

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.

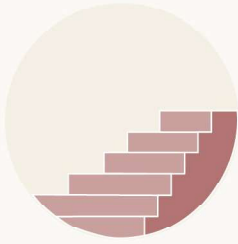


USING THE STOCKPORT ASSETS

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

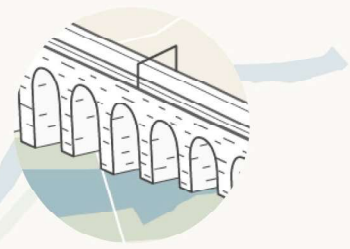
An organic urban grain and irregular street grid



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

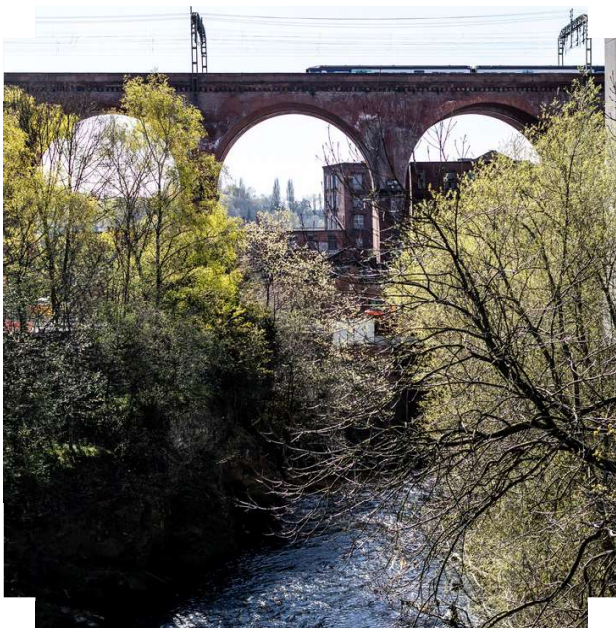


STOCKPORT'S LANDSCAPE ASSETS

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.

