration of green and blue infrastructure within streets and on building roofs also initiates evaporative cooling at night, reducing the urban heat island effect and creating shaded areas which will be increasingly important to quality of life as urban temperatures increase with the effects of global warming.

Design should connect people with nature wherever they are within the town centre, be it sat on their balcony or in their office.

**GES-5 Facilitate new green corridors or linear greens through neighbourhoods,** creating habitat connectivity between new and existing green spaces, as well as key destinations. New linear green features should seek to incorporate

**GES-6 Utilise trees, hedgerows and a range of natural boundary treatments** along the edges of green spaces, in play areas or other spaces where a defensible edge is deemed a requirement.

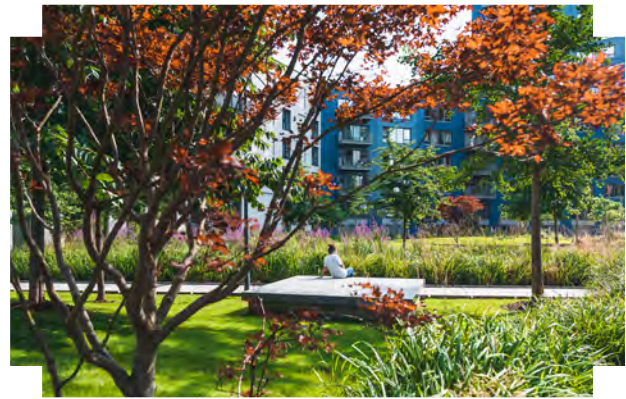
**GES-7 Embed a range of wildlife-friendly design features** into the design of public spaces and buildings. The following design features should be considered within new development:

- Green roofs and walls to provide nesting and foraging areas for birds and insects;
- Brush and deadwood piles to create microhabitats for small insects and mammals;
- Green bridges and underpasses below heavily used routes and roads;
- Permeable fencing and 'hedgehog gaps' to allow small animals to pass through; and
- Bat and bird boxes within new and renovated buildings. Swift boxes should be incorporated into the design of taller buildings.





The street is structured around a central linear green and incorporates green infrastructure within the curtilage boundary | Middlewood Locks, Salford



Green open space creates layers of planting, creating a range of habitat types, seating areas and green boundaries  
City island, London

## ↑ → Create green streets

**GES-8 Deliver climate-adaptive green infrastructure within streets.** The level of infrastructure should respond to the intended function and status of the street within the street hierarchy. For example, where a street provides a primary pedestrian route through a neighbourhood, larger areas of green and blue infrastructure should be created to define the importance of the route.

**GES-9 Green streets should be multifunctional** - providing meaningful amenity spaces for residents and visitors to dwell or play; whilst enhancing biodiversity through wildlife-friendly design. Larger areas of green infrastructure within streets should embed wildlife-friendly design features, as detailed in GES-6.

**GES-10 Green streets should provide layers of green infrastructure, including: native trees, shrubs, wildflower and semi-neutral grasses** which contribute to a rich and diverse ecological structure. Narrow strips of mown grass or astro-turf finishes should be avoided.



Ecologically-rich and considered planting included in SuDS features, mitigating the level change along the street  
Grey to Green, Sheffield

↓ → **Integrated Water Management**

We expect future development in the town centre to take an integrated and innovative approach to water management which embeds nature-based solutions.

The town centre interfaces with three river corridors, and as such an integrated approach is essential to manage flood risk; slowing the flow of surface water runoff and improving water quality.

**GES-11** Development should follow the key principles of water treatment and slowing water, creating a network of sustainable, nature-based solutions as opposed to one mechanism. This should include maximising opportunities to manage water where it falls. Where water is not captured where it falls, mechanisms should be in place to ensure it is managed, held-up, reused and treated.

**GES-12** Slow the flow of water, ensuring water is managed, held up, re-used and treated within the development to reduce the impact of rainstorms within the development and further downstream

**GES-13** Reduce reliance on sewers and rivers as the first outfall and mechanism to drain a site, seeking alternative connections for water runoff.

**GES-14** All development is encouraged to use nature-based solutions to water management.

**GES-15** Most of the town centre rests on sandstone, providing an excellent base for infiltration techniques for clean wastewater. However, good infiltration can become filtration. This is a key consideration for schemes proposing subterranean areas.



Permeable paving used on tertiary street and rain garden features integrated into design of the street and threshold spaces | Bo01 Waterfront, Malmö

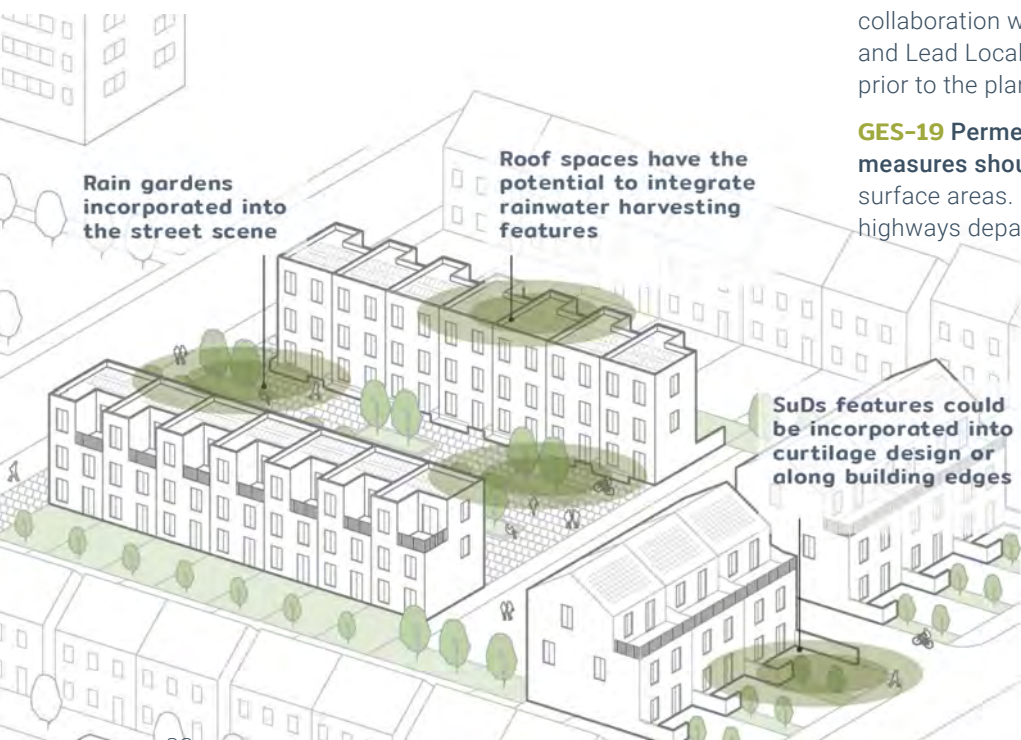
↑ → **Sustainable Drainage Systems**

**GES-16** Development should integrate a variety of SuDS features into the design of streets and spaces. SuDS should be viewed as a fundamental element of public realm design and integrated appropriately.

**GES-17** Nature-based features should always contribute to a sense of place and enhance biodiversity. Trees, ecologically-rich planting and wildlife-friendly design features should be included, to enhance the aesthetic quality of the space, maximise carbon capture and air-cleaning capabilities.

**GES-18** Where proposed along road carriageways, SuDS and planting schemes should be designed with a defensible edge to deter parking or drop off. SuDS should be considered at an early design stage, in collaboration with the Council's Highways Department and Lead Local Flood Authority or SuDS Approving Body prior to the planning process.

**GES-19** Permeable paving or other infiltration measures should be integrated into all feasible hard surface areas. Consult the council's drainage and highways departments early in the process.



Rain gardens incorporated into the street scene

Roof spaces have the potential to integrate rainwater harvesting features

SuDS features could be incorporated into curtilage design or along building edges



↓ → **Use appropriate street trees**

**GES-20** Integrate street trees and tree pits, considering their placement and choice of species to minimise the impact on adjacent homes. The choice of species should respond to the function of the space, for example using tall, narrow species at narrower streets.

**GES-21** Trees should be carefully located, ideally within 'zones' allowing clear movement, sight lines and respecting key views.

**GES-22** Adequate lighting is required around trees to ensure they do not create dark spots within a street or public space. Lighting should be integrated sensitively, to ensure no detrimental impact on local wildlife.

**GES-23** Use larger feature trees as focal points in new public spaces, integrating a range of features such as water refill points, cycle stands, lighting or seating to create a destination within the space.



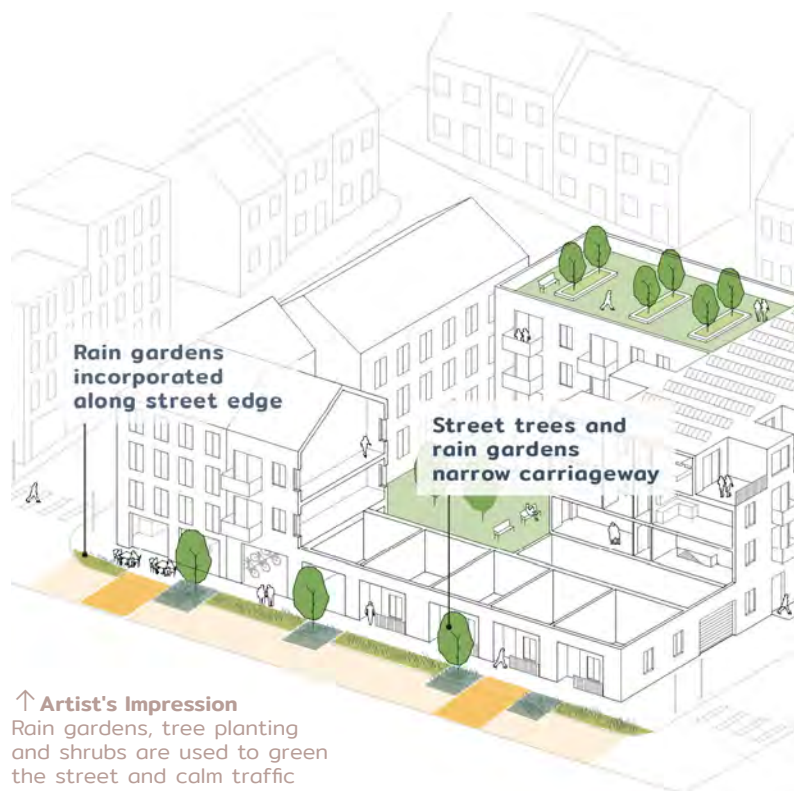
Tree species responds to the width of the street - organised to allow a smooth flow of pedestrian movement and with enough buffer space to ensure they don't negatively impact adjacent home | Battersea Exchange, London



Large mature trees act as a focal point within the space, with seating areas integrated below | Lewis Cubitt Park, London



Verdant SuDS features act as a fundamental element of the street, separating transport modes and encouraging biodiversity | Parc de Billancourt, Paris



↑ **Artist's Impression**  
Rain gardens, tree planting and shrubs are used to green the street and calm traffic





Balanced space design creates people-focused space whilst providing vehicular circulation along edges | Sovereign Square, Leeds



Subtly integrated and considered surface-level car parking, where required | Sugar House Island, London

### ↑ Create pedestrian-friendly courtyards, squares and incidental spaces

**GES-24** Courtyards, squares or predominantly hard areas of public realm should comprise high-quality and complementary surface materials, tying into a holistic material palette and responding to heritage.

**GES-25** Spaces should integrate a range of functions, including a range of seating types, SuDS and other water management features. Seating areas, tree planting and green infrastructure should be grouped and appropriately integrated into the space, creating a natural setting for dwelling or shelter.

**GES-26** Within larger urban spaces or squares, sufficient space should be provided to allow businesses to spill-out into the public realm without stifling pedestrian movement.

**GES-27** Where vehicular access to spaces is required, spaces should deliver a balanced and pedestrian-focused space. Carriageways should feel like integrated elements of the public realm, raised to create one surface and demarcated using a subtle change in surface material. Drop kerbs should be avoided in balanced, pedestrian-priority spaces.

**GES-28** Pedestrian desire lines between new and existing destinations should dictate the location of informal crossing points. The location of which should be suggested via a subtle change in material across carriageways, creating visual reminders to drivers of pedestrian priority realm.

### ↑ Integrate car parking and EV

**GES-29** Where it is proven to be an essential element of a residential scheme, car parking within the public realm or semi-private spaces should be subtly integrated as part of a considered design solution.

Parking bays should feel like integrated elements of the public space when cars aren't parked, and long rows or large clusters of parking bays should be avoided. Design should consider:

- Bays should be well-overlooked by habitable rooms in adjacent dwellings.
- Bays should be broken up with tree and shrub planting and other SuDS features at regular intervals.
- Alternatively, parking bays could be grouped to create more substantial and practical areas of public realm within courtyards, whilst still incorporating green and blue infrastructure.
- Building lines could be intermittently setback in the street or space to incorporate smaller parking courts and EV charging points, minimising the impact of parked cars on the street.



Planters wrapped by seating, encouraging connections between people with nature within public spaces  
Sadler's Yard, Manchester

### ↑ ↓ Integrate planting (and planters)

**GES-30 Integrate planting in both public and semi-private spaces.** The scale and species of planting should respond to the function and scale of the space, micro-climate and surrounding building materiality.

**GES-31 Avoid the use of standalone planters.** Development should integrate planters as fundamental elements of the design of a street or space. Where required, planters can also be used to form a protective edge to spaces or as part of a multi-functional threshold to residential buildings.

**GES-32 Planting should be sited with sun path and aspect in mind.** Wherever possible integrate seating and lighting, providing resting and sheltering points, sensory benefits and proximity to nature.

**GES-33 Explore opportunities to integrate smart technology** into integrated planters and seating, such as charging stations, 5G infrastructure or sensors.



Seating areas nestled into bunds of tree planting and green infrastructure within the streetscene  
Elephant Park, London

## ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

The Lead Local Flood Authority should be contacted for schemes which include drainage/SuDs proposals for the most up-to-date advice and guidance.

**C-S1** 'Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development - Addressing Inequalities and Climate Change'

**SD-1** 'Creating Sustainable Communities'

**SD-6** 'Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change'

**C-S8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-2** 'Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance.

[Manual for Streets \(1 and 2\)](#)

[Slow Streets Sourcebook \(Design London, 2015\)](#)

[An introductory guide to low traffic neighbourhood design \(Sustrans\)](#)

[Easy Access to Historic Landscapes \(Historic England\)](#)

[The Setting of Heritage Assets \(Historic England, 2017\)](#)

[Inclusive Mobility - a guide to best practice on pedestrian and transport infrastructure \(Department for Transport, 2021\)](#)

[The SuDS Manual \(Ciria, 2015\)](#)

[Green Streets Handbook \(US Environmental Protection Agency, 2021\)](#)

[Urban Greening for Biodiversity Net Gain \(London Wildlife Trust, 2021\)](#)

[Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD \(Stockport Council, 2019\)](#)

[Integrated Water Management Plan \(Greater Manchester Combined Authority 2023\)](#)



MAKE SURE IT'S

## GREEN, BLUE AND SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS

Stockport is working towards Zero Carbon as part of the response to the climate emergency. It is recognised that a net approach to carbon emissions may perpetuate fossil fuel dependency and therefore the target for delivering new buildings must be on delivering low or zero carbon solutions.

Sustainable design and construction is an approach which, if applied at the earliest concept stages of a project, can result in cost savings over the life of the building. Recognised environmental and social design standards can help to structure development proposals that achieve zero carbon, biodiversity net gain, climate change adaptation, sustainable drainage and transport, whilst delivering affordable, age friendly houses and buildings alongside other social benefits. This also helps to streamline the planning process by ensuring sustainable development.

Stockport intends to:

- Address the climate and ecological crises through requirement and promotion of sustainable design and construction techniques to enable zero carbon and biodiversity net gain;
- Drive a change in considering financial viability of schemes to reflect social and natural capital within project finances;
- Require consideration of zero carbon heat networks on certain scales of development including future-proofing smaller scale development to connect later;
- Establish net zero carbon targets for new development including Passivhaus, NABERS and BREEAM requirements for residential and non-residential development;
- Promote and support renewable energy projects including for communities;
- Capture the opportunity to deliver around 1,500 housing retrofits annually through householder applications by requiring / promoting energy improvements to existing dwellings;
- Make sure that energy, heating and cooling needs achieve net zero carbon by 2038.

Further detail will be published separately expanding on the above targets. Alongside this there are a number of practical considerations to be taken on board early in the design process.

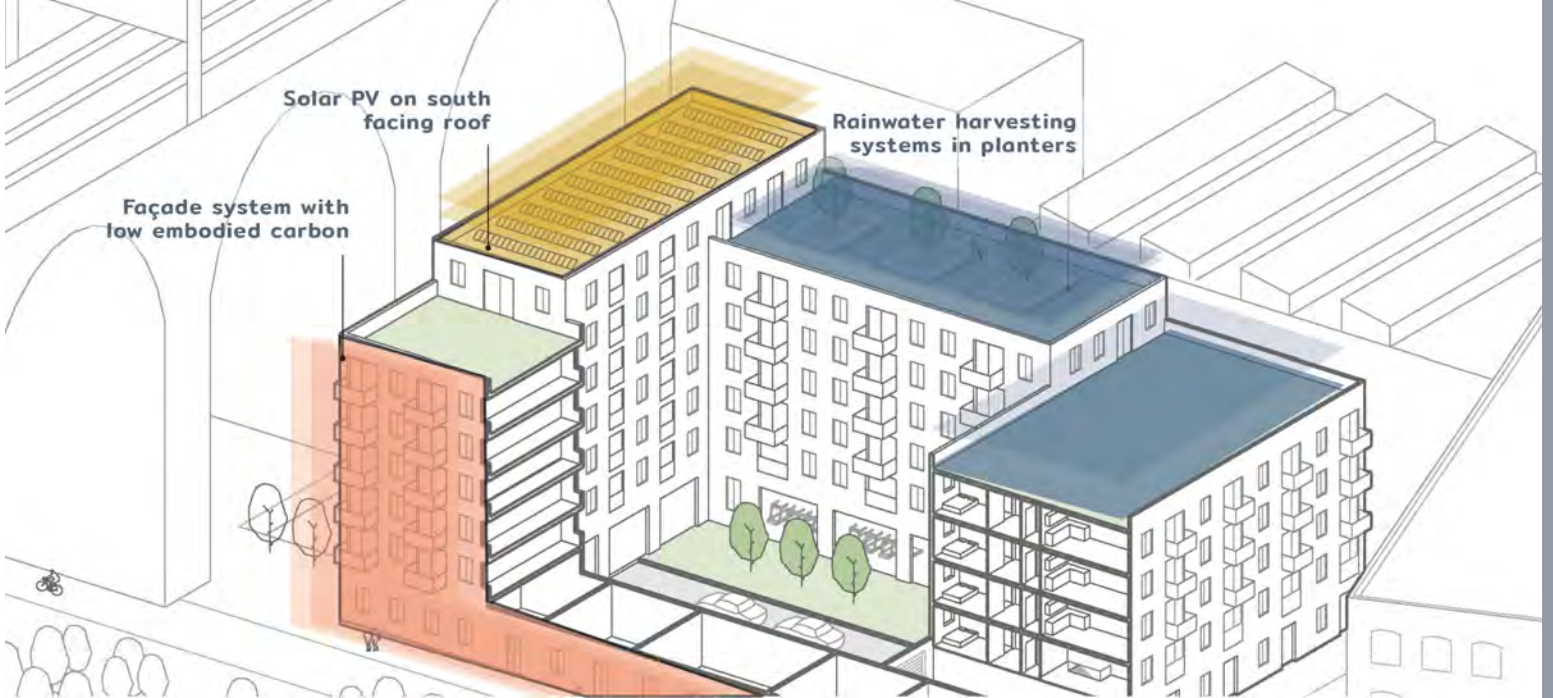


Green walls and vertical green can play a major role in sequestering carbon and reducing heat island effect | Chester Market, Chester



Large roof terraces create opportunities for rainwater harvesting, planting and solar panels  
New Islington, Manchester





↑ **Artist's Impression**

Opportunities to integrate sustainable infrastructure at roof level

## DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

### ← Integrate on-site energy production

**GES-34** Utilise various sources of non-fossil fuel energy to provide the building's heating, hot water and electricity needs.

**GES-35** Deliver a range of on-site energy production measures to reduce reliance on mains utilities, utilising renewable energy opportunities and low and zero carbon energy generating technologies.

**GES-36** Buildings should integrate renewable energy sources, such as solar panels. This could be combined with battery storage or smart car charging to maximise gain. The spatial requirements for renewable energy sources should be considered at an early stage.

**GES-37** Buildings should also include air source heat pumps wherever possible. These could be combined with renewable energy sources such as solar panels, to power the heat pumps. As with other sustainable energy sources, the spatial requirements should be considered at an early stage of the design process

**GES-37** Utilise the roofs of buildings, especially where flat roofs are proposed, to incorporate: solar panels, rainwater harvesting systems, grey water harvesting and green roofs. Roofs should be orientated to maximise solar gain.

**GES-38** Where pitched roofs are proposed, the optimum roof angle for PV panels is typically between 30 - 45 from horizontal.

**GES-39** Provide energy performance analysis of new homes in the post occupancy stage, including clear feedback and lessons learnt.

**GES-40** Provide details of how on-site energy production will be operated, maintained and potentially adapted over the life of the development through a formalised strategy.

**GES-41** Consider energy production holistically where possible, especially where applications are submitted as part of a wider masterplan.

Applicants submitting detailed applications as part of a wider strategic masterplan should discuss contributions to the delivery of strategic energy centres or district heat networks with the council at an early stage.

### ↑ Reduce embodied carbon

**GES-42** Always consider the reuse of existing buildings, in part or in whole. Re using, in part or in whole, means the existing building structure can create significant savings to the embodied carbon in a new building. Using recycled materials can also help with this issue and promote a circular economy.

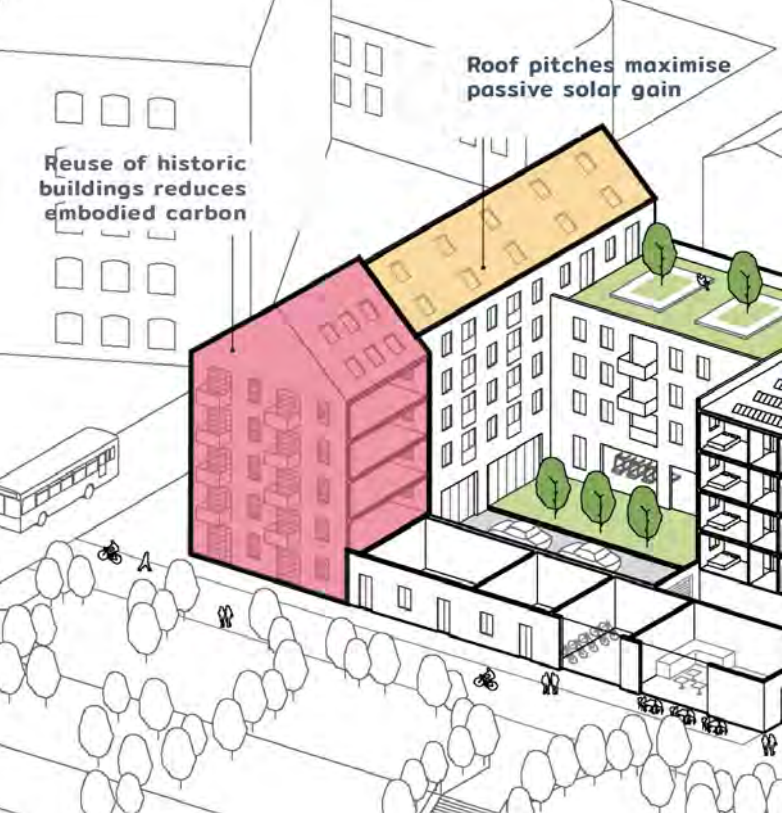
**GES-43** Carefully consider the inclusion of any basement areas, as there is a large amount of embodied carbon within a basement construction.

**GES-44** Create flexible frames and buildings, ensuring that the structure can be retained beyond the normal life cycle of a building. This could lead to its re-purposing in the future for another use.

**GES-45** Consider delivering measures that can reduce the embodied carbon of the building, include optimising grid sizes, challenging loading assumptions and façade material selections.

**GES-46** Consider the embodied carbon within façade systems (through-wall build up, not just the external facing material) at an early stage of design development.

**GES-47** Always seek to use a set of robust, durable and locally sourced materials, reducing embodied carbon associated with the transport and production of the materials. Natural materials should be considered wherever possible where they are proven to be durable.



← **Artist's Impression**  
Well-insulated buildings should be orientated to maximise passive solar gain



Blocks are orientated to maximise passive solar gain within habitable rooms | Sugar House Island, London

### Reduce operational carbon

**GES-48** Take a 'fabric first' approach to minimise space heating demand, making new buildings highly energy efficient and well-insulated. This may include the use of, for example, cavity wall insulation, warm roof systems, highly efficient glazing and mechanical heat recovery ventilation (MHRV) systems.

**GES-49** 'Passive' and 'Active' measures should be delivered to reduce energy and water demand within homes or buildings.

- **Active Measures** could include: using 100% low energy lighting, water efficiency measures such as flow control devices, water meters and zonal heating controls.
- **Passive Measures** could include: avoiding the use of heavy masonry balconies, keeping plant rooms away from southern elevations and using high performance insulation.

**GES-50** Integrate systems that allow full electric usage and renewable energy technologies, significantly reducing the operational carbon of a new building.

**GES-51** Engage the engineering disciplines within a design team at the earliest possible stage to ensure a fully coordinated proposal is developed, rather than addressing engineering aspects post-planning.

### ↑ Consider orientation and layout

**GES-52** Carefully consider plot and building layout to facilitate air movement and enhance natural ventilation through public spaces, seeking to avoid 'wind tunnelling' impacts. The delivery of green infrastructure and porous screens in outdoor public spaces could help to mitigate the impact of wind on outdoor spaces.

**GES-53** Orientate individual buildings and urban blocks on an east-west alignment where possible, maximising south-facing aspects and passive solar gain.

**GES-54** Orientate the main elevations of buildings within 45 degrees of south wherever possible.

**GES-55** Where possible, taller buildings should be to the north of the development to avoid overshadowing, enhancing net passive solar gains for the whole development.

### Reduce overheating

**GES-56** Design should take an innovative approach to ensure homes receive sufficient natural daylight, whilst also ensuring homes are future-proofed against the impact of overheating. Homes will be expected to be built in line with all relevant Building Regulations.

**GES-57** Deliver solar shading systems as an integrated and considered element of building design. Systems should complement the primary façade material.

**GES-58** Intelligent ventilation systems and specifications should be incorporated into the design of the building.

**GES-59** Consider green roofs and vertical greening along façades and structures. Additional planting can be an effective way to reduce overheating. Specifically, green roofs and vertical greening along façades and structures can help to address this. Where proposed, green roofs or vertical greening should include planting that encourages biodiversity, contributes to climate resilience, slows and sustainably captures water.

→ **Utilise Modern Methods of Sustainable Construction**

**GES-60 Utilise Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) where they are warranted** and to improve efficiency performance.

**GES-61 Consider utilising the latest technologies in the construction phase.** Off-site construction and modular systems can drive design quality, as well as protecting the amenity of existing residents during the construction phase.

**GES-62 Consider the use of modular construction, assembly and potential disassembly on buildings / components as part of the design proposals.**

**GES-63 Modular homes should deliver high-quality, responsive buildings** which reference local materiality and architectural features.

**GES-64 Consider off-site manufacturing and fabrication as a more efficient method of construction,** contributing to an overall reduction in embodied carbon.



Modular homes produced off-site can significantly reduce the embodied carbon of a project | New Islington, Manchester

**! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

**CS1** 'Overarching Principles:

Sustainable Development - Addressing Inequalities and Climate Change'

**SD-1** 'Creating Sustainable Communities'

**SD-6** 'Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change'

**CS8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-2** 'Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

**ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance during concept and detailed design stages.

[How to Improve Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings](#) (Historic England, 2018)

[Sustainable Design and Construction - good practice guide](#) (BREEAM, 2012)

[Passivhaus Trust Design Guidance](#)

[Sustainable Housing Design Guide](#) (Cambridge City Council, 2021)





MAKE SURE IT

## PRIORITISES PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

The [Central Stockport Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#) outlines a clear goal for the town centre - to improve connectivity, reduce the number of cars and rebalance movement towards active travel. Design guidance here supports these objectives, presenting a set of approaches that will lead to healthier, people-focused streets that promote public life, nature and community activity.

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

#### → Reduce the need for vehicular access

**PAT-1 Reduce the number of motor vehicles using town centre streets** - encouraging usage of edge multi-storey car parks.

**PAT-2 Consider delivering Mobility Hubs to serve multiple residential buildings as part of a holistic neighbourhood parking strategy.** Hubs create a wide range of benefits; acting as delivery centres and providing safe car and cycle parking facilities, reducing the requirement for vehicular access to individual buildings or streets. In turn, the space in streets dedicated to motor vehicles can be reduced.

**PAT-3 Mobility Hubs or multi-storey car parks should be sensitively 'wrapped'** by development wherever possible, creating an active perimeter around the building to address the street. Roof space should be maximised for community usage, such as children's play or allotment space.

Currently, streets across the town centre dedicate on average around 60-70% to motor vehicles, with wide road carriageways and narrow pavements. Reducing the area of the street dedicated to motor traffic to around 30-40% creates space for people and nature. Design should be used to discourage motor vehicles moving through the town centre, in turn creating a host of benefits and opportunities, which include:

**Place benefits** - creating safer, more attractive and healthier streets that support a range of community activities and contribute to a liveable place.

**Economic benefits** - people walking and cycling make more trips to urban centres than those driving, increasing footfall and potential spending.

**Health benefits** - discouraging motor vehicle traffic in the town centre will have a positive impact on air quality, reducing harmful emissions and creating space for climate change adaptive green infrastructure.



The multi-storey car park serves more than one function, with space for active land uses integrated into the ground floor and playground at roof level | Copenhagen, Denmark



Subtle changes in complementary materials demarcate areas for different street users | Copenhagen, Denmark



Green infrastructure, street furniture and high-quality materials contribute to an attractive and balanced streetscene | City Island, London



A balanced green street, designed to encourage slower cycle movement and pedestrian priority | Elephant Park, London

## ↑ Create balanced, accessible and safe streets

**PAT-4 Create clear, accessible and safe cycling and walking routes between areas of the town centre and new developments.** Individual developments should contribute to a coherent public realm network, connecting neighbourhoods across the town centre.

**PAT-5 Rebalance streets to be more inclusive and accessible for all road users,** reducing the amount of space dedicated to motor vehicles. Wider pavements provide opportunity for a range of place functions, such as seating, planting or play. Carriageways should feel like integrated elements of the public realm.

For further detail on creating accessible streets refer to design guidance on [page 26 and 27](#).

**PAT-6 Subtly integrate traffic-calming measures, avoiding overly engineered design approaches.** A range of measures should be considered, such as: widening pavements at regular intervals to create localised narrowing points (carriageways could be narrowed down to a minimum 3.7m width), integrating raised courtesy crossing points and junctions at regular intervals, and wider signalled crossing zones.

**PAT-7 Consider segregated cycle infrastructure along primary roads.** Where segregation is required, design should seek to integrate tree planting, ecologically rich green infrastructure or SuDS features between carriageway and footpath.

## ↑ Consider car parking access

**PAT-8 Avoid breakages in cycle routes when designing on-street parking or access to on-plot parking areas.** Building access points should be located along the lowest street in the hierarchy, avoiding breakages in building frontage or cycleways along key streets. As a rule of thumb, cyclists should never have to stop or divert their route to avoid manoeuvring vehicles.

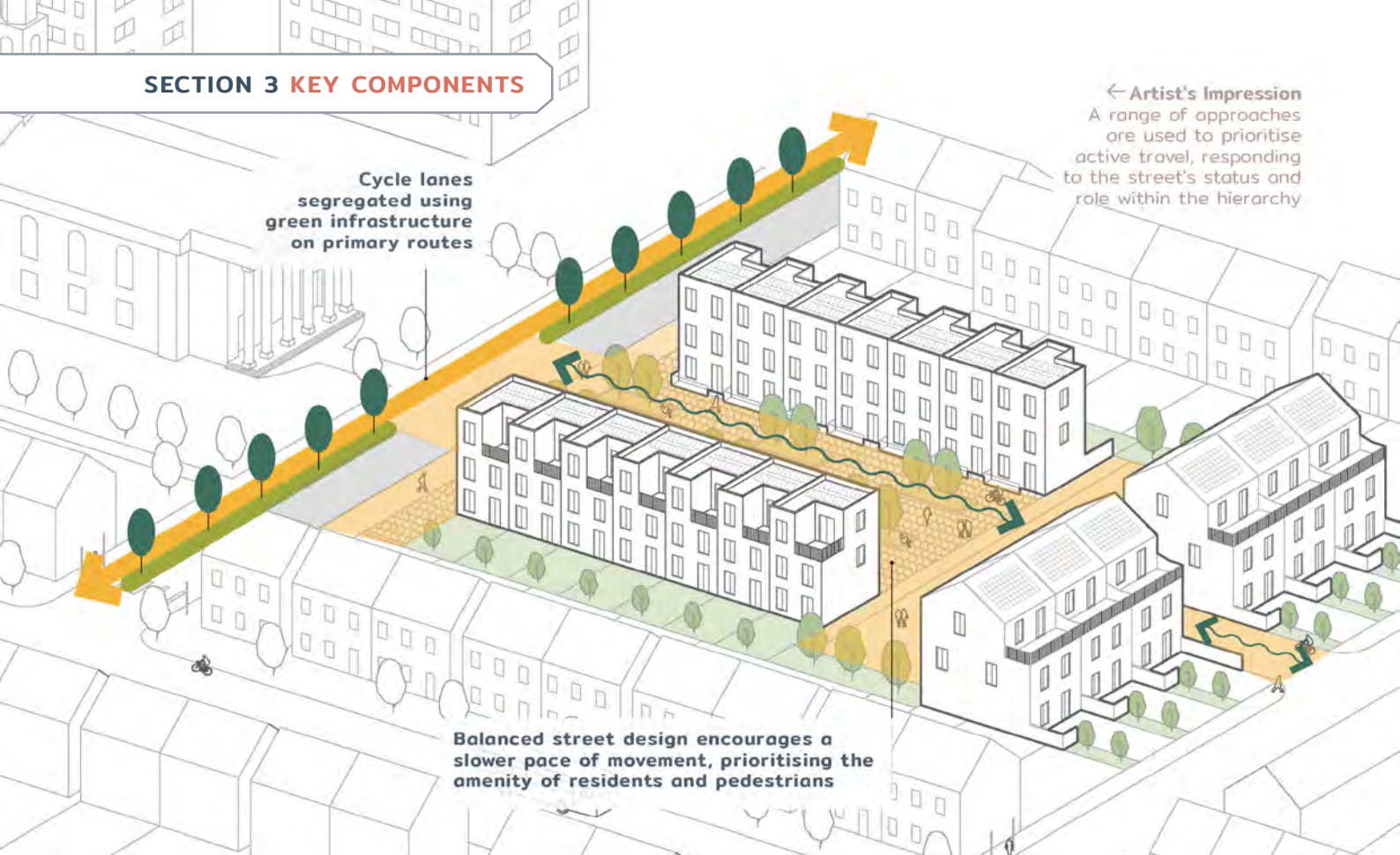
## ↓ De-clutter the public realm

**PAT-9 Avoid physical and visual clutter,** grouping street furniture and planting to ensure the primary function of a space is not compromised and to allow a smooth flow of pedestrian and cycle movement.



Street furniture, planting and integrated seating allows a smooth flow of movement | Elephant and Castle, London





↑ → Encourage active travel

**PAT-10** Connect new and existing public spaces, creating routes that prioritise cyclists and pedestrians. New cycle infrastructure should be delivered in accordance with [Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design \(Department for Transport, 2020\)](#).

**PAT-11** Prioritise active travel, walking and healthy transport modes. The level of infrastructure and design of the street should respond to the street's status within the hierarchy and its intended function.

- Residential streets should serve an amenity function, encourage community interaction and slow down all modes of traffic. Cycle infrastructure should be subtly integrated as part of a balanced street design. Winding, slower routes should be considered.
- On a primary street or national cycle route, more direct cycle movement should be prioritised, including segregated cycle lanes and 'cycle-priority' junctions at key intersections.

**PAT-12** Shared spaces can be considered for a range of street types. They are particularly effective in areas with high pedestrian flows and limited vehicular traffic moving at low speeds. Proposals for shared spaces must not be a detriment to pedestrian or cycle movements. They must also ensure the safety of those who are disabled or less mobile including providing demarcation to indicate a pedestrian space using a change in surface level or surface material that can be identified by people with impaired vision.

**PAT-13** Introduce a range of community functions in space reclaimed for pedestrians, including tree and shrub planting, SuDS features, informal play facilities, and seating areas.

→ Use high-quality, complementary materials

**PAT-14** A small number of high-quality, complementary surface materials should be used, linking to local context and heritage. The use of locally-sourced materials is encouraged, and design should avoid creating large areas or long strips of one-tone tarmac.

The future maintenance of materials should be carefully considered as part of the design process. This should be discussed with the council from the outset

**PAT-15** Appropriate surface materials can be used to improve the quality of a place. They can contribute to local distinctiveness while also demarcating areas for different users within a street or space. Despite this, the use of different materials should carefully consider the needs of disabled people and their ability to effectively navigate the built environment.

**PAT-16** Avoid interventions that inadvertently create barriers to movement and low-level obstructions, including but not limited to tall kerbs, fencing or bollards.

**PAT-17** Surface materials and street furniture should be high-quality, durable and robust, contributing to an attractive streetscene.

**PAT-18** Consider the use of permeable hard surfaces where possible, providing a drainage function.

**PAT-19** Street furniture should be durable and low-maintenance.



## ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

**SD-6** 'Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change'

**CS-8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment'

**CS-11** 'Stockport Town Centre'

**CS-1** 'Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development - Addressing Inequalities And Climate Change'

**SD-1** 'Creating Sustainable Communities'

**CS-9** 'Transport and Development'

**CS-10** 'An Effective and Sustainable Transport Network'

**T-1** 'Transport and Development'

**T-2** 'Parking in Developments'

**T-3** 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance.

[Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design](#) (Department for Transport, 2020)

[Better Residential Streets](#) (CABE, 2009)

[Streets for All - Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places](#) (Historic England, 2018)

[Manual for Streets](#) (1 and 2)

[Inclusive Mobility - a guide to best practice on pedestrian and transport infrastructure](#) (Department for Transport, 2021)

[Slow Streets Sourcebook](#) (Design London, 2015)

[An introductory guide to low traffic neighbourhood design](#) (Sustrans)

[Sustrans walking and cycle infrastructure design guidance](#)

[Sustrans Design Manual - for cycle friendly design](#) (Sustrans, 2014)

[Easy Access to Historic Landscapes](#) (Historic England)

[The Setting of Heritage Assets](#) (Historic England, 2017)

[Historic England Streets for All and Streets for All North West Guidance](#)



Seating, planting, high-quality surface materials and a flush surface creates a balanced street environment, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists | Sugar House Island, London



Raised carriageways and subtle changes in complementary materials contributes to a balanced streetscene. Significant carriageway space reclaimed for pedestrian activity | Fishergate, Preston



MAKE SURE IT

## RESPONDS TO CONTEXT AND CHARACTER

Stockport Town Centre's unique townscape derives from its location at the interface of river valleys, with distinct mills located along river edges and layers of development terracing across contour lines or stepping along streets.

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

#### → Embrace topography

**RCC-1** Respond sensitively to topography, contributing to a varied roofscape image and avoiding the overuse of retaining walls.

**RCC-2** Development must provide a positive contribution to Stockport's stepping skyline and varied roofscape, adding to the visual interest and ensuring views of distinctive landmark features are not obscured from wider viewpoints of value.

**RCC-3** New development should generally accentuate natural topography and step with the gradient of a slope. Development should avoid flattening the topography of an area or the skyline. Proposals for tall buildings at valley low points will require design justification, for example where steep level changes mitigate the perceived flattening of topography or the site addresses a prominent node or gateway.

**RCC-4** Utilise topography to deliver interesting, innovative homes, creating elevated rooftop and balcony spaces to provide residents amenity and views.

**RCC-5** Use green infrastructure and public open space to mitigate level changes between development platforms, enhancing permeability. New connections must provide accessible gradients.

**RCC-6** Development should consider existing local approaches to dealing with topography, where it contributes positively to a unique character, for example where buildings step up a slope in pairs.

**RCC-7** Consider mitigating level changes within the building footprint where steep topography is present, creating buildings that address and provide access at multiple levels. Development should always seek to work with the existing topography.

This rich industrial heritage, unique sense of place and proximity to river corridors should be embraced and enhanced. Future development must provide a contemporary yet sensitive response, embedding into the townscape layers and activating the rivers. Low-quality and insensitive pastiche proposals replicating the past simply will not be tolerated. Stockport is a forward-thinking place, acutely in touch with its past - and this principle should underpin all future proposals.



Apartments with large balconies are setback from the water, creating public open space along the waterfront | Nordhavnen, Copenhagen



Development accentuates the topography, stepping up the slope and creating a multi-level building, landscape terraces and rooftop amenity spaces | Bath Riverside, Bath

#### ↑ Activate blue infrastructure

**RCC-8** Active building frontages should address blue infrastructure, delivering a range of features such as large windows and balconies to encourage passive surveillance and create a visual connection with water.

**RCC-9** Consider setting the building line back from the water's edge to create public space along water fronts, encouraging visual and physical interaction with the water.





A sensitive response to heritage , using complementary materials and framing views of the landmark | Timekeeper's Square, Salford (Buttress Architects)



Incidental public spaces break up the urban form, creating points of interest to aid navigation | Lincoln Square, Manchester

### →↑ Respond sensitively to context

**RCC-10 Respond sensitively to the existing urban fabric**, considering existing building height datums, building massing, building line and street enclosure. Proposals should consider the historic grain of an area and contribute to a more human-scale neighbourhood.

**RCC-11 Repair fragmentation in the urban grain of the town**, filling voids in the urban fabric. New urban blocks should create a positive relationship with surrounding streets - creating an 'active front' to the street and a 'defensible back' to protect residents privacy and amenity.

**RCC-12 Consider building heights holistically**, generally stepping up towards key streets, public spaces or key street junctions and corners, whilst considering proximity to local heritage assets and local topography.

### → Enhance legibility and views

**RCC-13 Protect, enhance or create key views** of landmarks as points of reference. New schemes should seek to create strong visual connections between historic landmarks wherever possible.

**RCC-14 Create or reinforce a clearly defined hierarchy of streets**. Strong and consistent building lines and taller buildings should address primary and secondary streets

**RCC-15 Provide incidental additions to the public realm within appropriate locations**, creating natural focal points for activity and breakages in the urban form.

**RCC-16 Where it is deemed appropriate and fully justified, develop new landmarks as points of reference**. For example, where a site is considered part of a town centre gateway, the development of a landmark building is deemed more appropriate. Refer to [page 62](#) for details on tall buildings.

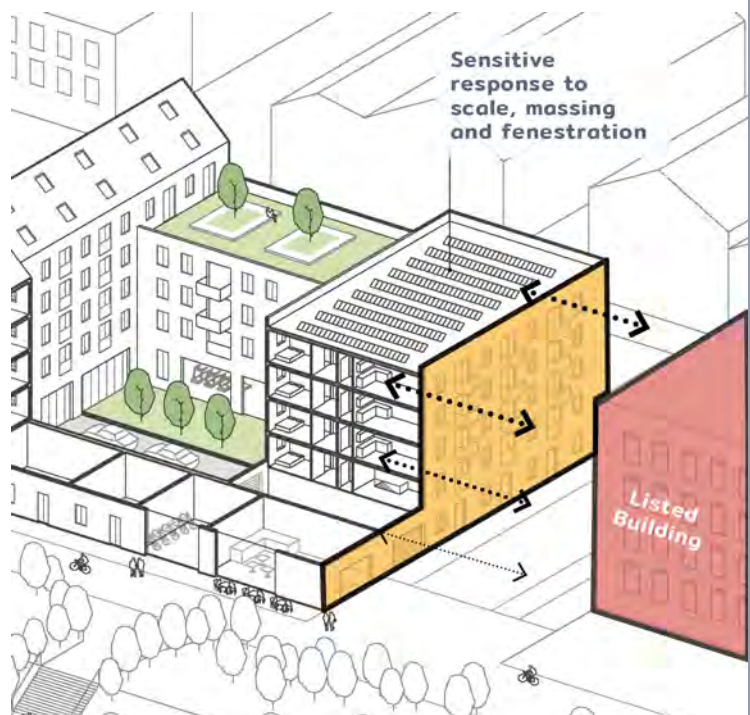
**RCC-17 Architecturally distinctive buildings and active corners should address key nodes**, creating points of interest at key intersections and junctions.



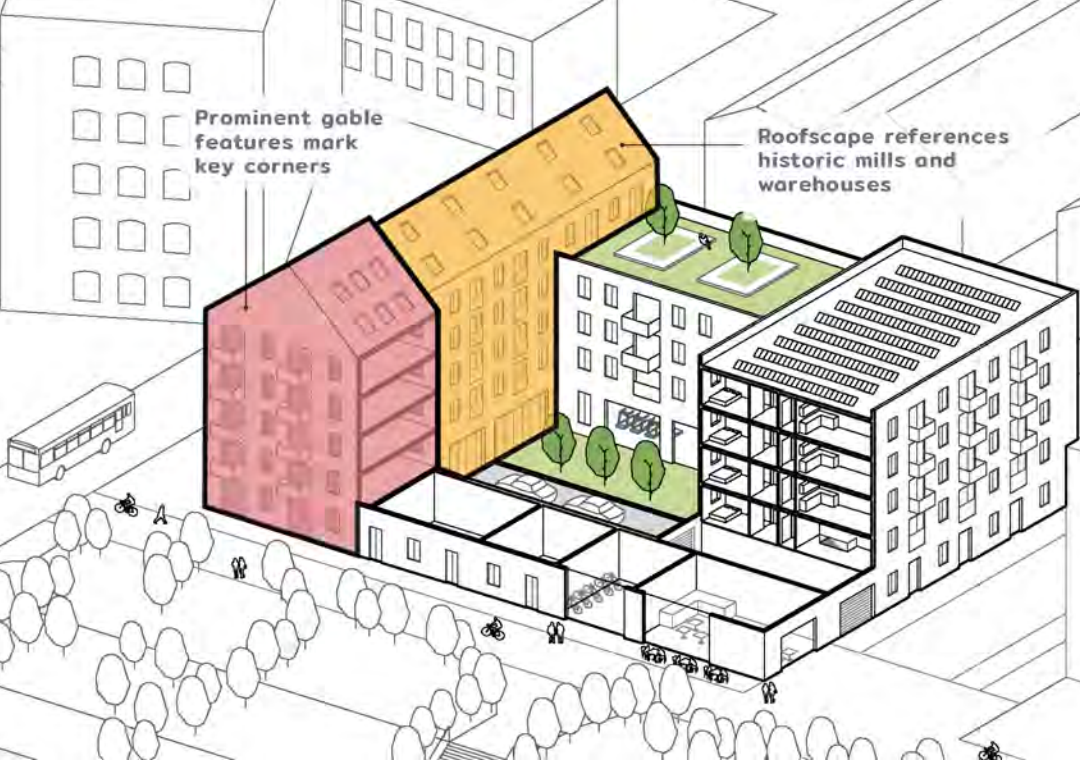
Stepping roof form and building heights mediate a transition in scale up towards the corner and key route | New Islington, Manchester

### ↓ Artist's Impression

Fenestration and building proportions respond to adjacent heritage assets







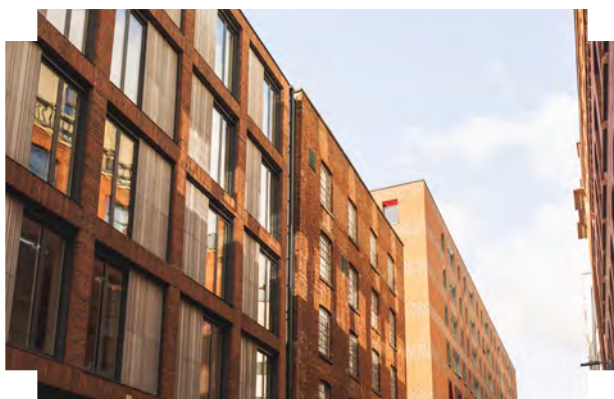
← **Artist's Impression**  
New development should reference locally distinctive features

↓ **Complement materiality and architectural detailing**

**RCC-18** Provide a sensitive and contemporary response to the existing townscape, referencing distinctive local architectural features of value and appreciating roof line, roofscape, façade and fenestration. New buildings should respond to the rhythm and proportions of local buildings and streets of value.

**RCC-19** Establish a select palette of quality materials which enhance, complement or create an interesting contrast to existing buildings of value in the area. The choice of materials on a site should be supported by a clear and creative narrative, explaining how the proposal responds to Stockport's townscape qualities and surrounding architectural features of value.

**RCC-20** Deliver visually interesting façades and roofscape that add depth to the street frontage, considering setting back upper storeys, varying building line or recessing entrances.



The new building block in the foreground provides a sensitive and contemporary response to materiality, proportions and fenestration of the adjoining historic mill Murray's Mills, Ancoats, Manchester

↓ **Celebrate heritage**

**RCC-21** Proposals will be expected to reuse or renovate existing heritage assets. The loss or harm of a heritage asset will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. The retention and renovation of historic buildings is also important in relation to the council's environmental objectives - significantly reducing embodied carbon related to the construction process.

**RCC-22** Activate the setting of historic buildings to create destinations, drawing people to the heritage asset. Areas of high-quality public realm encouraging dwelling and activity should be established, while a range of active land uses and installations could be created to animate new spaces.

**RCC-23** Any development within a Conservation Area must preserve or enhance its character and appearance and any contribution made by its setting. Proposals must consider all relevant national and local policies, including the council's Conservation Character Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

**RCC-24** Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the history of how the place has evolved and how this has shaped the proposed scheme. Proposals must help preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and/ or building and be sympathetic in terms of its: siting, scale, design, materials, and landscape design.

**RCC-25** Future proposals should also refer to design guidance relating to heritage outlined in the [Design of Residential Development SPD \(2006\)](#)



Social infrastructure integrated at ground floor of a mixed-use block, addressing public open space  
Elephant Park, London

### ↑ ↓ Integrate a range of land uses

#### **RCC-26 Embed a range of land uses within proposals.**

Proposals should analyse the provision of amenities locally, providing a range of facilities where there is proven to be under-provision within the local area. To maximise space, these facilities should be provided within the ground floor of mixed-use blocks.

**RCC-27 Where social infrastructure is proposed, integrate into the ground floor of mixed-use blocks,** creating new public spaces around building entrances and community facilities.

**RCC-28 Consider temporary or semi-permanent structures to activate dead spaces,** providing space for small businesses, start-ups or community facilities. Use recycled materials and structures to create new destinations wherever possible.

**RCC-29 Consider potential conflicts between residential and other land uses where mixed-use development is proposed.** Sensitive design and mitigation is required to ensure residential amenity is not compromised, especially relating to noise and odour.



Space for a mix of uses at ground floor level and well-designed spill-out space contributes to an animated streetscene | Elephant Park, London

## ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

**CS3** 'Mix of Housing'

**H-1** 'Design of Residential Development'

**CS8** 'Safeguarding And Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

**Saved UDP Policy HC1.3** 'Special control of development in Conservation Areas'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance.

- [Conservation Principles - Policies and Guidance \(Historic England, 2008\)](#)
- [Tall Buildings - Advice Note 4 \(Historic England, 2022\)](#)
- [Making Changes to Heritage Assets - Advice Note 2 \(Historic England, 2016\)](#)
- [Listed Buildings and Curtilage - Advice Note 10 \(Historic England, 2018\)](#)
- [Building in Context: New development in historic areas \(CABE, 2006\)](#)
- [Constructive Conservation - Sustainable Growth for Historic Places \(Historic England, 2013\)](#)
- [Historic England Streets for All and Streets for All North West Guidance](#)
- [The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 \(Second Edition\)](#)
- [Statements of Heritage Significance - Historic England Advice Note 12](#)
- [Design in the Historic Environment: Promoting a Contextual Approach to New Housing in Historic Places \(Purcell and Historic England 2021\)](#)



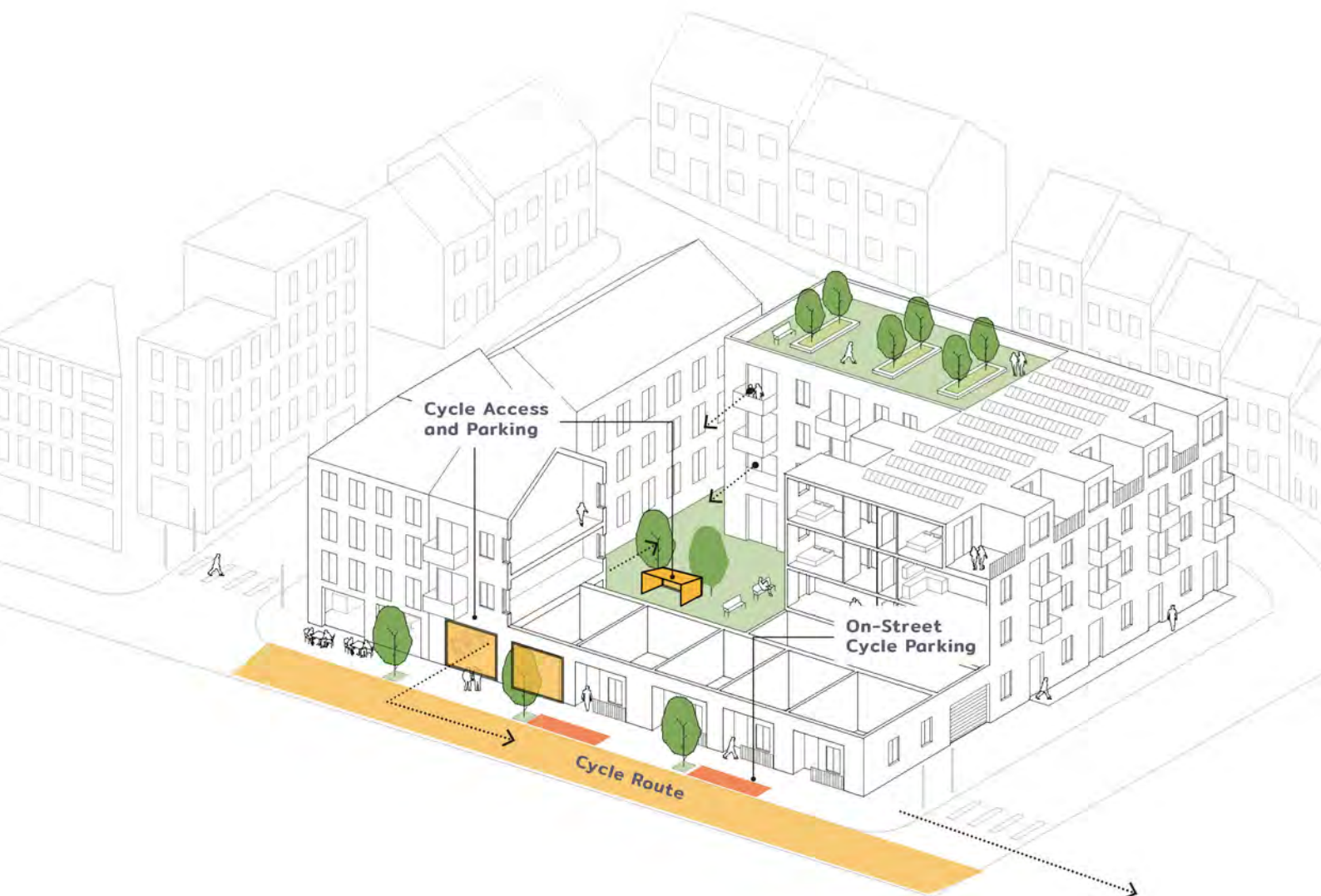


## MAKE SURE IT'S PRACTICAL

The success of a residential development depends on getting the fundamentals of design right, ensuring a place not only looks good, but works on an everyday operational level. To achieve this, buildings and their surroundings should be designed as an interconnected system, operating efficiently without compromising on appearance.

Whether it's a bin-lined street, having to carry a bike up numerous sets of stairs, parked cars along a pavement, or a lack of storage space, it's undeniable that poor residential design impacts people's daily lives, creating problems that are difficult to retrofit post-delivery. These are all situations that can, and should, be avoided through carefully-considered and well-integrated design solutions.

These considerations impact the character of a place and are particularly important within the town centre context, where higher residential densities mean more people, in smaller spaces, and where buildings and their surroundings are increasingly required to perform multiple functions.







Well-integrated and overlooked short-stay cycle parking facilities adjacent to key building entrances Embassy Gardens, London



Well-overlooked and secure cycle store, considered and delivered as a fundamental element of the residential courtyard space | Wharf Road, London

## DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

### ← Integrate accessible and secure cycle storage and parking

**P-1 Maximise the amount of cycle parking spaces provided within a development**, encouraging cycling as a primary means of transport. Cycle parking areas should also provide space for non-standard bicycle types, electric bikes and mobility aids.

**P-2 Consider the cyclist's journey 'from front door to cycle lane'** when designing cycle storage facilities, integrating facilities as part of this everyday journey.

- The location of cycle parking and storage should consider a person's 'everyday journey', such as commuting or shopping. The design and location of facilities should encourage cycling as part of the everyday - easily accessible, easy to use and secure.
- Facilities should be easily accessed from the street and internal common spaces, close to building entrances and near to existing cycle routes. Consider opaque facade materials where cycle storage areas address the street, maximising security.
- As a rule-of-thumb, a resident should never have to carry a bike up the stairs.
- External cycle parking stores must be robust and secure, overlooked by habitable rooms and windows and integrated using green infrastructure

**P-3 Deliver well-lit and accessible on-street cycle parking facilities**, near to building entrances and overlooked by adjacent homes. On-street, short-stay parking facilities should be carefully considered as part of a public realm scheme, integrated in a group functions such as seating, play facilities or recycling stations to encourage activity and passive surveillance.



↑ **Artist's Impression**  
Car park access along tertiary street, well-integrated and overlooked

**Integrated on-street parking**

### Deliver well-integrated and appropriate car parking solutions

A meaningful conversation with the council on car parking is encouraged at the start of the design process. Improvements to active travel, public transport infrastructure and Stockport Town Centre's strategic accessibility mean private car parking provision in the town centre should be minimised.

Car parking should be considered holistically. Where a collection of high-density proposals are clustered together, consider delivering a neighbourhood 'Mobility Hub'.

↓ In medium density developments (houses):

**P-4** Where car parking is deemed necessary, the approach should respond to the existing streetscene.

**P-5** Deliver parking within the building or plot footprint wherever possible, ensuring cars do not dominate the threshold of a dwelling or the streetscene.

**P-6** Where integral garages are proposed, garage doors should be punctuated by large windows and doors at ground floor level, with raised amenity spaces above to maximise passive surveillance. Development should avoid creating pairs or rows of integral garages.

**P-7** Where on-street parking provision is required, it should be subtly integrated into the streetscene, punctuated by planting and demarcated using a subtle change in surface material.



Integral garages within the building footprint, staggered and punctuated by ground floor windows | New Islington Manchester



Integral garages punctuated by windows and doors at ground floor, with private roof terraces above | Nordhavnen, Copenhagen



→ In higher density developments (apartments):

**P-8 A subterranean or podium parking approach is preferable in order to create meaningful residents' amenity space above.** Access to internal parking areas should be positioned along the lowest street within the hierarchy, and well-overlooked by adjacent homes.

- Where a semi-underground or podium approach is proposed to deliver parking within the block footprint, development must take measures to ensure the building activates the street. Long stretches of blank or 'dead' ground floor frontage along the street will not be considered acceptable.
- Where subterranean parking is preferred design have regard to the risks of flooding and any other site constraints, and should minimise embodied carbon in the construction process.

**P-9 Parking areas should not dominate the centre of a perimeter block.** Design should take a 'landscape first' approach, outlining how meaningful community space and green infrastructure is delivered, before integrating car parking appropriately.

**P-10 Respond to the constraints and conditions of the site.** For example, where infill is proposed, residents' parking areas could be wrapped by proposed development; creating active frontages to surrounding streets and amenity spaces above.

**P-11 Car pool, car club or car share facilities are a desirable inclusion in higher density schemes,** and will be strongly supported by the council. Electric vehicle charging points should also be integrated sensitively into the design of external spaces.



Well-integrated on-street EV parking, nestled into planting and trees | City Island, London



Subtly integrated and well-overlooked underground parking entrance | Dusseldorf, Germany





Communal bins and recycling as an integrated and considered element of the space | Middlewood Locks, Salford

### ↑ ↓ Innovate with waste and recycling

**P-12 Take a 'landscape-first' approach when designing external waste and recycling solutions**, first outlining the open space ambition for the site, before integrating waste and recycling sensitively into the design.

**P-13 Consider integrating underground communal waste solutions into the public realm**, with capacity for a minimum of one week's storage and preferably more. Schemes proposing this approach to waste and recycling should discuss options with the council at an early stage of the process

- Underground hatches should be located in close proximity to building entrances, provide space for vehicle manoeuvring and provide clear signage.
- Materials should complement those used in the public realm scheme.
- Hatches, chutes or larger bins should not dominate the entrance of a building, streets or spaces.

**P-14 Consider 'pneumatic' or 'vacuum' waste management systems holistically when undertaking strategic masterplanning projects** - linking individual apartment buildings and shared hatches to neighbourhood waste collection centres. These approaches should be considered where multiple development sites are considered as part of a strategic development area.

- Hatches should be in close proximity to residential entrances if located in the public realm or courtyard spaces..
- Clear signage should demarcate different types of waste.

Covered and secured bin storage integrated into the curtilage of the building | Telegraph Works, Greenwich



Carefully located pneumatic hatches, subtly integrated into public space and overlooked by surrounding apartments | Hammarby Sjostad, Sweden

In medium density developments (houses):

**P-15 Efficiently integrate waste and recycling solutions into the building footprint** where possible, or provide a subtle, covered storage area within the curtilage.

**P-16 Storage areas should be separated from other building facilities**, and should provide ample space to manoeuvre bins without obstruction. Bins for each item (i.e. paper/ food/ glass) should be accessible independently without having to move another bin.

**P-17 Storage areas should be easy to use and accessible** from the building entrance and the street, minimising the amount of time to remove or store bins.

In higher density developments (apartments):

**P-18 Create communal waste storage areas, accessible from communal areas and near to lifts on each floor**, including hatches where a vacuum system is proposed. Internal communal recycling areas should be located to ensure usage does not detrimentally impact the amenity of surrounding homes.

**P-19 Avoid a solution that requires collection from the public highway, where possible.** Designated bin storage areas for collections days should be designed into the building footprint, or preferably underground within the public realm. Location should be accessible for a 26 tonne HGV, and if bins are stored underground they need to be presented at ground level for collection.



### ↓ Sensitively integrate plant, externally mounted equipment and bin storage

Areas for plant, externally mounted equipment and bin stores can become unsightly additions to a street frontage if they are not considered early in the design process. The following points must be considered in proposals.

**P-20 It is accepted that bin stores, plant rooms and car parking areas will often be located at ground floor level**, either within, under or adjacent to a building. These facilities need to be fully considered early in the design stage to minimise potential inactive frontages and blank walls, especially along high-footfall routes and key sight lines.

These areas should be well-separated from active residential or commercial ground floor frontages to ensure the amenity of residents or businesses is not compromised.

**P-21 Satellite dishes, masts, aerials and EV charging points must not become an afterthought**, and their location needs to be considered within the design prior to a planning application.

**P-22 In addition, an external plant located at roof or ground level must be considered as part of the overall building design** including a full understanding of ventilation requirements for the equipment. Plant facilities should be integrated to limit dead frontage addressing the street.

**P-23 Incoming statutory services and meter boxes also need to be considered in a similar way.** All of these items can have a significant detrimental effect to the overall aesthetic of the completed building and so careful consideration must be given to these issues early in the design process.

**P-24 Where ventilation grilles are needed, these should be minimised on street frontages** and orientated into secondary areas within the site.



Subtly integrated plant facilities and bin stores at ground floor level | Embassy Gardens, London

**P-25 Bespoke designs for grille, door or gated areas are encouraged** so they can be integrated into the overall design of the façade, referencing locally distinctive architectural features and materiality.

### ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

H-1 'Design of Residential Development'

SIE-1 'Quality Places'

CS-10 'An Effective and Sustainable Transport Network'

T-1 'Transport and Development'

T-2 'Parking in Developments'

T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network'

CS-11 'Stockport Town Centre'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

#### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance during concept and detailed design stages.

The council should be contacted for schemes which include waste and recycling facilities for the most up-to-date advice and guidance.

[Building Regulations](#) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)

[National Planning Practice Guidance](#)

[Statements of Heritage Significance - Historic England Advice Note 12](#)

[Historic England Streets for All and Streets for All North West Guidance](#)



## MAKE SURE IT'S HIGH-QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Stockport Town Centre presents a real opportunity for experimentation, with stepping topography and a fine urban grain providing a unique townscape baseline. We expect developers to think outside of the box wherever possible, utilising the constraints to drive new and innovative residential typologies. Setting a high-quality benchmark for future residential development is one of the primary aims of this guidance, not only as a symbol of Stockport's creativity but also to help drive value in our residential market.

The town centre contains a rich mix of architectural styles, many of which feature robust masonry façades, predominantly in red brick and stone. These generally feature strong definition, an honest rhythm to fenestration, deep reveals to openings and articulation of the entrances.

New buildings in Stockport must be well-designed with the façade materials carefully considered, for quality, robustness, longevity and ease of maintenance. We require our homes to stand the test of time; energy efficient and unweathered. The choice of quality materials ensures less maintenance and greater longevity, making them easier and cheaper to maintain, as well as looking great.



Well-lit and transparent building entrance addresses a verdant green entrance space | Elephant Park, London



Tall and transparent ground floor, recessed to create covered spill-out space for businesses | Ancoats, Manchester

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to apply the following guidance points.

#### ← Create active ground floors and entrances

##### **HQA-1** Locate primary entrances in logical locations.

Entrance materials should be high-quality, well-lit and provide an accent to the primary façade material. Where possible, create incidental public spaces around building entrances to encourage dwelling and enhance sense of arrival.

**HQA-2** Suitable articulation of the entrance, including inset entrance doors in defined reveals, should be considered. Active frontages should be created to ground level façades to help create safe streets in the town centre.

**HQA-3** If alternative uses are proposed at ground level, careful consideration should be given to how the frontage is integrated into the building, including fascia, signage and lighting that complements the overall building design.



### ↓ Elevation, Façade and Materiality

We expect the choice of materials to be determined by an analysis of the surrounding context and heritage.

**HQA-4 Seek to use a robust and complementary materials palette**, proven to weather well.

**HQA-5 Use quality brick or other robust materials** such as stone, fine-finish pre-cast concrete or terracotta could be considered. Rendered façades should be avoided.

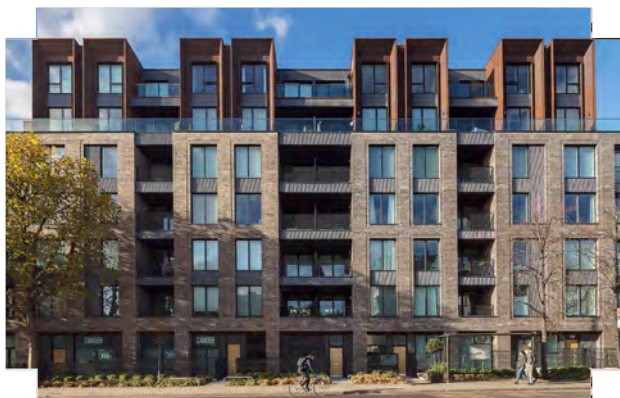
**HQA-6 Secondary façade elements** (façade elements that make up a smaller proportion of the overall building envelope, such as set-back upper floors or accents in the elevation) could feature the use of anodised or PPC metal cladding or stone to articulate façade openings. Secondary elements should complement or provide accent to primary elements.

**HQA-7 It is expected that balconies, balustrades and external gated areas** should comprise a robust set of materials, such as steel, which complement their context.

**HQA-8 A vertical emphasis to window openings is preferred and a regular rhythm and grid** should often feature on residential buildings.

**HQA-9 Window reveals should generally be the depth of a full brick** with the head and sill details also considered, particularly if high-level ventilation is proposed through the window head.

**HQA-10 Micro louvres inset flush into the window system are preferred** and crude solutions to this detail will not be accepted.



A range of complementary materials, generous windows and inset balconies create depth in the elevation | Camden Courtyards, London (Architect: Sheppard Robson / Image Source: © Simon Kennedy)

### ↓ Deliver depth and variety across the block

**HQA-11 Deliver distinctive and visually interesting elevations in highly visible elevations and frontages**, understanding the building's relationship with key viewpoints.

**HQA-12 Urban blocks should deliver variety to enhance visual interest**, considering mixed materiality, stepping buildings heights, varied roofscape and deep reveals.

**HQA-13 Create depth in building elevations and façades**, ensuring new frontages do not deter from the quality of the streetscene. For example, buildings could deliver a staggered building line, experimenting with a range of balcony treatments along the length of an elevation, in order to create depth and variety. A flat façade will not be accepted.

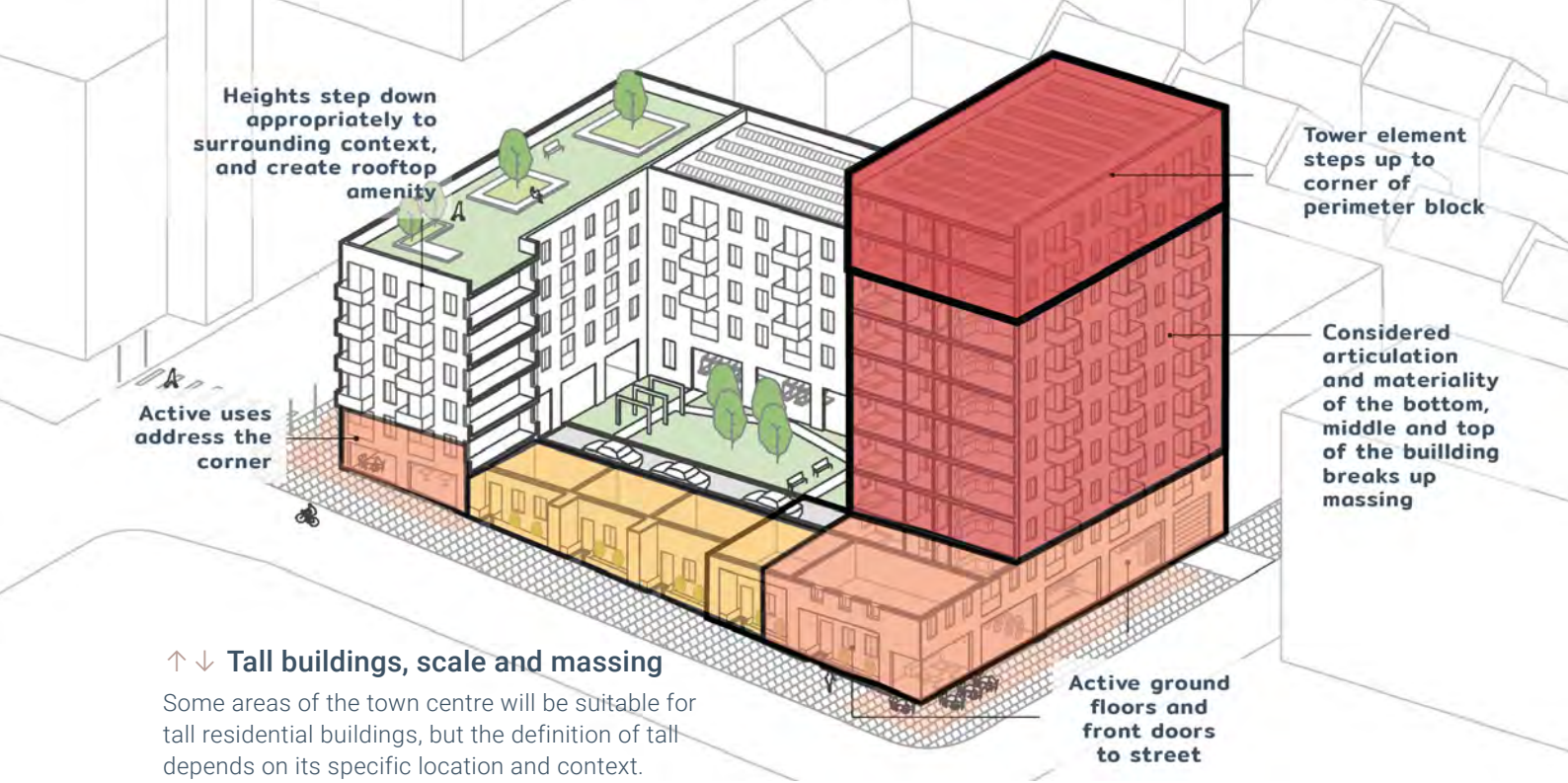
**HQA-14 Intensify architectural detailing to define key building features**, such as large windows, entrance areas, front doors or key corner elements.



A range of architectural features create depth and interest in the elevation, including balconies, deep reveals, mixed secondary materials and stepped building heights | Keybridge House, London



A robust set of complementary materials, detailing and vertical fenestration deliver a contemporary industrial aesthetic | The Crescent, Salford



### ↑ ↓ Tall buildings, scale and massing

Some areas of the town centre will be suitable for tall residential buildings, but the definition of tall depends on its specific location and context.

Buildings that are locally taller than their surroundings will be visible from a wider area and so will be subject to greater scrutiny in their design. The topography of the town centre will also play a key part in how tall a building appears.

**HQA-15** Proposals for tall buildings should be accompanied by a **Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment**, and a Heritage Impact Assessment in sensitive areas. This should inform the design development process rather than being used to justify a tall building proposal.

**HQA-16** Key views should be agreed early in the design process and it is more likely that verified views or a zone of visual influence assessment may be needed to illustrate the impact of design proposals.

**HQA-17** The development of town centre 3D CAD modelling is encouraged to be able to test where tall buildings are visible from, and what impact they will have on townscape and roofline.

**HQA-18** Consider wind, daylight and overshadowing at a stage when the massing can still be influenced. Analysis of the sighting and relationship to its immediate surroundings will be required, alongside establishing the impact on the character of the area.

**HQA-19** Sculpt the massing and form of buildings to ensure a positive contribution to the skyline and street. Where longer blocks or buildings are proposed (50m+), design must work hard to break down the visual mass of the building - for example, using building 'cut-ins' or protruding elements at regular intervals along longer elevations. Tall buildings should be sculpted to deliver slender proportions and form.

**HQA-20** In massing terms, a contextual approach is necessary, and for mid-scale and taller buildings the building design should articulate and emphasise the bottom, middle and top of the building. Special attention is needed for how the building terminates at the top.

↑ **Artist's Impression**  
The diagram highlights key design features that require consideration when developing taller buildings

**HQA-21** Taller buildings could be integrated within an active and human-scale perimeter block, delivering variations or 'stepping' building heights along the perimeter and incorporating taller building elements on key corners or junctions.

**HQA-22** Where tall or mid-rise buildings are proposed, design should carefully consider how the building 'meets the floor'. Design should take steps to articulate the lower floors of a building, emphasising a human-scale at street level.

**HQA-23** Should podium solutions be proposed, the impacts of such massing and the importance of maintaining overlooking and observation of the public realm and the avoidance of long, blank frontages should be considered and avoided respectively.

**HQA-24** All proposals for buildings over 18 metres must comply with fire safety regulations associated with the Building Safety Act and Building Regulations.



A slender high-rise building delivered as part of a perimeter block. Upper storeys are setback to create visual interest in the skyline | Embassy Gardens, London





Active uses and recessed upper storeys helps to articulate the lower portion of the building, emphasising a human-scale at street level | Kampus, Manchester



Raised amenity space at roof level and habitable rooms address the street, allowing for a more compact urban block | Ancoats, Manchester

### ↑ ↓ Experiment with typology

**HQA-25** Respond to the complexity of Stockport Town Centre innovatively, using the stepping topography and fine, informal urban grain to inspire innovative housing typologies that bed into the town's layers. **Design should take an innovative approach to achieve a compact and sensitive urban form**, without having to resort to taller buildings.

**HQA-26** Shorter 'back-to-back' distances could be achieved by carefully locating or 'staggering' upper storey windows to habitable rooms, limiting overlooking between homes to ensure privacy.

- **Single-aspect upper storeys and shorter back-to-back distances** maybe considered acceptable where space standards, access to natural daylight and the privacy of residents are not compromised.

**HQA-27** Consider the provision of private and semi-private elevated amenity spaces within the building footprint, at rooftop level, or recessed from the predominant building line. The approach to amenity provision should respond to the rhythm and building line of the street.



Staggered upper storey windows and narrow footprints prevents overlooking and allows a tighter block. Private terrace integrated to the side of each home. | The Gables, Crosby

### ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

**C-S8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

**CS-11** 'Stockport Town Centre'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

#### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance during concept and detailed design stages.

[BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice \(BRE, 2011\)](#)

[Guidance on tall buildings \(CABE Design Council, 2007\)](#)

[Tall Buildings - Advice Note 4 \(Historic England, 2022\)](#)

[Conservation Principles - Policies and Guidance \(Historic England, 2008\)](#)

[Building in context \(CABE\)](#)

[Design in the Historic Environment: Promoting a Contextual Approach to New Housing in Historic Places \(Purcell and Historic England 2021\)](#)





## MAKE SURE IT CREATES A HOME

The concept of home goes far beyond the dimensions of a house or apartment. Home is a sense of belonging, comfort and security, a place to capture memories and experiences.

It is of primary importance that future homes within Stockport Town Centre provide a physical form that fosters the development of a home. That is, to create a place where people want to live. Achieving this requires developers to address two different, but equally important aspects.

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to consider the following guidance points.

#### ↓ Deliver light and spacious homes

**CH-1 Comply with the Nationally Described Space Standard as a minimum.** Design should generally aim to deliver large apartments and homes above the minimum space standard.

**CH-2 Deliver large, dual-aspect homes wherever possible.** Large and light apartments and townhouses will be a crucial element of enticing families into town centre living, offering a feasible alternative to larger suburban homes traditionally preferred by families.



Orientation to maximise natural daylight in habitable rooms | The Longfords, London (5Plus Architects)

Firstly is the outward-facing aspect. Design should foster neighbourliness, creating a series of private and semi-private amenity spaces to encourage interaction, whilst providing a buffer to the outside world when necessary. Architectural features and façade treatment are also key to creating homes and capturing a sense of place. Fenestration that responds well to that of local buildings of value, prime entrances, articulated roof forms, roof terraces and balconies, all modelled in a tactile, robust materials palette, help to create a unique character within a place.

Internally, a home should offer sufficient levels of free-flowing accommodation, storage space and amenity space to satisfy the present and future needs of the occupier. Overlooking should be minimised, protecting residents' right to privacy, and ensuring they can enjoy their home without the fear of being watched. Most importantly, windows should be generously sized in proportion to their façade. People need natural light, and streets need to be overlooked. The provision of large windows and doors at all storeys ensures these requirements are met.

**CH-3 Orientate building layout to maximise passive solar gain and sunlight.** Single-aspect, north-facing homes should be avoided. Design should take an innovative approach to ensure homes receive sufficient natural daylight, whilst also ensuring homes are future-proofed against the impact of overheating. Homes will be expected to be built in line with [Part O Building Regulations](#).

**CH-4 Orientate building layout and the location of balconies to maximise aspects of the sky, views of surrounding heritage or landscape.** Design should capitalise on opportunities to create views across Stockport's stepping skyline from within the dwelling, creating a positive visual connection with the townscape.

**CH-5 Provide large windows and a vertical emphasis to window openings,** ensuring windows and doors maximise exposure to natural daylight as well as providing opportunities for natural surveillance of the street. Large windows should be orientated to address the street, public open spaces and internal communal amenity spaces.

**CH-6 Deliver a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 2.4m** in habitable rooms and bedrooms, further maximising exposure to natural daylight.



Significant green threshold protects privacy, provides amenity space and encourages personalisation  
Copenhagen, Denmark



Generous windows and large balcony provision provides residents with substantial private amenity space  
Dusseldorf, Germany



Space for cycle and bin storage integrated into the entrance area of the townhouse, well-overlooked by windows above | Bath Riverside, Bath

## ← ↑ Create adaptable homes

**CH-9 Create adaptable homes** which meet the needs of today, whilst being resilient to the potential needs of the future. Homes should be flexible, designed to allow personalisation in layout and adaptation over time.

**CH-10 Deliver flexible building thresholds along streets or public spaces**, offering opportunities for adaptation and personalisation, and creating space for future technological installations.

**CH-11 Consider future space requirements for on-site energy infrastructure in the layout of dwellings.** Design should factor in technological advancements and provide 'contingency' space where possible, to allow for future installations or replacements.

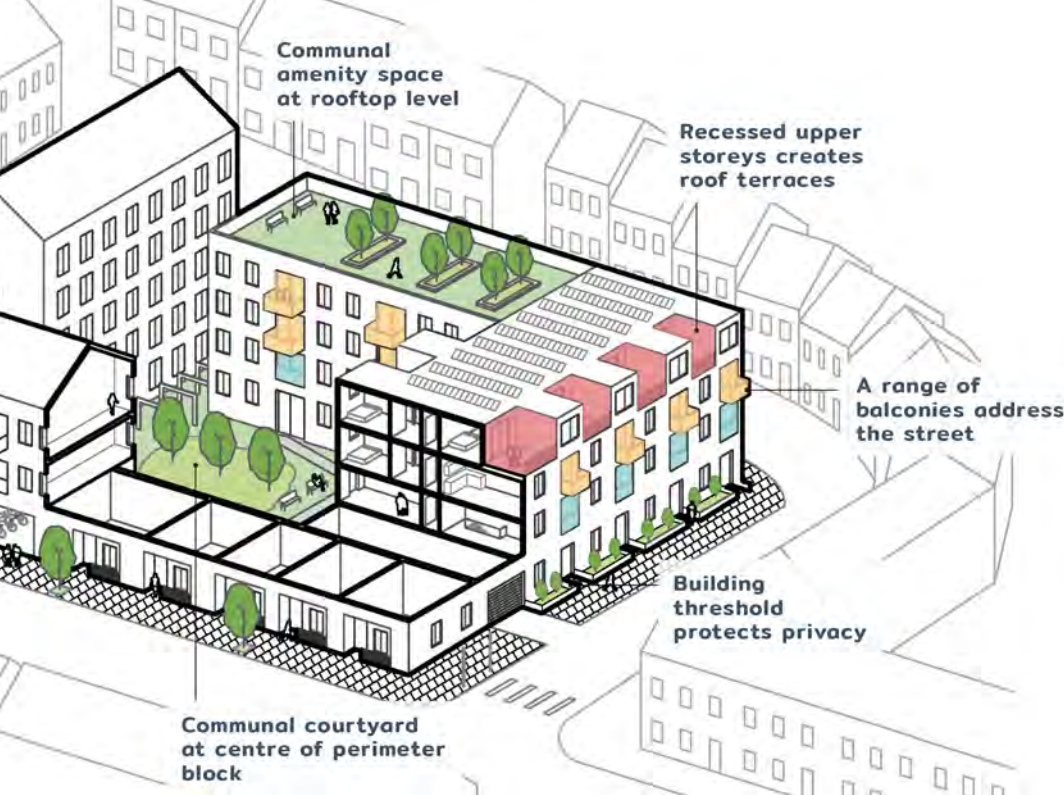
## ↑ Integrate sufficient storage space

**CH-7 Provide flexible, efficient and adaptable internal storage solutions.** Clear evidence should demonstrate how storage requirements have been met to meet storage requirements at a range of scales, from kitchen items to children's play equipment.

**CH-8 Consider cycle storage within the footprint of individual homes**, considering integrated solutions which maximise the amenity value of internal floor space, as well as reducing clutter both internally and externally.

Cycle storage should be considered holistically within the building or development, and provide the individual with choice in where they store their bike. Storage space for non-standard bikes, mobility scooters and mobility aids should also be considered.





← **Artist's Impression**  
A variety of approaches provide residents with private and communal amenity space in the block

### ↑ ↓ → Create meaningful private amenity spaces

Private amenity space is recognised as being an important part of high-density town centre living. This can include spaces such as balconies, private gardens, roof gardens and semi-private communal spaces.

**CH-12 Provide well-designed private amenity spaces. Incorporating private amenity spaces for each residential unit is encouraged.** However, where this is not possible, high-quality semi-private communal spaces will be accepted. In apartment schemes, incorporating both types of amenity space is preferable.

Please refer to page 34 of '[The Design of Residential Development SPD](#)' for private amenity space standards.

**CH-13 Private amenity space should be both usable and accessible,** considering different demographics and their requirements.

**CH-14 Where balconies are proposed as part of a residential development they should be large enough to be of practical use.**

**CH-15 The approach to delivering private amenity space should correspond with existing building lines, urban grain, surrounding façades and fenestration.**

For example, where a consistent and rhythmic building line addresses a street, a recessed balcony or roof terrace may be more appropriate, to avoid upsetting the rhythm of the street.

**CH-16 Orientate private or communal amenity spaces to maximise sunlight and natural daylight.** A thorough sun path analysis should be undertaken at an early stage of the design process to understand the impact of building massing and scale on proposed semi-private or public spaces, ensuring design maximises daylight.

**CH-17 Make sure building threshold contributes positively to the surrounding streetscene or public realm.** Threshold design should protect residents' privacy and amenity, whilst ensuring a positive visual connection between ground floor windows and the street.



Recessed balconies integrated into the roofscape of the building | Nordhavn, Copenhagen



Low-set green infrastructure integrated into boundary treatments. Large balconies provide private amenity space on upper storeys | Sugar House Island, London

**Provide sufficient internal circulation (higher density)**

**CH-18 Provide spacious, social and safe corridor areas and communal spaces.** Generally, residential development should deliver a maximum of 8 dwellings per corridor, with a minimum corridor width of 1500mm.

**CH-19 Ensure adequate ventilation of corridors and apartments,** generating air movements to prevent overheating within the building.

**CH-20 Corridors should seek to include windows for access to natural daylight into the common areas.** Within apartments, corridors act as the street to people's front door, and should be designed to create a welcoming and homely sense of place.

**CH-21 Use a robust selection of materials in corridor walls and floors,** minimising noise and levels of maintenance.

**CH-22 Consider the scale of development in lift provision.** Buildings up to five-storeys should have a single lift core, development of six storeys or greater should provide two lift cores (development must have regard to all up-to-date Building Regulations).



The building line is recessed at points, adding depth to the elevation and creating large inset balconies | Elephant Park, London

**! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

**C-S8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

**CS-11** 'Stockport Town Centre'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

**ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance during concept and detailed design stages.

[BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice \(BRE, 2011\)](#)

[Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard \(Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015\)](#)

[The Design of Residential Development SPD \(Stockport Council, 2008\)](#)





## MAKE SURE IT'S DELIVERABLE

Underpinning any high-quality residential development is a robust delivery process, providing a clear and scrupulous framework required to make sure future residential development is delivered as envisioned at the early stages of the design process.

Here we outline the key requirements that will ensure the often 'overlooked' aspects of the development process are properly addressed, and at an early stage. We acknowledge that achieving high-quality residential design is an iterative process, where developer, designer and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) are equally accountable in ensuring standards are upheld to achieve design quality. The specific responsibilities of these key stakeholders are also outlined here, providing clarity and accountability to the process.

Underpinning this process is a firm belief that quality design drives market value. As such, value engineering through the detailed design and construction phases must not dilute the original design intent, but ensure that high-quality design is delivered. The requirements of high-quality design should not be used as an argument to suggest a scheme isn't financially viable.

Outlining the design guardians for future residential development in Stockport Town Centre early is crucial. A Design Review Panel (DRP), a multi-disciplinary panel of design experts, is considered a prerequisite. The DRP must be consulted through every stage of the design process, their input is vital in ensuring early envisioned quality is delivered within the final scheme. Furthermore, developers should seek to maintain their design team throughout all stages of the process, ensuring the key concepts, nuances and details of a design are delivered as planned.

Similarly, proposals must provide detail on the future operational requirements of a development at an early stage, clearly outlining the costs and responsibilities involved in the long-term maintenance of a site, and exactly who is accountable for each aspect.



Robust and high-quality materials protected by the provision of detailed drawings and consultation at the planning stages | Dusseldorf, Germany

### DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect town centre residential proposals to consider the following guidance points.

#### ← Provide sufficient construction detail

**D-1 Submit 1:20 bay studies at the planning stage,** outlining the proposed materials and intended details of key elements of the façades.

**D-2 Submit a Quality Method Statement following the granting of planning permission,** setting out how a building will be detailed and constructed. This should include a full list of materials visible in the finished building, as well as the method of construction to be used to ensure water will drain off the building without staining.

**D-3 Make sure contractors are clearly briefed using the above documents.** Sample panels for primary façade elements should be submitted to the council for review to ensure quality, and be of an appropriate size and scale relative to the scale of the building.



Manage value engineering to retain high-quality detailing and materials upon delivery | Bristol Harbour, Bristol

### Consider viability from the start

**D-4 Seek to set a benchmark in design quality,** facilitating a growth in market value through the delivery of high-quality design.

**D-5 Consider the cost of delivering high-quality design** at the site acquisition stage.

**D-6 Carefully manage value engineering,** upholding the quality of the design outlined at the pre-application and Outline Planning stages at the detailed design and construction phases.

**D-7 Make sure Non-material Amendments or Minor Material Amendments to a planning application do not deviate** from the original design. Re-appraisals must not deter from the quality of the outlined scheme.

### Embrace scrutiny

**D-8 Establish a Design Review Panel (DRP),** possibly using Places Matter, at the earliest possible stage of the design process. The DRP should be regularly consulted at each stage of the design process, with their feedback provided to the Local Planning Authority to help underpin decision making.

**D-9 Encourage peer reviewing throughout the design process,** engaging a wide range of local and relevant regional stakeholders.

**D-10 Where possible, maintain the same design team through each phase of the development process.** If this isn't feasible, the original designers should be retained in the delivery phase as design guardians for the scheme.

### Consider maintenance, management and stewardship

**D-11 Clearly outline end user requirements of a development proposal at the planning stage,** ensuring the costs of future maintenance and management don't drive up costs towards the end of the development process, impacting the delivery of high-quality design.

**D-12 Seek to engage an Association of Residential Managing Agents / UK Apartment Association** approved management agent at an early stage of the design process. An appraisal should be obtained and submitted within a Design and Access Statement.

**D-13 Submit a detailed operational management strategy,** clearly defining responsibilities for the long-term maintenance of future residential development, surrounding public, semi-private and private realm. Developers should engage with both the council and other statutory bodies early, outlining whether there is scope for a stewardship partnership to be formed.

**D-14 Provide prospective and confirmed future occupiers with a detailed breakdown of maintenance responsibilities,** as well as a clear complaints procedure.

**D-15 Create a platform for communities to engage in the management and stewardship of their homes and neighbourhoods.** Design should provide spaces and facilities for communities, encouraging residents to take ownership. During planning, consider the role of the community within a future stewardship body, including potential governing structures and dedicated community assets.

### ! RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Successful application of the design guidance is linked to meeting the following [Core Strategy policy](#) requirements.

**C-S8** 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment'

**SIE-1** 'Quality Places'

**SIE-3** 'Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment'

**CS-11** 'Stockport Town Centre'

This document is intended to stay relevant in the longer term and so users of this guidance should have regard to up-to-date policies and guidance.

#### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

We recommend applicants consider the following additional guidance during concept and detailed design stages.

[Build to Rent: A Best Practice Guide \(Urban Land Institute, 2016\)](#)

[RICS Service Charge Residential Management Code \(RICS, 2016\)](#)



# A UNIQUE SENSE OF PLACE

## THE STOCKPORT ASSETS

A rich industrial history, complex topography and contesting design approaches have resulted in a unique Stockport Town Centre townscape. Here we identify Stockport's most important townscape assets, which combine to create a truly unique sense of place.

This section identifies the iconic landmarks and prevalent townscape features that combine to make Stockport, Stockport. Design guidance is provided to ensure future residential development provides a sensitive response to these features. A clear framework is provided, directing future development to **'protect, enhance and complement'** Stockport's assets.

Guidance here does not supersede any existing heritage or environmental guidance for Stockport. Guidance supports Core Strategy policy, helping to ensure future residential development considers its relationship with Stockport's sensitive townscape.

In Section 5, the plans at the beginning of each character area highlight where the Stockport Assets are present within each area.



### USING THE STOCKPORT ASSETS

All proposals should positively contribute and sensitively respond to the assets. Our aim is to protect and enhance the assets through future residential development, maximising their value to Stockport.





## SECTION 4 STOCKPORT ASSETS



### SLOPING STREETS AND STEPPING WALKWAYS

Steps linking areas of the town, long streets slope with topography and stepped building entrances



### A LAYERED TOWNSCAPE

Views of roofscape, development tiers, stepping roofscape and skyline



### A HISTORIC GRID AND GRAIN

An organic urban grain and irregular street grid



### ICONIC LANDMARKS

Civic, industrial, cultural and religious landmarks define the skyline





### A RICH INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Red brick materiality, industrial typologies, Stockport Viaduct and distinctive roof pitches



### TRANSIT STATIONS AS FOCAL POINTS

A new Stockport interchange and Stockport Railway Station as a central node



### HISTORIC NORTH-SOUTH STREETS

Wellington Road, Hillgate and King Street West act as the spine of the town centre



### LANDSCAPE ASSETS

The three rivers, undulating topography and steep woodland edges





## STOCKPORT'S LANDSCAPE ASSETS

We believe that future residential development in Stockport Town Centre should pay more attention to our landscape assets.

Activating the River Mersey and River Goyt is of prime importance, connecting people with water, green space, and woodland. Consideration of the stepping topography is also key. Residential development must establish a positive relationship with the town centre's natural assets; maximising natural capital and creating a more biophilic town in general.

Connecting with the landscape will inspire a healthier Stockport, physically and psychologically.



The River Mersey winds through the northern section of the town centre, culverted beneath Merseyway shopping centre | view from Wellington Road



## STOCKPORT'S LAYERED TOWNSCAPE

Stockport Town Centre's layered townscape is a fundamental characteristic of the place. A response to major topographical changes, development has naturally slotted into tiers through time, cutting into the topography at different levels to create a visually interesting skyline and roofscape.

Development must understand its place within the layers, sensitively embedding into the distinctive skyline and contributing to the stepping roofscape.



A range of buildings types, stepping buildings heights and varied roof form contributes to a layered townscape image | view from High Bank Side





## STOCKPORT'S HISTORIC GRID AND ORGANIC GRAIN

The twentieth century brought about major change in the townscape character of Stockport Town Centre.

A vehicle-oriented approach to highway design, housing clearance, light industrial infill and large footprint retail and leisure development moved away from the informal, human-scale market town of old.

Despite this, the historic, irregular street grid of Stockport remains in parts of the town centre, presenting an ideal framework for coherent and legible residential development.

Future development should enhance, extend and intensify the grid and reinstate the historic fine urban grain, contributing to a more human-scale and liveable place.



Streets in the old town form part of an organic street grid, twisting and turning to create interest as you move through the town | Little Underbank



## STOCKPORT'S ICONIC LANDMARKS

Stockport's landmarks, be it industrial, civic or religious, are visually prominent across the town centre, forming a key element of the skyline.

We must continue to celebrate the landmarks that provide Stockport with such a unique sense of place, protecting their primacy and embedding them in the future.

Future development should take a 'reuse-first' approach, always seeking to renovate and revitalise buildings of heritage value in a sensitive and contemporary manner.



Iconic landmarks permeate the skyline across the town centre, creating markers and points of interest within the townscape | Robinson's Brewery



## STOCKPORT'S SLOPING STREETS AND STEPPING WALKWAYS

The streets of Stockport Town Centre slope and step with the topography, responding to level changes. They provide the town centre with an element of intrigue and discovery, with points of interest waiting around the next bend.

Future residential development should use the topography to its advantage; using the slope to mediate scale, creating a sense of arrival at points of discovery, and establishing connections through areas of level change.



Sloping streets traverse the town's level changes | Lower Hillgate



## STOCKPORT'S TRANSIT STATIONS AS FOCAL POINTS

Stockport's stations, both bus and rail, are well-located strategically on both a national and regional scale, serving as key town centre arrival destinations.

Their central location at the interface of east and west Stockport further contributes to their prominence, marking them as key focal points within the town centre context.

Future residential development should contribute to a prominent and legible station quarter and exchange, defining the area as the primary gateway to the town centre.



Transit stations act as focal points and key gateways to the town centre | Stockport Railway Station



## STOCKPORT'S

# RICH INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Stockport's rich industrial heritage still underpins the townscape character of today, retained and represented in various forms. It is this heritage that best defines the town centre's unique sense of place. It is in the western gateway of the town centre where Stockport's industrial beginnings are best captured, where the Weir and Kingston Mills line the River Mersey, overlooked by the iconic Grade II\* Stockport Viaduct.

Elsewhere, a multi-toned red brick materiality and warehouse building typologies provide constant reminders of the town centre's key role as part of the world's first industrial conurbation in Manchester.

We as guardians of Stockport's heritage have a duty to both protect and celebrate this history, appreciating it as a fundamental part of the town centre's soul. Future residential development must capture the area's industrial past, creatively blending old and new.



The town centre is peppered with red-brick mills, warehouses and infrastructure serving as a reminder of our rich industrial heritage | Former Wellington Mill, Wellington Road South (A6)



## STOCKPORT'S

# NORTH-SOUTH PRIMARY ROUTES

Stockport's north-south primary streets serve the town centre through several means. Despite being different in character, varying in gradient, grain and levels of enclosure, they all act as key movement corridors. Their primary function is to move people from one area to another, or through the town centre en route to the next.

They serve as prominent edges between character areas. Their presence allows you to gain an understanding of your location within the wider town centre, using them as a point of reference when moving through. Furthermore, and most importantly, they are the features that provide visitors' with a lasting impression of the town centre.

Future residential development should contribute to well-defined, attractive and active primary streets, establishing a positive impression of the town centre as a whole.



Three north-south primary routes act as structuring elements to the town centre, and provide visitors first impressions of Stockport | Wellington Road South (A6)





View of the Historic Core from High Bank Side highlights the complex and visually interesting skyline

## STOCKPORT'S UNIQUE SKYLINE

Stockport's topography, and the town centre's response to it, has resulted in a unique skyline. The skyline can be appreciated at a variety of ranges; from street level all the way up to high points at the edge of the Peak District.

From elevated vantage points within the town centre, views of the layered roofscape are experienced, capturing the historic townscape response to the natural undulation of the land at short range.

Further out towards the edge of the town centre, notably from the elevated Hollywood and Heaton Norris Parks, open panoramas of the skyline are experienced. Development steps with the undulating land, with historic landmark features permeating the skyline.

Whilst it is beyond the scope of this document to develop policy regarding the development of tall buildings and skyline protection, it is important to note that any future residential development must consider its impact at a wider visual range.

It is vital that development does not flatten the topography of the existing skyline image, a sensitive response to scale will make sure future development contributes positively.





View of St Mary's Church along Middle Hillgate



View of Stockport Viaduct from High Bank Side Bridge

## STOCKPORT'S KEY VIEWS

A wide variety of key views can be experienced from within the town centre. At a shorter range and in a denser urban environment, views of local historic landmarks or surrounding countryside are often framed by existing buildings, or experienced at a glimpse.

Views of heritage assets, focal buildings and surrounding landscape not only aid legibility, acting as reference points for navigation, but add value to the townscape assets themselves. Furthermore, views fundamentally contribute to the experience of a place, helping to capture several townscape elements in one image.

Future residential development has a major role to play in protecting, enhancing and creating the key views that help to contribute to Stockport's sense of place. At the council's discretion, applicants will be required to produce a thorough Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment as part of a planning application, clearly outlining the impact of development on the existing townscape and views.









# STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE CHARACTER AREA GUIDANCE

Stockport Town Centre, when viewed as an urban whole, presents a varied townscape. Here we explore the twelve distinctive neighbourhoods that form the town centre, drawing out the townscape characteristics, issues and assets to which future residential development should respond.

The chapter provides character appraisals for each of the twelve identified Stockport Town Centre character areas, summarising the baseline townscape conditions. Findings are grouped under a series of subheadings, summarising the key characteristics of each area.

Character appraisals are followed by design guidance addressing these characteristics, steering contextually sensitive and place-specific design. The approach aims to protect sensitive historic townscape whilst encouraging innovation in delivering higher residential densities.

**Guidance focuses on the design of different types of plot, characteristic of each area.** The aim is not to steer a specific architectural approach on any specific site, but to provide design principles aimed at maximising development potential and guiding sensitive density.

A broad range of photography is used to support guidance points, providing best practice examples of residential design, and real life proof of what is achievable through considered design. The photography provides steer on an appropriate 'look and feel' for character areas, with regards to scale, materiality, streetscape and architectural style. However, photography is only a visual aid to support guidance, and applications will be judged on their ability to respond appropriately to their context.

\*a full character appraisal for each character area can be found in the Appendices



## USING THE CHARACTER AREA GUIDANCE

Design guidance in this section should not be viewed in isolation of the 'Key Components', which should be considered in all future proposals.



Respond to  
Context



Animate Public  
Realm



High-Quality  
Architecture



Practical



Create a  
Home



Place for All



Green,  
Blue and  
Sustainable



Cyclists and  
Pedestrians



Deliverable

# DEFINING THE BOUNDARIES

## CHARACTER AREA METHODOLOGY

Character area boundaries have been defined using a combination of previously prescribed boundaries, outlined within the following list of documents, as well as a full character appraisal of the wider town centre boundary.

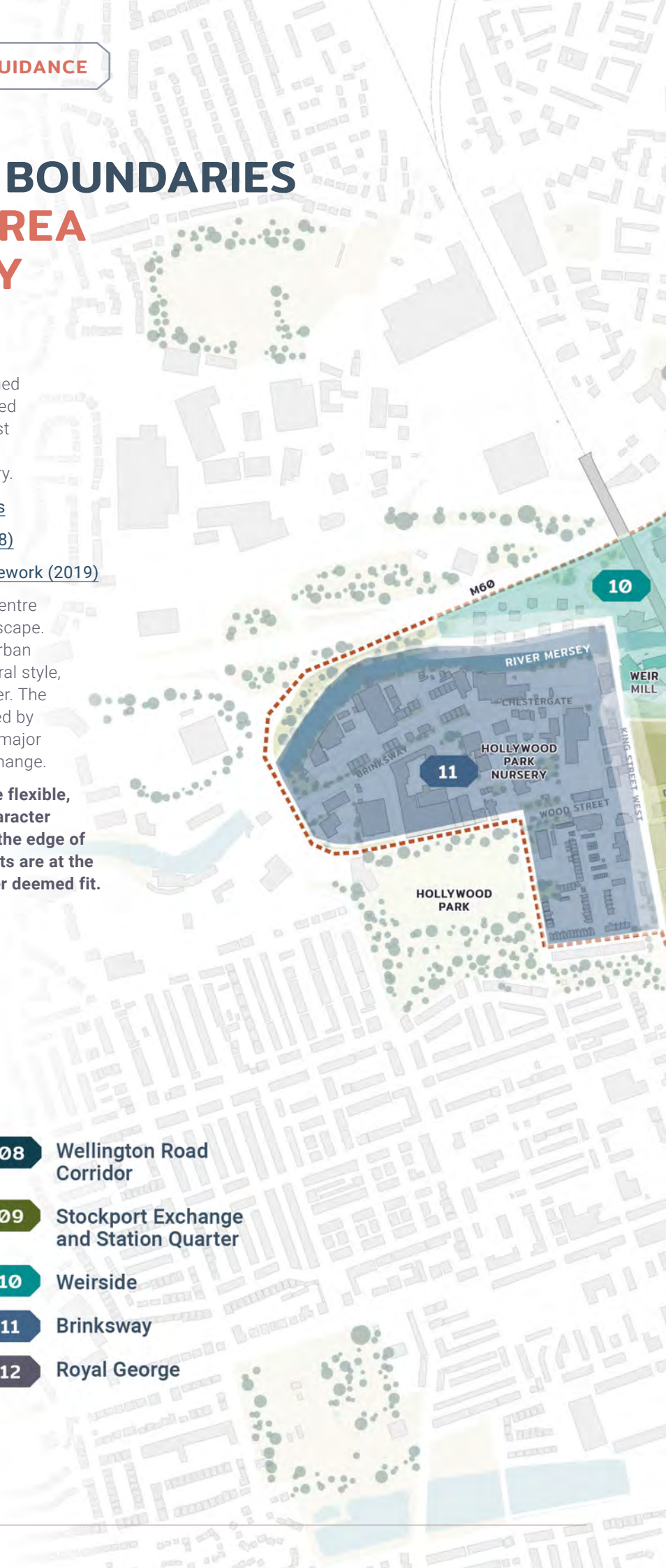
- [Stockport Conservation Area Appraisals](#)
- [Stockport Town Centre Living LDF \(2018\)](#)
- [Stockport Strategic Regeneration Framework \(2019\)](#)

Character areas are sections of the town centre with fundamental similarities in their townscape. This includes, but is not limited to: scale, urban grain, streetscape, landscape or architectural style, clearly differentiating one area from another. The boundaries selected were also often defined by a clearly delineated urban edge, such as a major roadway, woodland edge or a steep level change.

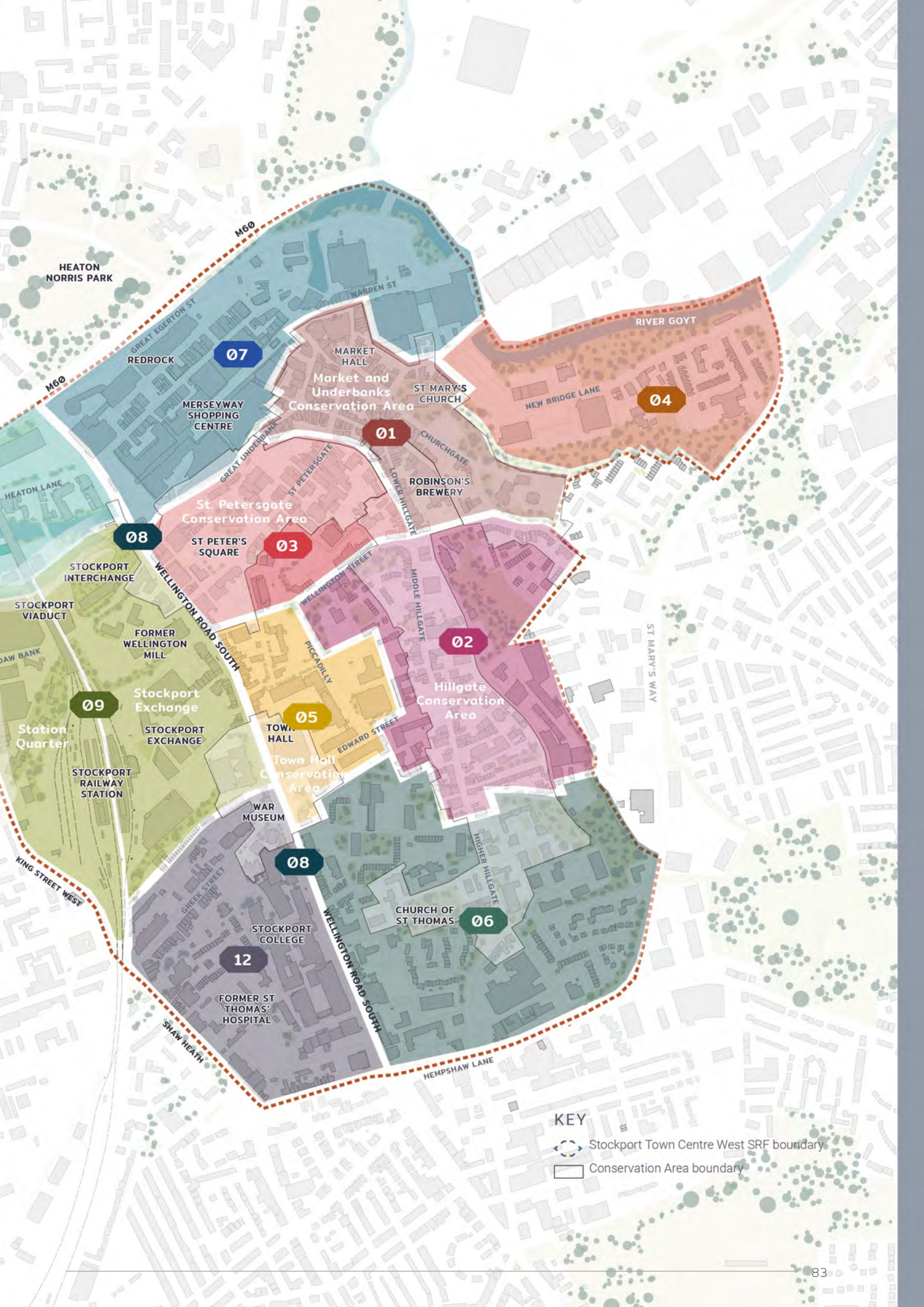
**Importantly, the boundaries presented are flexible, and at times guidance notes from one character area may be relevant to a site located on the edge of another. The application of guidance points are at the discretion of the decision maker, wherever deemed fit.**

### STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE CHARACTER AREAS

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>01</b> Historic Core           | <b>08</b> Wellington Road Corridor               |
| <b>02</b> Middle Hillgate         | <b>09</b> Stockport Exchange and Station Quarter |
| <b>03</b> St Petersgate           | <b>10</b> Weirside                               |
| <b>04</b> New Bridge Lane         | <b>11</b> Brinksway                              |
| <b>05</b> Civic Quarter           | <b>12</b> Royal George                           |
| <b>06</b> Higher Hillgate         |  |
| <b>07</b> Leisure and Retail Core |  |









# HISTORIC CORE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Stockport's Historic Core captures the essence of the town centre, where winding streets traverse levels and stepping buildings have nestled into the topography over time.

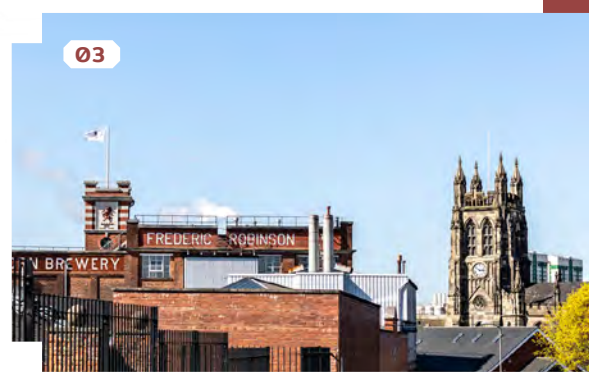
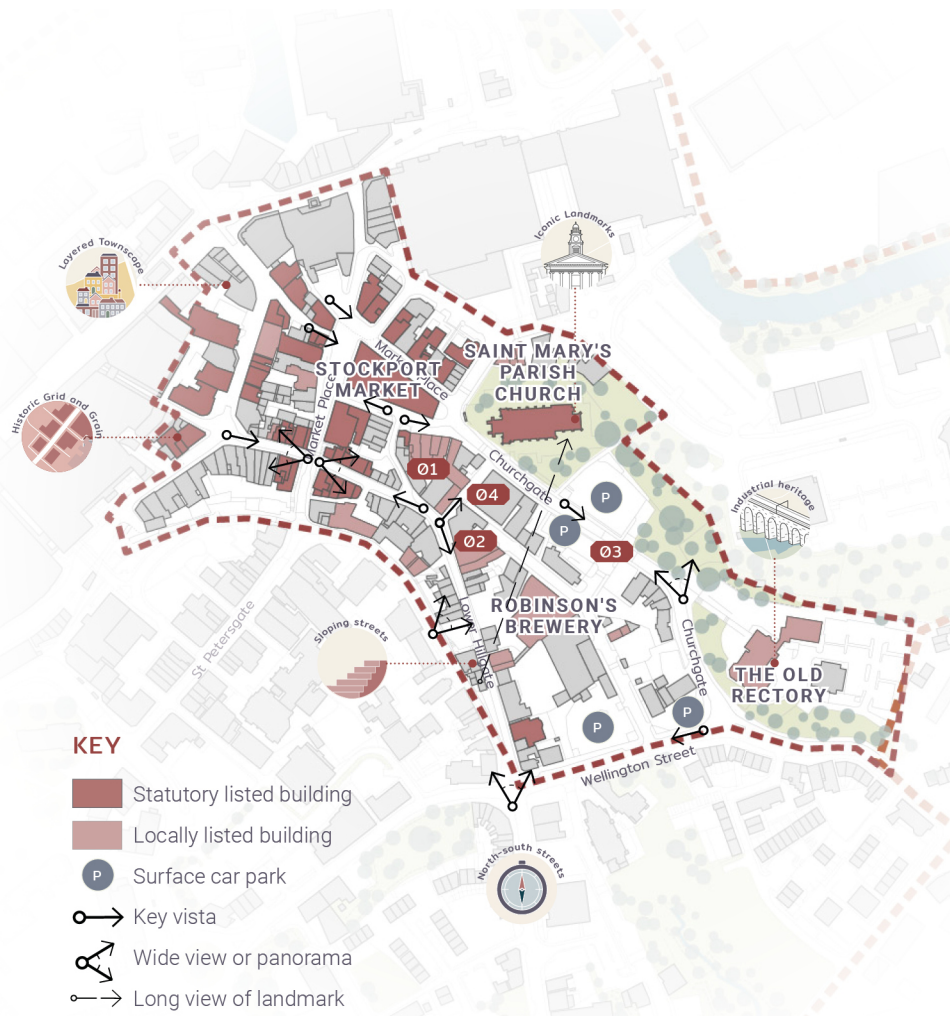
The area contains large sections of both the Hillgate, and the Market and Underbanks Conservation Areas, making it an incredibly sensitive area of historic townscape. The organic street pattern and fine urban grain provide a sense of intrigue as you move through the area. Long, sloping north-to-south streets lined with three-storey terraced properties wind through the area, drawing the eye around the next bend.

Stepped walkways address steeper level changes running from east-to-west across the area; some providing glimpsed views of historic landmarks. There is a constant feeling of 'what next' within the Historic Core, inspired by the organic form and grain.

The streets are generally animated. Pedestrian-priority treatments and limited vehicular access create a walkable area, whilst active frontages and retail uses at ground level help to activate the public realm. Generous spill-out spaces also contribute to a more active street.

Development in the Historic Core has responded to the complex topography organically, embedding itself in the tiers. The result is a layered effect, creating visual interest and intrigue which provides Stockport Town Centre with a truly unique sense of place, with great views across the roofscape from upper storeys.





**KEY**

- Statutory listed building
- Locally listed building
- P Surface car park
- Key vista
- Wide view or panorama
- Long view of landmark

**DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of the Historic Core. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **Organic street pattern and fine urban grain**
- **Level changes and terracing**
- **High-quality pedestrian streets**
- **Active frontages and uses**
- **Layered townscape and stepping roofscape**
- **Iconic landmarks and framed views**
- **Fragmented Churchgate and Aspley Lane area**
- **Low-rise, terraced buildings**

**01** | Buildings developed at different levels contribute to a layered townscape | Lower Hillgate  
**02** | Consistent active frontages and multi-coloured building elevations | Little Underbank  
**03** | Iconic landmarks rise above the roofline | Market and Underbanks Conservation Area  
**04** | Sloping streets and walkways connect the area, facilitating glimpsed views of landmarks | Roston Brow



# HISTORIC CORE DESIGN GUIDANCE

The Historic Core, including segments of two conservation areas, is a highly valued and sensitive area of town centre townscape.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

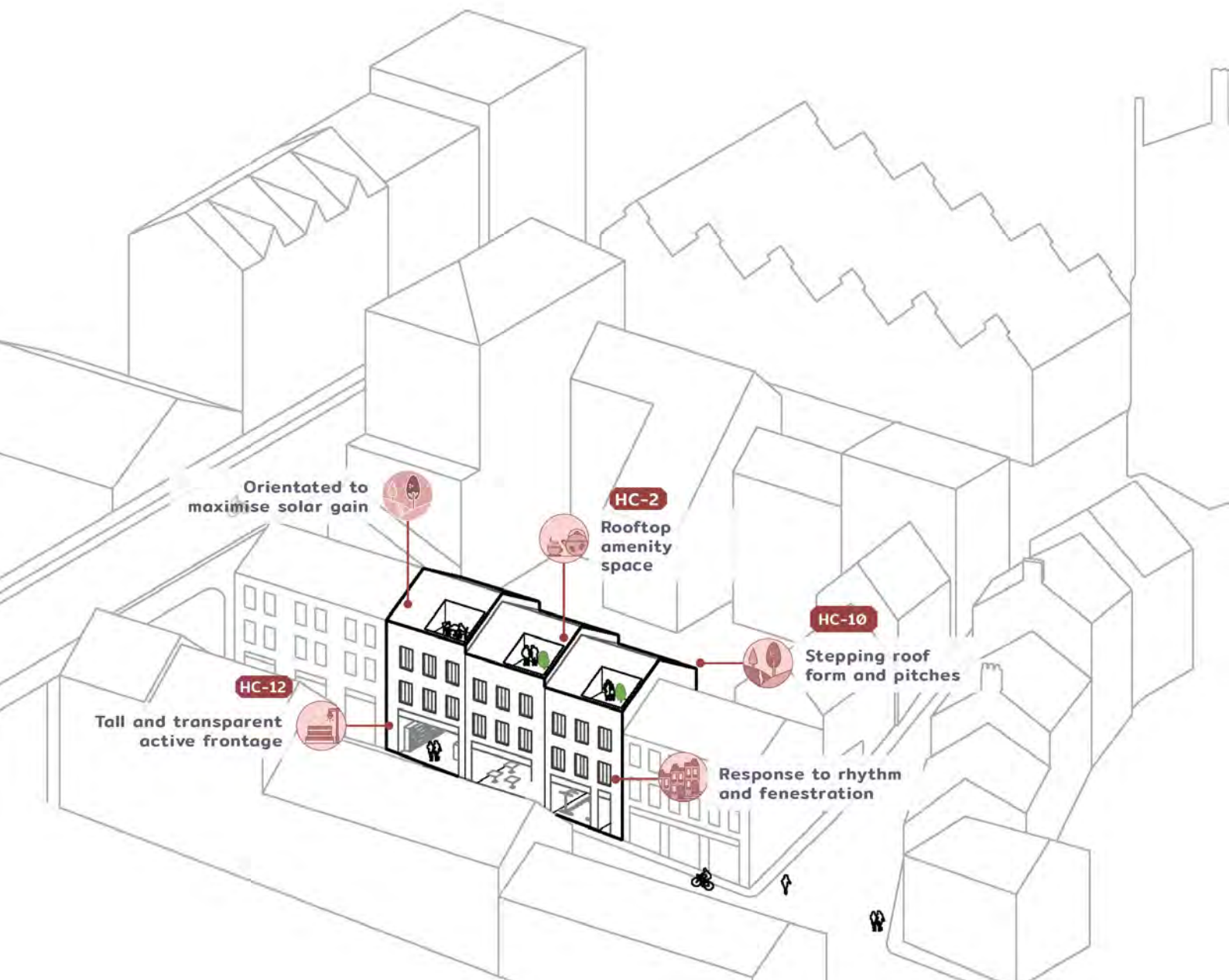
The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, and does not prescribe a specific design to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.

Level changes, tight-knit terraced streets and pedestrianised areas all contribute to a challenging development environment. Despite this, small infill projects and historic refurbishments have managed to set a high standard for residential development to date.

It is imperative that future residential development understands its place within the Historic Core, responding sensitively to the complex urban environment.

Future development in the Historic Core should refer to both the [Hillgate](#) and [Market and Underbanks](#) Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.



## DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect future residential development in the Historic Core to adhere to the following.

### → Respond to a fine urban grain

**HC-1 Deliver a narrow building threshold**, reinforcing the fine urban grain and character of the area:

- Along high streets and existing terraced rows, new development should reflect the historic building line, often flush with the street.
- In new blocks, narrow building thresholds (max. 2m) should be considered to reinforce a fine urban grain.

**HC-2 Provide elevated private or semi-private amenity spaces** to buildings at rooftop level, maximising the development potential of the plot below and responding to narrow development plots.

**HC-3 Upper storey amenity should be orientated to maximise sunlight and address the public realm**, integrated to provide depth in the building façade.

**HC-4 Massing should respond to the fine urban grain, avoiding overly deep building footprints or wide perimeter blocks.**

**HC-5 Where development is proposed on a larger plot**, rows of mews houses with narrow, linear building footprints, new streets or pedestrian connections should be considered through the centre of plot, reinforcing the fine urban grain of the area.

Design should take an innovative approach to achieving a compact urban form that reinforces a fine urban grain, without compromising residents' privacy or amenity.

**HC-6 Where perimeter blocks are achievable, multiple small courtyard spaces should be considered at the heart of the block**, referencing the historic urban form. Incidental 'pocket' public spaces should be delivered to break the fine urban grain at appropriate locations in the street network, at new or existing nodes to enhance legibility.

### → Redefine Churchgate

**HC-7 Contribute to a redefined and more active Churchgate**, delivering a consistent building frontage.

**HC-8 Contribute to an enhanced pedestrian crossing environment and public realm setting along Churchgate.**



A narrow threshold, low boundary and recessed building entrance protect the privacy of residents and reinforce a fine urban grain | Embassy Gardens, London



The building line is recessed at roof level to incorporate private amenity space without upsetting the existing building line | Ancoats, Manchester



Narrow mews dwellings with a narrow building footprint and small-scale apartments address a green communal courtyard | New Islington Mews, Manchester



# HISTORIC CORE DESIGN GUIDANCE



Stepping roof form and gable roof pitches reference historic warehouse buildings and create visual interest  
Warehaus | Ancoats, Manchester

## ↓ Animate the public realm

**HC-13 Deliver transparent and active ground floors** along commercial high streets and appropriate key corners, with habitable rooms located above.

**HC-14 Large windows should directly address the public realm at upper storeys.** Where the application conjoins with historic terraced rows or buildings, consider the use of recessed or juliet balconies at upper storeys to maximise passive surveillance.

**HC-15 Well-lit and inviting front doors and building entrances** should address the street, subtly integrated where homes are part of a mixed-use block along high-streets. Where the front doors and windows of individual homes address the street, make sure threshold design provides a degree of privacy.



Active frontages integrated at ground floor level, with sufficient space in the public realm for spill-out and green infrastructure | Elephant Park, London

## ← Work with level changes

**HC-9 Create a sense of arrival at points of interest within the townscape,** often located at the summit of a stepped walkway or sloping street, or as a terminus to a key view. This may be achieved through architectural detailing, an increase in scale, or provision of a new public space.

**HC-10 Building heights, roof pitches and roof lines should subtly step up and down** along sloping terraced streets, reinforcing the informal stepping skyline of the Historic Core. Development must not flatten the roofscape or topography.

**HC-11 Deliver active gable ends,** including large windows or balconies, and prominent roof pitches where development is proposed on a highly visible elevation of a raised development platform.

**HC-12 Accommodate steep level changes within the building footprint** where possible, creating 'two-level' buildings and experimenting with building typology, avoiding large inactive retaining walls or unusable open space.



The building subtly steps up in scale to emphasise the corner | Battersea Exchange, London

## ↑ A sensitive response to scale

**HC-16 Correspond with the consistent lower-rise height datum of the area.** A subtle increase in scale should be considered up to the corner of blocks, or at key junctions or nodes.



Subtly recessed upper consisting of complementary materials create raised amenity space at roof level | London

### ↑ A sensitive response to layers and roofscape

**HC-20** Sensitive embed into the layers of roofscape, considering pitched roofs and gables to reference distinctive local features. Development must not flatten the topography of the roofscape image.

**HC-21** Sensitive recessed upper storeys should be considered, delivering a slightly taller building without upsetting the rhythm and scale of the street. Where a vertical extension of an existing building is considered, the proportions and materiality must complement existing buildings of value and that of the building below.

**HC-22** Create rooftop views of the townscape and views of distance countryside wherever possible, considering raised amenity spaces and large windows on upper storeys, to create new vantage points. Buildings should be orientated to maximise the view.



A blend of historic and new development create a consistent building line, framing a view of the historic landmark Bold Street, Liverpool

### ← ↓ Respond to historic terraced rows and industrial buildings

**HC-17** Sensitive integrate townhouses and duplex apartments that respond to the grain and massing of the area. The footprint of individual terraced buildings should correspond with existing buildings in the street.

**HC-18** Make sure fenestration and façade responds to the rhythm and proportions of existing historic buildings of value along a street. A contemporary and innovative response to existing façades should be achieved using a range of complementary building materials, avoiding low-quality pastiche replications.

**HC-19** Retain, reuse and extend existing historic buildings of value wherever possible. Extensions should be sensitively delivered, using a range of complementary materials and respecting building proportions.



Fenestration, rhythm and proportions complement the historic terraces | Timekeeper's Square, Salford (Buttress Architects)

### ← Frame views of local landmarks

**HC-23** Development should frame views of St Mary's Church as set out within the Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans (or any subsequent updates)

**HC-24** Appreciate key views of the Stockport skyline and historic landmarks. Future residential development must not deter from the quality of the view, nor obscure views of landmarks.

**HC-25** Consider key views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisals for the area.



# MIDDLE HILLGATE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The townscape character of Middle Hillgate represents a transition in the urban form, a space between the fragmented urban grain of Higher Hillgate and the fine grain Historic Core to the north.

The historic grid street pattern is still prominent, however phased demolition of terraced housing and light industrial infill has eroded the urban grain over time. Levels of enclosure along Middle Hillgate and along southern streets in the area present a human-scale, differentiating the area from its neighbours.

The character of Middle Hillgate is dictated by the stepping topography, with development responding using a variety of approaches. West of Middle Hillgate presents a fragmented urban grain, where development platforms have been established to incorporate large footprint commercial or apartment buildings.

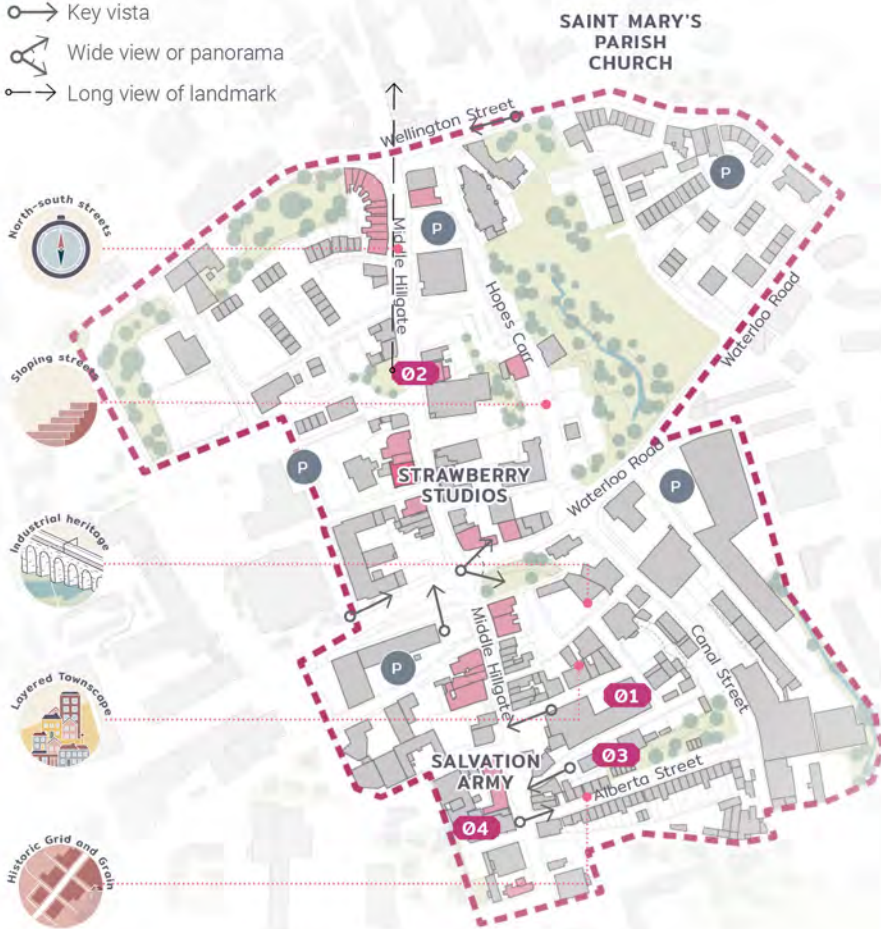
To the east of Middle Hillgate, development presents a more organic, informal townscape responding to the Hemphshaw Brook valley. Streets lined with stepping terraced buildings slope down towards the brook on an east-west alignment, providing framed views of landmarks and the countryside from junctions along Hillgate. Prominent gable ends and roof pitches of old mills and warehouses step with the topography, creating a layered roofscape image and a distinctive industrial character.

For further details on the special historic character of the conservation area, refer to the [Hillgate Conservation Area Appraisal](#).



## KEY

- Statutory listed building
- Locally listed building
- Key vista
- Wide view or panorama
- Long view of landmark



## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of Middle Hillgate. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **An informal, tight-knit grid of streets**
- **Level changes and views**
- **Inactive streets and frontages**
- **An industrial character**
- **A transition in building scale and urban grain**
- **Terraced building typologies**

- 01 | Walls of industrial buildings address the street, creating inactive frontages | Mowbray Street**
- 02 | A consistent building line frames the view of historic buildings | Middle Hillgate**
- 03 | Stepping terraced streets and consistent chimneys creates visual interest | Alberta Street**
- 04 | A dramatic transition in the scale of buildings | Higher Hillgate**



# MIDDLE HILLGATE DESIGN GUIDANCE

Middle Hillgate provides a broad scope for future residential development, with several voids in the urban form to the west and a range of industrial sites presenting opportunities to infill and intensify the grid to the east.

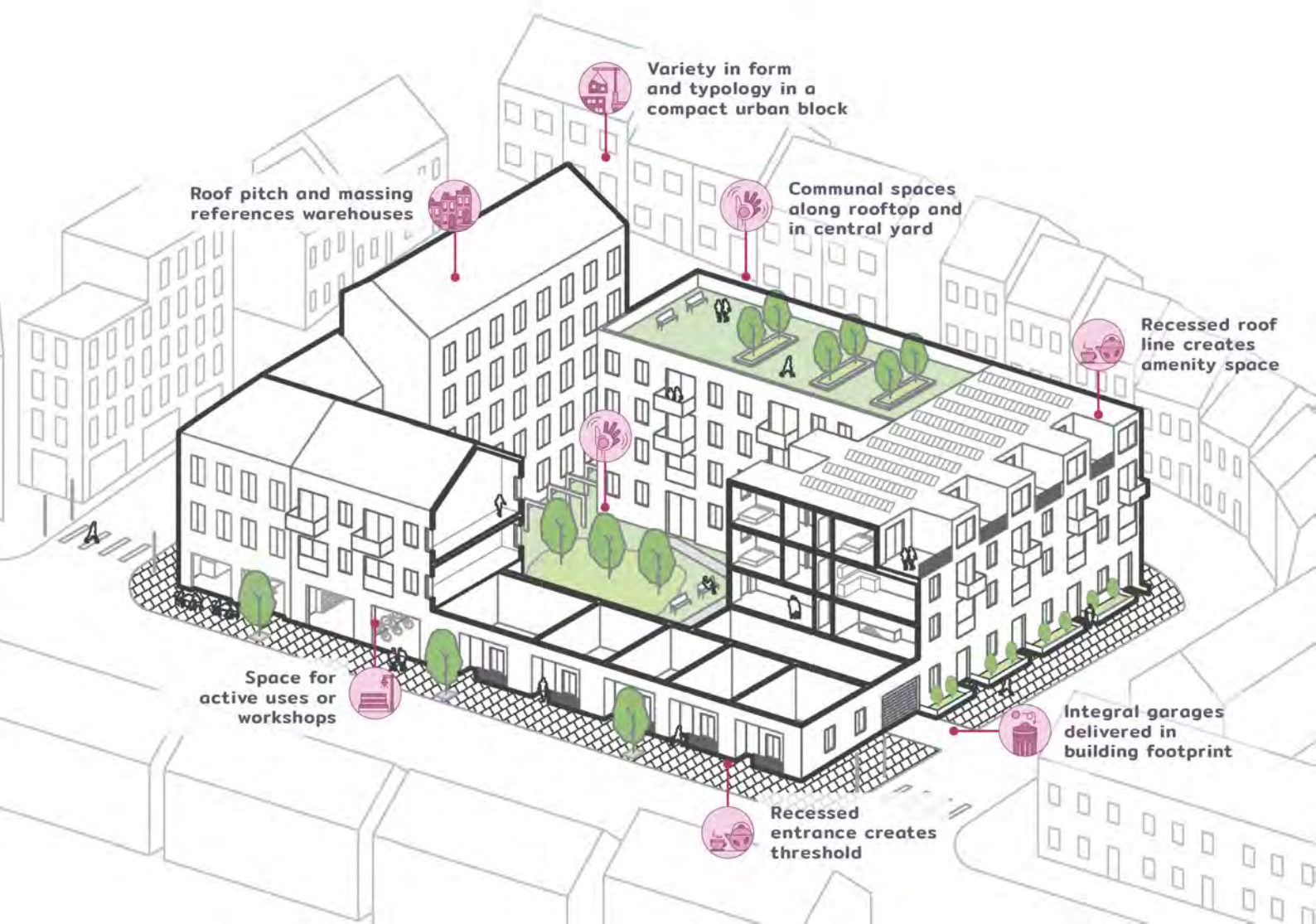
It is important that future residential development captures the historic character of the area; with topography, urban grain and an industrial aesthetic creating opportunities for a unique, low-rise urban neighbourhood.

This guidance aligns with guidance presented within the [Hillgate Conservation Area Appraisal](#). Future residential proposals must adhere to the guidance points outlined overleaf, as well as any relevant policies, guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, and does not prescribe a specific design to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.



## DESIGN GUIDANCE

We expect future residential development in Middle Hillgate to adhere to the following guidance points.

### → Intensify the grid and grain

**MH-1 Utilise the grid as a framework for future development**, embedding new homes into the existing urban fabric. A range of innovative buildings typologies should be delivered within tight urban blocks, optimising the potential of each plot without resorting to high-rise.

**MH-2 When working in a grid, it is important building detailing provides variation and informality**, enhancing legibility and the visual appearance of the street. Stepping roof form and roof line, recessed building elements, mixed façade materials and active gable ends all contribute to a vibrant street frontage and elevation.

**MH-3 Embed smaller footprint apartment blocks into the ends of terraced rows** where possible, delivering a subtle increase in scale to the corner. Apartment units should feel like a natural extension of the terraced row.

**MH-4 Extend the existing grid where new streets are proposed**, creating new connections between new and existing streets, and framing views of local landmarks.

**MH-5 Deliver incidental public spaces** to break the grid at key intersections, aiding navigation through the neighbourhood. The scale of space should respond to its location within the wider movement framework, and should be addressed by active building frontage.

**MH-6 Private amenity should be elevated or delivered at rooftop level.** Juliet balconies or recessed balconies should be considered on upper floors, reinforcing the strong and consistent building line of the area.

Car parking should be considered within the building footprint where required, considering the provision of raised private amenity space above.

**MH-7 Shorter 'back-to-back' distances could be achieved by carefully locating or 'staggering' upper storey windows to habitable rooms, limiting overlooking between homes to protect residents' privacy.** Applications should take an innovative approach on narrow development plots.

**MH-8 Mews houses, with a narrow linear building footprint, or modern back-to-back typologies should be considered on narrow development plots.** A narrower building footprint may allow for partial single-aspect upper storeys, where access to sufficient daylight and privacy to the home is not compromised

**MH-9 Where on-street parking is necessary, it should be subtly integrated**, demarcated using a change in complementary surface material and permeated by planting of ecological value. The design of on-street parking should integrate space for EV charging points, without compromising pedestrian or cycle movement.



Apartment buildings bookends terraced row, providing variation in form, detailing and height to mark the corner | New Islington Mews, Manchester



Incidental public spaces creates points of interest and dwelling opportunity within the street network | Battersea Exchange, London



Narrow buildings footprints with staggered upper storey windows limit overlooking between dwellings, and allow a compact urban block | The Gables, Crosby



# MIDDLE HILLGATE DESIGN GUIDANCE

## ↓ Respond to level changes and views

**MH-10** The topography of the area will dictate the layout of buildings. Long linear blocks with consistent building frontages should be considered, running along contour lines and providing rooftop views. Variety in roofscape and roof pitch should be used along longer frontages to create visual interest.

**MH-11** Where possible, steep level changes should be mitigated within the building footprint, creating buildings which address two-levels, avoiding the overuse of retaining walls.

**MH-12** Alternatively, level changes could be mitigated using innovative public realm solutions, creating green terraced amenity spaces within the street or at the centre of perimeter blocks.

**MH-13** Seek to introduce increased scale or density in a sensitive manner, taking advantage of the valley landscape. There is scope to embed taller buildings in low lying areas of land along Hopes Carr.

**MH-14** Frame key views of the Historic Core landmarks along Middle Hillgate.

**MH-15** Roofscape and doors should be in conjunction with the slope and gradient of the street, taking design cues from historic local streets such as Alberta Street and the steps off Banbury Street.

**MH-16** Create accessible pedestrian and cycle linkages through steeper areas, helping to create a more permeable neighbourhood.



A green amenity space at the centre of the street mitigates the level change | Middlewood Locks, Salford

## ↓ Activate the street

**MH-17** Maximise the transparency of the ground floor along Middle Hillgate, creating active frontages in key locations. Fenestration should respond to the rhythm and proportions of existing terraced buildings along Hillgate.

**MH-18** Maximise upper storey passive surveillance without disrupting existing building lines.

Protruding balconies are deemed more acceptable where apartment buildings are proposed on new streets without existing building lines.

**MH-19** Consider reusing existing industrial buildings to the east of the area, creating space for active uses or workshops at ground floor level.

Creating activity behind the building line helps to create a sense of intrigue at street level.

**MH-20** Create consistent building lines and frontages, responding to long, horizontal frontages presented by industrial areas to the east. Roofline 'cut ins', deep reveals, and recessed upper storeys should be used to provide depth and variety in the façade without disrupting the building line.

**MH-21** Front doors, building entrances and large windows should address the street. Along narrow streets where the building line is hard up to the street, consider stepping back the building entrance to provide residents with defensible space.



Front doors and large windows should activate the street along Hillgate | Timekeepers Square, Salford



Roof form references heritage and delivers a subtle step up in height at the end of the terraced row | Little Kelham, Sheffield

↓ **Complement the spacial character, appearance and historic identity of the area**

**MH-22** Seek to refurbish or reuse historic industrial buildings wherever feasible.

**MH-23** Use a range of complementary materials to create visual interest across the area.

Residential schemes should consider the use of industrial materials, such as timber or steel, as part of a mixed material palette, complementing and contrasting the area's red brick.

**MH-24** Enhanced architectural detailing should emphasise key building features, such as large windows or entrance areas.

**MH-25** Take design cues from the industrial architectural features of the area, including but not limited to uniform fenestration patterns, distinctive tall roof pitches and gable ends. Proposals should not attempt to mimic heritage, but provide a contemporary and complementary response.

**MH-26** Apartment blocks should respond to the scale and massing of industrial warehouses within the area, framing new courtyard spaces which reference the industrial 'yard' space'.



A sensitive, contemporary response to the historic warehouse building | Ancoats, Manchester

← **Mediate a transition in scale**

**MH-27** Respond to the height datum of the area, subtly integrating increased scale on street corners. Taller apartment buildings should be located along key streets, such as Hopes Carr, and in low-lying areas at the bottom of the valley.

**MH-28** Where an increase in scale above the height datum is proposed, an application must provide clear justification of the townscape benefit.

**MH-29** Respect and reinforce existing levels of street enclosure, creating continuity and rhythm throughout the area.



A narrow threshold defines the edge of the street and provides defensible space | Copenhagen, Denmark

↑ **Respond innovatively to terraced buildings**

**MH-30** Deliver contemporary terraced dwellings in appropriate locations, helping to drive a low-rise, dense urban form. A contemporary response is expected, referencing but not mimicking existing typologies.

**MH-31** Contribute to the rhythm and continuity of existing building lines provided by existing terraces. Parking access should not disrupt the consistency of the building line.

**MH-32** Correspond with the threshold presented by existing terraced streets. The introduction of narrow thresholds is considered preferable in areas where a new street network is introduced, contributing to the emerging character of the area.



# ST PETERSGATE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

St Petersgate presents a varied townscape, with a mix of iconic landmark buildings and twentieth-century commercial development.

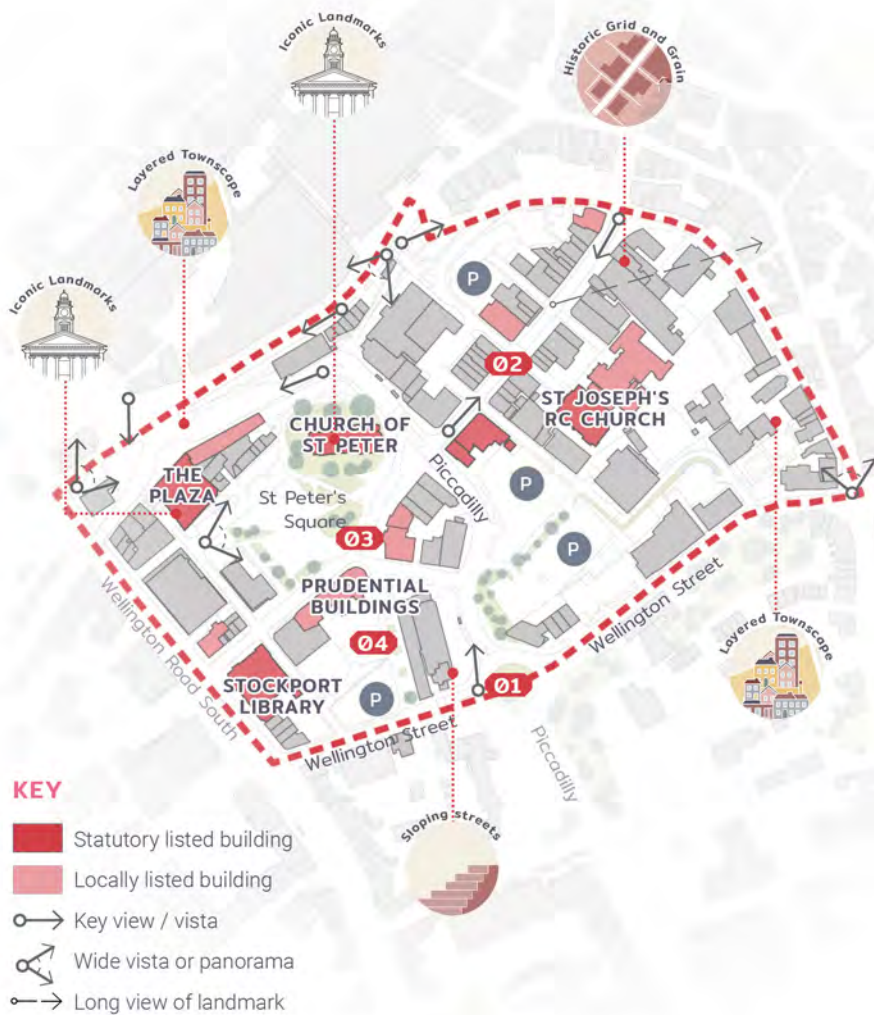
A fine urban grain is present east of Piccadilly, with medium scale terraced properties lining a grid street pattern. Architectural styles are mixed, with evidence of periodic infill clearly visible along St. Petersgate.

Further west, the area presents a more fragmented urban grain, with commercial office buildings set back from the street surrounded by areas of surface car parking.

There are several positive townscape features existing within the St Petersgate that could be further enhanced by contemporary residential development, including existing heritage assets, St. Peter's Square and high-quality new development.

For further details on the special historic character of the conservation area, refer to the [St Peter's Conservation Area Appraisal](#).





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of St Peter'sgate. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **Level changes and layered townscape**
- **Fluctuation in the scale of buildings**
- **A fragmented urban grain**
- **Poorly addressed streets and spaces**
- **Historic landmarks and glimpsed views**
- **Sloping streets**

- 01 | A cluster of taller office buildings address a key junction | Piccadilly**
- 02 | The grid street pattern and consistent building line frames view of the landmark | St Peter'sgate**
- 03 | Fluctuation in the height of buildings and level changes contributes to a layered townscape | St Peter'sgate**
- 04 | A blank wall to undercroft car park creates an inactive street frontage | Lord Street**



# ST PETERSGATE DESIGN GUIDANCE

There is significant scope for residential development in the St Petersgate area, where the historic urban fabric has been eroded over time. The presence of large surface car parks, empty backland sites and single-use office buildings setback from the street

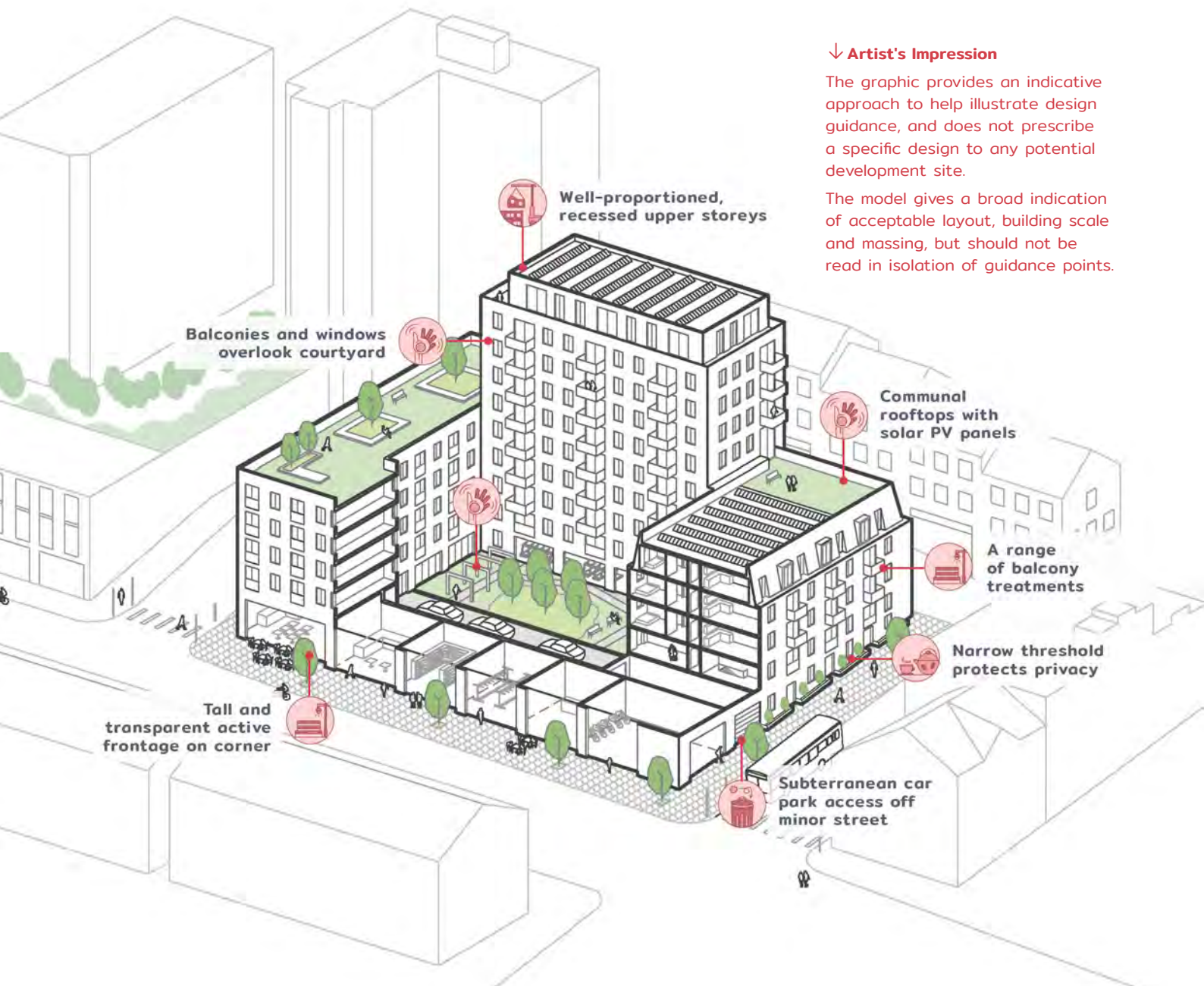
Land in the character area slopes from southeast to northwest towards the River Mersey, resulting in gently sloping streets, significant development platforms and retaining walls. Potential development sites located off Piccadilly, shielded by development platforms to the south, all provide opportunity for development of scale.

The relationship of these sites with St Peter's Conservation Area and Hillgate Conservation Area is a crucial consideration in their design. Future residential proposals must develop a harmonious relationship with the conservation area, mediating a smooth transition in building scale from south-to-north towards the Conservation Area.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, and does not prescribe a specific design to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in St Petersgate to adhere to the following.

### ↓ Mediate a transition in scale

**SP-1 Approach scale in a considered manner, mediating a smooth transition in the height of buildings** from taller buildings around Piccadilly towards the lower-rise height datum of St Peter's Conservation Area.

**SP-2 Correspond with the scale and massing of existing heritage assets** when developing in the Lord Street / Laurence Street area. Particular attention should be paid to the RAC and Prudential buildings along St Petersgate.

**SP-3 Use level changes across the area to increase the scale of buildings in a sensitive manner**, considering the proposals contribution to the skyline. There is opportunity to deliver taller buildings in low-lying areas of land along Piccadilly and Wellington Street.



Stepping building heights mediate a transition in scale across a long development plot | Granary Wharf, Leeds

### ↓ Taller Buildings

**SP-4 Where taller buildings are proposed, they should form a positive relationship with the street.** Taller buildings could be integrated as part of an active and human-scale perimeter block, delivering variations in building height along the perimeter and incorporating taller building elements on key corners or junctions.

**SP-5 The 'tower' element of the building could be recessed from the building line**, ensuring the building isn't overbearing at street level. Building entrances should create a strong sense of arrival and activate the street.

**SP-6 Incorporate substantial communal amenity space within the centre of the block.** Spaces should be easily accessible from internal communal areas, overlooked by adjacent dwellings and orientated to maximise daylight within the space. The quality of central spaces should not be deterred by surface level car parking.

**SP-7 Seek to deliver townhouse dwellings and active building atriums within lower storeys where spaces for active land uses aren't appropriate.** Front doors and large windows should address the street, with a narrow building threshold delivered to protect residents' amenity.

**SP-8 Where car parking to apartments is deemed necessary, development should seek to deliver spaces within the footprint of the building or block.** Designs should consider podium parking or utilising existing level changes to create subterranean parking areas. Any subterranean parking should have regard to the risks of flooding, the difficulties of embodied carbon and any other constraints.



Green communal amenity space at the centre of the perimeter block, overlooked by townhouses and apartments | Blackfriars, Salford



Taller building elements are recessed, emphasising the lower portion of the building and contributing to a human scale | Kampus, Manchester



# ST PETERSGATE DESIGN GUIDANCE

## ↓ Establish a more coherent urban grain

**SP-9 Strong perimeter blocks focused around communal courtyards** will contribute to a more coherent urban grain across the area. Building lines should be pushed closer to the street, creating a more positive and active interface with the public realm.

**SP-10 Seek to re-establish the historic, fine urban grain east of Lord Street**, taking cues from existing terraced rows and buildings.

**SP-11 Respond to the consistent building line and frontage presented by the St Peter's Conservation Area.** Where development conjoins with an existing terraced row, a sensitive response should be delivered, appreciating roofscape, proportions, and fenestration patterns.

**SP-12 On narrow infill plots, contemporary mews houses with a narrow, linear building footprint, terraced homes or narrower maisonette blocks** should be considered, integrating elevated private amenity spaces to address spatial constraints. Design should take an innovative approach to achieving a compact urban form, whilst ensuring the amenity and privacy of residents is not compromised.



Contemporary mews homes with a narrow building footprint. Large windows, a narrow threshold and roof terraces are used to create a compact urban block | Copenhagen, Denmark



Large windows and habitable rooms address the street, with juliet balconies above | Laurieston, Glasgow

## ↑ ↓ Animate the street

**SP-13 Establish consistent active frontages along unaddressed routes**, ensuring building entrances and large windows of habitable rooms directly address the street. Development should seek to redefine Lord Street and Piccadilly as important town centre connections.

**SP-14 Provide animated and transparent ground floor frontages along key streets**, considering space for a mix of active uses where development addresses public spaces. Where habitable rooms address the street, create a small threshold space to protect privacy.

**SP-15 Activate upper storeys, considering a range of private amenity spaces.** The type of balcony proposed should respond sensitively to the existing building lines. For example, recessed balconies or juliet balconies should be delivered where a consistent building line already exists.

**SP-16 Where protruding balconies are proposed, they should be suitably raised above the street**, ensuring they contribute to a positive space below.



Apartment block integrates townhouses at lower floors, with apartments above. Protruding balconies are delivered three-storeys up, to ensure a positive space below | City Island, London



High-quality public realm and seating creates a fitting setting to heritage assets | Sadler's Yard, Manchester



Buildings materiality responds to historic buff brick buildings within the area | Elephant Park, London

### ↑ Complement and enhance heritage assets

**SP-17** Protect, enhance or frame key views of historic landmarks throughout the area.

**SP-18** Buildings should step down in scale towards heritage assets and the Conservation Area.

**SP-19** Seek to establish a high-quality public realm setting adjacent to heritage assets, taking design cues from St Peter's Square.

**SP-20** Consider the unique architectural features and character within St Petersgate in order to reinforce a new local character, including arched building entrances and the distinctive fenestration patterns of historic buildings addressing St Peter's Square.

### ↓ Work with the topography

**SP-22** Building entrances and roofscape should step in conjunction with the slope of the street, ensuring the area's skyline is not flattened as a result of new development. Roofscape design should contribute to a visually interesting streetscene.

**SP-23** Where possible, steep level changes should be addressed within the building footprint, creating buildings which address and activate frontages on two-levels, avoiding blank retaining walls or structures.

**SP-21** Seek to respond to the prominent materiality of the surrounding area. The RAC, Prudential buildings and St Joseph's RC Church are all defined by their sandstone materiality, a unique feature within the St Petersgate area. A complementary palette should be considered within design responses, both within building façade treatment and the public realm.



Building heights step up towards the corner of the block, emphasising the corner | Elephant Park, London



Building entrances and roofscape step with topography, creating visual interest | New Islington, Manchester

### ↑ Sensitively embed into townscape layers

**SP-24** Show appreciation for the buildings' location within the layered townscape of St Petersgate, considering where an increase in scale may impact or contribute positively to views of the Stockport Skyline.

**SP-25** The introduction of taller buildings into the Character Area could contribute positively to the skyline, creating new landmarks and punctuation of the skyline in appropriate locations. A Townscape and Visual Impact assessment will be required for taller buildings to ensure proposals do not deter from the visual quality of the townscape.



# NEW BRIDGE LANE CHARACTER APPRAISAL



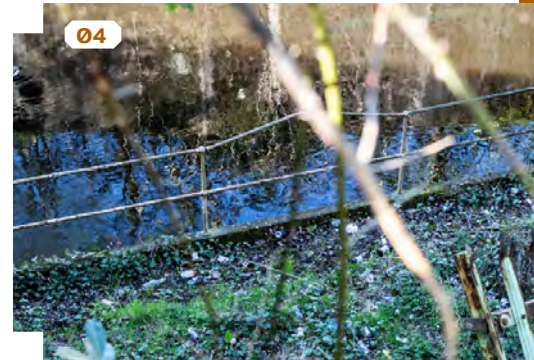
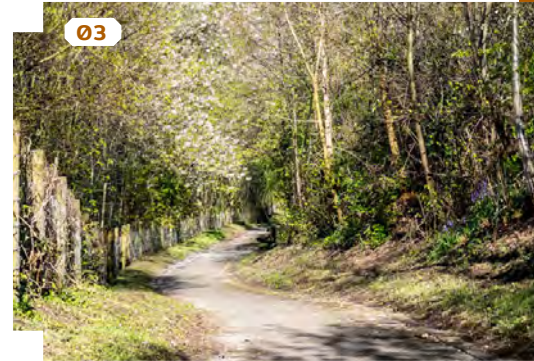
The New Bridge Lane area remains industrial in character, with red brick materiality, a grid street pattern and Victorian terraced houses symbolising this history. This character has been eroded through time, leaving a fragmented and inactive area of the town centre.

The area is bound by strong landscape features, including the steep banks of the River Goyt to the north and a steep woodland verge to the south. Extensive level changes and dense woodland along its boundaries create a well-enclosed neighbourhood, with limited visual connection to surrounding areas.

Traces of the historic grid are still most apparent to the east of the area, however urban erosion over several decades has resulted in a fragmented and coarse urban grain. Big box retail development, large format buildings and light industrial infill has created an inactive network of poorly overlooked streets and spaces, a problem exacerbated by vast areas of surface parking.

The River Goyt and the adjacent Fred Perry Way are important assets within the town centre. However, these assets are poorly overlooked by adjacent development. This results in an inactive and fairly uninviting woodland trail and river front. There is the opportunity to improve this through future development.





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of New Bridge Lane. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **A loose grid of streets and terraced housing**
- **A fragmented urban grain**
- **An inactive town centre gateway**
- **Prominent landscape edges**
- **Industrial uses and heritage**
- **A low-rise building height datum**

**01** | Rows of Victorian terraced houses | Bateson Street  
**02** | Light industrial uses highlight the history of the area | Stanley Street  
**03** | Mature landscape edges enclose the area | Fred Perry Way  
**04** | The River Goyt is poorly overlooked | Fred Perry Way



# NEW BRIDGE LANE DESIGN GUIDANCE

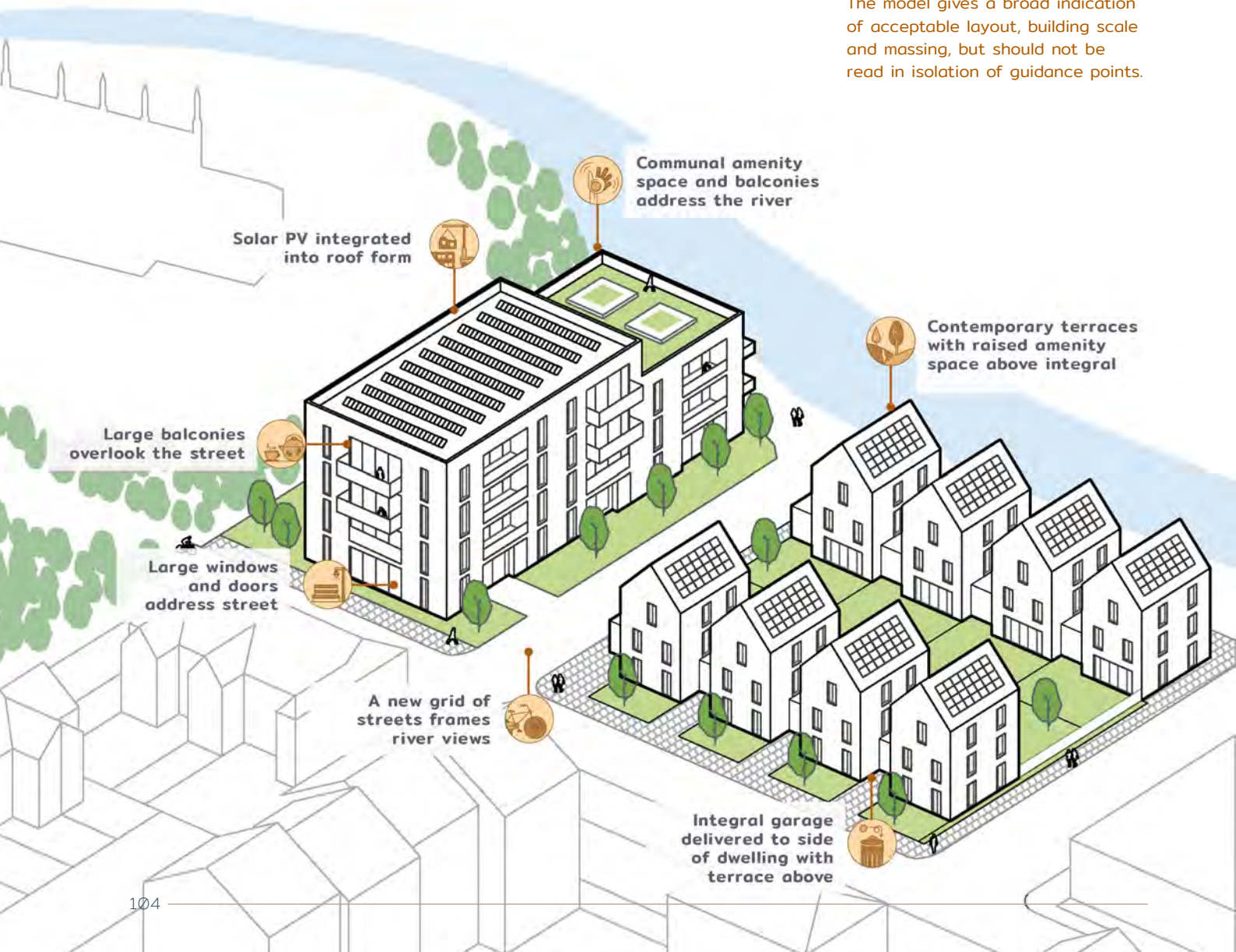
Future residential development in the New Bridge Lane area should contribute to the development of a well-defined eastern gateway to the town centre.

A well-defined eastern gateway does not automatically mean a dramatic increase in scale and density. A sensitive and complementary response to the existing townscape character will contribute to a strong sense of arrival and sense of place, playing on the area's industrial past and activating the River Goyt Corridor.

### ↓ Artist's Impression

The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, and does not prescribe a specific design to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in New Bridge Lane to adhere to the following.

### ↓ Extend and intensify the grid

**NBL-1** Extend the grid street pattern from east to west, connecting new streets with the current network.

**NBL-2** Seek to intensify the grid to the south of New Bridge Lane, using innovative housing typologies to deliver a compact urban form.

**NBL-3** Shorter 'back-to-back' distances could be achieved by carefully locating or 'staggering' upper storey windows to habitable rooms, limiting overlooking between homes to ensure privacy is not compromised. Applications should take an innovative approach to achieve higher density within plots without having to create tall buildings, considering raised private amenity spaces within the building footprint.

**NBL-4** Sensitively embed smaller footprint apartment blocks into the ends of terraced rows where possible, maximising the corner plot in narrow linear blocks. These apartment typologies should feel like an integrated element of the terraced row, delivering a subtle step up in height to the corner.

**NBL-5** Where narrow urban blocks are proposed, surrounding streets must provide an amenity function to residents - incorporating play facilities and climate-adaptive green infrastructure. Parking should be integrated within the building footprint or the side of the dwelling.

**NBL-6** New terraced properties should take design cues from historic terraced houses of townscape value to the east, referencing fenestration patterns, roofscape and building proportions in a contemporary manner.

**NBL-7** Consider narrow building thresholds and low-set boundary treatments in new terraced properties, contributing to a fine urban grain and urban character.

**NBL-8** Deliver incidental public spaces to break the grid in appropriate locations creating focal points within the dense urban form. Spaces should be small in scale and addressed by distinctive marker buildings.

**NBL-9** Consider delivering car parking areas on the edges of new residential areas, minimising the impact of cars on new streets. Car parking areas on edges should be well-overlooked by adjacent homes, and should act as multi-modal hub facilities such as: EV charging points, car club and bike share facilities.

**NBL-10** Where on-street or courtyard parking is proposed, it should feel like an integrated element of the public realm - including tree and shrub planting. Parked cars should not dominate the building threshold and long rows of on-street bays should be avoided.



Contemporary townhouses with a narrow building footprint create a compact urban block  
Ancoats, Manchester



Contemporary semi-detached houses with integrated parking and roof terraces | Valette Square, Salford



Parking is delivered on the edge of the development, creating pedestrian-friendly streets  
Marmalade Lane, Cambridge



# NEW BRIDGE LANE DESIGN GUIDANCE

## ↓ Create a more coherent urban grain (North of New Bridge Lane)

**NBL-11** Larger development plots to the north of New Bridge Lane provide an opportunity to deliver strong perimeter blocks of medium-rise apartments, focused around central amenity spaces.

**NBL-12** Building heights and roofscape should subtly step up and down across the length of the block, creating visual interest and variety.

**NBL-13** A range of upper storey and rooftop amenity spaces should be delivered, including large balconies addressing the public realm.

**NBL-14** Where car parking is deemed necessary, a subterranean approach is preferable. Any subterranean parking should have regard to the risks of flooding, the difficulties of embodied carbon and any other constraints.

Where surface level parking is required, courtyard spaces should deliver an amenity function, avoiding long rows of parking bays and integrating substantial areas of green infrastructure. Podium courtyards could be considered, with meaningful amenity spaces above.



Medium-rise apartment blocks set around biodiverse green streets and amenity spaces  
New Garden Quarter, London



A consistent and active building frontage addresses the primary route | Trafalgar Place, London

## ↑ Define New Bridge Lane as a new eastern gateway

**NBL-15** Establish a consistent building line along New Bridge Lane, contributing to a new eastern gateway to the town centre. Building entrances and large windows should be orientated to address the street.

**NBL-16** Building heights should step up towards New Bridge Lane, defining the route's importance in the street hierarchy.

**NBL-17** Make sure building heights and layout do not obscure the key vista of Saint Mary's Parish Church along New Bridge Lane. New development should frame and enhance the quality of the view.

**NBL-18** Consider a mediated or stepped approach to scale along New Bridge Lane moving towards the town centre. Development should gently step up in scale from the existing two-storey height datum present to the east of Mary Street, towards the Corporation Street / Millgate junction.

**NBL-19** Deliver amenities within mixed-use apartment blocks along New Bridge Lane in appropriate locations, supporting the development of a new town centre residential neighbourhood.



Active frontages, habitable rooms and balconies address the river and adjacent space | Sugar House Island, London

### ↑ ↓ Animate blue and green infrastructure

**NBL-20** Create a positive relationship between new buildings, the River Goyt and green woodland edges.

New streets should be orientated to frame views of landscape assets, using street trees and shrub planting to extend nature's influence through the public realm.

**NBL-21** Orientate windows and doors towards the River Goyt, providing opportunities for overlooking and passive surveillance. The provision of large upper storey windows, balconies, and roof terraces are essential in activating the river edge.

**NBL-22** Create opportunities for direct and indirect interaction with the River Goyt, creating safe and pleasant areas of public realm along the river and the Fred Perry Way.

**NBL-23** Waste storage areas or subterranean car parking entrances to apartment blocks should be kept away from landscape edges, accessed from minor streets.



Former industrial building re-invented as social, commercial gathering space | Zollverein, Germany

### ↑ Celebrate the industrial heritage

**NBL-24** Deliver a complementary mix of uses, considering the retention of industrial warehouses to provide local workspaces, new homes or re-purposing buildings as community halls or local gathering venues.



Prominent gables and large windows address the riverfront | The Oaks, Crosby



# CIVIC QUARTER CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Functioning as the civic heart of Stockport Town Centre, the area contains a series of iconic landmarks. Combined, the landmarks provide the Civic Quarter with a unique sense of place within the wider town centre context, with striking architectural features and scale contributing significantly to the distinctive Stockport skyline.

Despite the presence of buildings of architectural and heritage value, the area suffers from a vehicle-dominated streetscene. Streets at all scales of the hierarchy are highly-engineered, detracting from the walkability of the place.

Mid-20th century development has resulted in impermeability across the area. Large development podiums, most notably surrounding the modernist council offices, have created barriers to movement from east-to-west. The opacity of the podium also results in inactive frontage along adjacent streets.

Large civic buildings, modern office development and new-build apartment blocks contribute to a coarse and fragmented urban grain, where buildings generally have large footprints and are surrounded by poorly defined spaces.

Surface car parking is a predominant feature throughout, occupying prominent corner sites which effects the overall legibility of the area. The result is an inactive streetscene, which fails to complement the great landmarks of the town centre.

For further details on the special historic character of the conservation area, refer to the [Town Hall Conservation Area Appraisal](#).





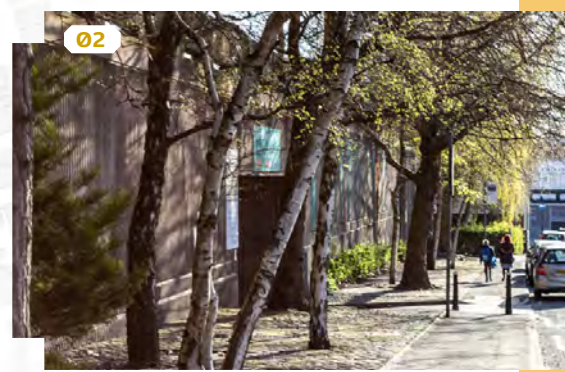
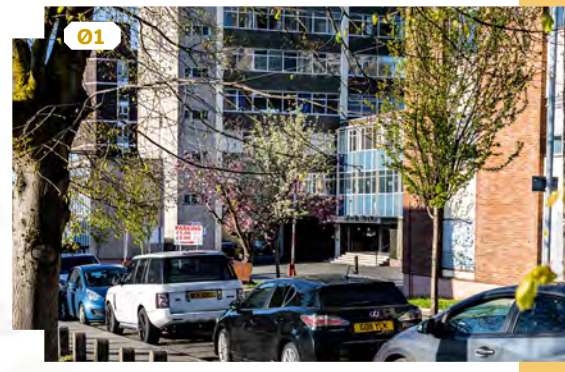
**KEY**

- Statutory listed building
- Locally listed building
- Key vista

**DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of the Civic Quarter. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **A coarse urban grain**
- **An impermeable movement framework**
- **Fluctuation in the scale of buildings**
- **A green framework**
- **An inactive and low-quality streetscene**
- **Iconic civic landmarks**



**01** | Streets are lined with parked cars along kerbs | Lord Street  
**02** | Mature trees contribute to green street edges across the area | Norbury Street  
**03** | Buildings are surrounded by large spaces, contributing to a coarse urban grain | Piccadilly  
**04** | Streets are vehicle-dominated, and lack crossing points or street furniture | Piccadilly



# CIVIC QUARTER DESIGN GUIDANCE

Future residential development in the Civic Quarter must contribute towards of a more walkable and animated neighbourhood.

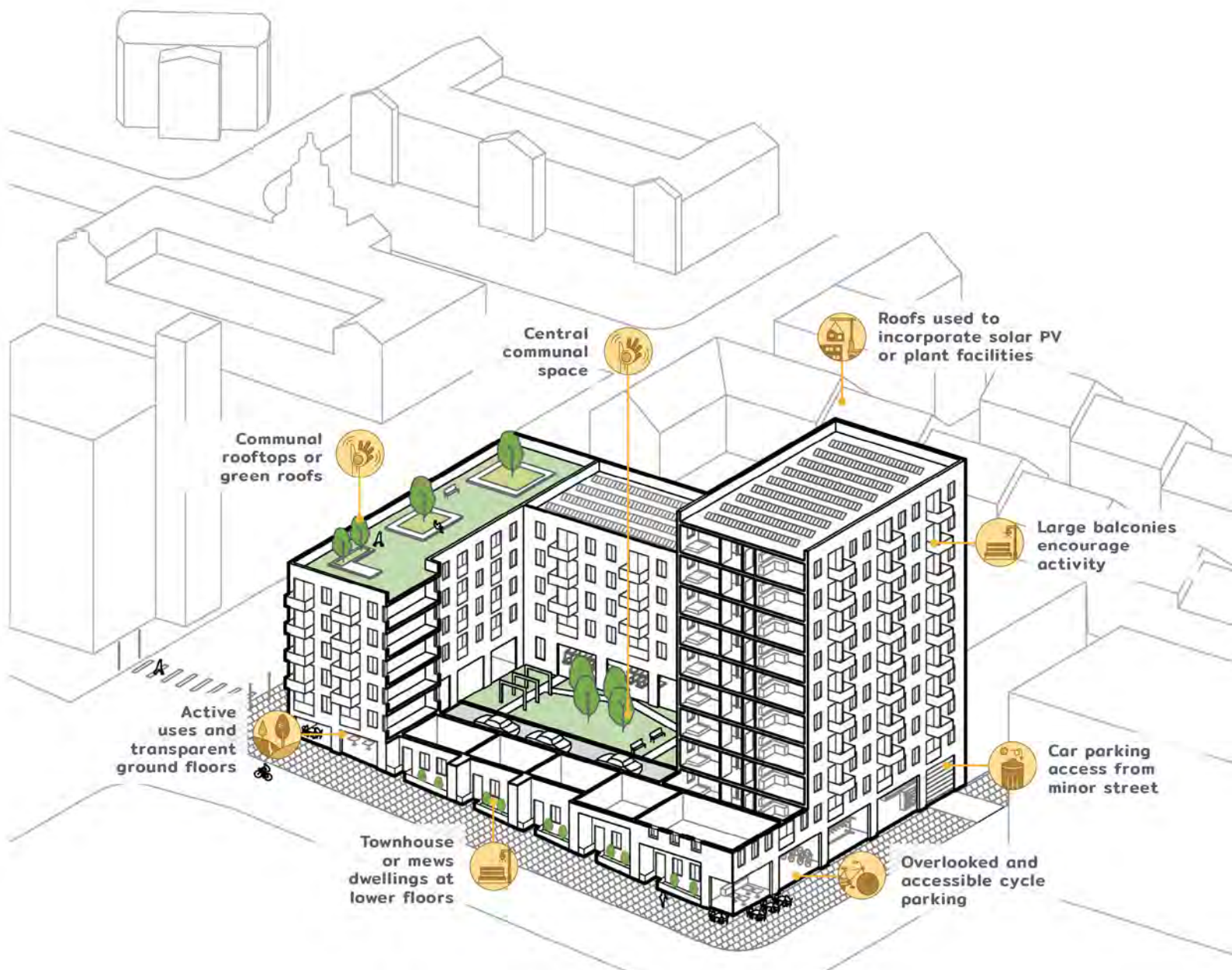
## ↓ Artist's Impression

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To the rear of the Stockport Council offices, the area lacks any distinct character, definition or legibility. Addressing the streetscene is a priority for future residential development, creating a more balanced, attractive and people-oriented public realm. This must coincide with the establishment of a more coherent urban grain, ensuring new buildings form a positive relationship with the streets they line and deliver active frontages.

This guidance aligns with policy presented within the [Town Hall Conservation Area Appraisal](#). Future residential proposals must adhere to the guidance points outlined overleaf, as well as any relevant policies, guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in the Civic Quarter to adhere to the following.

### → Respond to the scale of the area

**CQ-1 Respond to the existing medium-rise height datum** of the area.

**CQ-2 Consider the area's relationship with the three key north-south routes**, mediating a change in scale between the routes. Building heights could step up above the existing height datum along primary road corridors, key corners, or key nodes.

### Taller Buildings

**CQ-3 There is scope to deliver taller buildings in low lying land to the north of the area**, adjacent to the junction of Piccadilly and Wellington Street.

**CQ-4 Where taller buildings are proposed, they should form a positive relationship with the street.** Taller buildings could be integrated subtly as part of an active and human-scale perimeter block, delivering variations in building heights along the perimeter block and incorporating taller building elements on key corners or junctions.

**CQ-5 Design should break down the mass of taller buildings to create a human-scale at street level and depth in the façade.** Building entrances and atriums should create a strong sense of arrival and activate the street.

**CQ-6 Incorporate substantial communal amenity space within the centre of human-scale perimeter blocks**, easily accessible from internal communal areas, overlooked by adjacent dwellings and orientated to maximise daylight within the space. The quality of central spaces should not be deterred by surface level car parking.

**CQ-7 Consider incorporating townhouses at lower levels as part of a duplex / maisonette block, where active uses aren't viable.** Front doors and large windows should address the street, with a narrow building threshold delivered to protect residents' privacy whilst retaining a visual connection between homes and the street.

**CQ-8 Where car parking to apartments is deemed necessary, development should seek to deliver spaces within the footprint of the building or block.**

Designs should consider podium parking or utilising existing level changes to create subterranean parking areas. Any subterranean parking should have regard to the risks of flooding, the difficulties of embodied carbon and any other constraints.



Stepping building heights mediate a transition in scale through the development, stepping up towards a key corner | The Crescent, Salford (5Plus Architects)



Stepping building line, heights, and recessed balconies create visual interest and depth in the elevation | Victory Park, London



Biodiverse communal amenity space incorporates a range of functions at the heart of the block | Copenhagen, Denmark



# CIVIC QUARTER DESIGN GUIDANCE

## ↓ → Create a more coherent urban grain

**CQ-9 Establish a finer and more coherent urban grain throughout the area**, enhancing the grid and breaking down larger development plots to create new connections.

**CQ-10 Where infill or backland development is considered, buildings should deliver an innovative response to the spatial constraints of the site.** Mews houses with narrow, linear building footprints or duplex /maisonette blocks help to achieve a compact urban form, without resorting to taller buildings.

**CQ-11 Building heights and roofscape should subtly step up and down across the length of the block**, creating visual interest and variety at street level.

**CQ-12 Where dwellings are proposed at the heart of a perimeter block, proposals must protect the privacy of residents.** Traditional terraced typologies can be adapted, using staggered upper storey windows or single-aspect upper storeys to mitigate shorter back-to-back distances. [See HQA-25 on page 63 for details.](#)

**CQ-13 Develop a narrow building threshold**, ensuring the ground floor establishes a visual connection with the street, whilst protecting privacy. Low-set boundary treatments should be delivered along boundaries.

**CQ-14 Avoid surface level car parking**, instead integrating parking into the building footprint of houses or in subterranean parking areas of apartment buildings where possible.



Multifunctional building threshold creates privacy, integrating seating and green infrastructure creatively | Sugar House Island, London



Stepping building heights, roof form and façade detailing creates variety along the length of the block  
Dusseldorf, Germany

## ↓ Enhance permeability

**CQ-17 Seek to reinstate historic connections through the area**, creating new east-west routes through development plots wherever possible to enhance permeability through the area.

**CQ-18 Seek to contribute to a friendlier crossing environment along the A6 and Piccadilly**, appreciating the area's linkages with Stockport Station and the setting of iconic landmarks.



Modern mews dwellings run along a minor street through the centre of the block, contributing to a fine urban grain | Battersea Park, London



Tree planting and biodiverse green infrastructure define the edge of the street | Sheffield Concourse, Sheffield

### ↑ Extend the green framework

**CQ-19** Utilise existing green infrastructure as a framework for new development, retaining existing trees wherever possible, subject to utilities constraints.

**CQ-20** Extend existing tree-lines along key routes, including both Lord Street and Piccadilly, helping to define the streets as important town centre connections.

**CQ-21** Seek to create a more balanced and pedestrian-oriented streetscene, narrowing the road carriageway where possible and expanding the pavement to allow more space for green infrastructure, street furniture and children's play. Applicants should engage with the highways department at an early stage of design to explore opportunities for balanced street design collaborate, and all new balanced street designs will be subject to an appropriate safety audit

### → Create active building frontages

**CQ-22** Seek to re-define both Lord Street and Piccadilly as historic town centre connections. Consistent building frontages, with entrances and windows addressing the street, are considered essential.

**CQ-23** Maximise the transparency of the ground floor, creating space for active land uses in appropriate locations. Frontages should deliver large windows, orientated to address the street.

**CQ-24** Activate upper storeys, considering a range of private amenity spaces to the street. The type of balcony proposed should respond sensitively to the existing building line. For example, recessed balconies or juliet balconies should be delivered where a consistent building line already exists.

**CQ-25** Where protruding balconies are proposed, they should be suitably raised above the street, ensuring they don't have a detrimental impact on spaces and properties below.



High-quality public open space enhances the setting of historic civic building | Peace Gardens, Sheffield

### ↑ Respect and enhance heritage

**CQ-26** Seek to enhance the primacy and setting of the Town Hall, providing high-quality public spaces and public realm adjacent. The scale of buildings should respond sensitively to the landmark.

**CQ-27** The layout of development should seek to frame or create views of the Town Hall wherever possible. Specific key views can be found in the Town Hall Conservation Area Appraisal.



Front floors and windows address the street, with balconies raised two-storeys above street level to ensure a positive space below | Telegraph Works, London



# HIGHER HILLGATE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Higher Hillgate presents a varied and incoherent townscape character, a result of piecemeal residential infill and contrasting architectural approaches over a number of decades.

The eastern edge of the area presents a suburban character, comprising cul-de-sacs and low-density, low-rise residential buildings. West of Hillgate presents a more urban character, where the conversion of historic industrial buildings and a drastic increase in scale defines the change in character.

The permeability of the area is greatly affected by both cul-de-sac street layouts and defensible plot boundary treatments. These approaches create barriers to movement, where walls and fences prevent a smooth movement flow through the area.

Furthermore, the area lacks any meaningful public open space or high-quality public realm. Streets are vehicle-oriented and green spaces are narrow and poorly overlooked.

For further details on the special historic character of the conservation area, refer to the [Hillgate Conservation Area](#).





**KEY**

- Statutory listed building
- Locally listed building
- Key view / vista

**DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of Higher Hillgate. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **A range of conflicting land uses**
- **Coarse urban grain**
- **Fluctuation in building scale and typology**
- **Barriers to movement**
- **Undefined and under-utilised green edges**
- **Scattered heritage assets and views**

**01** | Fluctuation in the density and scale of buildings | Union Street  
**02** | A convoluted and impermeable movement framework | Elizabeth Avenue  
**03** | Large spaces between buildings create a coarse urban grain | Higher Hillgate  
**04** | Houses back on to green spaces | Higher Hillgate



# HIGHER HILLGATE DESIGN GUIDANCE

Higher Hillgate represents the contrasting design approaches delivered in Stockport Town Centre throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Future residential development should create a more coherent and legible townscape. Provision of public open space, of all scales and typologies, is considered a priority, taking advantage of the area's location at the edge of the town centre. Furthermore, future residential development must enhance permeability, establishing new connections wherever possible.

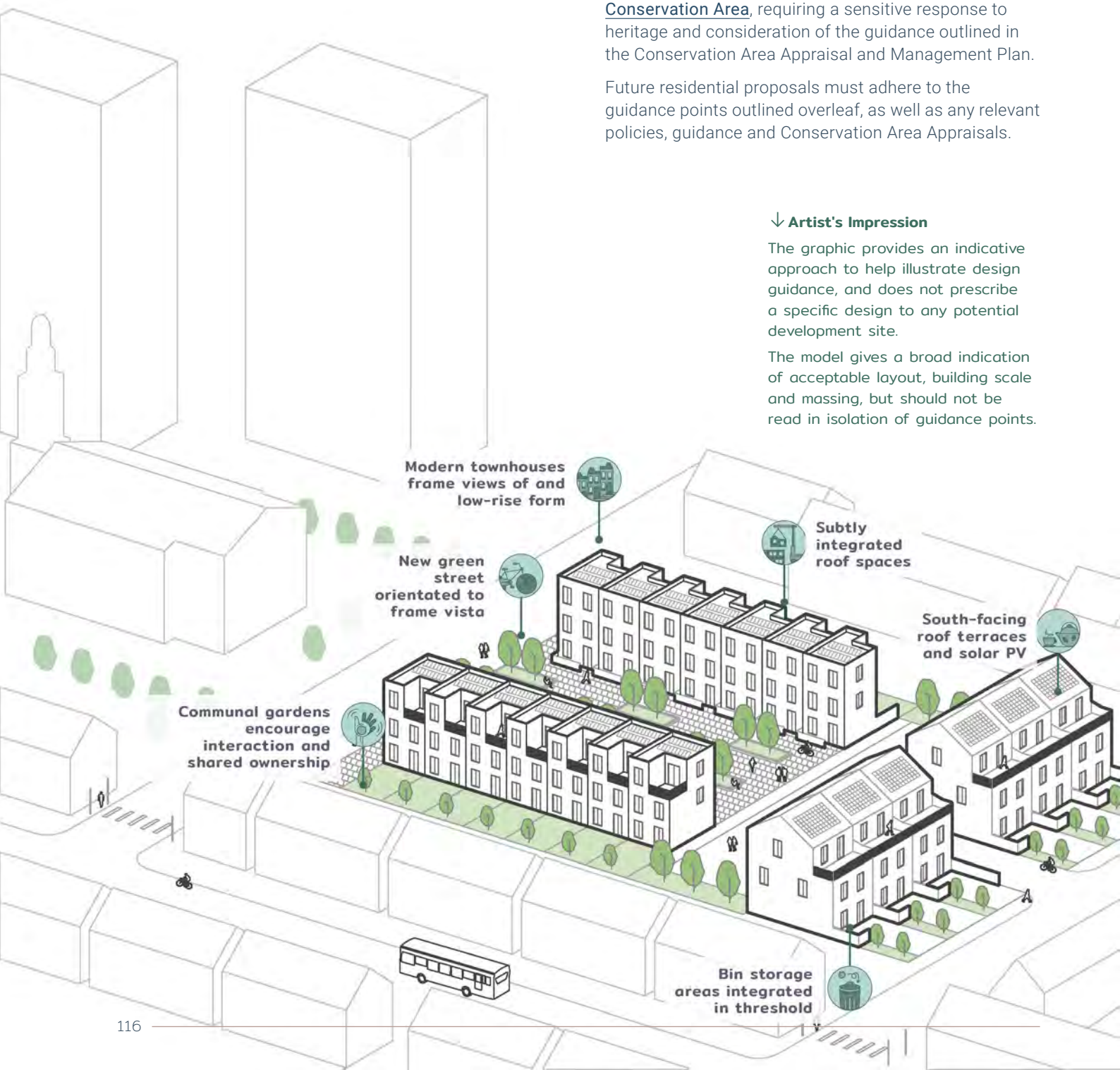
Parts of the Character Area sit within the **Hillgate Conservation Area**, requiring a sensitive response to heritage and consideration of the guidance outlined in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Future residential proposals must adhere to the guidance points outlined overleaf, as well as any relevant policies, guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, and does not prescribe a specific design to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Higher Hillgate to adhere to the following.

### ↓ → Establish a more compact urban form

**HH-1 Seek to deliver a more compact and efficient urban form**, arranging tight-knit urban blocks along a series of pedestrian-oriented streets.

**HH-2 Higher residential densities could be achieved using innovative housing typologies.** Mews houses with a narrow, linear building footprint or maisonette blocks should be considered, integrating elevated private amenity spaces within the building footprint.

**HH-3 Shorter 'back-to-back' distances could be achieved by carefully locating or 'staggering' upper storey windows to habitable rooms, limiting overlooking between homes.** Applications should take an innovative approach to achieving higher density without resorting to taller buildings.

**HH-4 Deliver car parking subtly;** within the building footprint, behind the building line, or sensitively within the street. [See pages 56 and 57 for details.](#)

**HH-5 Where possible, maximise the end terrace of narrow urban blocks**, integrating small footprint apartment buildings as a natural extension to the terraced row.

**HH-6 Consider larger apartment typologies on key corner plots**, stepping up in scale from the lower-rise height datum. Apartment buildings should use space efficiently, minimising surface level parking.

**HH-7 Seek to develop a more consistent building line along Higher Hillgate**, enhancing the rhythm of the street as witnessed in the Historic Core.



Subtly integrated roof terraces  
Timekeepers Square, Salford



Stepping roof form and building heights creates a subtle transition in scale | Goldsmith Street, Norwich

### ↑ Mediate a transition in scale

**HH-8 Avoid sudden jumps in scale and massing along a street.** Blocks should present a gradual increase in scale and density along the street, stepping up from less dense areas to more prominent primary and secondary connections or key focal spaces within the neighbourhood.

**HH-9 Development on key corners, junctions or nodes should subtly step up in scale from the existing height datum along terraced rows.** Where apartment buildings are proposed, consider the scale and massing of historic local mills and warehouses.

**HH-10 Deliver taller buildings along key corridors, including a range of apartment typologies.**

Development proposed along Wellington Road South, Longshut Lane and Hempshaw Lane should step up to define strong town centre edges and key routes.



Small-footprint apartment building bookends a row of terraced housing, appearing as a natural extension of the terraced row | Goldsmith Street, Norwich



# HIGHER HILLGATE DESIGN GUIDANCE

## ↓ Enhance legibility and permeability

**HH-11 Create a more coherent hierarchy of streets through the area**, establishing new linkages through larger development plots.

**HH-12 The layout of new streets should link to the existing network, breaking down barriers** in the urban form and creating views of prominent landmarks or distinctive new buildings.

**HH-13 Activate the existing green connection to St Thomas' Recreation Ground** off Hempshaw Lane. Front doors, large windows and habitable rooms should address the street where new development addresses the route.



New terraced streets could permeate the centre of wider development plots | The Gables, Crosby



Consistent frontage and green infrastructure enhance the setting of a pedestrian street | Copenhagen, Denmark



Space for seating and green infrastructure whilst allowing vehicular circulation | Coal Drops Yard, London



Mature tree and shrub planting enhance the ecological value of the street verge | Kings Crescent, London

## ↑ Create well-defined and functional public realm

**HH-14 Create areas of high-quality public realm as focal points** within new development parcels, offering orientation points within a more compact urban form.

**HH-15 Development should intensify around focal points**, delivering distinctive marker buildings differentiated by architectural detailing, typology, or scale.

**HH-16 Building frontages should positively address new areas of public realm**, with building entrances, and large windows overlooking the space.

**HH-17 Make sure new areas of public realm do not become hard surfaced car parks or vehicle dominated environments.** Areas of ecologically valuable green infrastructure and other amenity functions should be integrated into the design of the space.

**HH-18 Enhance the biodiversity value of existing green verges**, considering wildflower planting.

→ **Create a more balanced streetscape**

**HH-19 New residential streets should be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle activity, and enhance public life.** The approach to street design should correspond with the street's status within the wider hierarchy. For example, more strategic movement corridors may require segregated cycle lanes, whereas minor residential streets should be designed to prioritise pedestrian amenity. Refer to [page 46- 47](#) for further detail.

**HH-20 Make sure car parking does not dominate the streetscene or the curtilage of buildings addressing the street.** Parking should be integrated into the building footprint, or behind the building line unless a well-evidenced justification is provided.

**HH-21 Establish high-quality public realm settings adjacent to listed heritage assets,** including the Parish Church of St Thomas and 27 Higher Hillgate.

**HH-22 Enhance the pedestrian environment along Higher Hillgate, considering a range of traffic calming measures.** This could include raised courtesy crossings, a narrower road carriageway and tree planting. The aim should be to create a more people-oriented and sustainable corridor.



**High-quality and green public space encourages dwelling around the historic asset | Whitfield Gardens, London**



**Consistent active frontage and a balanced streetscape enhance the pedestrian experience | Altrincham, Cheshire**



**Roof form, massing and fenestration reference historic local mill and warehouse buildings  
Trumpington Meadows, Cambridge**

← **Complement and enhance heritage assets**

**HH-23 Architectural features should make reference to prominent local industrial heritage assets,** including prominent roof pitches, tall gable ends and vertical fenestration.

**HH-24 Residential development in close proximity to St Thomas' church should enhance the primacy of the iconic landmark,** respecting the scale of the building and referencing distinctive architectural features.

**HH-25 Establish a more consistent materials palette throughout the area.** A future materials palette must respond to and complement the prevailing materiality of local heritage assets located within the area.

**HH-26 Create pockets of high-quality public space around heritage assets wherever possible,** encouraging dwell and interaction with the building and spill-out space for potential active uses at ground floor level.



# TOWN CENTRE RETAIL AND LEISURE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

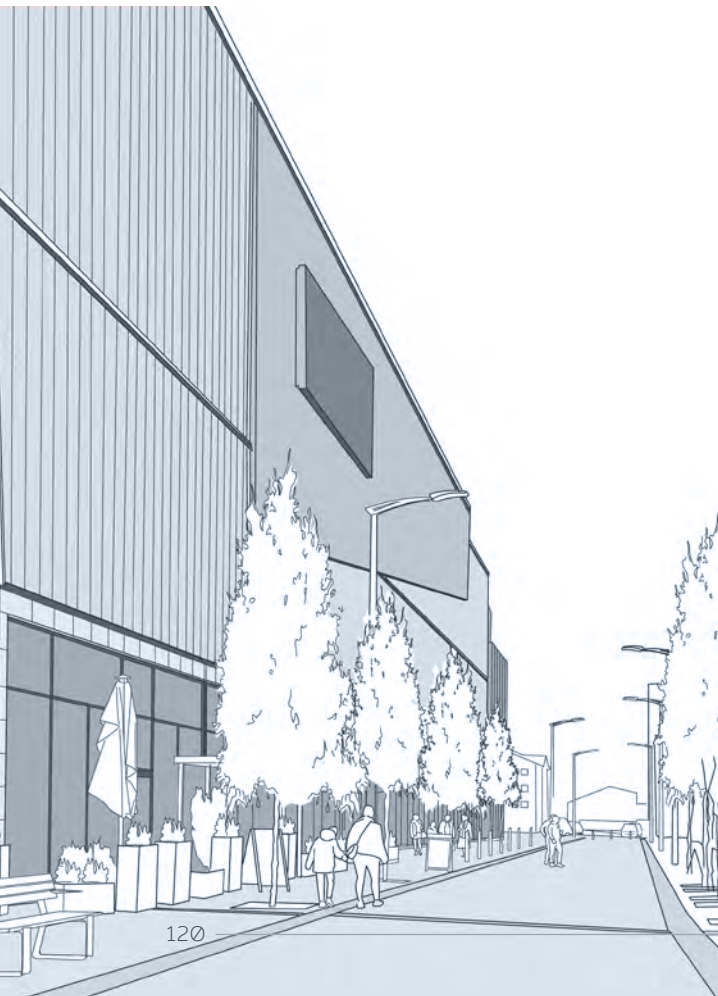
The area forms Stockport's primary shopping and leisure district, its form symbolic of a variety of popular design approaches and retail-led development delivered throughout the twentieth century.

Long linear high streets lined with ground floor active frontage and retail run through the area from east-to-west, with the Merseyway Shopping Centre sitting between two older terraced edge blocks.

Merseyway itself is built in tiers above the River Mersey, a response to the topographical changes within the area. Its upper two tiers, including the roof, offer car parking facilities and are accessed via higher ground to the south east. The remaining tiers of the centre are fully pedestrianised, creating a pedestrian friendly and walkable shopping environment.

Recent development has seen the emergence of Redrock to the northeast of the area, introducing a host of retail and leisure uses to a previously declining and inactive area. Adjacent streets have been transformed, with new high-quality public realm and amenity open spaces creating an improved and inviting streetscape.

Whilst much of the area is pedestrianised, the two primary public spaces are poorly defined and vehicle dominated. Mersey Square fails to create a sense of arrival to the area, dominated by vehicular traffic which impacts the pedestrian experience.





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of the Town Centre Leisure and Retail core. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **Development tiers**
- **High street and pedestrian realm**
- **A fragmented periphery**
- **Active frontages and retail uses**
- **Indirect relationship with the river**
- **Inactive edges and backland streets**

**01** | Active frontages and mixed ground floor uses | Bridgefield Street

**02** | Merseyway and Mersey Square | Little Egerton Street

**03** | Improvements to public realm across the area have enhanced the pedestrian experience | Prince's Street

**04** | Views of the Viaduct from elevated points | view from Higher Bank Side



# TOWN CENTRE RETAIL AND LEISURE DESIGN GUIDANCE

Whilst the area's primary role is to provide Stockport with a strong retail and leisure offer, it is important to understand the changing nature of town centres as multifunctional and multi-use civic hubs. The introduction of residential uses into the area will contribute towards a more resilient and futureproof central shopping district.

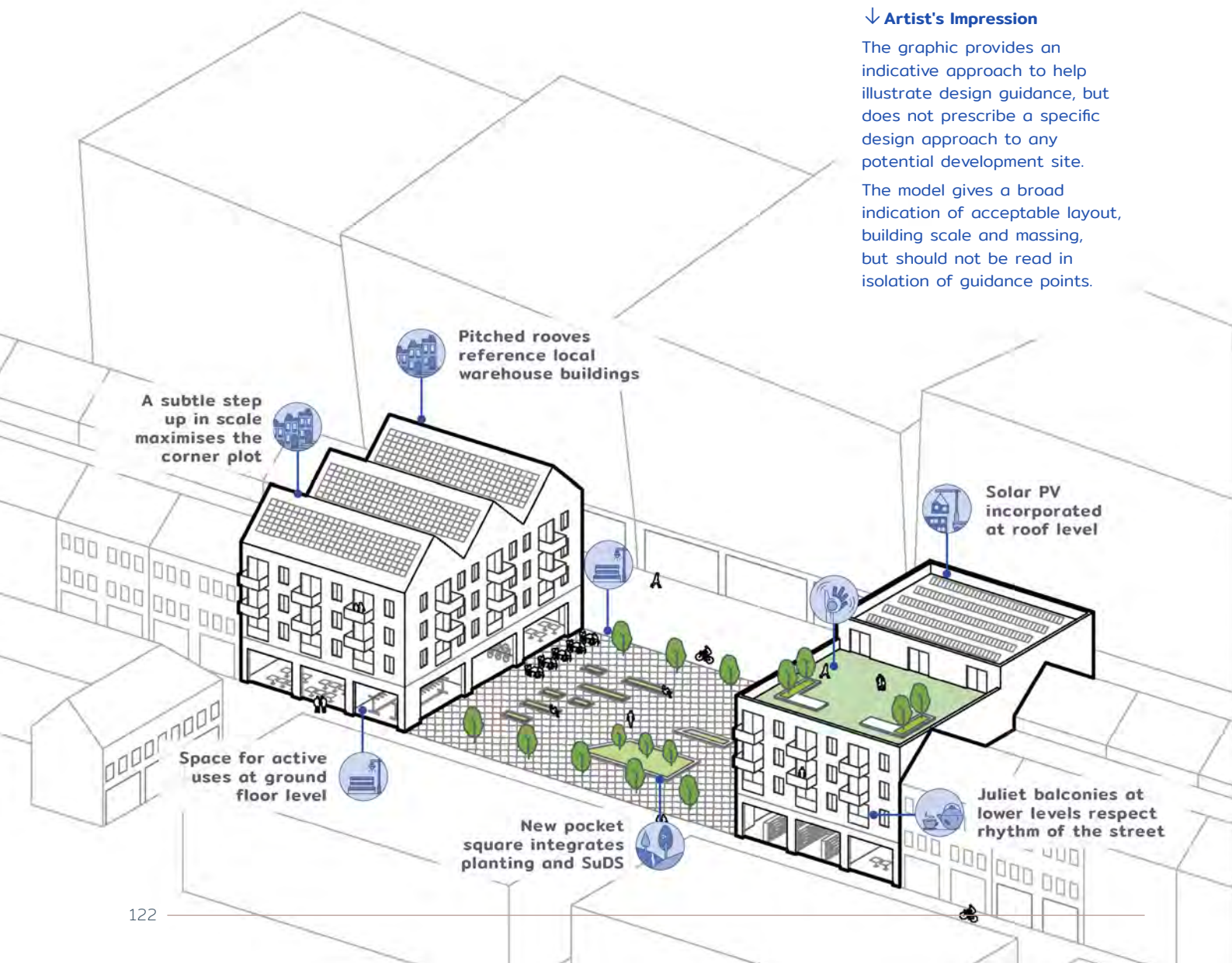
Residential development must seek to utilise the tiers of the area, considering currently inactive upper storey areas as potential new residential locations. More broadly, the area must provide a smoother transition between areas to the west and the Historic Core.

Breaking down physical and visual barriers at Mersey Way, Mersey Square and the supermarket sites to the east of the area will create a more coherent urban grain, linking the area with its surrounding urban context. Furthermore, addressing, animating and creating space around the River Mersey will connect the area with its assets, enhancing the public realm setting for residential development.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

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The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Town Centre Retail and Leisure to adhere to the following:

### → Create a broader mix of land uses

**TCRL-1 Reinforce the existing retail and leisure offer within the area**, creating flexible and active spaces for a range of land uses at ground floor level wherever possible.

**TCRL-2 Integrate residential land uses into the existing urban fabric of the area**, considering a range of approaches including upper storey extensions and conversions, infill and optimised corner blocks.

**TCRL-3 Residential development should contribute to a greener, softer public realm** along main shopping streets, enhancing the environment for food and drink businesses and spill-out space.



A range of active ground floor uses and spill-out space address a pedestrian friendly street | Elephant Park, London



Mixed-use blocks address public realm and mature green infrastructure | Elephant Park, London



A sensitive, contemporary response to heritage which steps up to the corner | Ancoats, Manchester

### ← Consider conversions and extensions

**TCRL-4 Consider middle and upper tiers of existing structures** to introduce residential use, maximising opportunities presented by existing building stock for residential conversion.

**TCRL-5 Seek to renovate and reuse upper storeys of existing terraced properties of historic value** along Prince's Street where possible. Conversions should provide spacious and light homes, reconsidering the internal layout of the building where possible to maximise daylight and create liveable spaces.

**TCRL-6 Consider vertical extensions to existing buildings within the area**, maximising the existing plot to incorporate homes. Where vertical extensions are considered, they should deliver a sensitive response to the existing building, considering existing building proportions, fenestration and materiality.

**TCRL-7 When extending or infilling terraced rows, ensure fenestration and façade responds to the rhythm and proportion** of existing buildings along a street. A contemporary and innovative response to existing façades should be achieved using a range of complementary building materials, avoiding low-quality pastiche replications.

**TCRL-8 Deliver a subtle increase in building height** where a new development site sits on the end of an existing terraced row or addresses a corner.



# TOWN CENTRE RETAIL AND LEISURE DESIGN GUIDANCE



Townhouses with integral garages, windows and front doors address the street | Great Kneighton, Cambridge

## → Encourage activity and passive surveillance

**TCRL-13** Create a more outward-facing shopping area, activating back streets and edges.

**TCRL-14** Deliver transparent and active ground floors along commercial high streets and appropriate key corners, with habitable rooms located above.

**TCRL-15** Well-lit and inviting front doors and building entrances should address the street, subtly integrated at ground floor level where homes form part of a mixed-use block.

**TCRL-16** Where the windows of individual dwellings address the high street at ground floor level, a building threshold should be established to protect residents' privacy, whilst retaining a visual relationship with the street.

**TCRL-17** Maximise upper storey passive surveillance of the public realm through the provision of raised amenity spaces, encouraging surveillance outside of core shopping hours. Where the application adjoins to historic terraced rows or buildings, consider the use of recessed or juliet balconies at upper storeys.

**TCRL-18** Establish areas of high-quality public realm adjacent to ground floor active uses, creating space for spill-out without impeding a smooth flow of pedestrian movement. Green infrastructure and soft landscape should be integrated subtly to demarcate boundaries.

## ← Optimise narrow development plots

**TCRL-9** Where buildings of lower-quality or unfit for residential conversion are removed, new development should maximise the development potential of the plot, without compromising on the quality of home.

**TCRL-10** Consider the use of innovative housing typologies along backland streets and in narrow plots, where elevated private amenity space and a narrower building footprint help to maximise development potential below.

**TCRL-11** Where it is deemed necessary, car parking in backland development should be sensitively integrated into the building footprint of houses or underground in apartment development.

**TCRL-12** Where proposed, integral garages should be regularly permeated by large windows and front doors of habitable rooms at ground floor level to maximise passive surveillance of the street.



A range of balcony treatments creates visual interest along building frontage and street | Telegraph Works, London



Large protruding balconies raised to create inviting, active spill-out space below | Rotterdam, Netherlands

→ **Create a more coherent urban grain and dynamic skyline**

**TCRL-19** Establish a more coherent urban grain to the east of Merseyway, considering the transition between the Historic Core and the edge of the town centre.

**TCRL-20** On potential development sites to the east of Merseyway, development should create new pedestrian connections between the Historic Core and the River Mersey. New connections should be addressed by active building frontages, delivering a range of non-residential uses in ground floor units or active residential frontages in appropriate locations.

**TCRL-21** Seek to deliver a series of urban perimeter blocks where possible if future development comes forward on or around the Merseyway Shopping Centre site, breaking down the 'wall' effect the centre has on surrounding streets.

**TCRL-22** The area presents a flat and horizontal roofscape image, lacking variety and detracting from the stepping Stockport skyline. New development should contribute to a more varied roofscape image across the area, subtly stepping building heights up and down across perimeter blocks and terraced rows.

**TCRL-23** Overall, development should mediate a transition in building heights from the Historic Core towards the edge of the town centre.

**TCRL-24** Building heights should gradually increase moving north west towards the rivers, marking a new town centre gateway area adjacent to the A560 and Howard St bridge.



Transparent ground floor units, large balconies and a tree-lined promenade | Queen Elizabeth Park, London



Stepping perimeter blocks lined with balconies address green streets | Rathbone Square, London



Stepping building heights, balconies and materiality create visual interest in the roofscape | Telegraph Works, London

← **Animate the River Mersey**

**TCRL-25** Seek to establish a positive relationship with the River Mersey, creating consistent and active building frontages along the water's edge. Large windows, habitable rooms and front doors should address the river wherever possible.

**TCRL-26** Create substantial balconies and rooftop amenity spaces addressing the river, encouraging passive surveillance and overlooking at upper storeys.

**TCRL-27** Contribute to a series of high-quality public spaces along the river in appropriate locations, creating space for a wide range of activities. Adjacent buildings should be orientated to maximise sunlight in new spaces.



08

# WELLINGTON ROAD CORRIDOR CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The Wellington Road Corridor is as a key organising feature within the wider town centre context, functioning and as the primary street of the town and interfacing with several character areas along its length.

Primarily, the Corridor is a key strategic connection, linking the town centre with surrounding towns, villages, suburbs, and Manchester City Centre. The Corridor therefore provides many with their first impression of Stockport Town Centre as a whole.

This impression is predominantly positive, with historic, civic, industrial and religious landmarks lining the route providing an impressive summary of Stockport's past. Furthermore, east-west views of the layered townscape and high-quality modern commercial development serve to enhance the townscape setting.

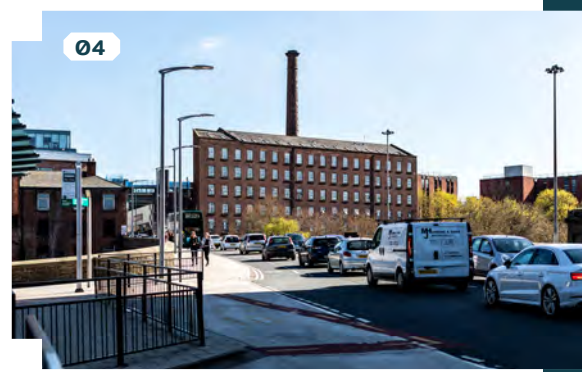
Design guidance overleaf will seek to further enhance the first impression provided by the corridor. Gaps in the building line, vacant retail units and undefined gateway sites all detract from the quality of the built environment as it stands. Furthermore, the corridor as a whole is dominated by vehicles and traffic movement, creating a hostile environment impacting the pedestrian experience and creating a barrier to east-west movement.

The corridor interfaces with both the Town Hall and St. Peter's Conservation Areas. For further details on the special historic character of the conservation areas, refer to the [The Town Hall Conservation Area](#) and [St Peter's Conservation Area](#).

## Relationship with other character areas

The corridor interfaces with and passes through multiple character areas, and applicants should review the characters areas plan at the beginning of the chapter to understand where other character area guidance may apply.





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of the Wellington Road Corridor. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- Fluctuation in building scale and enclosure
- A barrier to east-west movement
- Active frontages and a mix of uses
- Poorly defined town centre gateways
- A consistent building line
- Inactive backland streets

01 | Buildings and spaces fail to create a sense of arrival to the town centre | Wellington Road South

02 | A consistent building line emphasises the corridor | Wellington Road South

03 | Inactive backland streets are prevalent to the rear of the corridor | Lord Street

04 | The A6 is vehicle-dominated and acts as a barrier to pedestrian movement | Wellington Road South

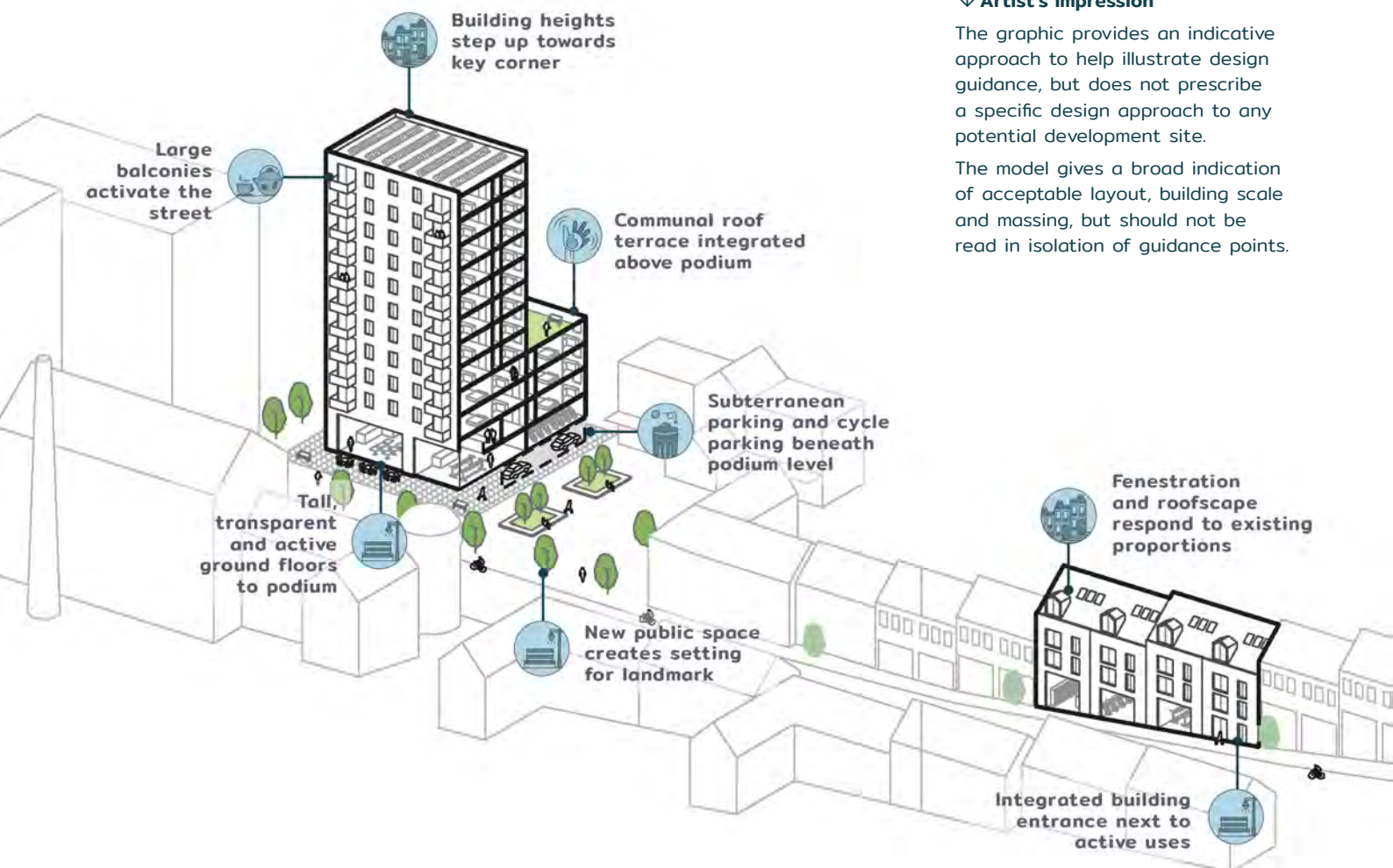


# WELLINGTON ROAD CORRIDOR DESIGN GUIDANCE

Future residential development should contribute to a more people-oriented Wellington Road Corridor; encouraging walking, cycling and dwelling in the public realm.

Development should harness the positive impact created by ongoing and planned projects as part of the 'Stockport Town Centre Access Plan' and A6 relief programmes, helping to create a more civilised, more sustainable and less congested primary corridor and a seamless transition from east-to-west. Furthermore, residential design should seek to activate the street, creating mixed-use buildings within which a range of businesses can operate and space for spill-out.

The Town Hall Conservation Area and St Peter's Conservation Area are located within the area. Future residential proposals must adhere to the guidance points outlined overleaf, as well as any relevant policies, guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.



## ↓ Artist's Impression

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The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Wellington Road Corridor to adhere to the following.

### → Increase scale to define the corridor

#### **WRC-1 Mediate a transition in scale from Wellington Road to areas east and west of the primary corridor.**

Building heights should gradually increase towards the corridor, stepping up along the edge of newly defined perimeter blocks.

**WRC-2 Building heights should step up and down along a consistent corridor frontage**, creating variety and depth in the roofscape and façade. New development must avoid a flattened, horizontal roofscape form.

#### **WRC-3 Appreciate the presence of historic landmarks and key intersections along the length of the corridor.**

Building heights should be considered holistically and respond to these townscape features, stepping down towards historic landmarks to enhance their primacy and generally stepping up towards key intersections and junctions.

**WRC-4 Focus taller buildings around key junctions and town centre gateway sites.** The scale of taller buildings in the area should respond to the height datum set by Mottram / Millbrook Towers and buildings of scale at Stockport College.

### Taller buildings in a perimeter block

**WRC-5 Where taller buildings are proposed as part of a perimeter block**, they should form a positive relationship as part of an active and human-scale building perimeter.

**WRC-6 Where possible, deliver larger townhouse dwellings at lower floor levels** addressing secondary or minor streets of Wellington Road. Taller elements could be recessed from the building line to develop a human scale to the street.

**WRC-7 The main building entrance should create a strong sense of arrival**, activating the street and creating a high-quality public realm setting.

**WRC-8 Incorporate substantial communal amenity space within the centre of perimeter blocks**, easily accessible from internal communal areas, overlooked by adjacent dwellings and orientated to maximise sunlight. The quality of central spaces should not be deterred by surface level car parking.



**Building heights fluctuate along the perimeter, stepping up to emphasise the corner | King's Crescent, London**



**A tall and active building entrance integrated into a building podium, surrounded by high-quality public realm Clayworks, Stoke City Centre**

### Use of Podiums

**WRC-9 Where taller buildings are proposed on smaller site areas**, podium blocks could be used to deliver a slender building footprint.

**WRC-10 Podiums should deliver an active and human-scale perimeter to the building**, creating a positive interface with the street. A range of functions are easy to integrate into podiums, including subterranean or semi-underground parking, cycle and waste storage and a mixture of active ground floor uses.

**WRC-11 Where waste storage, plant facilities or car parking access are proposed within the podium**, they should not deter from the quality of the primary street frontage or new public spaces. They should be sensitively integrated along minor streets and well overlooked.

**WRC-12 Podium roofs should be used to deliver multifunctional communal amenity space**, encouraging interaction, children's play and planted areas which serve a biodiversity, drainage or rainwater harvesting function.



# WELLINGTON ROAD CORRIDOR DESIGN GUIDANCE

→ **Define town centre gateways**

**WRC-13 Create a sense of arrival at key gateway sites**, considering landmark buildings of scale in appropriate locations.

**WRC-14 Develop high-quality and active public realm settings for new landmarks**, especially around building entrances, enhancing the sense of arrival to the town centre.

**WRC-15 Consider key vistas of existing historic landmarks along the corridor**, including the Town Hall. Building line should respond to the parameters of the existing street and the location of taller buildings should not obscure views of historic landmarks.



Well-proportioned and stepped buildings define the city gateway | The Crescent, Salford (5Plus Architects)



Tall and transparent ground floors and a recessed building line create space for businesses to spill-out | Ancoats, Manchester



Double-height ground floor, recessed entrances and tree planting creates a threshold and protects residents' privacy | Blackfriars, Salford

← **Deliver consistent and active frontages**

**WRC-16 Contribute to a strong and consistent building line along the corridor**, considering existing building lines and degrees of enclosure.

**WRC-17 Deliver bright and tall ground floor spaces within mixed-use development blocks** wherever possible, maximising the transparency of the ground floor. Recessed entrance areas to active uses helps create space for spill-out and adds depth to the façade along the busy corridor.

**WRC-18 Where required, provide vehicular access to the rear or side of buildings**, preventing breakages in the building line along Wellington Road South. Vehicular access should be sensitively integrated and well-overlooked.

**WRC-19 Where the windows and doors of individual dwellings address Wellington Road South** at ground floor level, a significant building threshold should be established to mitigate the impact of noise and privacy. A range of approaches should be considered, including the integration of green infrastructure, a small step up in level from the street and recessed private amenity space.

**WRC-20 Maximise upper storey passive surveillance of the street**, responding to the current lack of provision. Large doors and windows, and a range of balcony treatments should be considered.

→ **Create a more legible, people-focused streetscene**

**WRC-21** Seek to create modal balance within the streetscape, prioritising public transport, cyclists and pedestrian movement. The corridor should deliver enhanced and safe cycle facilities, along the length of the route and at key junctions.

**WRC-22** Create a more coherent hierarchy of streets through the area, considering the relationship between character areas east and west of the corridor. New linkages should connect to existing streets on the other side of the A6, with new crossing points aiding a smooth flow of pedestrian movement.

**WRC-23** Where new streets are proposed off the A6, consider visual interconnectivity between eastern and western character areas. Site layout should seek to create new vistas between landmarks, contributing to wider legibility.

**WRC-24** Where more strategic residential development is proposed on larger development sites, a new network of high-quality public spaces should be delivered. These will be connected by pedestrian-friendly streets and public realm.

**WRC-25** Consider recessed building entrances to buildings where active ground floor uses are proposed, creating semi-covered spill-out areas for new businesses. Areas should be well-lit and overlooked by adjacent homes.



**Raised crossing points, tree planting and street furniture create a safer pedestrian environment along the street | Elephant Park, London**



**Narrowing of the road carriageway creates space for planting, business spill-out and pedestrian activity Fishergate, Preston**



**Townhouse dwellings and front doors address the street, with taller elements of the building recessed to emphasise a human-scale at street level | Kings Crescent, London**

← **Activate backland streets**

**WRC-26** Integrate townhouse or mews houses along backland streets as part of a compact urban block.

Elevated private amenity space within the building footprint and a narrow, linear building footprint help to maximise development potential of narrow plots. Single-aspect upper storeys could be considered, but design must ensure homes have sufficient access to daylight and residents' privacy is not compromised.

**WRC-27** Car parking in backland development should be sensitively integrated into the building footprint, regularly permeated by windows and habitable rooms at ground floor level.

**WRC-28** Consider delivering private amenity space above integral garages or podium blocks, where either approach is used to deliver car parking on the plot.



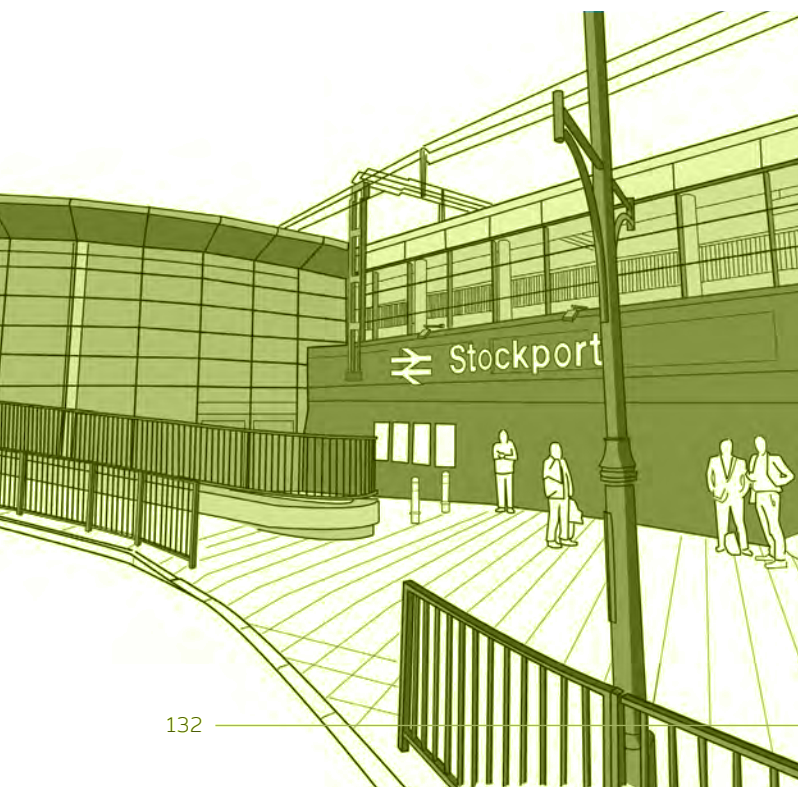
# STOCKPORT STATION QUARTER AND EXCHANGE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Stockport Railway Station acts as a focal point and gateway into the town centre. Its elevated position, central location and status as a regional rail hub creates an opportunity to deliver mixed-use development at scale.

Stockport Exchange lies to the east of the station, where a high-quality commercial destination is already emerging, creating a new front door to the town centre. A mix of Grade-A office space, hotel and ground floor retail uses address a high-quality new public space. In time, this will be supported by a new transport interchange, new homes and parkland on the site of the current bus station.

The area to the west of the station currently acts as its 'back door', where a series of inactive streets and walkways create an incoherent and unpleasant streetscene. Steep level changes, large footprint warehouse buildings and rail infrastructure all stifle east-west permeability through the area, dividing the town centre into two distinct sections.

The area interfaces with both the Town Hall and St. Peter's Conservation Areas. For further details on the special historic character of the conservation areas, refer to the [Town Hall Conservation Area](#) and [St Peter's Conservation Area](#).





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of the Station Quarter and Exchange. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **Barriers to east-west movement**
- **The viaduct and station as a focal point**
- **A coarse and fragmented urban grain**
- **Inactive streets and building frontages**
- **Steep level changes**

- 01 | The railways station and enhanced public realm act as a focal point | Stockport Exchange
- 02 | Streets are poorly addressed to the west of the train line, with several inactive frontages | Viaduct Street
- 03 | Streets slope steeply towards the town centre | Station Road
- 04 | Stockport Exchange has created a high-quality commercial gateway to the town centre | Stockport Exchange



# STATION QUARTER AND EXCHANGE DESIGN GUIDANCE

Stockport's strategic accessibility makes the area surrounding the railway station a logical location for high-density, mixed-use development - contributing to the creation of a 'second front door' to the town centre.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

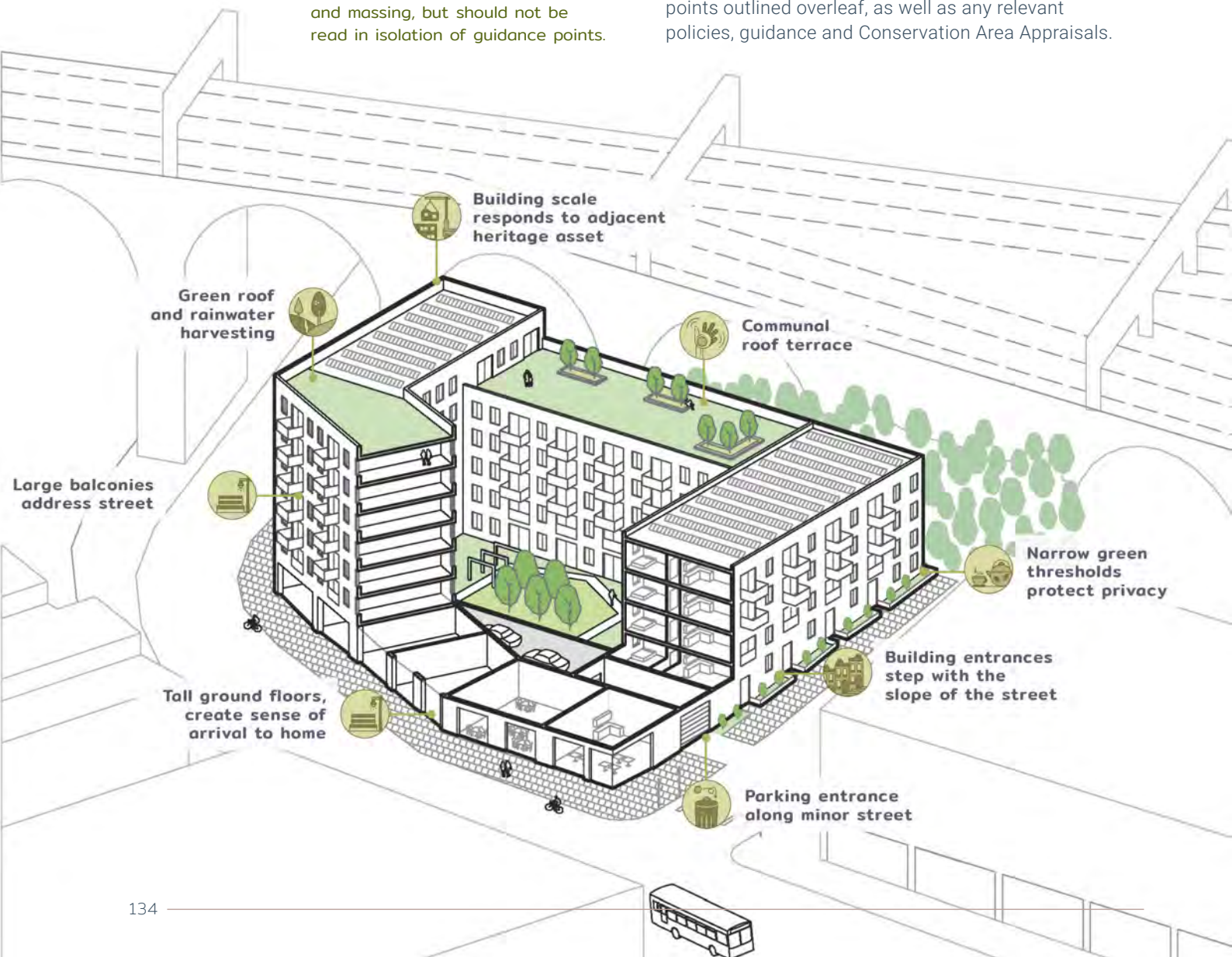
The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, but does not prescribe a specific design approach to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.

The adopted Stockport Town Centre West Strategic Regeneration Framework sets out a clear vision for the area, outlining design principles to guide future development. Guidance here supports these principles, providing additional detail on the design of streets, spaces and buildings to ensure residential development achieves high-quality design.

There is significant potential for residential development to the west of the station, complementing Stockport Exchange to the east. As such, design guidance here focuses on the area to the west of the Station, acknowledging that plans for Stockport Exchange to the east and the New Transport Interchange are already moving towards fruition.

The [Town Hall Conservation Area](#) and [St Peter's Conservation Area](#) are located within the area. Future residential proposals must adhere to the guidance points outlined overleaf, as well as any relevant policies, guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Station Quarter and Exchange to adhere to the following.

### → Contribute to an active western gateway to the town centre

**SQE-1 Contribute to a new hub of activity around potential new station buildings to the west of the existing station building**, establishing a vibrant mix of uses to encourage activity around the new entrance area.

**SQE-2 Mixed-use development blocks should be delivered, incorporating a range of workspaces within the building footprint** to encourage a 'live-work' culture. The mix of land uses should reference the area's industrial heritage, providing workshop spaces and community facilities at ground floor level.

**SQE-3 Establish a strong sense of arrival for passengers entering and exiting the station** through a new western station building. Proposals should contribute to a high-quality public realm environment around station entrances, creating spaces for dwelling and interaction.



A range of mixed-use buildings create variety around a high-quality public square | Kings Cross, London



A range of active uses integrated into rail infrastructure and ground floors, overlooked by apartments above | Granary Wharf, Leeds



Medium-rise building heights should step up towards the corner, marking key gateways | Elephant Park, London

### ← Intensify development around the transport node

**SQE-4 Deliver higher residential densities and taller buildings to the south of the area**, clustered around the new station building and potential future Metrolink stations. The scale of landmark buildings should broadly correspond with taller towers located in Edgeley to the west.

**SQE-5 A range of appropriate block typologies should be used to incorporate taller building elements**, ensuring tall buildings are sensitively integrated to form a positive relationship with the street. For detailed guidance on tall buildings, [refer to page 62](#).

**SQE-6 The scale and massing of buildings should carefully consider** key views of Stockport Viaduct from Hollywood Park.

**SQE-7 Future development proposals must clearly evidence how they have considered the visual impact** of the proposal on the Stockport Viaduct. A thorough Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be submitted as part of planning applications for apartment buildings in the area.

**SQE-8 Broadly, development in the area should respond to the existing scale set by mills** in the area, creating a more coherent height datum from east-to-west surrounding the station and viaduct, aside from locations as set out above.



# STATION QUARTER AND EXCHANGE DESIGN GUIDANCE



Split-level building steps up with the topography of the slope | Bath Riverside, Bath

## ↑ Work with the topography

**SQE-9 Consider the visual prominence of plots located on higher ground** to the west of railway sidings and the viaduct. Proposals must provide evidence they will contribute positively to the Stockport skyline, in line with a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

**SQE-10 New development should seek to accentuate the valley topography** and should avoid flattening the natural valley topography of the area and skyline.

**SQE-11 Urban blocks and buildings should take an innovative approach to mitigating level changes**, working with the topography to provide visual interest. Stepped building heights, roofscape and stepped building entrances are all design features which should be considered to create a positive response to the topography and develop a unique character in the area.

**SQE-12 Where possible, level changes should be mitigated within the building footprint.** Split-level buildings should be considered, providing level access to the building at multiple levels, rooftop amenity spaces and viewing platforms.

**SQE-13 Take an innovative approach to creating accessible new connections and public spaces through areas of level change**, ensuring permeability through new neighbourhoods. Terraced green and blue infrastructure could be considered along sloping areas, taking advantage of the topography to create unique public spaces and viewing platforms.

New connections and building entrances should be accessible to all, according with detailed guidance outlined on [page 26 and 27](#).

## ↓ Establish a more coherent urban grain and character (west of viaduct)

**SQE-14 The future character of the area should take design cues from the existing local townscape.** There are opportunities to reference interesting warehouse roof form, local materiality (including red brick façades, coloured steel and vibrant accent colours), local mill proportions and the unique features of the viaduct.

**SQE-15 Deeper plot footprints across the area provide opportunity to establish a more coherent urban grain**, comprising new pedestrian links and perimeter blocks with frontages addressing the street. Blocks should respond to the informal grid structure present to the west in the Brinksway neighbourhood - comprised of mills, warehouses and their associated yard spaces.

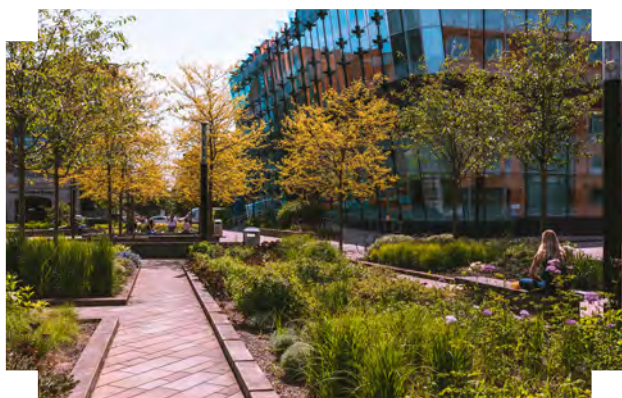
**SQE-16 Perimeter blocks should deliver variety in the buildings façade, materiality, height and roofscape.** Variety is required across the length of perimeter blocks to create a visually interesting and contextual urban form, referencing locally-distinctive, industrial architectural features.

**SQE-17 Where steep level changes occur, it may be difficult to achieve a functional perimeter block.** Development should respond to the topographical constraints of the specific site, where linear block and building typologies may be required on steeper sites.

**SQE-18 Streets and blocks should be arranged to frame views of the Stockport Viaduct** from the south and west. This will enhance visual connectivity between the viaduct and Hollywood Park Nursery School to the west, contributing to a more legible area. This is particularly important to foster the integration of new neighbourhoods to the west of the Railway Station.



Sloping green streets and stepped buildings respond positively to level changes | Middlewood Locks, Salford



Green streets and spaces create a pedestrian friendly movement network | Sovereign Square, Leeds



A balanced streetscape prioritises pedestrians and cyclists, overlooked by large balconies and addressed by front doors | Sugar House Island, London

### → Activate the streets

**SQE-19** Orientate active frontages and entrances to address new streets and areas of public realm. Front doors and large windows should regularly address the street.

**SQE-20** The width and boundary treatment of building thresholds on residential streets should ensure a visual connection between ground floor dwellings and the street, whilst protecting residents' privacy. Low-set boundary treatments such as hedging, walls or a subtle step up in height from the street should all be considered.

**SQE-21** Proposals should maximise upper storey passive surveillance of the public realm, delivering a range of balcony treatments along façades. Where proposed, protruding balconies should be sufficiently raised from the street, ensuring they do not have a negative impact on the streetscene or properties below.

### ← Rebalance streets and enhance connectivity

**SQE-22** Seek to deliver an appropriately located Mobility Hub on the edge of the area, easily accessible from primary roadways and the motorway. A multi-storey facility would provide a catalyst for the delivery of pedestrian-friendly streets.

**SQE-23** Deliver new east-west connections through the area, enhancing existing strategic cycle linkages and creating new pedestrian routes. Connections should link the Brinksway character area and Edgeley with Stockport Railway Station, connecting to any future station entrance areas or new public spaces.

**SQE-24** Enhance the cycling environment along Daw Bank and King Street West, providing safe active travel corridors linking eastern and western town centre areas. The treatment of busy junctions along King Street West should be considered, creating a safer and smoother crossing environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

**SQE-25** Streets across the area should be people-focused and pedestrian-friendly, accounting for the area's proximity to the Railway Station. Streets should contain ecologically valuable green infrastructure and provide a high-quality setting for surrounding land uses, as well as space for a range of pedestrian functions. Dwelling spaces, informal play areas, and the use of SuDS should all be considered.



Tall, light and transparent active ground floor uses and enclosed spill-out space | Queen Elizabeth Park, London



Green infrastructure promotes biodiversity along sloping green streets | Grey-to-Green, Sheffield



# WEIRSIDE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Weirside forms a key access point into the town centre from the north, playing host to some of Stockport's most iconic industrial assets. The area captures the industrial heritage of the town centre and its relationship with the River Mersey.

Unfortunately, the relationship between the town centre and its rivers has been steadily eroded over time, with development turning its back on the asset and walling it in. Development in Weirside has the potential to fix this, reanimating and reconnecting buildings with the water.

Significant rail infrastructure, vehicle-dominated streets and large-footprint industrial sites stifle permeability, preventing a smooth flow of movement through the area. The low-quality streetscene deters from the setting of Weir Mill, which currently sits on an 'island' site, segregated from its urban context by road infrastructure and inaccessible from the River Mersey.

The area lies just a few minutes from both Stockport Railway Station and the proposed new transport interchange, making it a highly accessible location.





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of Weirside. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **An industrial character and landmarks**
- **The Stockport Viaduct**
- **An indirect relationship with the river**
- **An inactive gateway area**
- **Fragmented urban grain**
- **A broad range of uses and building typologies**

- 01 | Stockport Viaduct is ever present when moving through the area | Exchange Street
- 02 | Streets across the area are poorly overlooked and are dominated by vehicular traffic | Daw Bank
- 03 | Development has failed to activate the River Mersey | Wellington Road South
- 04 | The scale of buildings fluctuates dramatically across the area | Heaton Lane



# WEIRSIDE DESIGN GUIDANCE

Proximity to transit nodes, a waterside setting, and the presence of industrial heritage create a real opportunity to develop a town centre gateway with a unique sense of place.

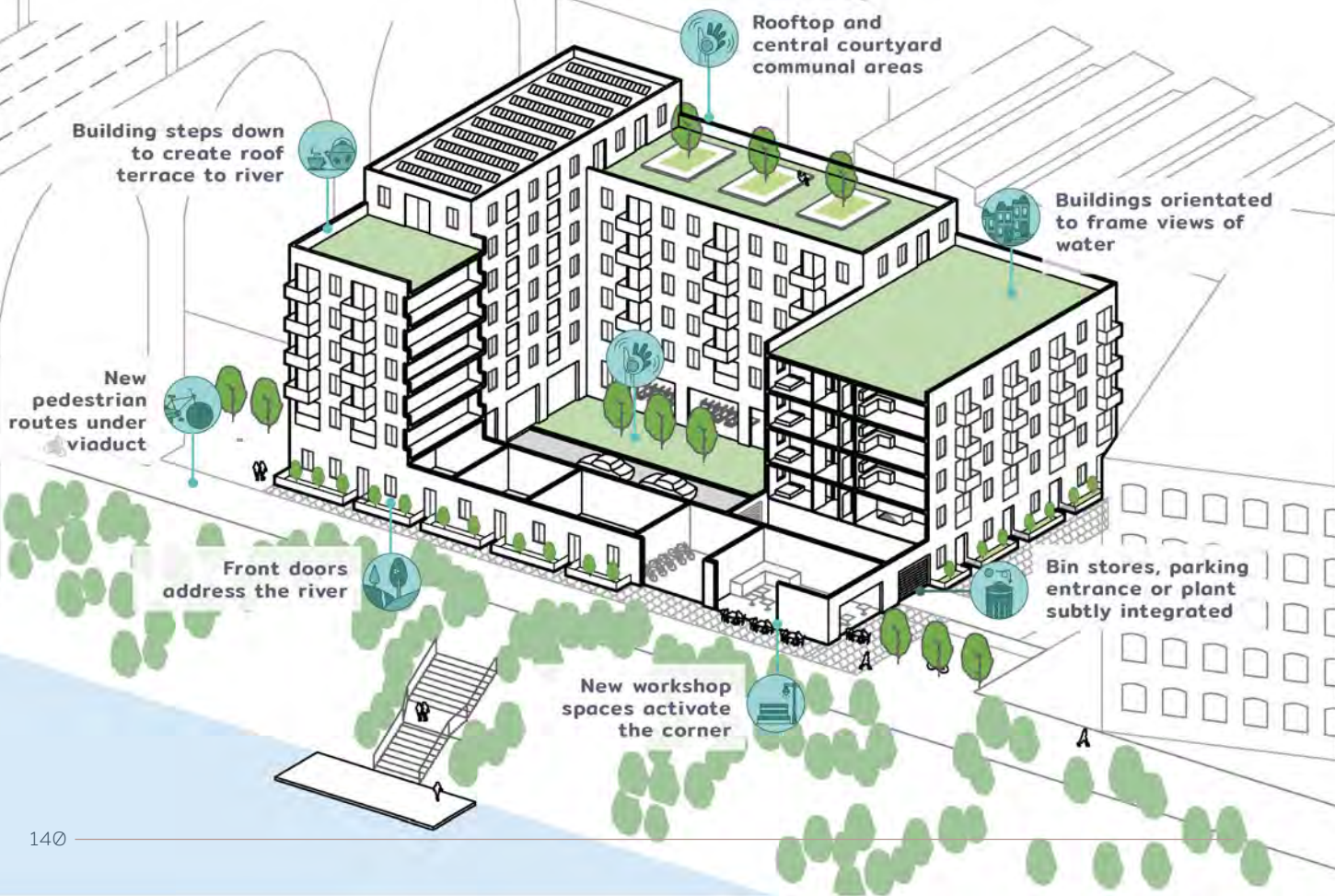
Future residential development must harness this opportunity, re-activating Weir Mill, reconnecting people with the river, and establishing a range of uses and amenities that will contribute to a more liveable neighbourhood. This process of development has already begun, with consented and funded proposals to create new homes and riverside public spaces at Weir Mill moving forward.

The adopted Stockport Town Centre West Strategic Regeneration Framework sets out a clear vision for the area, **'to create a unique destination with a range of uses and flexible buildings that complement the area's industrial heritage'**. Design guidance supports this vision, outlining further detail to help deliver high-quality design outcomes.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

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## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Weirside to adhere to the following.

### → Contribute to an active and contemporary post-industrial neighbourhood

**W-1 Contribute to a new post-industrial character,** retaining and enhancing existing industrial buildings and structures where possible to house a range of active land uses and works spaces.

**W-2 Where new infill development is proposed around existing small-scale industrial warehouses, buildings should reference distinctive architectural features in a contemporary manner.** Including features such as the 'sawtooth' roof pitches of warehouses on Astley Street, tall gable features and consistent building frontages.

**W-3 Consider the scale and grain of former warehouse buildings** located to the north of the river, set around working 'yard' spaces and courtyards.

**W-4 Integrate a broader range of land uses into the area,** using a range of human-scale, industrial inspired structures to incorporate work spaces. Active uses should address the river wherever possible, or smaller incidental yard spaces.

**W-5 Building materials should enhance and dramatise the setting,** complementing heritage with a range of brick base colours, using primary accent colours where possible to provide a sharp contrast to the Victorian red brick base material.

**W-6 Deliver art and ecologically-rich vertical greening along existing brick elevations and infrastructure,** symbolising nature's takeover of former industrial sites over time. Where vertical greening is proposed, planting should be natural and provide biodiversity value. The siting and species of vertical greening should consider the location's access to natural daylight and prevailing winds.

**W-7 Higher density apartment development proposed in the area should respond to the setting, scale, massing and proportions of the Viaduct and Weir Mill.**

**W-8 Seek to create pockets of high-quality public space adjacent to heritage assets** and new building entrances, encouraging dwell time and visual interaction with the building.



A complimentary material palette and roofscape referencing local heritage | Keybridge House, London



Bright primary colours are used in fascia and external structures to create sharp contrast and visual interest | Elephant Park, London



Darker accent colours, steel and concrete create a coherent industrial material palette | Kampus, Manchester



Vertical elements in the landscape and along walls allows plants to climb the building | Eindhoven, Netherlands



# WEIRSIDE DESIGN GUIDANCE

## → Animate the River Mersey

**W-9 Create a positive relationship with blue infrastructure.** Proposals should seek to develop large areas of public or semi-private amenity space adjacent to the river, encouraging visual and or physical interaction with the water.

**W-10 Deliver consistent building frontages along the river,** activating new public spaces at ground floor level.

**W-11 Consistent front doors, large windows, narrow building thresholds and private amenity spaces should all be considered** to activate the river edge at ground floor level. A range of balcony spaces should be delivered on upper storeys.

**W-12 Create opportunities for upper storey interaction with the River.** Residential development proposing balconies and roof terraces along the riverfront will be treated preferably.

**W-13 Create new pedestrian connections and green streets** leading to the river, framing views of the water and encouraging interaction.



Temporary or semi-permanent structures house businesses around courtyard spaces | Hatch, Manchester



A range of low-rise structures house businesses along a pedestrian-priority street | Elephant Park, London



Development is set back from waters edge, creating a pedestrian promenade | Nordhaven, Copenhagen



Clusters of human-scale apartments around communal courtyard space | Sugar House Island, London

## ← ↑ Establish a more compact urban form

**W-14 Create human-scale perimeter blocks, with consistent and active building frontages** addressing surrounding streets. Central communal amenity spaces should be addressed by new homes and be active spaces.

**W-15 Urban blocks should deliver variety in the buildings façade, materiality, height and roofscape.** Variety is required across the length of new perimeter blocks to create visually interesting street frontages and skyline features.

**W-16 Develop a finer and more human-scale urban grain around the Weir Mill site,** where new or extended buildings could cluster around courtyards spaces.

**W-17 Consider the relationship of new homes to the Motorway Corridor to the north.** A range of measures should be used to mitigate noise, including significant green buffers or the delivery of non-residential uses / multi-storey facilities addressing the motorway to act as an acoustic barrier to new homes.





Fine grain streets should connect a network of new spaces below and around the viaduct  
Wellington | New Zealand

### → Respect the primacy of the Viaduct

**W-18** The scale and location of taller buildings in the area should consider key views and vistas of the Stockport Viaduct from town centre approaches, to the east and west, as well as elevated locations to the north and south.

**W-19** Generally, taller buildings are deemed most acceptable around key junctions and town centre gateway sites, specifically on sites along the A6 and King Street West. For further detail on the design of taller buildings please refer to guidance on [page 62](#).

**W-20** Future development proposals must clearly evidence how they have considered the visual impact of the proposal on the Stockport Viaduct and Weir Mill. A thorough Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be submitted as part of planning applications for taller buildings in the area.

**W-21** Where an application addresses King Street West or Wellington Road, building heights may step up slightly from the predominant height datum, helping to distinguish the routes as key movement corridors.

**W-22** Allow the Viaduct to 'breathe', ensuring new development on adjacent sites provides sufficient and high-quality buffer space to ensure the viaduct retains its primacy in the area.

New streets and spaces around the Viaduct should be active and people-oriented - providing space for dwelling, green and blue infrastructure and play facilities.

### ← Create a pedestrian-friendly and permeable network of streets

**W-23** A range of tight-knit pedestrian routes and green streets should be established below the viaducts, enhancing the setting and establishing pedestrian friendly crossing environments along King Street West.

**W-24** New routes should meander through a series of smaller public spaces, associated with newly established workshop units, live-work blocks and homes.

**W-25** Enhance the cycling environment along National Cycle Network and Beeway routes through the area. The street should prioritise walking and cycling, and integrate areas for green infrastructure and seating.

**W-26** Activate key east-west connections along Daw Bank and Chestergate. A consistent building line should be established, comprising active building frontages, animated building entrances and large windows.



Landmark buildings around gateways could reference warehouse massing and roofscape | Orchard Place, London



Apartment buildings setback from the viaduct, creating public spaces at the base of the heritage asset | Battersea Exchange, London



# BRINKSWAY CHARACTER APPRAISAL

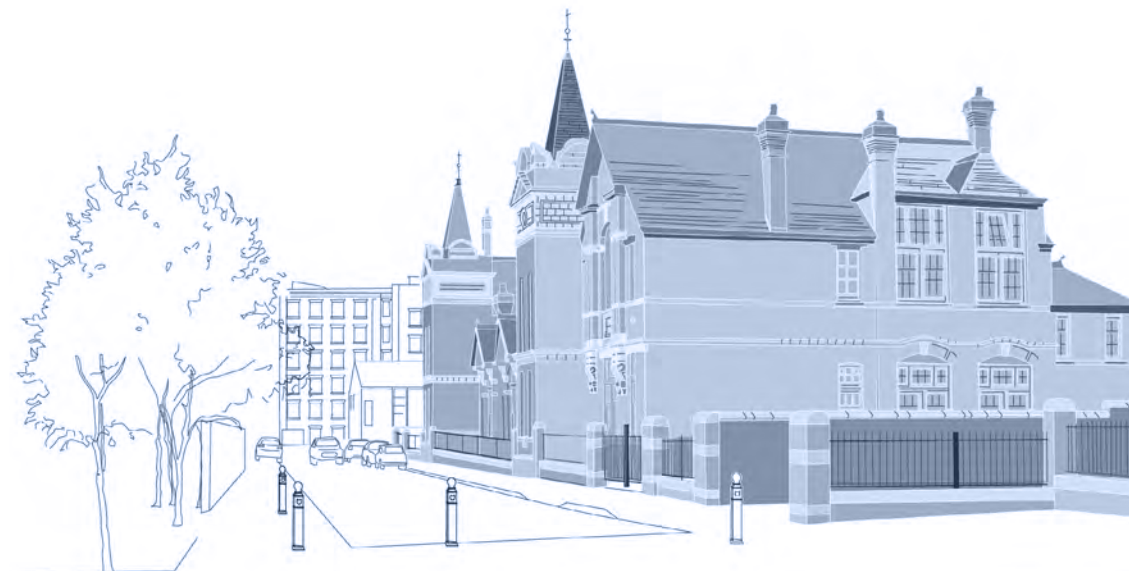
Brinksway is the westernmost character area of Stockport Town Centre, bound by the River Mersey to the north, Hollywood Park to the south and Hollywood Way to the west. The visual dominance of Kingston Mill, a locally listed former cotton mill situated to the north of the area, serves as a reminder of the area's industrial past.

Further contributing to this industrial character are smaller scale warehouse typologies and a multi-toned red brick materiality. At the centre of the neighbourhood lies a Grade II listed Victorian school, a beautiful landmark building which acts as a key focal point within the area.

The historic grain of the area has been eroded over time, with larger footprint like industrial buildings, surface car parks and town centre overspill parking plaguing the area. Large yards and service areas further contribute to a coarse and fragmented urban grain, creating voids in the historic grid and inactive streets. Building frontages are often blank, deterring from the quality of the streetscene.

A-roads Brinksway and Wood Street are significant east-west connections, providing strong vistas of Weir Mill and the Stockport Viaduct upon arrival to the town. Both routes are currently dominated by vehicular movement entering the town via the motorway, creating barriers to movement between Hollywood Park and the River Mersey and a hostile cycling environment along National Cycle Route 62 on Brinksway. This lack of permeability through the area is further compounded by the light industrial compounds and their associated infrastructure.

The area's relationship with its natural assets is poor, with industrial units abutting the river front, limiting interaction with the water.





## DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of Brinksway. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **An indirect relationship with the River Mersey**
- **Fragmented urban grain**
- **Industrial uses and character**
- **An irregular grid street pattern**
- **Inactive streets and frontages**
- **A low-quality western gateway**
- **Barriers to movement**

- 01 | The River Mersey is poorly overlooked, with development backing onto the asset | Hollywood Way
- 02 | Mills and warehouses are present across the area, contributing to an industrial character | Kingston Mill, Chestergate
- 03 | Streets are addressed by brick walls and fencing throughout, creating an inactive streetscene | Owen Street
- 04 | Key town centre access streets are poorly defined, failing to create a sense of arrival | Chestergate



# BRINKSWAY DESIGN GUIDANCE

Of all the town centre character areas, Brinksway has the most significant scope to deliver transformational, residential-led, sustainable regeneration - driven by high levels of public land ownership, excellent accessibility and a strong vision for change.

Delivering an '**exemplar community which embraces our commitment to zero carbon and sustainable living**', as outlined in the Stockport Town Centre West SRF, will require a holistic and coordinated approach by future developers.

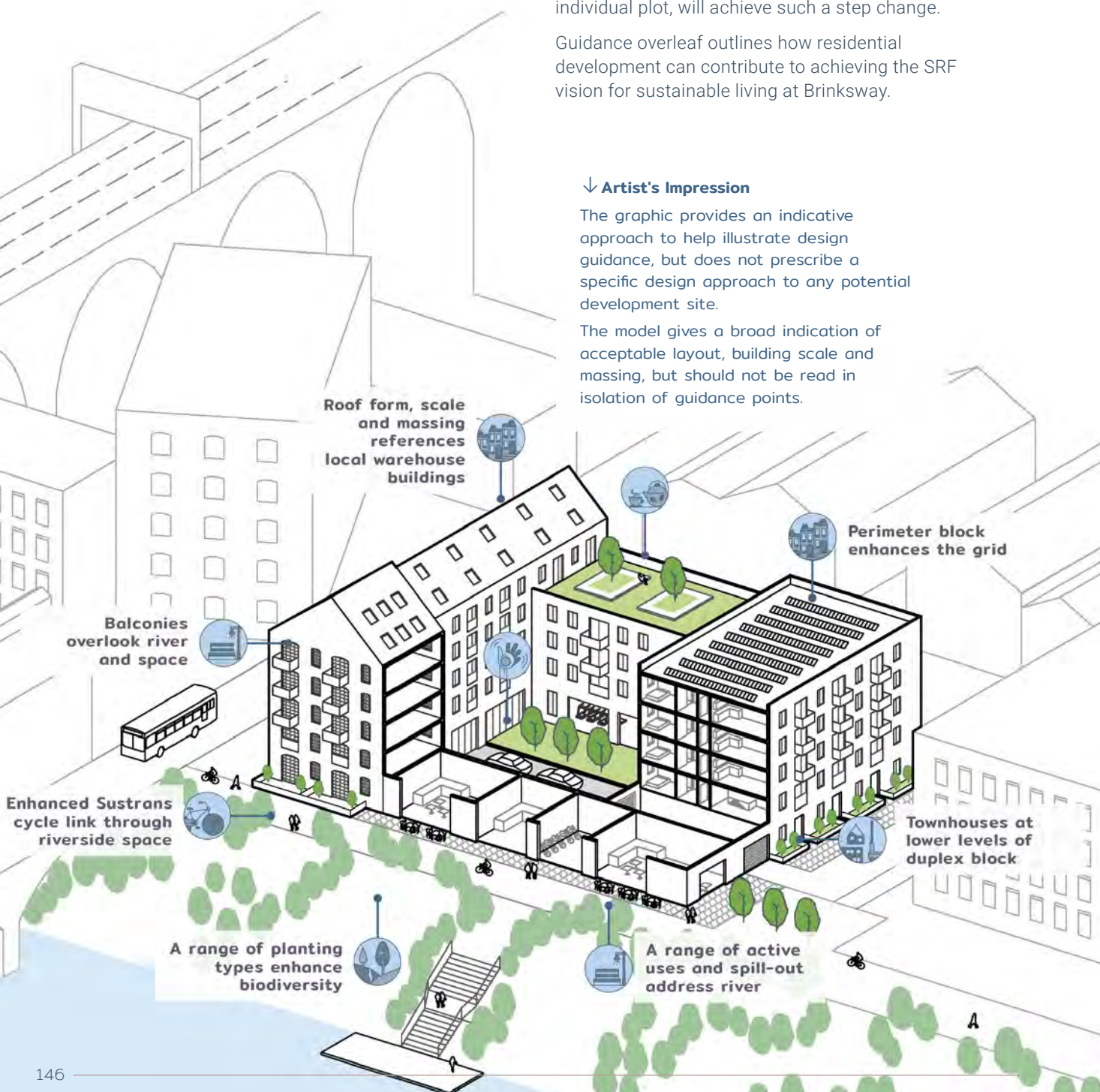
To ensure a truly exemplary scheme, the neighbourhood must function as an efficient 'ecosystem', producing and harnessing energy on site and thinking about practical challenges (including flooding) creatively. Only a coordinated approach, looking beyond the individual plot, will achieve such a step change.

Guidance overleaf outlines how residential development can contribute to achieving the SRF vision for sustainable living at Brinksway.

## ↓ Artist's Impression

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The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Brinksway to adhere to the following.

### →↓ Enhance the area's natural capital

**B-1 Deliver a series of green streets through the area,** connecting Hollywood Park and the River Mersey.

**B-2 Green streets should act as linear parks and key community spaces,** including a range of amenities such as children's play, seating areas, informal sports and allotment gardens. Substantial areas of tree and shrub planting should be incorporated, in line with design guidance on [page 36](#).

**B-3 Create green communal spaces where perimeter blocks are delivered,** incorporating a range of planting types and maximising biodiversity.

**B-4 Deliver sufficient space within the building threshold to incorporate green infrastructure.** The height and scale of planting should respond to the housing typology, car parking approach and the significance of the street in the wider movement framework.

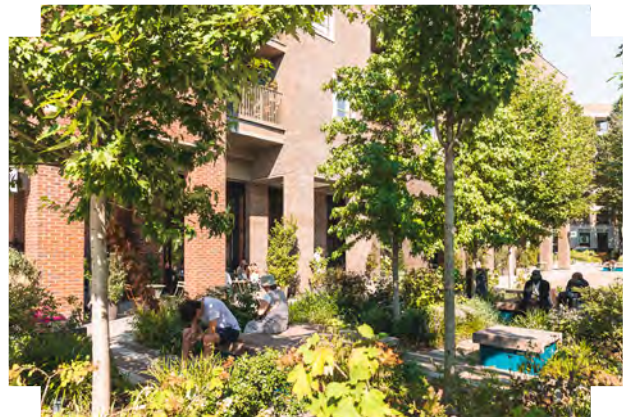
**B-5 Sustainable Drainage Systems are particularly important within the area as a flood mitigation measure,** increasing the attenuation capacity of the public realm and reducing surface runoff into the River Mersey. Blue infrastructure should be sensitively integrated into the design of streets and public spaces.



Well-planted SuDS features integrated into the design of the residential courtyard and curtilage edges. The courtyard is addressed by former warehouses, converted into new homes | Eindhoven, Netherlands

**B-6 Consider the use of biodiverse green and blue roofs on buildings** to further enhance the attenuation capabilities of the built form in the area. Where communal cycle storage or waste storage facilities are proposed outside of the building envelope, they should also seek to incorporate landscape features at roof level or along walls.

**B-7 Consider the use of vertical greening along building frontages** or retained industrial structures or walls, enhancing the ecological value of the built form.



Significant green infrastructure and amenity functions integrated into streets and spaces | Elephant Park, London



Vertical greening climbs up building and ancillary structures, such as external bin or cycle stores | Vauban, Freiburg



# BRINKSWAY

## DESIGN GUIDANCE

### → Animate the riverfront

**B-8 Set new development back a minimum of 10 metres from the river banks**, allowing space for high-quality, biodiverse and well-overlooked green space along the waterfront, encouraging physical and visual interaction with the water.

**B-9 New areas of parkland along the river** should provide sufficient space to incorporate a strategic cycleway/ footpath, in line with a potential re-routing of the NCN62.

**B-10 Deliver a distinctive new building frontage along the river**, symbolising the area's new green credentials and establishing a unique sense of arrival to the town centre. Façade, roofscape and fenestration should reference the area's mills and warehouses in a contemporary manner, whilst a mixed materials palette should create a visually interesting and appropriate contrast with the red brick.

**B-11 Establish upper storey passive surveillance of public realm** along the river, including a range of large balconies and roof terraces.

**B-12 Where protruding balconies are considered, ensure they are appropriately raised from ground level** to form a positive relationship with spaces below.

**B-13 Consider subtly recessed upper storeys and stepping roof form along the riverfront**, creating balconies and roof terraces along recessed elements.

**B-14 Seek to extend the off-road section of National Cycle Route 62** along the southern edge of the River Mersey. A bridge connection should be considered linking to the cycle route on the northern edge.



Pedestrian footpaths and seating are overlooked by apartments along the river | Sugar House Island, London



High-quality public space incorporates strategic pedestrian and cycle route, cycle parking and planting Olympic Park, London



Apartments nestle into verdant green infrastructure along the riverfront | London



Medium-rise apartment blocks set around green courtyard spaces | Middlewood Locks, Salford

→ **Contribute to a modern industrial aesthetic**

**B-19 Seek to refurbish and reuse existing industrial buildings wherever possible.** Locally listed assets the Kingston Mill and The Hollygate are considered vital contributors to the area's unique character, and should be retained.

**B-20 Complement and introduce subtle contrast against the prominent red brick materiality** of the area. Where taller buildings rise above the medium-rise height datum, a set of complementary lighter materials could be introduced on upper storeys, placing emphasis on lower elevations and breaking up the visual mass of the building.

**B-21 Use a range of complementary materials** to create visual interest in façades and a contemporary industrial aesthetic. Appropriately treated metals and the use of primary colours as accents should be considered, juxtaposing the overarching brick materiality.

**B-22 Intensify architectural detailing around key building features**, such as large windows or entrance areas.

**B-23 Take design cues from the industrial architectural features of the area**, including but not limited to fenestration patterns and distinctive tall roof pitches and gable ends. Proposals should not attempt to mimic, but provide a contemporary and complementary response.

**B-24 Create high-quality public realm settings and public spaces around listed buildings in the area**, surrounded by a range of active land uses and work spaces, where possible, to encourage activity around the heritage asset.

← **Deliver a sensitive increase in scale**

**B-15 Buildings should respond to the medium-rise height datum set by local mills** in the area.

**B-16** Where a taller building is proposed, applications should consider recessing taller building elements rising above the local mill height datum, emphasising the bottom section of the building which responds to the local height datum.

**B-17 There is scope to step up in scale of buildings and intensify the building line along primary routes**, emphasising streets as key town centre access routes.

**B-18 There is scope to deliver landmark buildings of scale along the River Mersey frontage** in gateway locations. Where tall buildings are proposed, they should not compromise the quality surrounding public realm.



New apartment blocks reference industrial heritage, through considered materials and roofscape | London



Converted industrial buildings to the rear of the image address the riverfront | London



# BRINKSWAY

## DESIGN GUIDANCE

→ Consider a smart and efficient new 'system'

**B-25 Capitalise on the opportunity presented by the area to deliver a truly smart, efficient and interconnected new place.**

**B-26 Consider the delivery of a strategic waste management system across the area,** integrating underground bin storage areas subtly into the public realm. Pneumatic systems should be considered, linking individual apartment buildings and shared hatches to a neighbourhood waste collection centre.

**B-26 A new Mobility Hub could be considered,** delivered through pooled resources, in close proximity to the strategic road network and motorway, reducing the requirement for vehicular access to individual streets.

**B-27 Any strategic hub should integrate a range of community facilities** - such as car pool clubs, e-charging points, cycle storage and parcel management.



Waste and recycling units integrated into the design of the space | Middlewood Locks, Salford



Homes adjacent to the river are raised above the river corridor using a biodiverse sloping buffer  
Climate Innovation District, Leeds

↑ Approach flood management creatively

**B-28 Consider the development of flood resilient ground floors within the flood zone,** reducing the potential impact of flooding on new homes across the area.

**B-29 A range of approaches should be considered, including non-residential spaces at ground floor level,** minimising any flooding impact on elevated homes.

**B-30 Consider introducing a subtle step up of the ground floor in buildings adjacent to the river, where new homes address routes and spaces at ground floor level.** A small level change may be achieved within the building threshold or by raising the height of adjacent public or semi-private spaces, creating a buffer space for residents of ground floor apartments.



Permeable paving and rain gardens incorporated into the building threshold and streetscene  
Climate Innovation District, Leeds

**B-31 Where ground floor homes are raised from street level, the approach should not compromise passive surveillance of the public realm.** A range of amenity spaces should be delivered above. Where the approach is used, large, blank elevations must be avoided.

**B-32 Consider the use of permeable paving and porous surface materials** within the public realm wherever possible.

**B-33 Rainwater harvesting systems should be integrated** into the public realm, individual buildings and urban blocks, minimising surface runoff to reduce the risk of flooding.

→ ↓ **Optimise the grid**

**B-34 Enhance the permeability of the area, establishing a coherent network of connected streets.**

The new street network should extend and connect existing linkages, creating incidental public spaces at intersections as points of navigation.

**B-35 Create vistas of landmarks, considering how building line can be used to frame views,** such as the former school on Hardman Street, Kingston Mill and the Stockport Viaduct.

**B-36 Connect to the existing network of streets,** ensuring permeability through the area.

**B-37 There is opportunity to deliver strong and active perimeter blocks across the area,** creating consistent building frontages along streets and centred around communal amenity spaces.

**B-38 Building heights and roofscape should subtly step up and down across the length of the block,** creating visual interest and variety.

**B-39 Maximise the use of townhouse typologies at the ground floor level of new apartment buildings,** providing individual front doors to the street.

**B-40 Where car parking to apartments is deemed necessary, development should seek to deliver spaces within the footprint of the building or block** - considering podium or integral parking areas. Any subterranean parking should have regard to the risks of flooding and minimise embodied carbon.

**B-41 Where surface level parking is required, central courtyard spaces or on-street parking should take a 'landscape first' approach,** creating usable communal amenity spaces for residents. Car parking should not compromise the amenity function of streets or spaces.



A visually interesting perimeter elevation, using mixed façade materials, accent colours, staggered building lines and stepping roof form | Dusseldorf, Germany



Duplex apartments integrated into lower floors  
Middlewood Locks, Salford



Active ground floor uses, spill-out space and transparent frontage animates the streetscene  
Hammarby Sjöstad, Sweden



Active building frontages address on-street courtyards, permeated by green infrastructure | Laurieston, Scotland



# ROYAL GEORGE QUARTER CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The Royal George Quarter is steeped in history, boasting several listed heritage assets that continue to symbolise the area's past.

The derelict buildings of the former St Thomas' Hospital campus create a focal point and structure to the area. Prominent roof pitches, distinctive cupolas, chimney stacks and multi-toned red-brick all provide design cues for future residential development to respond to and complement. Additional listed heritage assets can be found to the west of Stockport College, however the lack of physical and visual permeability through the area fails to tie the assets together.





Urban grain is fragmented and incoherent, with swathes of surface car parking, deep footprint industrial units and mid-century college buildings proliferating the streetscene. This fragmentation has a negative impact on the area's streets, which are poorly overlooked and inactive.

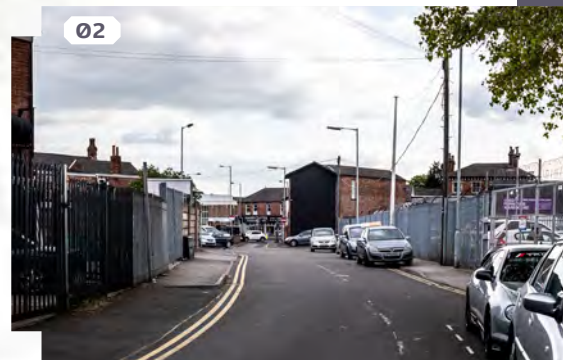
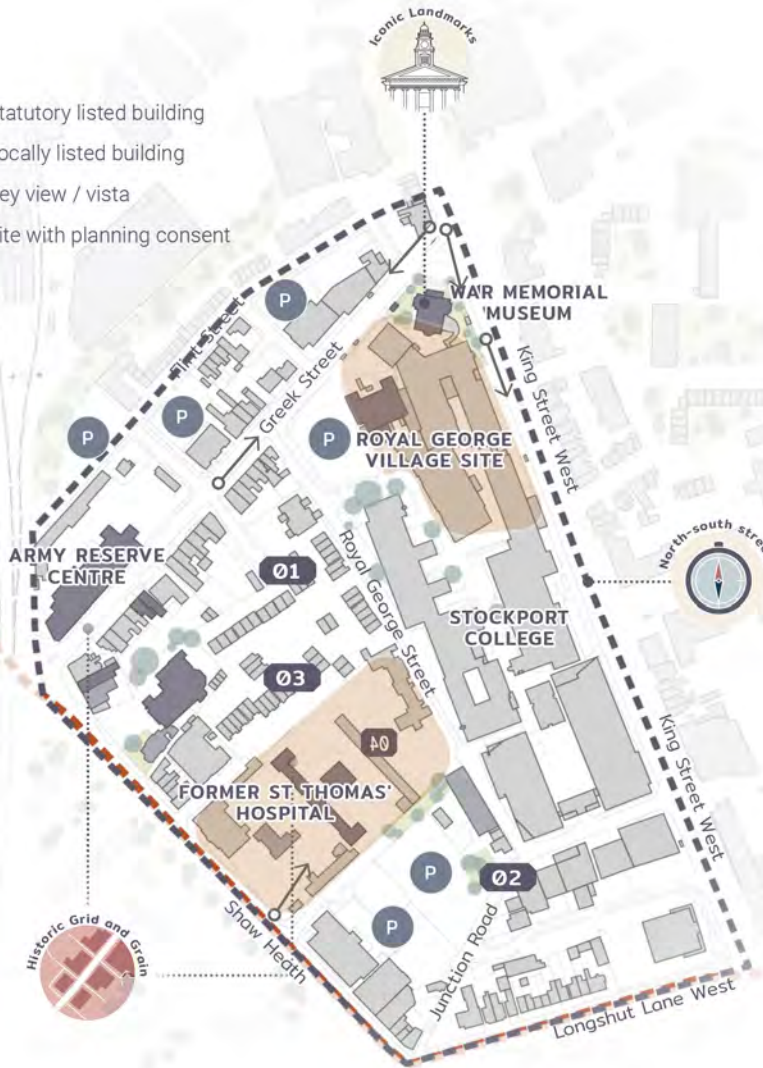
Terraced buildings along east-west connections such as Greek Street and Longshut Lane West present a finer grain, tying into the historic pattern of the area still present in Edgeley and Shaw Heath to the south and southwest.

The scale of Stockport College along the A6 drastically drops to a more domestic scale along Royal George



**KEY**

-  Statutory listed building
-  Locally listed building
-  Key view / vista
-  Site with planning consent



**DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

The following townscape features have been identified as characteristic of the Royal George Quarter. Some are assets, contributing positively to townscape character, whereas others present issues that residential design should contribute to resolving. Guidance overleaf responds to this baseline.

- **The Former St. Thomas' Hospital**
- **Fluctuation in the scale of buildings**
- **A fragmented urban grain**
- **Low-quality, inactive streets**
- **A range of land uses**
- **Barriers to movement**

- 01 | Several heritage assets remain across the area | Simpson Street
- 02 | Buildings are often surrounded by large spaces, contributing to a coarse urban grain | Junction Road
- 03 | The scale of buildings fluctuates dramatically | Finn Street
- 04 | Roads and buildings across the area prevent a smooth flow of movement | Royal George Street



# ROYAL GEORGE QUARTER DESIGN GUIDANCE

Harnessing and enhancing the value of historic buildings should be the starting point for residential design in the area, creating a well-structured and high-quality public realm setting which creates permeability.

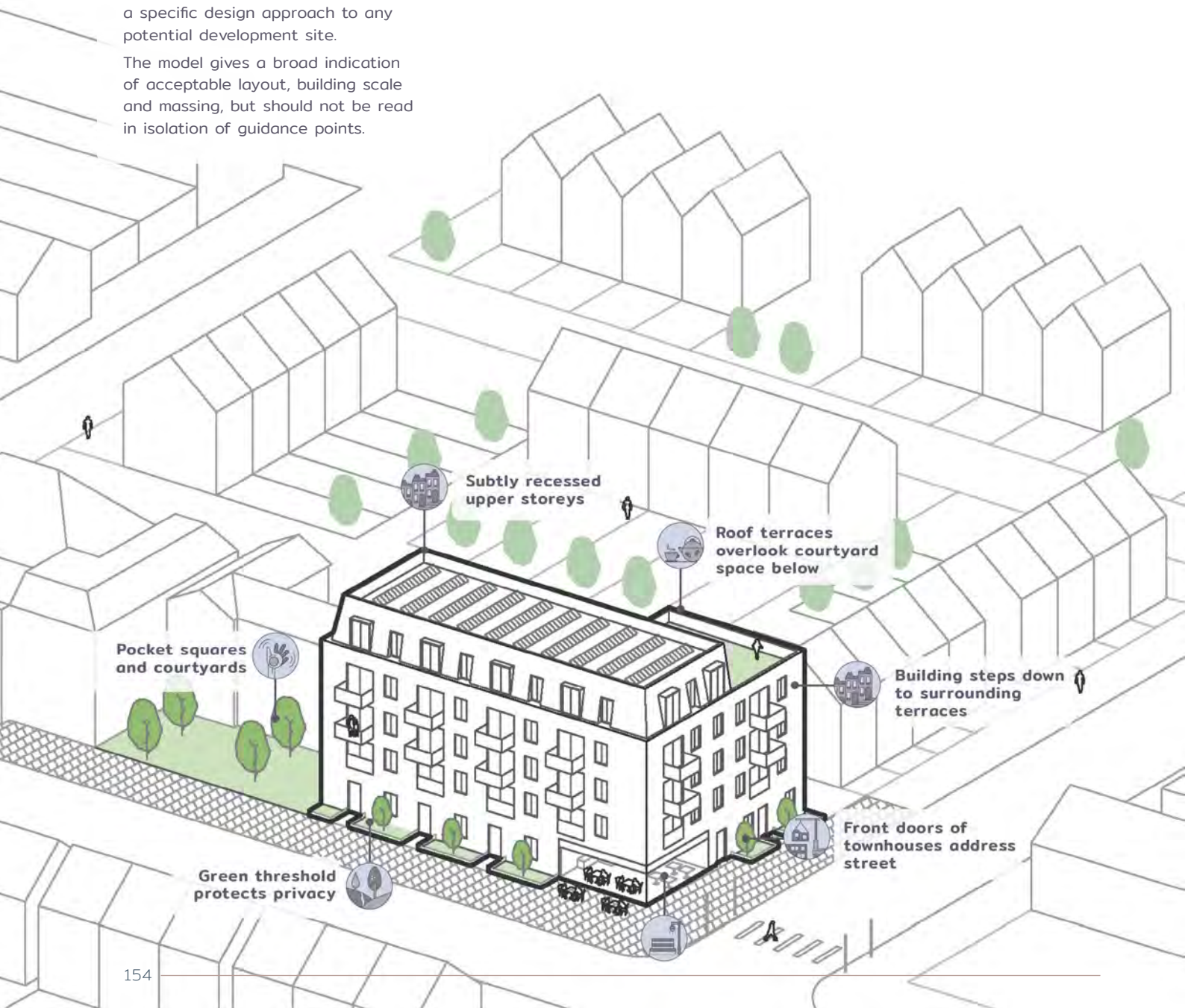
## ↓ Artist's Impression

The graphic provides an indicative approach to help illustrate design guidance, but does not prescribe a specific design approach to any potential development site.

The model gives a broad indication of acceptable layout, building scale and massing, but should not be read in isolation of guidance points.

A more coherent and permeable street hierarchy should be established, repairing the urban grain through a considered response, accounting for the scale and street pattern of surrounding neighbourhoods. The scale of buildings should mediate a transition from the A6 through to the inner suburbs of Shaw Heath and Edgeley, where a compact and low-rise urban form is present.

This guidance aligns with policy presented within the [Town Hall Conservation Area](#). Future residential proposals must adhere to the guidance points outlined overleaf, as well as any relevant policies, guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

We expect future residential development in Royal George Quarter to adhere to the following.

### → Complement heritage assets

**RGQ-1 Develop a coherent and complementary materials palette to be used across the area.** A future palette should complement the soft red brick materiality of the former St Thomas' Hospital buildings.

**RGQ-2 Consider the architectural detailing of the area's heritage assets,** including but not limited to prominent roof pitches and rhythmic fenestration patterns. Development should not seek to mimic heritage, but provide a contemporary response.

**RGQ-3 Reuse and renovate existing heritage assets wherever possible.** Residential extensions should refer to the scale and proportions of the historic building.

**RGQ-4 Orientate new streets and blocks to frame views of heritage assets in the area,** as well as creating visual connections between buildings in the area and surrounding landmarks.

**RGQ-5 Seek to create visual connections between St Thomas' Hospital buildings and Wellington Road,** aiding legibility within the wider area. Where possible, new connections should be established through the college site.

**RGQ-6 Develop high-quality, green public or semi-private spaces** adjacent to heritage assets, improving their setting and encouraging dwell.

### → Mediate a transition in scale

**RGQ-7 Consider the transition between primary road corridors and more suburban areas in Shaw Heath** to the west and southwest. Design should avoid drastic changes in the scale of buildings along streets, using roofscape to create subtle transitions.

**RGQ-8 Where future development sits within the Wellington Road Corridor area,** design should consider design guidance outlined within that Character Area.

**RGQ-9 Sensitively respond to the scale and massing of listed buildings in the area,** ensuring new development does not become overbearing and providing space around historic buildings.



A range of complementary brick tones and gable roof features | Marmalade Lane, Cambridge



Consistent front doors, large windows and habitable rooms address a green street | Timekeepers Square, Salford



A holistic materials palette creates a positive relationship between homes and the public realm | Timekeepers Square, Salford



# ROYAL GEORGE QUARTER DESIGN GUIDANCE

## → Animate streets and spaces

**RGQ-10 Develop consistent and animated frontages along streets**, ensuring building entrances and regular front doors address the street at ground floor level. Habitable rooms should be located addressing the street and windows should be generously-sized relative to their façade.

**RGQ-11 Provide appropriately-sized thresholds at the front of homes**, between 1-2m providing ample space for personalisation and planting whilst ensuring a visual connection between the home and street.

**RGQ-12 Consider the integration of car parking within the building footprint where possible**, reducing the space required parking in the public realm or within the building curtilage.

**RGQ-13 Where integral garages are proposed, rows of dead frontage should be avoided**. Front doors and windows should regularly permeate integral garages to maximise ground floor passive surveillance.

**RGQ-14 Streets and new public spaces should take a people-first approach**, integrating a range of community functions and green infrastructure.

**RGQ-15 Sensitive integrate vertical greening wherever possible**, celebrating the natural wilding of the Hospital site since its closure and dereliction.



Recessed front doors and large windows address a pedestrian friendly streetscene  
Embassy Gardens, London



Vertical greening integrated up the walls of end terraces | Elephant Park, London



Sensitively integrated on-street parking, using tree planting and green infrastructure to separate bays  
City Island, London

## ← Sensitive mix land uses

**RGQ-16 Make sure residential development integrates into the existing mix of land uses**, so as not to compromise the presence of existing businesses. The council should agree a set of appropriate working hours for industrial businesses located within the area, ensuring future residents' visual and acoustic amenity is not compromised.

**RGQ-17 Consider the development of live-work building and block typologies** around new courtyard spaces, to create a transition between future residential and pre-existing industrial uses.

**RGQ-18 Where residential amenity is potentially compromised by existing industrial uses**, developers must provide necessary noise mitigation measures. For example, materials should be considered at an early stage to protect the acoustic amenity of future residents.



Subtly-integrated seating and trees prevents vehicular access to pedestrian street | Sugar House Island, London

→ **Create a pedestrian-friendly network of streets and spaces**

**RGQ-19 Discourage motor vehicular movement through the area**, rethinking the movement framework and design of streets to create a neighbourhood that prioritises the safety and amenity of pedestrians.

**RGQ-20 Well-located street furniture, tree planting and integrated planters could be used to prevent vehicles speeding** through the area, whilst retaining clear and continuous routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

**RGQ-21 Develop safe, well-lit and legible pedestrian and cycle connections** to Stockport Railway Station, creating crossing opportunities wherever possible.



Trees and bollards prevent vehicular access to public open space and street | Dusseldorf, Germany

← **Establish a more coherent urban grain**

**RGQ-22 Respond to the geometric grid structure created by the orientation of buildings and spaces** of the former St Thomas' Hospital campus. The existing grid structure should be extended across the area, enhancing legibility and permeability.

**RGQ-23 Human-scale, green public or semi-private courtyard spaces should be delivered where possible**, responding to the form presented by the Old Hospital site.

**RGQ-24 Seek to optimise the development potential of the plot, delivering a compact, low-rise urban form.** A range of innovative, well-designed housing typologies may allow for narrower back-to-back distances. Modern mews homes with narrow, linear footprints, back-to-back dwellings, and maisonette blocks could be considered, integrating elevated private amenity space within the building footprint.

**RGQ-25 Create a new network of incidental public spaces within the area.** New spaces should be well-connected and overlooked by distinctive marker buildings, delivered through a subtle increase in scale or architectural detailing.

**RGQ-26 Where required, car parking in new public or semi-private spaces should be subtly integrated**, permeated by biodiverse tree and shrub planting and demarcated by a subtle change in surface material. Large areas of tarmac, and white paint to demarcate spaces should be avoided.



Subtle changes in surface material and a level surface contribute to a pedestrian-oriented residential street  
The Gables, Crosby



A human-scale, green courtyard overlooked by large windows and habitable rooms | Sugar House Island, London





# CONCLUSION

It is clear that the face of Stockport Town Centre is set to undergo major change over the course of the next thirty years. Our town has a key role to play in ensuring growth in the borough creates a fundamentally more sustainable and more liveable place.

It is essential that this change delivers high-quality, flexible and resilient new homes to serve existing and future communities that will call the town centre their home. Whilst protecting and enhancing our existing assets sits high on the agenda, it is equally important to capture our creative spirit in the design of the future built form. Achieving this balance will take commitment, from developer, designer and local planning authority, to ensure the high-quality design agenda outlined here is delivered in future town centre residential development.

Andy Burnham has laid down the target of a carbon-neutral city-region by 2038, an ambitious yet incredibly important goal for all of Greater Manchester's boroughs. As a result, this guidance sets high standards for future residential development in Stockport with regard to sustainability. Residential schemes will need to be innovative and proactive in their incorporation of the most appropriate and up-to-date technologies, at all stages of the design process, to significantly reduce emissions.

We expect applicants to consider the guidelines presented within this document, making every effort to integrate its suggestions in the development of future residential proposals. Furthermore, it is expected that the guidance is picked up and read at the earliest stage of the development process to ensure future development is deliverable from the outset.

Stockport Town Centre will become a place that people call home, this much is a given. This document signifies the first steps in ensuring future residential development delivers a wide range of high-quality, adaptable and sustainable new homes that will contribute to a town centre environment that captures our creative spirit. Furthermore, it signifies our commitment to placemaking, creating homes and town centre neighbourhoods of choice. It is vital to ensure that 'home means home' in every sense of the word, for everyone, a principle that fundamentally underpins our approach to town centre living in Stockport.



**STOCKPORT  
TOWN CENTRE  
RESIDENTIAL  
DESIGN GUIDE**

**Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council**

