The Draft Birmingham Design Guide

The Design Principles Document

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Birmingham is at an important juncture in its evolution. As the need to address climate change becomes increasingly critical, the City has committed to becoming net zero carbon by 2030, placing itself at the forefront of climate action; ensuring its communities and businesses are resilient and continue to thrive and evolve within a low carbon economy, where prosperity is shared by all.

As the city transitions to this zero carbon, clean air environment (via its Route to Zero and Clean Air Strategy), the role of future investment and growth will become increasingly important. In helping deliver the city's growth agenda, it must build resilience and create future focused development that will deliver zero carbon, low pollution environments. This Guide will be fundamental in delivering this, setting out the design aspirations of the city, with guidance to ensure developments create high quality, innovative and resilient places.

Through its implementation, the Guide will ensure development successfully responds to the varied needs of the city: homes to be adaptable and efficient; neighbourhoods to be welcoming, safe and attractive; places of work to compete with the best in the world; the built environment to reflect local distinctiveness and embrace creativity; leisure and recreation facilities to be diverse and modern; pervasive green infrastructure effectively integrated; and citizens to be part of healthy, happy and affordable communities.

The guidance within this document applies to all development that takes place across Birmingham; ensuring they deliver resilient, low and zero carbon buildings and places that enhance their physical surroundings; and provide inviting, healthy, creative and productive environments.

The Guide is being prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to support the delivery of the Birmingham Development Plan (2017) and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (2005) (to be replaced by the emerging Development Management in Birmingham Document). Once adopted, the SPD will be used as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications. It will supersede the existing design guidance detailed at page 59.

Design Themes

Good design comprises a number of interconnecting elements, which when successfully applied, result in the creation of places and spaces that enhance the environment and enrich the physical, social, cultural, health and wellbeing of the people who use and interact with them.

The Design Guide has drawn these key elements under five Design Themes, each with a number of Design Principles and accompanying City Notes (within City Manuals) that interlink, collectively ensuring high quality, sustainable design is delivered across Birmingham.

Design Themes

- The Birmingham ID
- Streets & Spaces
- Landscape & Green Infrastructure
- Quality, Healthy Living & Working Places
- Efficient & Future-ready

Development proposals must clearly demonstrate how they have incorporated, addressed and aligned with the five Design Themes and their relevant design principles (assisted by City Notes from the relevant City Manuals).

To help demonstrate and explain this, it is recommended design and access statements are framed around the Design Guide's 5 Design Themes.

Fulfilling Design Quality

Having successfully aligned with the Design Themes to help achieve planning permission, proposals must retain the quality of their design through to delivery. The Fulfilling Design Quality section outlines how the City Council will seek to ensure approved designs are realised.

Align or explain

The primary role of this Guide is to highlight the importance Birmingham places on delivering high quality design. It presents Design Principles to assist and inspire developers and their design teams to achieve the high quality, innovative outcomes required.

Whilst some Design Principles are use or building specific, those relevant should be appropriately applied to a scheme. Proposals that fail to apply the relevant Principles will not generally be supported.

If an applicant wishes to challenge a Design Principle, they should explain their rationale for this, with clear evidence to demonstrate how their proposal delivers good design, despite not aligning with the City Council's guidance.

END OF SECTION

THE BIRMINGHAM ID

Birmingham's unique identity is one of its key assets that must be celebrated, strengthened and positively utilised to help realise the city's growth agenda.

The city's diverse landscapes and townscapes comprise a range of characteristics and environments, which overtime have created the Birmingham ID. This ID has evolved as the city has embraced waves of city plans and inherited centuries of development, each leaving their own legacy, from the Georgian Colmore Estate, Regency housing of Edgbaston and modernism of the city centre; to the medieval deer park of Sutton Park, Victorian Botanical Gardens and Birmingham's comprehensive canal network. This evolution continues today with the growth of modern housing developments across the city; the continued evolution of the city centre skyline; and the sensitive conservation and re-use of the city's historic assets.

Whilst the buildings, streets, art, canals and green spaces play a fundamental role in establishing the physical character of an area; the communities and users of these spaces are equally important. Birmingham benefits from a culturally diverse population; and is home to one of the youngest populations in Europe. These social characteristics enrich the city and play an instrumental role in its continued vibrancy. It is the relationship between the cultural diversity and the built environment that has created Birmingham's ID, from its vibrant city centre quarters and productive employment areas; to its residential suburbs and diverse green assets.

As these environs continue to develop and evolve, it is important development positively responds and adds to the unique components of Birmingham, further diversifying the cultural, historic and green capital landscape to ensure the city's finite environments have a prominent role in its future; and introduce new developments into the city's landscape that leave their own legacy on Birmingham's ID.

To help continue the evolution of Birmingham's ID, the City Council encourages developers (where appropriate) to include artists, facilitators, makers and curators within their design teams. Engaging these multifaceted professionals from the outset of a project can help inject creative thinking into all elements of a development, when encouraged to work collaboratively with architects, landscape architects, engineers and interior designers.

Commissioned as part of a design team, to either facilitate or create art in the built environment, artists and facilitators can work effectively within given constraints (financial, development) to create and promote innovative outcomes. Historic case studies include an array of examples, demonstrating how artists have effectively delivered this, leading to an enhancement in the cultural quality and place specific characteristics of the development.

There are a range of site specific and responsive ways in which artists with different practices work, from engagement with existing communities; designing physical elements of the building or public realm; devising creative re-use of spaces or buildings; using sites or buildings for temporary uses; or developing on-going programmes of culture and arts post-development.

The value creative professionals can bring to a scheme, should not be underestimated in helping to create bespoke, quality developments that people enjoy.

Design Principle 1: Enhance and Contribute to Birmingham's ID

BDP Policies - PG3 | PG2 | TP12 | TP27

Development must positively add to Birmingham's diverse identity, through the creation of designs that respond to the physical, cultural and social characteristics of the surrounding area. This must lead to proposals that engage, enhance and celebrate the surrounding environment and community, whilst meeting the needs of all its occupants and users.

Character Assessment

In order for a new development to successfully contribute to Birmingham's ID, design teams must have an appreciation and understanding of the surrounding character and land-uses.

The character of an area comprises a number of elements and layers, often unique to a given location or site. From the function, style and detail of a specific building or group of buildings, up to neighbourhood level where street patterns, densities and environmental character are formed.

When creating new proposals, architects should have an understanding of, and embrace, all these elements, ensuring schemes successfully acknowledge and interpret relevant characteristics into their proposal. Where the surrounding character is poor, or there's a design rationale to ignore established character, proposals must lead to an enhancement of the area.

A character assessment will be an important tool in understanding the context of an area, the scope of which should be relative to the scale of the development and the nature of its surroundings.
For example, developments involving tall buildings, those within the urban fringe or a conservation area may require an assessment that extends beyond their immediate hinterland.

The below (coupled with further guidance in **City Note ID-1 of the Birmingham ID Manual**) are some of the elements design teams should assess within a character assessment, to help inform and inspire their design process.

Neighbourhoods
Densities
Streets, roads and routes
Plot widths / block widths / urban grain
Land uses
Topography / Views / focal points / skyline
Public realm / art
Landscape character
Cultural and social mapping

Buildings
Role of buildings
Architectural styles & detailing
Materials
Scale, height & massing
Roof-scape
Façade emphasis
Outdoor space
Boundary treatments

Design Principle 2: Character Assessment
BDP Policies - PG3 | TP12
The design of proposals must be informed by a clear understanding of the surrounding area's character. A direct synergy between the proposed and the existing should be evident and explained; unless there is a clear justification for an alternative approach; or an opportunity for character enhancement.

Birmingham's Historic Environment
The city's historic environment is one of the key components of Birmingham's ID, providing it with bespoke buildings, structures and environments unique to the city. These spaces and assets represent city's history and can play an important role in its future. Productively used and incorporated, the inclusion of historic assets in development can help sustain the asset, whilst providing maturity, character reference and/or focal points for the wider development.

Birmingham's historic assets fall under the five recognised national designations:

- Listed Buildings & Structures

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Registered Parks & Gardens
- Conservation Areas
- Non-designated Heritage Assets

Future information on these national designations can be sourced at:
www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20030/conservation

Conserving and managing Birmingham's historic assets

In order for Birmingham's historic assets to continue playing a pivotal role in its future, they must be effectively managed and conserved, to remain relevant to the communities who own, inhabit and use them.

The City Council does not view the act of conservation as preserving heritage unchanged. It should be the act of managing change and understanding how a building, place or object can continue to sustain a use or inherit a new use without losing what is significant or important about it. This approach will ensure the city's historic environment is absorbed into its future, and not seen as a separate entity.

The City Council believes this proactive approach will enable it to work productively with landowners, developers and designers to ensure these finite assets continue to serve the city.

Understanding Significance and Setting

In order to support this proactive approach to managing and conserving the city's historic assets, it is important applicants and design teams understand the significance and setting of the heritage asset their proposal involves, or may impact upon, at the outset of the design process.

Heritage statement

This 'understanding' of significance and setting should be clearly presented within a heritage statement , together with detailed information on the development and/or works proposed, materials and fabric affected and the construction methods to be employed.

Design Principle 3: Significance and Setting of a Heritage Asset

BDP Policy - TP12

Proposals involving, or with the potential to impact on, a heritage asset must submit a Heritage Statement to support the development proposal they wish to pursue. This should include:

Significance

A clear and evidenced judgement on significance. This must understand, define and conclude the significance of the asset to establish parameters for conservation and potential change.

Setting

An assessment and understanding of the asset's setting and how a development proposal will effect or alter this; demonstrated by applying the approach advocated by 'The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning – Note 3' (or any subsequent replacement guidance).

In justifying a development, proposals must demonstrate their design has understood the significance of the heritage asset and responded appropriately to its setting, successfully mitigating any harm.

City Notes ID-2 & ID-3, in the Birmingham ID Manual provides further guidance on understanding and assessing significance and setting.

END OF SECTION

STREETS & SPACES

The city's movement is enabled by a network of streets, paths, dedicated routes and public spaces which broadly comprise the city's 'public realm'. These routes and spaces provide a transport function whilst also playing a fundamental role in the quality of Birmingham's built environment and how people use and engage with it, providing spaces for social interaction, arts and culture, leisure, exercise or to simply dwell.

To successfully fulfil these dual roles, the city's public realm must balance demands from different users and uses, to create an accessible, safe and attractive network of routes and public spaces.

Allied with the visual and functional quality of these environments, reducing levels of air pollution and road noise will play a key role in the quality and functionality of spaces. The Clean Air Zone will aid this in the city centre, but these issues must be addressed across the city.

New development will play a fundamental role in helping the public realm and transport network evolve and improve, enhancing how people experience Birmingham's 'great streets' and 'move around the city'.

Birmingham's Great Streets

Development must contribute to the continued enhancement of the city's network of public spaces and streets. This should be achieved through the physical enhancement of the public realm and the creation of buildings that engage with it.

In enhancing the quality and functionality of the city's public realm, the City Council will seek to ensure a focus on creating environments for people to enjoy. This will require development proposals and projects to consider how people will interact with, experience and use the space. This should lead to the application of innovative landscape architecture (allied with artistic intervention) that utilises a combination of elements such as high quality materials and furniture, art, lighting, green infrastructure and landscape features to help create accessible spaces that invite and encourage safe use by different users. Where advertisements and service infrastructure is to be located within, or visible from, the public realm it should be designed and sited to not impact negatively on the amenity or safety of the surrounding space.

In designing new buildings, architects need to ensure their proposals successfully engage and interact with their surroundings; with primary entrances and internal space, sited at street frontage; and users and uses encouraged to spill into spaces (where appropriate). This should lead to buildings that overlook, activate and physically and visually connect with their surrounding public realm.

Places and streets should be shaped by the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users and road traffic and parking should be carefully integrated to produce

a liveable environment which minimises the negative impacts of vehicles such as excessive volumes, fumes and noise.

Design Principle 4: Creating Great Streets

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP12 | TP27 | TP37 DM DPD Policies - DM2 | DM7

All development must positively acknowledge, enhance and interact with their surrounding street environments; adding to their vibrancy, safety and use.

In designing their proposals, architects and landscape architects shall:

- **Create safe and inviting, inclusive spaces for people;**
- **Design streets to prioritise active travel;**
- **Ensure streets and public spaces are defined and enclosed by active building frontages;**
- **Site principal entrances from primary streets and spaces;**
- **Effectively integrate servicing requirements;**
- **Ensure advertisements do not impact (cumulatively or individually) on character, movement, amenity and/or safety as a result of their location, size and/or illumination / method of projection;**
- **Engage local artists in the design process to aid the creation of innovative, engaging, playful environments;**
- **where appropriate, provide spaces for community, cultural activities and facilities for exercise, sport & play and resident engagement;**
- **Avoid street clutter; and**
- **Incorporate appropriate anti-terror measures.**

Further guidance on how to ensure designs positively contribute to great streets is presented in **City Notes SS-1 to SS-9 of the Streets & Spaces Manual**.

Moving Around the City

As Birmingham continues to evolve, it must have a transport network that can serve and support the this change. The Birmingham Transport Plan (draft, January 2020) sets out how transport in Birmingham must change to achieve a sustainable, green, inclusive, go-anywhere network. There must be a greater focus on clean (air quality), efficient, healthy forms of movement that the city's network of streets, routes and spaces, including its blue and green corridors. Decarbonising our transport network is key priority to support the City Council's route to zero targets. The Clean Air Zone will be an important element of this, seeking to reduce the high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide currently present across the city centre.

This evolution will need to focus on efficient, low carbon use of the city's road network, together with the enhancement and creation of alternative networks and infrastructure to support safe non-road based movement.

New development across the city will play an important role in delivering and enhancing these spaces and routes; with design that enables safe, efficient movement; and effectively knits with existing routes and spaces.

The proposal's character assessment will help establish existing and desired links, roads and routes that schemes should acknowledge and link to (canals towpaths, footpaths, roads). Within a development itself (relative to size) designs must utilise focal points and a clear hierarchy of streets to aid legibility; ensure car parking does not dominate public spaces; and incorporate appropriate infrastructure and layouts that encourage safe cycling and walking.

Developments should be sited and designed to minimise the need to travel by private car, and maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport. To help achieve this, highway space should be used objectively to provide appropriate levels of service to different road users, whilst prioritising sustainable travel.

Developments that have the potential to generate significant volumes of road traffic, or may expose users to areas of known or likely high air pollution, must demonstrate consideration of the impacts and provide suitable mitigation.

The transport needs of disabled people must be considered within all development proposals and design must make appropriate provision for these needs.

Commercial developments should undertake an initial Delivery and Servicing Plan to understand the logistics and freight requirements of their proposal; and incorporate measures into the building's design to help enhance the efficiency of these.

Levels of parking provision for disabled drivers, bicycles, motorcycles, cars, ultra low emission vehicles and car clubs should adhere to current council parking standards. Design and layout of all types of parking, as well as supporting facilities such as charging infrastructure or storage lockers should be carefully considered and integrated into a development.

Design Principle 5: Transport Needs of Development

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP38 |TP39 | TP40 |TP41 |TP44 |TP45 DM DPD Policies - DM2 | DM14 | DM15

Transport needs must be an integral part of every development. Designs should ensure all users can access and utilise a range of transport modes to link with their surroundings and beyond in a safe and sustainable way.

Designs must seek to:

- **create safe, attractive, efficient walking and cycling environments;**
- **deliver a clear hierarchy of connected streets;**
- **make legible, accessible places that are easy to navigate;**
- **design efficient, safe servicing and loading facilities;**

- **support access to public transport;**
- **accommodate the transport needs of people with disabilities;**
- **provide appropriate levels of cycle and motorcycle parking and facilities that are convenient, safe and secure; and**
- **minimise and manage car parking provision, and effectively integrate car parking into a scheme, ensuring it does not dominate.**

Further guidance on providing and integrating the transport needs of a development are contained in **City Notes SS-10 to SS-18 within the Street and Spaces Manual.**

END OF SECTION

LANDSCAPE & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Birmingham's varied green infrastructure contributes significantly to its character and environmental quality. The infrastructure comprises a diverse range of green and blue assets that often serve a multitude of roles as key adaptation facilities to climate change, recreation and amenity space, transport networks and biodiversity network and key hubs. In turn, they provide a number of health, social and cultural benefits to the city's citizens and visitors of all ages.

Such assets are an intrinsic component of a sustainable city, and must develop and grow with it; supporting and adapting to the future needs of Birmingham; serving its residents; and providing habitats to support a range of wildlife.

To aid this enhancement and growth, development proposals must effectively incorporate meaningful green infrastructure and landscape proposals within their context. This should include the retention of existing assets and the creation of new environments that result in green infrastructure and biodiversity gains, whilst enhancing the quality of place.

Landscaping of New Development

Landscapes can comprise a number of diverse elements and components (hard and soft) that collectively provide an area with its distinct and often unique, landscape character. Birmingham contains a diverse range of landscape character areas, from its hard landscapes in the city centre, to its mature soft landscapes within its suburbs, parks and countryside.

These different character areas are a product of the relationship between different components, from the urban grain, land-uses and materials palette of the built form, to the topography and land use of open space and its diversity of flora and fauna.

It is important proposals utilise landscape architecture to help development integrate into an established landscape character area (or create its own); considering the role of public and private spaces in helping schemes integrate with and enhance their surroundings. This will require proposals to effectively balance the architectural and landscape needs of a site, giving sufficient space and focus to both elements.

Where appropriate, proposals must seek to create landscape gains. In seeking these gains, development must have an understanding of the surrounding environment and design landscape proposals that effectively respond to them. This response will be bespoke to a given site, but should reinforce, align and/or repair an established landscape character (man-made or natural); or develop a new character that can positively enhance and connect to its surroundings and green corridors. Innovation, allied with an acknowledgement of climate, net gain for bio-diversity, potential for future conflict and solutions for long term maintenance, will be supported.

Where a site has limited capacity to accommodate landscape, proposal must seek to use the building to help provide landscape gains via the integration of green roofs and living walls into their design.

Design Principle 6: Landscaping New Developments

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP6 | TP7 | TP27 | TP37 | TP39 | DM DPD Policies – DM4

Development shall provide high quality landscapes that enhance and acknowledge existing character, devoting sufficient space and specifying appropriate hard and soft components, to help ensure designs have sufficient resilience to endure.

Innovative, artistic, contemporary landscape design is encouraged in new landscape character areas, and may be acceptable where the quality of existing landscape character is poor.

In designing proposals, landscape architects should:

- **utilise and protect existing landscape assets;**
- **respect existing character areas;**
- **give space to landscape;**
- **create spaces to support social and cultural activity and aid health and well-being;**
- **create spaces that make room for children and young people**
- **seek to increase bio-diversity through response to the needs of wildlife**
- **create connections to existing green corridors**
- **design out potential for crime; and**
- **utilise appropriate landscape components / features.**

Where landscape is to accommodate the site's sustainable drainage systems, they should form a key feature of the site's landscape design, that complement rather than inhibit or replace traditional forms of recreational space in line with the city's adopted guidance.

Proposals must seek to integrate landscape / green elements into buildings, particularly where limited or no landscape is provided by a scheme.

Further guidance on landscaping new developments is contained in **City Notes GI-1 to GI-7 within the Street and Spaces Manual.**

Birmingham's Trees

The city's trees are important components of a sustainable city; contributing significantly to it's green infrastructure. A contribution the City Council wants to see increase with greater canopy coverage via appropriate retention and tree planting.

The benefits trees bring to Birmingham are threefold:

Aesthetic – trees enhance urban landscapes, softening environments, creating focal points, bring human scale and introduce colour, movement, life and seasonal change.

Ecological – existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows create habitats that help support a range of species, bringing wildlife into urban spaces and enabling it to move across the city.

A practical city asset – with careful species selection, a tree is by far the most cost-effective option for providing a wide range of essential urban services: slowing winds channelled by buildings, filtering air pollution (but this must not detract from tackling the sources of pollution), hydrating and cooling air, providing shade to control the 'urban heat island' effect, intercepting rainfall and evaporating ground water to reduce the load on surface water drainage.

PROTECTION AND RETENTION OF EXISTING TREES

Protecting and Utilising Existing Trees

The benefits trees give to the city and its communities increase as they mature and establish which development proposals must recognise and acknowledge via the retentionand integration of existing trees and hedgerows located within, or adjacent to, a site.

Trees should be retained that not only add to the wider character of an area (including trees statutorily protected by Tree Preservation Orders or located within conservation areas), but those that can add maturity and/or create focal points within the development.

Where existing trees are considered particularly important, the City Council may serve a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to help ensure they are retained by development. TPOs can also be applied retrospectively if trees are removed prior to the development proposal being submitted to the City Council. It is therefore recommended applicants work proactively with the City's Arboricultural Officers.

If proposals are seeking to develop adjacent to a woodland, a minimum 15 metre eco-tone should be allowed to develop, or be planted, to provide a gradual transition between forest trees, woodland edge trees and woodland edge shrubs.

Loss of Trees

The category a tree is allocated when surveyed (in accordance with BS 5837) may often guide the likelihood of its retention within the development, with a general assumption that:

- category A trees should be retained unless there are exceptional

circumstances for their removal, such as the only possible point of access;
- A design must give due consideration to the retention of B category trees and accommodate them wherever it is reasonably possible;
- C category trees should not be a constraint to development; and
- U category trees are recommended for removal regardless of development plans.

However, assessments should be based on site specific circumstances and a consideration of what an existing tree could offer to the development, be it category A, B or C.

Where proposals are seeking to remove existing trees (of any category); justified losses must be appropriately compensated for by new tree planting, or via a commuted sum. To establish the appropriate level or value of compensation, the City Council will use the Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees method (CAVAT) to value the existing tree/s.

Designing Existing Trees into Development & Infrastructure Projects

Generally, a tree may be considered to be within the potential effects of development if the works or access is within 5 metres of the full canopy spread of a typical tree or half the height of a cypress conifer. Design must respond effectively to these parameters, to aid integration and retention.

Tree Surveys

To help achieve these outcomes, proposals must apply the guidance and standards within British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction'. This is a complete procedural tool for designing with existing trees and successfully retaining trees throughout development. It is also a tool for assessing which trees are suitable for retention and which could, or should, be removed.

Use of the full standard must be applied where there are protected trees within or near a development and the best practice that it represents is expected of any development proposals or infrastructure projects where existing trees are present.

Proposals must clearly demonstrate how they have followed BS 5837:2012, with appropriate plans and assessments, details of protection to be used during construction and the construction methods to be followed during site preparation and build.

For small scale developments and householder developments, it may be sufficient to apply and address the basic tree survey principles detailed at **CITY NOTE GI-9**, with relevant information submitted with the application to demonstrate these principles have been applied.

Design Principles 7: Integrating Existing Trees into Development

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP1 | TP7 | TP8 | TP12 DM DPD Policies – DM4

Site layouts must be informed by a clear understanding of the tree assets within and adjacent to a site, with designs positively responding to these assets, through the retention, protection and integration of existing trees and/or hedgerows.

To help demonstrate and achieve this outcome, proposals should apply BS 5837, undertaking the sequential production of:

1. **Tree Survey (TS)**
2. **Tree Constraints Plan (TCP)**
3. **Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)**
4. **Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)**
5. **Tree Protection Plan (TPP)**

If a proposal seeks to remove existing trees and/or hedgerows, the rationale of this must be clearly justified, with appropriate compensation agreed with the City Council, based on the asset value of the existing trees (CAVAT). Where the rationale and justification does not warrant removal, proposals may be refused and a tree preservation order served.

Where pruning is proposed to existing trees, details of this should be submitted, with works complying with best practice detailed in BS3998:2012.

Proposals must appropriately site the development and utilise building methods, to help protect and effectively integrate existing trees into a scheme; retaining existing canopy coverage and the associated landscape character of the site.

Further guidance on how to protect and integrate trees into development is detailed at **City Notes GI-8 to GI-16 within the Landscape & GI Manual**.

Canopy Coverage

In order to maximise the benefits trees can bring to the city they must be given sufficient space to grow and mature, enabling them to fulfil their environmental potential.

The canopy is one of the primary measures used to assess the maturity of the city's tree stock and is something the City Council will seek to enhance, ensuring the benefits provided by trees endure with the city and help it adapt to and mitigate against the predicted effects of climate change.

It is widely recognised that canopy coverage of between 25% and 35% will be required to meet these challenges. Birmingham currently stands at around 18% canopy coverage (2019) by land area and seeks to increase this to 25% by 2030.

Development should contribute to the growth of this baseline through the retention of existing trees and the introduction of new.

In order to help achieve the 7% increase desired, the City Council will seek to retain and grow levels within existing high contributing uses such as residential; and increase coverage on uses that have historically provided low coverage levels (industrial and commercial).

Tree Planting In New Development

Through their considered siting, appropriate species mix and maintenance; newly planted trees should successfully mature adding to the landscape quality of an area and contributing to the growth of Birmingham's Forest.

Key to ensuring newly planted trees are able to mature is specifying the most appropriate species for the site. This will require Arboricultural professionals and landscape architects to have a clear understanding of the ground conditions; the below and above ground constraints; topography; and adjacent uses. Consideration must also be given to how the trees proposed will effectively co-exist with the development's services and transport infrastructure; and the occupants of the development. To help achieve this, designers should ensure the landscape and tree planting proposals are conceived alongside the infrastructure requirements and general layout of the site. This will help ensure any potential conflicts with servicing infrastructure; on-site micro-climate created by development; excessive overshadowing; dropping of honeydew or fruit; or visibility splays and the kinematic envelope of vehicles, is reduced.

Having understood these site specific constraints and characteristics, an appropriate species mix should be specified that can successfully grow and mature within the site. These should be supported and aided by appropriate tree pit dimensions and surfacing (grilles are not generally supported), protection and on-going maintenance.

Design Principles 8: Tree Planting in New Development

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP1 | TP7 | TP8 | DM DPD Policies – DM4

Landscape designs shall include the planting of new trees where there is appropriate space; soil availability; and climate to enable them to grow and mature. Where existing trees have been removed from the site, new provision must appropriately compensate for this loss and seek to deliver wider gains where there is scope to do so.

Uses that currently contribute a low level of canopy coverage to the city (as detailed at City Note GI-15) should seek to introduce new tree planting above the baseline % coverage.

Designers must have a clear understanding of the existing and proposed constraints of a site; and design tree planting layouts and species specifications that respond to these.

This process should consider:

- ***Soil characteristics***
- ***Root Available Soil Volume***
- ***Above and below ground constraints***
- ***Tree pit dimensions and appropriate surfacing***
- ***Ultimate height and spread***
- ***Wildlife value***
- ***Ornamental qualities***
- ***Tolerance to exposure and climatic extremes***
- ***Resistance to pests and diseases***
- ***Nursery availability***
- ***Reference to the local tree stock composition***
- **Planting / supports & guards**
- **Aftercare and maintenance**

Further guidance on these elements is presented in **City Notes GI-16 to GI-19 within the Landscape and GI Manual**.

Public Open Spaces

Multifunctional public open spaces play an important role in the creation of sustainable developments, providing spaces that can encourage healthy, social and cultural activity; whilst also delivering biodiversity gains and contributing to the city's green infrastructure network.

As future development helps the city respond to the economic and social needs of its population, it must also provide the public open space needed to support and serve this population. As such, the City Council will require new residential development (20+ dwellings in line with BDP Policy TP9) to provide or contribute towards the provision of public open space (including bio-diversity enhancements, health and well-being interventions, play, cultural and sports facilities) to meet the needs of residents and the wider environment.

The facility's size and nature of the public open space will be informed by the type of residential development proposed; the requirements for which must be effectively

integrated into the scheme's design. In designing schemes, consideration should be given to the mix of people likely to be using the space; ensuring facilities and access to them serve these different users. Designs and facilities should also be informed by social and cultural mapping to help determine the wider demographic of potential users and the facilities they may wish to have.

Designs for new Public Open Space must be supported by robust and effective written specifications and attention to detail that will be translated into a high quality construction, delivery and maintenance.

Design Principle 9: Design of Public Open Space

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP9 | TP11 | TP27 | TP37 DM DPD Policies - DM2

The City Council requires all public open spaces to be multi-functional, safe and attractive; encouraging use and activity by surrounding residents. It will welcome innovative designs and features that draw users into the space and expand the experiences and stimuli available within them, both mentally and physically. In doing so, the requirements and desires of different age and social groups must inform the design and facilities provided.

In order to design these spaces, design teams must successfully utilise existing site characteristics; align with relevant organisation guidelines; and provide facilities that help meet the open space needs of the local area.

New spaces and facilities must be supported by robust, effective and sustainable maintenance arrangements via dowry to the City Council, or a management plan attached to a planning application.

Further guidance on developer contributions, specifications and public open space to be adopted by the City Council is detailed within the Public Open Space in New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (or as updated).

www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/836/public_open_space_in_new_residential_development_supplementary_planning_document

Biodiversity & Geodiversity

Birmingham's natural environment

Birmingham has a rich and diverse natural environment, which comprises semi-mature 'core areas', such as river corridors, woodlands, remnant agricultural landscapes and heathland; inter-connected with an array of other green assets including parks and public open spaces, watercourses, rail, road and canal corridors, churchyards and residential gardens.

This ecological network is a key asset for the city's environment and its communities, for their intrinsic worth, but also as natural capital (value to people) associated with a

range of economic and social benefits; and the city's most recognised adaption facility to climate change.

Achieving enhancements and minimising impact

Development has the potential to change Birmingham's natural environment, whilst also presenting opportunities for enhancement and the creation of new resources and connectivity, leading to net gains.

In designing their proposals, architects and landscape architects must utilise appropriate ecological and geological expertise, to understand the resources currently present on their site. This expertise and site specific information should then be used within the design process to minimise the impact on existing resources; whilst creating new resources that support habitat creation and species. The nature and scale of the resources created will be site specific, but should at least align with the city's Enhancement Matrix (weblink). Proposal must also consider any air quality or environmental changes resulting from the development that may impact on the existing or proposed resources.

In order to demonstrate the proposal has undertaken the appropriate surveys and created a design that responds to the site specific resources, proposals must submit appropriately detailed ecological and /or geological reports. These must be submitted with a planning application and should contain:

Ecological and geological surveys

In assessing the development potential of a site, developers must determine whether the proposal is likely to affect biodiversity or geodiversity within the site or wider hinterland.

Surveys should comprise at least a two stage process, beginning with a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to assess habitats and their potential to support protected or important species. The conclusions from this appraisal should then inform the need for a more detailed species survey to be undertaken, detailing the presence or absence of the suspected species.

Circumstances where an ecological appraisal and protected species survey (such as surveys for bats) will be required are described in the on the City Council's website:
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20055/conservation_areas/1462/do_i_need_an_ecological_or_geological_assessment/2

Addressing ecological and geological impacts

Proposals must demonstrate how the design has been informed by the outcomes of the ecological and geological surveys. The objective should be to design a development that minimises harm and maximises benefits for biodiversity and geodiversity. In order to achieve these outcomes, development proposals must apply the sequential approach details in the mitigation hierarchy (as detailed at **City Note GI-21**).

Biodiversity and geodiversity enhancements

Beyond any adverse impacts, almost all development provides opportunities to enhance existing biodiversity or geological assets; or create new resources, to go beyond “no net loss” to deliver a “net gain”.

Enhancements should be appropriate to the scale, type and location of the development; and deliver sustainable, long-lasting benefits for biodiversity. The city’s requirements for incorporating biodiversity enhancements in new development are set out in the City Enhancement Matrix (weblink).

In addition to the ecological and geological report, proposals must explain how the resources will be maintained and managed. This should be presented within a management plan for the site, detailing the techniques, periods and funding sources to be applied. Where this provision is secured as part of a planning obligation, the period of aftercare will be defined, and appropriate resources secured, as part of this legal agreement.

Design Principle 10: Assessing and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets

BDP Policy – TP7 | TP8 DM DPD Policies – DM4

Development proposals likely to affect a protected or priority species must submit appropriately detailed ecological and/or geological reports presenting the site specific assessments undertaken; enhancement measures proposed; and management systems to be implemented:

Assessment

Development must undertake appropriate ecological surveys to understand the biodiversity and geodiversity assets present within the proposed development site and its surrounding area.

Proposals likely to affect any designated site, important habitat, species or geological feature must be supported by adequate ecological and geological information to assess the likely impact of the proposal. Any identified impacts must influence the design of a proposal, applying the sequential Mitigation Hierarchy; to avoid, mitigate or compensate the impacts.

Enhancement

All development must seek to enhance existing biodiversity and geodiversity assets; and create resource that can help increase Birmingham’s ecological network.

Management and Monitoring

Proposals must submit management plans outlining how existing and new assets will be managed and monitored during construction and through the proposals lifetime.

Further guidance on assessing and enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity is presented within **City Notes GI-20 to GI-23 of the Landscape and Green Infrastructure Manual**.

END OF SECTION

QUALITY, HEALTHY LIVING & WORKING PLACES

The buildings and places interacted with on a daily basis have an important influence on the health and well-being of individual users and the wider visual perception of Birmingham. As the city continues to grow and respond to the changing needs of its citizens, it is vital development positively contributes to this. Birmingham needs accessible, clean (air), zero carbon living and working places that reflect local distinctiveness and embrace creativity. This will help build healthy, active, communities and neighbourhoods; creating places that respond to the needs of people and the natural environment.

Achieving this requires:

- Understanding of, and response to, surrounding character (as detailed at Design Principle 2);
- A desire to enhance and innovate through the application of considered architecture, landscape architecture and urban design; and
- The integration of infrastructure, facilities and measures to support health and well-being.

NEIGHBOURHOODS

Mix Uses to Create Sustainable, Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Allied with well-designed public spaces, living and working development across the city should contribute to the creation of sustainable, accessible neighbourhoods and prosperous communities. Whilst the size and nature of development may influence the scale of contributions possible, every proposal must seek to make a positive impact, meeting the everyday needs of people living, working or visiting. This may include retail, education, health, cultural, leisure or community facilities; considering the needs of the wider community.

Whilst providing a neighbourhood with a focus and sense of place, such facilities can also aid health and wellbeing, placing facilities within walking distance; whilst providing opportunities for social interaction, culture, exercise and relaxation. These benefits should not just be realised by residential and town centre developments. Neighbourhoods focused on employment uses should also be sustainable, containing ancillary uses and facilities (or walkable routes to them) for employees.

Allied with their social benefits, some of these ancillary uses can also help support day-long activity; and activate the ground floor of mixed use developments, helping to create safe, vibrant places.

The viability of such units and their targeted use mix will obviously be key to achieving the activation sought. Retail, office and leisure have often been the desired

uses for these units, but the city has a number of examples where they lie vacant. Proposals are therefore encouraged to consider broadening the scope of potential occupiers of these spaces. Small scale, low noise manufacturing, or studios for creative industries could prove a viable alternative to the 'traditional' uses, introducing activity and interest to ground floor and street environments.

Where proposals are unable to directly contribute to providing ancillary uses, residential or business schemes should ensure local facilities are accessible to residents and employees (refer to BDP policies TP9 and TP 45 for distances between homes and facilities). Larger developments that will generate additional demand for facilities in the local area should incorporate these within the development or in nearby accessible locations, in accordance with planning policy.

Residential-led proposals should respond to the housing needs of a neighbourhood, providing a range of modern homes that meet the varied requirements of the local population (in line with BDP Policy TP30); in turn helping to create a balanced, sustainable community with a mix of housing to meet different social and demographic needs of a community.

The draft Birmingham Transport Plan (January 2020) identifies that transport is a vital factor in unlocking the potential of both new and existing neighbourhoods and local centres. The plan seeks to ensure active travel is prioritised in local neighbourhoods, improving air quality and public health and reconnecting communities. Streets should be walkable, cycle friendly and the default speed limit should be 20mph, making them inclusive for all, including those with reduced mobility.

Design Principle 11: Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP24 | TP21 | TP27 DM DPD Policies - DM2

Development shall help support and contribute to the creation of sustainable, accessible neighbourhoods that provide a range of viable services, uses and facilities to support and activate residential and employment environments.

Building at Densities Appropriate to Good, Accessible Place Making

In the context of development, density relates to the amount of development on an area of land: number of dwellings per hectare; or gross to net areas achieved. (In the context of this Design Principle, it also relates to buildings that are of a greater height, mass and/or scale then the surrounding context).

Increasing the density of development in the right location can make a significant contribution to place, introducing activity and intensifying primary uses, which in turn can help aid the vibrancy of neighbourhoods. The challenge is to deliver this

successfully within the context of established character areas, where scale and mass can be important. In these scenarios, innovative architectural solutions will need to be developed to increase density, whilst acknowledging character.

The City Council encourages architects and developers to rise to this challenge; creating high quality housing and employment space that uses land and resources efficiently. In order for the city to meet its housing and employment needs, innovative solutions will be needed. Within the city centre high density development is supported; and in the urban centres introducing higher density schemes, in appropriate locations will help sustain these important local centres.

Beyond these established mixed-use centres, there may also be scope for density increases where designs can effectively integrate the increased built form of the building into an established character area.

Where a change in character is promoted or supported by the City Council, proposals must understand the role of the development site within the wider area of change, and create designs that respond to this.

In creating architectural solutions, designs should ensure the quality of internal and external environments are not compromised as a result of density increase. Architects should use these opportunities to apply their skills and creativity to design buildings that respond successfully to these challenges; delivering new forms for living and working. If designs lead to an increased focus on shared amenity space and public realm (with less private space), these must be quality, functional landscaped spaces that can respond to the competing health and well-being needs of users.

The City Council will not support schemes that merely seek to intensify development to the detriment of living or working environments; or the character of the wider area.

Design Principle 12: Increasing Densities

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP30 | TP27 DM DPD Policies – DM2 | DM10

Where proposals are seeking to increase the scale and density of buildings above those that positively characterise the surrounding area, designs must demonstrate how a change in scale will enhance the surrounding area.

Where a change in character is supported or promoted by the City Council, designs must deliver coherent outcomes that establish a justified scale and environment that can help redefine and enhance the character of a given area; and acknowledge the role of the development site in this wider context.

The density of a proposal must not impact on the quality of place. Architects must actively respond to any challenges posed by introducing high density schemes, creating innovative designs that enhance their surroundings and deliver quality, functional internal and external environments that support health and well-being.

Further guidance on increasing densities, whilst retaining quality is detailed in **City Notes LW-1 & LW-2 of the Living & Working Manual**.

Layout and Orientation

The layout and orientation of a development can play an important role in successfully integrating a proposal into its surroundings; and the quality of the internal and external environments created.

It is important proposals successfully engage with streets and public spaces, and align with an established street pattern that contribute to the character of the surrounding area and supports low car, walkable neighbourhoods. To aid this, permeability between new developments and existing streets and neighbourhoods must be ensured.

The layout and orientation of a building/s can play an important role in creating biophilic led environments that enhance the occupier and user experience. Appropriately considered, layout and orientation should lead to internal spaces that benefit from high levels of natural light, provide outlook for users and successfully connect to its public and private surroundings. If single aspect dwellings are proposed, levels of light and orientation must be a key consideration, with any north aspect units having large windows and elements to maximise natural light.

Siting and layout should also be used to aid external environments, ensuring amenity spaces are sited in areas that are sheltered, benefit from a high level of sunlight and have appropriate enclosure where desired. Gardens and landscapes should be viewed from key internal environments, giving users a visual connection to these areas.

Within multi-unit residential schemes, layouts should help encourage a sense of community amongst residents, promoting interaction through design features such as shared access points and courtyards, elements of communal amenity space and shared infrastructure such as laundry facilities, gyms and leisure space, or lounge space.

Design Principle 13: Building Orientation and Layout

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP37 DM DPD Policies - DM2 | DM10

Orientation and layout must be informed by the characteristics of the site and its surroundings, leading to internal and external environments that maximise health benefits with high levels of natural light, functional layouts and a synergy between internal and external areas.

Residential Privacy and Overlooking

Amenity, natural light and privacy play an important role in creating quality residential environments that help support the health and well-being of residents. New development must ensure it creates such environments; and does not unacceptably impact on those of existing residents.

To help create and protect residential amenity and privacy, the City Council will use the '45 degree rule' and minimum privacy distance requirements* as a baseline for assessing the proximity of new development (non-residential uses to residential and residential to residential) to existing properties. These principles will also be used to help assess any potential amenity impacts of extensions to existing buildings (further guidance on this is provided in the Living & Working Manual).

Whilst these measures will form a useful tool, the City Council may allow flexibility in their implementation where it can be clearly demonstrated that residential amenity (natural light and outlook) and privacy is not compromised as a result of a lesser distance.

The acceptability of a lesser distance will be assessed on a case by case scenario, with issues such as impact on existing residents, location, local character, building height to street width ratio, levels, densities and/or architectural innovation being potential considerations.

Proposals that offer no architectural solution, using details such as opaque glazing or poorly considered angled bay windows are unlikely to be acceptable, unless there is a justified architectural rationale for them.

* details of the requirements are presented in **City Note LW-3 & LW-4 of the Living & Working Manual.**

Design Principle 14: Protecting Resident Amenity

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP37 DPD Policies - DM2 | DM10

All new development must ensure it does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity or privacy of existing or new residential properties. The City

Council will apply minimum privacy distances and the 45 degree rule as a base set of standards to help achieve this.

Exceptions to these standards will be considered on a case by case basis, assessing the surrounding context, the quality of the proposal and/or the degree of change to existing residents; allied with the exceptions detailed in Policy DM10 of the Development Management in Birmingham Development Plan Document.

Details of minimum privacy distances and 45 degree rule are presented in **City Notes LW-3 and LW-4 of the Living & Working Manual.**

BUILDINGS AND THEIR USES

Architectural Quality

As Birmingham continues to develop and grow, progression of the city's architecture will be fundamental to creating quality places and spaces that support the health and wellbeing of its residents and workers. This must lead to developments that deliver innovative, accessible, low carbon architecture; harnessing new technologies; robust, sustainable materials; and biophilic design principles.

Across all sectors of development, architects must seek to progress their response to the demands and needs of the specific uses, creating solutions that in their form, language and associated detailing; deliver a strong architectural concept that responds tothe needs of occupants and enhances its surroundings.

It is recognised that stock book building types are often used by developers, but the City Council will expect these to be appropriately adapted, detailed, or new types designed; to respond to the characteristics of the site and surroundings. Good urban design, with the creation of quality living and working environments must the primary driver of all development. This must not be compromised by any shortcomings of stock book buildings.

Design Principle 15: Architectural Cohesion and Quality

BDP Policy – PG3 |TP27

All new developments within Birmingham must deliver innovative, cohesive architecture that support the health and wellbeing of all occupants, positively responds to the site and enhances its surroundings; aided by:

- **the application of biophilic design principles;**
- **a strong, innovative architectural concept;**
- **a form, scale and mass complementary of its surroundings;**

- **robust façade and roof detailing;**
- **quality fenestration and composition;**
- **balanced and articulated elevations; and**
- **a considered palette of quality, durable materials.**

Submitted drawings and the Design and Access Statement must clearly demonstrate how the design fulfils the above.

Development that seeks to apply stock book building types without regard to the local context and a desire to enhance will not be supported.

Further guidance on delivering architectural cohesion is presented within **City Notes LW-5 to LW-9 of the Living & Working Manual.**

Residential Buildings

Homes play a fundamental role in people's lives and their quality should reflect this, with designs creating affordable, attractive and functional homes that fulfil the health and well-being needs of residents.

The architectural style of the building will play an important role in achieving this quality, as will the internal layout and outdoor spaces. Internally designs must align with the National Space Standards (DM DPD Policy DM10), but this should not be the sole consideration in delivering internal layouts. Designs must also apply efficient and functional layouts within these parameters, ensuring the arrangement of internal space is driven by resident well-being and how they will use the rooms and spaces.

Beyond the internal elements of a home, designs must deliver functional outdoor amenity space, ensuring the quality and functionality of the home's internal environment extends into its outdoor spaces. These spaces, whether integrated or external, individual or communal, must create private, functional areas where residents can relax and connect to the outdoor environment and nature (helping create biophilic led design). The City Council has minimum private amenity space requirements (as below) to help achieve these requirements, but recognises there may be bespoke designs that can deliver quality amenity space under these thresholds. Where a proposal is seeking to achieve this, it must demonstrate how their reduced provision will deliver the quality, useable outdoor space needed to serve the residents.

Within apartments or other communal housing schemes, private balconies are encouraged; supported by appropriate lobby, communal and social spaces with layouts and spaces that support exercise, well-being and social activity.

In designing these internal and external environments, architects must also consider and effectively mitigate against any potential conflicts with adjacent uses. In helping to create sustainable communities, a mix of uses are encouraged, but the introduction of residential uses into areas of existing employment or leisure uses must not lead to unacceptable restrictions on these existing activities.

Design Principle 16: High Quality Homes

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP27 | TP37 DM DPD Policies - DM2 | DM10

Homes will be expected to support residents' mental and physical quality of life. This should be achieved through the creation of homes that fulfil the visual and physical needs of its occupants; ensuring proposals:

- **create efficient, functional internal layouts;**
- **maximise levels of natural light;**
- **are located where adjacent uses will not negatively impact on resident quality of life (air quality, external noise, air pollution);**
- **are potentially adaptable; and**
- **provide sufficient, usable indoor and outdoor space for all occupants.**

The city's minimum requirements for outdoor residential amenity space are:

- **70 m^2 minimum for a family home;**
- **52 m^2 for 2 bed houses;**
- **Balconies a minimum of 1.5 metre in depth;**
- **For each apartment: 5 m^2 (1 bed flat), 7 m^2 (2 bed flat) & 9 m^2 (3 bed flat); and**
- **10 m^2 per resident for C2 Uses & HMO's.**

Further guidance on the delivery of high quality homes is outlined in **City Notes LW-10 to LW-15 of the Living & Working Manual.**

Residential Extensions

Household extensions must effectively balance the desires of residents, with the need to create a design that complements or enhances its host building and the wider area; whilst not unacceptably impacting on the amenity (privacy and overshadowing) of neighbours.

To inform designs, architects and designers should undertake a character assessment of the host buildings and its surroundings (as detailed at Design Principle 2) to understand the constraints and inform potential design solutions. Where dwellings are located within the green belt, the size of extensions will be limited (as detailed in City Note LW-17) to help protected the openness of the green belt.

The resulting design must be of a form and design that complements the host building, and does not over-dominate or substantially alter its overall appearance, scale or mass of the building. If an acceptable balance cannot be achieved, it may not be possible to extend the property in the manner desired.

The architectural style of an extension does not have to match the host building (contemporary design responses are often preferred), but it must result in an addition that complements and effectively integrates with the existing building. This could be via a well designed contemporary or pastiche extension.

Design Principle 17: Household Extensions

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP27 | TP37 DM DPD Policies - DM2 | DM10

The design of household extensions* must respond to, and complement the character of their host building and surroundings

Proposals must align with the 45 degree rule and minimum privacy distances to help protect resident amenity of adjacent dwellings.**

***extension include detached elements such garages, car ports and workshops**
****** resident amenity guidance detailed at City Notes LW-3 & LW-4 of Living & Working Manual**

Further guidance on the design of household extension is presented in **City Note LW-16 to LW-24 of the Living & Working Manual.**

Rooftop Extensions

To introduce a rooftop extension onto an existing building, designs must respond to the architectural style and scale of the existing building, ensuring proposals do not result in overbearing, out of proportioned elements that negatively impact on the host building. Proposals that visually alter the scale of the building must be of a design that enhances the building and its surroundings.

Designs that seek to create a statement in contrast to its host must demonstrate their rationale and create a response with a considered and well-articulated form that effectively delivers the quality and contrast desired.

Proposals will be assessed on a case by case basis, taking into account the particular architectural style and detailing of the host buildings and likely impact on the surrounding area.

The City Council will seek to resist the clustering of rooftop extensions that could lead to a collective terracing effect and/or negative change in character.

Design Principle 18: Rooftop Extensions

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP27

The design of rooftop extensions must effectively respond to the existing building and its surroundings; acknowledging the architectural style and scale of the existing building, to create a proposal that is appropriate in scale and form to its host building.

Non-Residential Developments

The city's mix of non-residential buildings contribute significantly to its diverse built environment, often having a prominent role in the character of an area. For the city's citizens, these buildings play an important role in their lives, serving as places of work, leisure and cultural activity.

The experiences people have with these buildings will play a fundamental role on the success of the building and the use occupying it. Designs must positively respond to this, ensuring they deliver an external form that enhances and engages with its surroundings, with an internal environment that serves the use function and supports the health and well-being of users and employees.

Simple interventions such as the introduction of glazing can help enhance internal and external environments, forming a visual connection between the internal and external environments; whilst introducing natural light into spaces. Where this translates into a formal 'shop front', designs should acknowledge the architectural character of the host building. Equally it may be possible to accommodate ground floor uses that help engage and activate its surroundings.

Design Principle 19: Designing Non-Residential Buildings

BDP Policy – PG3 |TP27 DPD Policies - DM2 | DM8| DM9

Non-residential developments must introduce architectural solutions that effectively balance the operational needs of the use, with the well-being and health of its users, employees and customers; and the quality of the surrounding environment.

In designing schemes to appropriately meet the needs of the use and its surroundings, further use-specific design guidance is presented in **City Note LW-25 to LW-36 in the Living & Working Manual.** This relates to:

- Accessible Buildings (City Note LW-25)
- Community uses (City Notes LW-26)
- Places of work (City Notes LW-27)
- Warehousing and Industrial (City Notes LW-28)

- Retail & leisure (City Notes LW-29)
- Extensions to non-residential uses (City Notes LW-30)
- Shop front design (City Notes LW-31 to LW-36)

Tall Buildings

Tall buildings will play an increasingly important role in the future of Birmingham, optimising the city's land resource in key locations to provide homes, offices and leisure uses that support the city's growth. Through their efficient use of land, tall buildings will help the city respond to, and balance, the competing land use needs across the city centre; ensuring the housing and employment requirements are met, whilst enabling resilient transport and green infrastructure networks to be created.

In realising these opportunities, the architecture must be exemplar, applying a considered scale, form and façade to create a building that fulfils the needs of occupants; integrates with its streetscape; and positively adds to the city's environment and skyline.

Designs must also mitigate and prevent any potential adverse effect on the surrounding environment and uses in terms of wind turbulence, overshadowing, noise, reflected glare; or aviation, navigation and telecommunication interference.

Where a scheme proposes a shoulder building or surrounding cluster, these elements must be of an appropriate scale and mass to not detract from the tall building. They must be one element of a cohesive design; and be used to help the proposal integrate effectively with its surroundings, performing a transitional role between the tower and its surrounding context. Within this role, the shoulder must engage with its surroundings via activation and/or activity.

The form and height of a shoulder will also influence the effectiveness of any transition, acknowledging the scale and character of the surrounding context and not eroding the prominence and elegance of the tower. Shoulder heights no greater than 1/3rd of the tower are considered to effectively balance these requirements; but the City Council will assess shoulder height and form on a case by case basis, considering the surrounding context and wider proposal.

Definition of a Tall Building

The city's definition of a tall building within the city centre is a building or structure of over 15 storeys; or that will result in a significant change to the city's skyline. Beyond this initial threshold, the City Council categories tall buildings as:

Low rise towers – 15+ storeys | Medium rise towers - 20+ storeys | High rise towers – 30+ storeys|
Skyscrapers – 40+ storeys

Outside the city centre, a building will be considered tall where it will result in a recognisable change to, or impact on, the character and/or skyline of the surrounding area.

Design Principle 20: Creating Tall Buildings

BDP Policy – PG2 | PG3 | TP27 DM DPD Policies - DM2

Tall buildings must deliver 360^{o} innovative architecture that responds positively to their surrounding; engaging and activating street environments, whilst introducing a silhouette, body and crown that enhances the city-wide skyline and respects key views, existing landmarks and the city's historic environment.

Proposals must represent deliverable outcomes, with equal focus given to the building's form, façade detailing and materials palette; leading to a slender, well-articulated building.

Where proposals would lead to tall building clusters, architects must demonstrate the forming cluster will improve the quality of the surrounding environment and wider cityscape.

Secondary shoulder buildings or clusters proposed with a tall building must be subordinate to the primary building; respect the scale and mass of the streetscape; and be appropriate to their context, with a justified height if greater than 1/3rd of the primary tower's height.

Designs must be informed by appropriate micro-climate studies, ensuring any adverse impacts are effectively mitigated against.

The development of well-designed tall building may be supported in the locations outlined in City Note LW-45 in the Living & Working Manual.

Further guidance on designing tall buildings is provided by **City Notes LW-37 to LW-45 in the Living & Working Manual.**

Developing with Birmingham's Water Assets

Birmingham's blue infrastructure (rivers, canals, streams, lakes and ponds) has played an important role in the historic development of the city; and remain vital environmental assets providing a range of functions and facilities to the city and its communities.

Acknowledged and utilised by development, these assets provide unique settings and character areas which have the potential to add substantially to the design of any scheme.

Development adjacent to Canals

Birmingham's extensive canal network is a particularly important asset providing a multi-functional resource that can act as a catalyst for regeneration and provide a

network of spaces serving as travel routes; locations for sports, leisure and cultural activities; and ecological and biodiversity habitats and corridors. The network also contributes to the city's historic environment; and is an important element of the city's water management system.

Developments adjacent to these waterways present opportunities to enhance them and their functions; benefiting occupants and the wider users of the network. To help realise these opportunities, developments must actively engage with the water asset, creating outward looking developments that enhance connections with these spaces and contribute to their animation and use.

Developments adjacent to Rivers & watercourses

Development adjacent to the city's 3 rivers (Rivers Tame, Rea & Cole), Ordinary watercourses and other water assets*, also create opportunities for their enhancement. But unlike the managed nature of the city's canal network, a number of these assets have the potential to impact on fluvial flood risk. In some areas these may be classed as 'heavily modified water bodies' and may generate significant fluvial flood risk in the immediate surrounding area.

Where rivers and tributaries are totally culverted or canalised, opportunities should be used by development to daylight and naturalise these elements, enhancing their value, reducing the potential of fluvial flood risk and improving the water quality.

Development adjacent to such assets must have an understanding of the potential risks related to the asset and how new development could impact on this. Further guidance on how development must respond to these potential risks is detailed with the city's '*Sustainable Management of Urban Rivers and Floodplains: Supplementary Planning Document'*.

Designers should also consult with the appropriate agencies (such as the Environment Agency) during the early stages of the design process; and align with their relevant guidance.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1166/sustainable_management_of_urban_rivers_and_floodplains_supplementary_planning_document.pdf

Proposals must also consult and appropriately respond to the information contained within the Birmingham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

**Rivers are classified as Main River or Ordinary Watercourses, with many other forms of waterbodies, including reservoirs and canals. These features are often managed and/or maintained by multiple parties which include Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, Severn Trent Water, Canals and River Trust and Riparian Owners*

Design Principle 21: Developing Adjacent to Water Assets

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP7 | TP12 | TP27 | TP37 DM DPD Policies - DM2

Development adjacent to a canal, river or water course must positively relate to its character and setting; and utilise opportunities to deliver enhancement to the water side environment and its use. Proposals should*:

a) **use the water asset as a key focal point;**
b) **overlook and engage with the water space and associated towpath or waterside environment;**
c) **enable and enhance safe public and private access (including mobility impaired) to the waterside and wider route network;**
d) **not restrict access to the riverside;**
e) **not create blank elements or high (over 1.2m) non-permeable boundaries at waterside frontage;**
f) **introduce active uses at water frontage and where appropriate, enable use spillage into public spaces;**
g) **enhance public spaces, routes and towpaths to aid their multi-use function and wider environment quality;**
h) **aid way-finding of the city's canal towpath network, balanced against keeping spaces free of clutter;**
i) **use opportunities to daylight and naturalise culverts and canalised elements;**
j) **support and promote appropriate water based travel and exercise; and**
k) **not lead to unacceptable shading of the water environment or contribute to a tunnelling effect.**

Development adjacent to the city's rivers or other water courses should effectively mitigate against any potential fluvial flood risk resulting from development.

***in consultation with the Canal & River Trust and/or Environment Agency.**

Further guidance on developing adjacent to Birmingham's water assets are detailed within **City Notes LW-46 to LW-48 in the Living & Working Places Manual.**

Development Works and Alterations Involving Historic Assets

The city's historic assets play a defining role in characterising Birmingham, providing a portfolio of high quality buildings and places that must continue to have a key role in its future.

In continuing this role, development proposals or works to assets must effectively balance the need to conserve the significance of the asset with their desires for future use. Whilst the City Council will work proactively with property owners and developers to create viable solutions for conserving the city's historic assets, solutions need to ensure the significance of the asset is a primary consideration in designing proposals and the detailing of works.

Through a clear understanding of significance, proposals can establish the scope or opportunity for any works or development to take place, ensuring the impact on the historic fabric is minimised and any new additions are sensitively located, scaled and designed. This focus should extend to the detailing of buildings, ensuring existing

historic windows and façade details are preserved, restored / reused, with replacement only considered as a last resort.

Where proposals are seeking to introduce a new development into a conservation area, the design orientation and scale of the building must be informed by the characteristics of the designated area. Modern interpretations or well considered traditional forms may be considered in this context.

The demolition of a heritage asset will rarely be accepted as part of a development proposal; but where exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated, proposals must conceive a replacement building that positively adds to the historic environment.

Listed buildings are sensitive to alterations as these can affect their special character and appearance, as well as the way their historic fabric functions. Listed building consent is required for all changes to a listed building that affect its character. This can range from removing historic decoration, to alterations to the building's fabric, cleaning of masonry or installing new heating systems.

It is recommended applicants seek guidance from the City Conservation Officer prior to undertaking any works or alterations to a listed building, through the city's pre-application process.

Design Principle 22: Development and Works Involving Historic Assets

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP12

Proposals involving or affecting an historic asset* must ensure the works or development proposed do not have a detrimental impact on the historic significance of the asset or the building fabric associated with this.

Extensions and Alterations

The design of extensions or an alteration must consider the physical impact they will have on the asset, ensuring the scale, design, materials, location and connecting fabric respects the character of the asset. Where proposals will lead to an unacceptable change or impact, they will not be supported.

Windows in listed buildings

Alterations or works to windows within a listed building must conserve the historic significance of the building, with proposals applying the sequential approach detailed in City Note LW-50.

Demolition in conservation area

Demolition of a building within a conservation area will not be supported, unless the proposal will lead to enhancement (as detailed at City Note LW-52 of Living & Working Manual) of the area.

Demolition of a non-designated heritage asset

Loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be resisted, unless its loss can be justified due to structural integrity, condition, wider design benefit and/or development viability.

New buildings in conservation areas

The design of new buildings within a conservation area must relate to and acknowledge the specific characteristics of the area. If replacing an existing building that adds to the area, proposals should not seek to replicate it architecturally, but its orientation, scale and mass must guide the form of the replacement. Buildings that have a negative impact on an area should not be used as design cue for new development.

***listed building, building in a conservation area or a non-designated heritage asset**

Further specific design guidance related to the above works is contained with **City Notes LW-49 to LW-54 of the Living & Working Manual.**

Lighting of Buildings

Illumination of Buildings & Spaces

The effective lighting of public spaces and buildings are an important element of their design, ensuring places remain safe and usable beyond day-light hours. Appropriately considered and designed, lighting strategies can create dynamic and exciting night-time environments, providing spaces and buildings with an evening persona to help support safe, evening activity.

The creation of a site specific, creative lighting scheme can be enhanced through the commissioning of ~~an~~ a professional artist, whose creative input as part of the design team, will help deliver greater gains from a pre-allocated budget.

In designing these evening environments, proposals must ensure the lighting and its associated infrastructure is appropriate to the character of the area and any host building; will not impact on wildlife habitats or activity; and is maintainable.

Operational Flood lighting

Flood lighting can contribute to the security of sites and premises; and enable outdoor business operations, cultural and leisure facilities to run beyond daylight hours. In designing these systems, proposals must consider adjacent uses and ensure any potential for light spill is mitigated.

Design Principle 23: Lighting of Buildings and Spaces

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP27 | TP37 DM DPD Policies DM2| DM5

Illumination of buildings and space

Development should apply external lighting designs that ensure public spaces remain safe during non-daylight hours. Where appropriate, projects should use professional artists to enhance the creativity and quality of lighting proposals.

Façade lighting of buildings should seek to enhance the night-time presence of appropriate buildings, considering their stature and role within the city.

The furniture and structures used to mount lighting must not contribute to street cluttering; and should serve dual functions where possible.

The design and style of columns and mounting infrastructure must enhance the character of their surrounding and align with an establish furniture palette, where appropriate.

Lighting infrastructure attached to buildings, must not detract from the architectural quality of the host building.

External lighting proposal must not damage or adversely affect the habitat or night-time activities of notable species.

Floodlighting

The use of flood lighting to support the operation of a building or use during night-time periods, must be appropriately located and specified to ensure they do not impact on an adjacent residential use, transport infrastructure, wildlife habitat or area of nature conservation.

Further guidance on floodlighting and the lighting of buildings & public spaces is presented in **City Notes LW-55 to LW-60 within the Living & Working City Manual**.

Creating Safe Buildings

Development proposals that have the potential to be viewed as a terrorist target must engage the West Midland's Counter-Terrorism Unit at the early stage of their design process. This engagement will highlight any use specific recommendations related to the development that designs must effectively integrate.

Beyond any use specific requirements, the City Council supports the Counter-Terrorism Unit's desire to increase the use of laminated glazing within developments at prominent locations.

Laminated Glazing

The City Council encourages the installation of laminated glazing in all facades (upto 4th storey) within the city centre's retail core; and those that overlook primary streets, large public spaces, sports, cultural and leisure destinations, or transport hubs. Where laminated glass cannot be installed, blast film should be applied to standard glazing systems.

Laminated glass is a substantially more robust glazing system against blasts or explosions, reduces the potential for human injuries or fatalities caused by airborne glass.

Beyond its strength against an explosion, the properties of the glazing also lead to security gains for the building, reducing the potential for forced entry via the glazed areas; and helping to reduce noise.

National guidance on counter-terrorism and crowded places can be sourced at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/619411/170614_crowded-places-guidance_v1.pdf

Design Principle 24: Safe places - Anti-terror Measures

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP27 | TP37

Developments located within the city centre's retail core and those that overlook city centre primary streets; large public spaces; sports, cultural and leisure destinations; or transport hubs must introduce measures that help protect occupants and enhance the city's resistance to terror activity.

Design of Waste Storage

All development requires the appropriate management of waste, with storage being a primary consideration in the design of a development. To be effective and acceptable, waste stores must be secure; and of a design that integrates with the development. It must also be of a sufficient size to accommodate the waste bins associated with the building's use. Where communal facilities are to be provided in

development such as apartments, the store should be supported by appropriate infrastructure (such as waste shoots and in-flat recycling bins) that enables ease of use. Movement of bins must also be considered, with at-grade or appropriate ramped access.

If the development is to be served by the City Council's refuse collection service, the capacity of the store should reflect the bins and containers associated with this service.

Design Principle 25: Design of Waste Storage

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP13

In designing waste storage, proposals must ensure they align with the following principles:

- **waste bins must be stored in a bespoke store, or within the rear garden of houses;**
- **where possible, storage should be provided within the building;**
- **where independent stores are to be provided their design must complement the building, be constructed of robust materials, secure and covered;**
- **communal facilities should be well located and supplemented by additional infrastructure to encourage use and promote recycling;**
- **stores must be sited in a location that does not impact on property frontage or the surrounding environment;**
- **mixed use development must have separate stores for the different uses; and**
- **stores must have at-grade access and be large enough to accommodate the bins needed to serve the development.**

Telecommunications Infrastructure

The need to have modern, efficient telecommunications infrastructure is an essential element of life and it is important Birmingham's' communities and businesses are able to benefit and access these technologies as they continues to evolve.

Whilst the city wants to ensure it benefits from modern telecommunications, the associated infrastructure must be designed, sited and of a scale that minimises its visual and physical impact on the buildings they are attached to; and the character and amenity of their surroundings.

Having established a desired area to locate infrastructure, proposals must undertake a detailed assessment of potential sites (and specific locations within a site) and infrastructure options, to establish a site and infrastructure that will have the

minimum impact on its surrounding area (and uses) and building it will be attached to (if relevant). This assessment must include existing infrastructure that could accommodate the proposal via sharing of base or mounting equipment.

The city has a number of locations which are *most sensitive* to the installation of telecommunications infrastructure, such as listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, sites of nature conservation, scheduled ancient monuments, and the grounds of education and health institutions. New installations in these locations should be avoided and may only be acceptable if there is a demonstrated technical requirement; there are no more suitable *less sensitive* or *more sensitive* locations; and the specific siting and design pay sufficient regard to the high sensitivity of the setting.

More sensitive locations comprise residential areas and areas of high quality open space where new installations may be acceptable but should be carefully sited and designed to minimise the impact on the visual amenity of the area and on residential amenity.

Less sensitive locations comprise all other areas including commercial settings.

In all locations, the design, siting and scale of infrastructure must be a primary consideration. Whether located on a building or in landscape, the infrastructure and/or the cladding around it must complement its surroundings and not be a generic, utilitarian form that enhances its visual presence and detracts from its host and surroundings. The overriding design ethos must be to limit the visual impact of the installation as much as possible and not detract from the visual amenity of the host site and surroundings.

Design Principle 26: Design of Telecommunications Infrastructure

BDP Policy – PG3 DM DPD Policy – DM16

In the siting and design of telecommunications infrastructure, proposals must undertake a detailed assessment of all sites within the desired location area, ensuring the least sensitive site is selected. If the selected location is a *'Most sensitive or More sensitive location'* (as detailed in City Note LW-61 of the Living & Working Manual), the assessment must clearly demonstrate and justify why a 'less sensitive' location cannot be utilised.

The design, location and size of the infrastructure must be a key consideration for all telecommunications infrastructure. The infrastructure proposed must be of a size appropriate to its surroundings; and be sited to minimise the visual and physical impact on the host building, character of the surrounding area and/or amenity of adjacent uses. This must be considered singularly and cumulatively, where existing infrastructure is present.

To help mask the visual presence of the infrastructure, proposals must create bespoke, non-utilitarian designs or utilise high quality cladding and/or landscaping.

Further guidance on the design and location of telecommunications infrastructure is detailed in City Note LW-61 to 63of the Living & Working Manual.

END OF SECTION

EFFICIENT & FUTURE-READY

On 11 June 2019 the City Council declared a climate emergency and set an ambition to become a net zero carbon city by 2030. To aid this, the City Council wants development to deliver energy efficient, people focused architecture that endures; providing long term gains for the city and its citizens. In order to effectively achieve this, architects must create the most sustainable, efficient and future-aware buildings possible, ensuring energy efficiency and climate adaptation are embedded in the design process.

Successfully achieved, this will create buildings and places that require less energy to build and operate, in turn helping the city meet its carbon reduction targets, whilst reducing the energy burden for occupants. They should also enable users and occupants to adapt buildings; to respond to changes in climate and user needs.

To deliverthese outcomes, sustainable principles must be applied from the outset of the design process to ensure potential passive gains are harnessed, appropriate build methods employed and technologies and infrastructure integrated.

Aided by international best practice, evolving technology and collaborative working, architects and designers should consider and integrate the following elements in their designs.

Energy Efficiency

Design should seek to reduce the energy burden of all development, utilising build methods, materials and technologies to help reduce heat and lighting needs of a building; allied with a considered layout that utilises orientation to positively use solar gain in key spaces.

Conserving Water Resources and Maximising Water Efficiency

In understanding the water needs of the building and its users; designs should introduce measures and technology that aid its efficient use of. The efficiency of the water infrastructure in the building will play a primary role in this; but designs should also consider the use of rainwater harvesting and the reuse of grey water wherever possible.

Decentralised Energy Generation

Proposals should utilise site specific characteristics, with appropriate technologies, to introduce low and zero carbon energy infrastructure (in line with BDP policy TP4) within the development. Where it is currently unviable to utilise such technology, the

introduction of infrastructure to aid future installation should be appropriately considered.

Flexible and Adaptable Building Designs

Through construction methods, layout and division of space, designs must consider how buildings could be adapted in the future to meet the changing needs of uses and users. This is particularly relevant to residential units, ensuring internal spaces are designed to serve existing users effectively, whilst having the ability to respond and adapt to changing needs.

Building Re-use and Sustainable Materials

Allied with the efficient running of a building, due consideration must also be given to the sustainability of the construction process to be utilised. This should extend from an appropriate assessment of whether any existing buildings could be effectively re-used, to utilising off-site build methods and sustainably sourced materials.

Climate Change Adaptation

Linked to elements of the above, designs must give appropriate weight to existing climate conditions and the likely effects of further climate change; specifying robust landscape, materials and installing infrastructure that can help the building manage and respond the potential effects of climate adaptation, increased rainfall and temperatures.

BREEAM Requirement

As outlined in BDP Policy TP3, all new non-residential developments in excess of 1,000 sq. m. (gross permitted floorspace) or on a site area of 0.5 ha or more, should aim to meet BREEAM standard excellent (or any future national equivalent) unless it can be demonstrated that the cost of achieving this would make the proposed unviable.

Design Principle 27: Creating efficient & future-ready buildings

BDP Policy – TP1 |TP2 | TP3 | TP4 | TP5 | TP37

Allied with the policy requirements of the BDP (TP1 to TP5), where viable and appropriate, the design of development must effectively incorporate measures and infrastructure to help create buildings and spaces that reduce their environmental burden; and the long term financial burden for occupiers. In seeking to achieve this, proposals must demonstrate they have integrated or considered the following within their design process:

a. **Energy efficiency – using technology, design elements and the site's characteristics to create thermally efficient buildings.**

b. **Conserving Water resources and maximising water efficiency – through water efficient infrastructure, harvesting of rainwater and use of grey-water.**
c. **Decentralised energy generation – install low-carbon decentralised energy infrastructure appropriate to the site and surroundings where viable.**
d. **Flexible and adaptable buildings – create designs and use construction methods that could enable future alterations.**
e. **Building re-use and sustainable materials – utilising modular building methods, effectively integrating existing buildings into a scheme and using low carbon materials.**
f. **Climate Change Adaptation– ensure landscapes, materials, façade treatments and infrastructure are appropriate to existing and future climate.**

Further guidance on creating efficient and future-ready buildings is presented within **City Notes EF-1 to EF-7 of the Efficient & Future Ready Manual.**

END OF SECTION

FULFILLING DESIGN QUALITY

The Design Guide's Principles and accompanying City Manuals outline a framework of design cues to help ensure only high quality proposals receive approval. Whilst this is an important stage in achieving high quality design, it is the successful construction of these consents that will deliver the outcomes sought.

As the development process commences post-planning, it is important the designs, details and concepts approved are physically delivered and not deteriorated during this process.

This design retention and delivery process should begin before and during the planning process, ensuring proposals being submitted for consent are physically and financially viable.

Detailed Drawings

In order to make an informed planning judgement on a proposal, a number of detailed drawings and supporting information may need to be submitted (as detailed by the City Council's Validation Checklist). This package of information should include appropriate construction drawings, which demonstrate how the design presented will be detailed and delivered.

These drawings should comprise a number of bay studies (sections, part elevations) at 1:20 scale to illustrate how the façade (*such as key junctions, materials, windows, rain water goods*) detail presented will be achieved. This information will provide clarity and confidence to the City Council and applicant their proposal can be achieved.

If such detail is not submitted with the planning application, the Planning Officer will request them during the determination period, which may cause delays. The City Council will not defer the submission of this information that is critical to design quality via condition.

Landscape proposals

Equally detailed landscape drawings and rationale statement should also be submitted to demonstrate how the landscape, public realm and any public open space would be constructed. The submission of this information may be accepted via pre-commencement condition, where mutually supported. In relation to Public Open Space provision, written specifications alongside the detailed drawings will need to be submitted for approval pre-implementation.

Where appropriate, the City Council may condition the implementation of the submitted landscape/ Ecological plans and require a practical completion report to discharge of condition.

Robust Materials & Detailing

Material and detailing choices play an important role in successfully translating a design from concept to reality. In selecting materials and detailing, the City Council will seek to ensure they are durable and robust enough to withstand the British climate; ensuring they function correctly and weather well overtime, retaining the design quality of the building through its lifecycle.

The selection of a small palette of quality materials may aid this process, reducing the need for junctions, abutments and flashing details; which can increase the potential for weather damage or degradation.

Sample Panels

To assist the selection and approval of materials and façade detailing the City Council may condition the creation of sample panels to demonstrate how these elements will effectively work together. Panels may be requested to demonstrate façade detailing, window reveals, rain water management, material joints and junctions. They may also be required to demonstrate the construction methods and workmanship to be applied to the building.

The request for such information will be at the discretion of the City Council.

Retaining Design Quality - Amendments & Value Engineering

Whilst the City Council recognises that proposals may need to alter as a result of constraints identified post planning, the principle of actively up-designing for planning and then lowering quality post approval will not be accepted.

Value engineering will inevitably be applied through the construction process, but it should not be used as a tool to deteriorate the quality of the building or landscape. Its role should be to resolve construction challenges, ensure best value and aid build efficiency.

The City Council will use non-material or minor amendment consent to manage alterations to approved schemes. However, where there is clear intent to reduce the quality of the building, such consents will not be supported.

If an applicant wishes to substantially alter the design of a scheme, a new application should be submitted.

Construction Quality

The construction of the development will be the ultimate test of a scheme's successful integration into the city's landscape. Appointed contractors must ensure quality workmanship is applied across a scheme, delivering the design quality approved. The client should be confident the contractors appointed are capable of delivering the quality and finish sought. As detailed above, sample panels created by the appointed contractors, will aid this process.

To help manage design quality, the City Council supports the retention of a design team from concept through to completion. This helps retain a clear understanding of how and why the proposal's design has evolved; and should help ensure the design concept and integrity is maintained.

On large development schemes the City Council recommends developers appoint an experienced clerk of works to manage the quality of the work being undertaken.

Design Principle 28: Fulfilling Design Quality

BDP Policy – PG3 | TP27 | TP37

Development proposals submitted for planning permission must be appropriately detailed and financially assessed to ensure the architecture and landscape design presented is realised. To help support this, applicants will be required to provide:

- **a number of detailed drawings;**
- **a quality, robust panel of materials and detailing, with relevant written specifications;**
- **sample panels of materials and detailing, created by the appointed contractors, as requested;**
- **reflect the building quality proposed in any financial appraisal; and**
- **detailing of the Clerk of Works appointed.**

Where an applicant is seeking to amend their proposal post-approval, this must not lead to a reduction in quality.

END OF SECTION

SUBMITTING A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Policy Alignment

The Design Guide is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, joining the hierarchy of documents used to assess development proposals across Birmingham. It builds on the core design policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12: Achieving well-designed places (para 124 to 132), the National Design Guide and the Birmingham Development Plan Policy PG3: Place making.

Beyond these core national and local design policies, different elements of the Guide will also supplement other Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) and Development Management Development Plan Document (DM DPD) policies, references to which are given under the individual Themes.

Additional Guidance and Design Tools

Some areas of the city have their own focused planning guidance (statutory and non-statutory)
in the form of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), Frameworks, masterplans and Conservation Area Management Plans. These place specific documents contain detail and design requirements that should be considered and implemented in conjunction with guidance in this document.

These guidance documents are located on the Council's website:
www.birmingham.gov.uk/directory/10/approved_planning_policies

Information to Support Applications

In order to help explain and illustrate how the design of a proposal has successfully aligned with the Design Themes, applicants should submit sufficient information and drawings to explain the rationale behind the design and accurately present the development proposal sought.

The nature and scale of the development being proposed may dictate the level of detail an applicant will need to submit in support of their application; this will be at the discretion of the City Council.

The City Council's submission requirements are detailed within the adopted submission checklist, present on the City Council's website:
www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/312/planning_application_checklists

Design & Access Statements

Architects and designers should use their Design and Access (D&A) Statements to clearly explain the rationale for their design.

The City Council recommends framing D&A statement around the Design Guide, with sufficient written and drawn information to demonstrate how proposals will successfully align with the Design Guide's 5 Design Themes and associated design principles.

As detailed within the Birmingham ID, understanding the context and characteristics of the surrounding area should play an important role in influencing the design of a scheme. The design story told in the D&A statement should begin with a character assessment, leading to an identification of key characteristics that have been utilised and acknowledged by the scheme's design.

Consents and Pre-Application Engagement

The City Council encourages applicants to contact and engage with the Council prior to undertaking any works or submitting an application for consent. This will help ensure the correct consents are sought and initial advice and feedback can be given to the applicant to assist with their proposals.

More information on what developments require planning consent can be sourced at: *www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20160/planning_applications*

It should be noted that specific consents may be required for works, alterations or repairs to historic assets; and for any works (pruning or to removal) to trees within conservation areas or covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Confirmation should be sought from the City's Conservation or Arboricultural Officer to establish what consents are required prior to any works taking place.

Works undertaken without consent may lead to enforcement action being taken.

Formal pre-application advice

The City Council operates a formal pre-application service that it recommends all major applications undertake. This service enables constructive feedback to be given on development proposal, highlights key policy considerations and potential constraints prior to proposals entering the planning process. It also enables initial consultation to take place with other City Council Departments, such as Highways, Ecology, Arboriculture, Leisure and Regulatory Services, to establish the information and assessments they will require to support the application.

For major schemes in the city centre, proposals are encouraged to submit 3D models that can be sited in the city's virtual city centre model, enabling informed feedback to be shared on scale, mass and siting of proposals.

Used constructively, this service can enable proposals to travel through the planning process more efficiently. However, it cannot guarantee the outcome of a planning application.

Further information on the pre-application service and costs can be sourced at: www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20160/planning_applications/79/pre-application_advice

Works to & Consents for Historic Assets

Historic assets across the city are often protected to help retain and preserve their historic significance; in some cases requiring specific consents to undertake any alterations or repairs to them.

Listed Buildings & Structures

For a listed building or structure, listed building consent is likely to be required to undertake any works to the building. Such works include internal and external alterations, new heating and ventilation systems, cleaning of external masonry, painting of historic surfaces and replacement or alterations of windows to the construction of an extension. This is by no means an exhaustive list; as such the City's Conservation Officer must be consulted prior to any works taking place.

Depending on the scale of works proposed to a listed building, a planning application may also be required.

Conservation Areas

Within a conservation area, planning permission may be required for works that would otherwise have been permitted development, or where an Article 4 direction has been placed over the conservation area, removing certain permitted development. Consent is also required for works to trees and the demolition of an asset in excess of 115 cubic metres.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Works affecting a Scheduled Ancient Monument will require Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent from Historic England.

Registered Parks and Gardens

No separate permission is required for development affecting a registered park or garden. However, the potential impact development may have on the asset will be a key consideration in determining a planning application.

Local and Undesignated Heritage Assets

No separate permission is required for development affecting a local or non-designated heritage asset. However, the potential impact development may have on the asset will be a key consideration in determining the planning application.

Building Regulations

It is likely that you will need building regulations approval, even if you do not need planning permission. Separate application forms and approvals will need to be sought.

Building regulations are the national minimum building standards that provide acceptable levels of health and safety for people who occupy or visit buildings. The regulations are also concerned with energy conservation and making buildings more accessible for all disabled people. Most building work must be checked to ensure it complies with the regulations.

Please check with the City's Building Consultancy Services prior to undertaking any works.

www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20008/planning_and_development/459/building_consultancy

Professional Expertise

The City Council recommends appointing appropriate professional expertise to design your development proposal, support it through the planning process and successfully deliver the outcome.

The size, location and nature of development is likely to dictate the scale of professional expertise required, but as a minimum it is recommended an architect or architectural technologist and planning agent be appointed to design your proposal and assist you in gaining planning permission and building regulations.

More complex developments (due to size of development or characteristics of the site) may require additional professional expertise, such as building conservation specialists, ecologists, arboricuturist, transport engineer, landscape architect, professional artists, town planner, drainage and flood risk engineer and building surveyor.

Construction Logistics

Beyond the design of a development proposal, applicants should consider any impacts the construction of their proposal will have on the city's transport network; and highway consents that may be necessary. Within the road network, consideration needs to be given to the movement of construction traffic and how this may impact on existing vehicle movement, parking and air quality.

Demolition and construction have the potential to generate significant air pollution in the form of particulate emissions (dust) as well as the use of construction plant that emits high levels of nitrogen dioxide. Furthermore, these activities have the potential to cause noise complaints. Developments must demonstrate how these impacts will be mitigated through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Schemes also need to consider and effectively mitigate against any disruption construction will cause to existing pedestrian and cycle routes. Where disruption will occur, developments need to install temporary measures that where possible, retain the efficiency of a route and not introduce additional obstacles or compromise safety. A plan of the temporary route shall be clearly displayed. These temporary measures should avoid exposing pedestrians and cyclists to sources of air polluting caused by the development or surrounding environment.

Developers and contractors should liaise with Highways Development Management Team to develop appropriate solutions for their construction site.

END OF SECTION

EXISTING GUIDANCE TO BE SUPERSEDED

Once adopted, the design guide will supersede the following supplementary planning documents:

1. 45 Degree Code for Residential Extensions (March 2006)
2. Access for People with Disabilities: Supplementary Planning Document (March 2006)
3. Car Park Design Guide (N/A)
4. Extending your home: Home extensions design guide (March 2007)
5. Floodlighting of Sports Facilities Car Parks and Secure Areas (March 2000)
6. High Places: A planning policy framework for tall buildings (March 2003)
7. Large format banner advertisements: Supplementary Planning Document (March 2008)
8. Lighting Places: A lighting strategy for the city centre and local centres of Birmingham (June 2008)
9. Location of Advertisement Hoardings (N/A)
10. Places for All (November 2001)
11. Places for Living (March 2001)
12. Shopfronts Design Guide (April 1996)
13. Telecommunications development: mobile phone infrastructure: Supplementary Planning Document (March 2008)
14. Guidelines for Bedroom Sizes for Student Accommodation (N/A)
15. Canalside development in Birmingham Design Guidelines (N/A)

END OF SECTION

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