



**Birmingham City Council
Local Plan**

**Development Management in Birmingham
Development Plan Document**

**Standards for Residential Development
Topic Paper**

October 2019

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Appendices

1. Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (March 2015 as updated)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This topic paper has been produced to support 'Policy D10 Standards for Residential Development' proposed in the Development Management in Birmingham Development Plan Document (DMB). Policy DM10 seeks to introduce elements of the Housing: optional national technical standards for new developments in Birmingham, specifically the 'access' and 'space' components.
- 1.2 The paper provides a summary of the evidence, the reasoning and the justification for inclusion of the optional Nationally Described Space Standards and Building Regulations Part M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings).

2.0 The National Technical Housing Standards

- 2.1 The Ministerial Statement¹ of the 25th March 2015 sets out the government's new approach to the setting of technical standards for new housing. The reforms were aimed at reducing burdens on development and helping to bring forward much needed new homes at a quicker pace. Instead of the complex patchwork of varying standards in place around the country, the new National Technical Standards for housing were introduced to simplify and streamline the system.
- 2.2 Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of access and water, and an optional Nationally Described Space Standard. LPAs need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area, and justify the policies proposed in their local plans.

3.0 National Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. The NPPF is clear that local planning authorities should plan to create safe, accessible environments and promote inclusion and community cohesion. In achieving well designed places, para. 127 of the NPPF says that "*Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users(46); and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*"
- 3.2 *Footnote (46) states: "Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties. Policies may also make use of the nationally described space standard, where the need for an internal space standard can be justified."*

¹ Department of Communities and Local Governments (DCLG)

- 3.3 The government has provided additional guidance in the form of the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) resource. The PPG 'Housing: optional technical standards' makes clear that, where LPAs wish to adopt any of the optional technical housing standards, they should be clearly evidenced to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area.
- 3.4 Local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of access and water, and an optional nationally described space standard.
- 3.5 The PPG suggests that the following information is considered when deciding whether or not to introduce the optional standards:
- the likely future need for housing for older and disabled people (including wheelchair user dwellings).
 - size, location, type and quality of dwellings needed to meet specifically evidenced needs (for example retirement homes, sheltered homes or care homes).
 - the accessibility and adaptability of existing housing stock.
 - how needs vary across different housing tenures.
 - the overall impact on viability.
- 3.6 The Government's nationally described space standard (NDSS) (Appendix 1) sets out the minimum requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area (GIA) of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage, floor to ceiling height and a minimum requirement for built-in storage (BiS).
- 3.7 The PPG clarifies that if a local authority wishes to apply the NDSS within its area, evidence needs to be gathered to determine whether there is a local basis for adopting them, as well as consideration of how the setting of optional standards affects viability and delivery of development. Local planning authorities should take account of the following areas:
- need – evidence should be provided on the size and type of dwellings currently being built in the area, to ensure the impacts of adopting space standards can be properly assessed, for example, to consider any potential impact on meeting demand for starter homes.
 - viability – the impact of adopting the space standard should be considered as part of a plan's viability assessment with account taken of the impact of potentially larger dwellings on land supply. Local planning authorities will also need to consider impacts on affordability where a space standard is to be adopted.
 - timing – there may need to be a reasonable transitional period following adoption of a new policy on space standards to enable developers to factor the cost of space standards into future land acquisitions.

4.0 Proposed Policy DM10 Standards for Residential Development in the Development Management in Birmingham DPD

- 4.1 Birmingham City Council is seeking to introduce a policy into the DMB relating to two of the three optional technical standards: access and the space standards. DM10 'Standards for Residential Development' was introduced into the DMB Preferred Options Consultation (published and consulted on in February – March 2019). A total of 28 comments were received on Policy DM10, primarily from the development industry stating that evidence had not been fully set out to justify the adoption of Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) or Building Regulation Part M4(2) on all residential developments.
- 4.2 This Topic Paper therefore provides the justification and evidence for the proposed policy approach to accompany the Publication version of the DMB. Policy DM10 has been modified since the Preferred Options Consultation in response to some of the consultation comments and in order to clarify the policy.

Policy DM10 Standards for residential development

1. All residential development will be required to meet the minimum Nationally Described Space Standards (Appendix 1).
2. Housing developments of 15 or more dwellings should seek to provide at least 30% of dwellings as accessible and adaptable homes in accordance with Building Regulation Part M4 (2) unless demonstrated to be financially unviable.
3. Separation distances* between buildings and surrounding uses should protect residents' privacy and outlook, ensure appropriate levels of daylight to internal and external living spaces and prevent undue enclosure, overshadowing, noise and disturbance.
4. All new residential development must provide sufficient private useable outdoor amenity space* appropriate to the scale, function and character of the development and adequate provision for recycling/ refuse storage and collection.
5. Development will need to ensure adequate outlook and daylight to dwellings, in line with the approach of the '45 degree code'. This includes potential impacts on existing houses, where development should not cross the line from an angle of 45 degrees from the nearest window providing the main source of natural light to a 'habitable room' of dwellings that could be affected.
6. Exceptions to the above will only be considered in order to deliver innovative high quality design, deal with exceptional site issues, respond to local character and where it can be demonstrated that residential amenity will not be significantly diminished.

* Standards are set out in the Birmingham Design Guide SPD.

5.0 Justification for policy approach

National context

- 5.1 Across the UK as a whole, the demographic reality is that more and more people are living longer. Birmingham is following that national trend, and it is predicted that the percentage of those aged over 65 within Birmingham will increase from 13% (147,900) in 2018 14.7% (183,200) in 2031, rising to 16% (210,900 people) by 2041 of the population. This represents an increase of 23.9% to 2031 and 42.6% in 2041 in the numbers of older people.² Despite increasing life expectancy, there remains a gap in healthy life expectancy. This in turn presents a series of health and care challenges for older people and people with mobility impairments as it means they will be living longer with impairments and life-limiting conditions. This also impacts on the immediate and wider family and regular visitors who provide support and care.
- 5.2 Building accessible housing can make a substantial difference to quality of life, whether you need support yourself or are caring for someone else. The wider benefits of delivering accessible and adaptable housing will not only improve the quality of life for residents now, but will also ensure that future need is delivered throughout the lifetime of the Plan. To support the ageing population and the specific needs of people with mobility problems, the DMB proposes Policy DM10 Standards for Residential Development.
- 5.3 In Birmingham the general health of the population is worse than the England average: specific local priorities identified by Public Health England include addressing local health inequalities by improving health and wellbeing³. From the evidence available it is clear that the quality of new housing in the city (including implementation of the internal space and access standards) has a role to play in addressing these priorities and meeting Council ambitions.
- 5.4 The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) made a strong case to Government for embedding the national minimum space standards into the Building Regulations⁴. This approach would set the standards for housing design across the country to create a level playing field and a fair housing offer wherever people live. In the absence of this approach however, Birmingham City Council seeks to adopt the standards as set out in Policy DM10 to help achieve its stated policy aims.
- 5.5 The Council's position is that Policy DM10: Standards for Residential Development, as written, is a sound, robust and practical approach to the issue of adopting the optional access and space standards for future new homes in Birmingham. The justification for this is set out in detail below, structured into two key parts: firstly, in the context of the Council's overall policy ambitions, and secondly with respect to the Council's evidence base (including viability matters).

² ONS 2016 Sub-national population projections

³ Health Profile for the Birmingham published by Public Health England (3 July 2018)

⁴ Space standards for homes, RIBA (December 2015)

Local context

Council Plan 2018-2022

- 5.6 Guided by the present situation – with a rising demand for services (especially adult social care), financial pressures and the need to invest in children’s services – we plan to focus our resources on five key priorities:
- Birmingham is an entrepreneurial city to learn, work and invest in
 - Birmingham is an aspirational city to grow up in
 - Birmingham is a fulfilling city to age well in
 - Birmingham is a great city to live in
 - Birmingham residents gain the maximum benefit from hosting the Commonwealth Games
- 5.7 Two of the six key outcomes in the Council’s Plan are particularly relevant to DM10:
“Birmingham is a fulfilling city to age well in – ...citizens to live more active, longer, healthier and independent lives....”
Birmingham is a great city to live in - “... Birmingham to be a sustainable city of vibrant culture, flourishing neighborhoods with good quality housing....”

Housing Strategy (2018)

- 5.8 Birmingham’s Housing Strategy produced by Birmingham’s Housing Partnership is the Council’s key housing strategy document. Its overall vision is that *“Every citizen can find a great place to live”* which means:
- *A strong supply of new high quality homes;*
 - *Citizens are able to find, access and sustain housing that meets their needs;*
 - *Neighbourhoods are enhanced and the quality of existing housing is improved.*
- 5.9 The strategy notes that household sizes in Birmingham are larger than the national average. There are pockets of high overcrowding in the city. There are five wards in the city where more than one in five households are short of at least one bedroom and in a further 6 wards, one in ten households suffer the same problem. This is reflected in the SHMA and the Birmingham Development Plan’s housing mix requirement.
- 5.10 Development is recognized as providing an opportunity to increase the choice of housing types and options. In relation to the population profile of the city it states that: *“Whilst Birmingham is a young city, we also have an ageing population. The links between suitable housing and health and wellbeing are well established. We have identified that there is an opportunity to develop housing options for older people who wish to move to a more suitable property within the city. Older owner-occupiers have considerable resources in terms of the equity they hold in their homes. Increased housing options for older people would have considerable benefits both in terms of releasing family housing and for the wellbeing and independence of older residents.”*

- 5.11 Research on dwelling sizes⁵ confirms the negative impact that poor quality housing can cause. The study refers to the issue of overcrowding potentially (in extreme cases) causing *'physical illnesses such as asthma, and mental illnesses such as depression'* and that *'less extreme cases can cause anxiety or stress, or impact on children's social and emotional development'*.
- 5.12 Quality, condition and choice of housing within Birmingham is one of the key issues facing the city with 29.5% of houses being terraced properties, compared to 23% in the West Midlands and 24.6% nationally. The housing market has recovered since the 2008 recession, but in parts of the city where the market has struggled; there is a need for a more balanced supply of good quality homes. The application of these standards should help achieve this.
- 5.13 The Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (the City Council's housing development arm) has built all of its properties (both private and affordable) to Part M4 (2) standard.

Housing in Later Life Market Position Statement (MPS) (2015)

- 5.14 This document outlines the demand and opportunities to expand housing choices for older people. It highlights that housing and health often become intrinsically linked with ageing, and as the majority of the population continues to live longer lives this will also present a continuing increase in demand for quality housing and care solutions city wide.
- 5.15 Birmingham, like other cities, has a priority to reduce the proportion of its residents admitted to and living long term in residential care settings. As the older population grows it will not be sustainable for the current levels to be maintained. Service providers agree that, wherever possible, to enhance the quality of life for those both living with dementia and their families, that it is important for older people with mild to moderate symptoms of dementia to remain living independently at home / in the community. The position statement identifies three topics fundamental for the market to consider: Ageing well; Successfully enabling good health and wellbeing; and delivering real choice, quality and affordability across housing and care services.
- 5.16 In particular the MPS seeks that the following is integral to planning and developing housing choices for older people:
- *Affordability – reflective of the low income levels experienced by many older people in the city;*
 - *Health and wellbeing – the need to ensure that older people have the opportunity to live in homes and environments that make a positive contribution to their health and wellbeing by enabling an active, healthy lifestyle; combating social isolation and helping to mitigate the effects of dementia.*

⁵ Malcolm Morgan & Heather Cruickshank (2014) Quantifying the extent of space shortages: English dwellings, Building Research & Information, 42:6, 710-724

Public Health Green Paper (2019)

- 5.17 The Green Paper sets out some of the significant health issues affecting individuals, families and communities in Birmingham and the priority areas for action and how to best focus the Council's efforts over the next four years. Priority 4: Healthy Environment - *"increasing the health gains of new developments and transport schemes"* is of particular relevance to proposed Policy DM10. The Paper highlights the three values driving Birmingham's strategy which are equity, prevention and evidence based practice.

Birmingham Development Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2017) (BDP)

- 5.18 One of the key objectives of the BDP is *"to develop Birmingham as a City of sustainable neighbourhoods that are safe, diverse and inclusive with locally distinctive character."* High standards of design in new residential areas and the provision of a wide choice of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet community needs, including homes for families, the elderly and appropriate levels of affordable housing is central to the strategy of the BDP. Specific aspects of the BDP relevant to matters of housing standards include:

Policy PG3 Place making

All new development will be expected to demonstrate high design quality, contributing to a strong sense of place. New development should:

- *Reinforce or create a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness, with design that responds to site conditions and the local area context, including heritage assets and appropriate use of innovation in design.*
- *Create safe environments that design out crime and make provision for people with disabilities through carefully considered site layouts, designing buildings and open spaces that promote positive social interaction and natural surveillance.*
- *Provide attractive environments that encourage people to move around by cycling and walking.*
- *Ensure that private external spaces, streets and public spaces are attractive, functional, inclusive and able to be managed for the long term.*
- *Take opportunities to make sustainable design integral to development, such as green infrastructure, sustainable drainage and energy generating features.*
- *Support the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods (Policy TP27).*
- *Make best use of existing buildings and efficient use of land in support of the overall development strategy.*

Policy TP27 Sustainable neighbourhoods

"New housing in Birmingham is expected to contribute to making sustainable places, whether it is a small infill site or the creation of a new residential neighbourhood. All new residential development will need to demonstrate that it is meeting the requirements of creating sustainable neighbourhoods. Sustainable neighbourhoods are characterised by:

- *A wide choice of housing sizes, types and tenures to ensure balanced communities catering for all incomes and ages....*
- *A strong sense of place with high design quality so that people identify with, and feel pride in, their neighbourhood."*

- 5.19 It is in the context of these clear policy ambitions that the Council is seeking to introduce housing standards into the Local Plan through the DMB. The aim of creating sustainable neighbourhoods and ensuring high quality design is of particular relevance to space standards and the creation of accessible and adaptable homes in Birmingham.

6. Evidence of need

- 6.1 As set out in the NPPF and the associated NPPG the Council is required to establish a need for the additional standards in their area. The Government acknowledges that this data is not always readily available and that councils will need to draw from a range of sources. The following data has been collected to demonstrate the need in Birmingham.

Access standard

- 6.2 A Lifetime Home (now M4(2) Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) will be designed with particular attention to circulation within the home and external routes to transport infrastructure. Pathways, hallways, stairways and access to floors above, doorways and spaces to approach and reach essential facilities and controls in the home will be taken into consideration. Integral design features are ready to assist adaptation for households that have a family member with a temporary or permanent disability or a progressive condition that is making movement around the homes or between floors difficult.
- 6.3 Research underpinning the Lifetime Homes principles highlighted the long-term value of providing high quality housing specifically designed for older people as it is this age group that has higher levels of mobility and other health related issues. The provision of housing for older and less mobile people includes potential saving through:
- Reducing the risks of falls;
 - Protecting against the effects of cold homes and fuel poverty;
 - Enabling earlier discharge from, and fewer readmissions to hospital;
 - Preventing the need (both temporary and permanent) for institutional residential care; and
 - Reducing ill health costs associated with isolation and loneliness.
- 6.4 Increasing the amount of general housing that is suitable for older and less able people (e.g. smaller homes, bungalows and serviced flats), together with more specialist housing, can have the added benefit of freeing up larger homes in communities that are required by families, of which there is a high level of demand for in Birmingham (SHMA 2013).

Birmingham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2018/19

- 6.5 Birmingham's JSNA captures important information about older people's housing, health and wellbeing and sets the baseline from which local demand profiling of the city's older community and their service needs must be drawn from. The 'Older Adults Profile with Adult

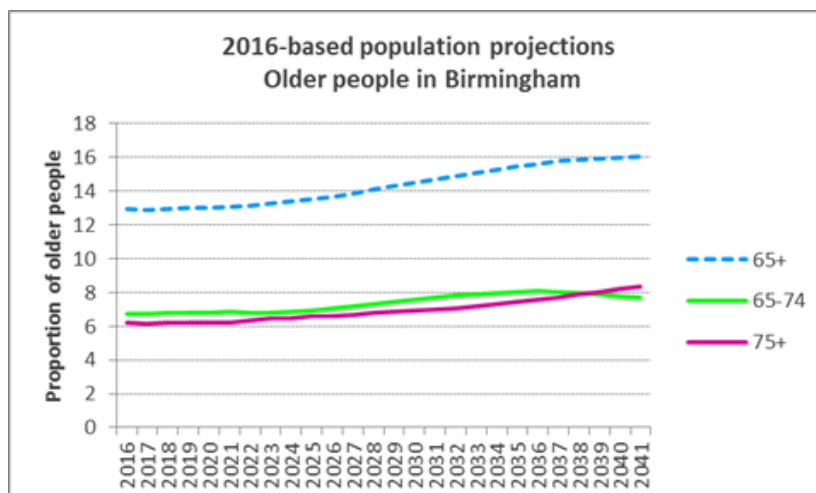
Social Care Outcomes Framework and Public Health Outcomes Framework' report forms part of the JSNA. Outcome frameworks are a collection of indicators to provide an understanding of how well public health is being improved and protected.

- 6.6 The report shows that there were 146,693 people in Birmingham aged 65 years and older, making up 13% of the total population of the city. (ONS mid-year estimates 2017). The 2016 ONS based population projections suggest a 15% increase in Birmingham's population aged 65 and over by 2027. The biggest % increase is expected in the 90 year and over age range. It observes that as people age, they are progressively more likely to live with complex co-morbidities, disability and frailty.
- 6.7 The report also highlights the healthy life expectancy of males and females in Birmingham as being much lower than the national average; the older population is therefore spending more years in poor health. (Further details provided below). So despite increasing life expectancy, there remains a significant gap in healthy life expectancy. This in turn presents a series of health and care challenges at older age. If trends in healthy life expectancy continue as they are and population projections for older people continue as expected, we are likely to see considerable and potentially unsustainable demands for adult health and social care services in the future. The report concludes that it is therefore important to prevent care needs from arising, as well as managing these needs when they do arise.

Population projections

- 6.8 The latest ONS 2016 sub national population projections forecast an increase in the proportion of older people in Birmingham between 2016 and 2041. It predicts that the percentage of those aged over 65 within the Birmingham will increase from 12.9% (145,900 people) to 16% (210,900 people) of the population. This represents a 25.6% increase to 2031 and a 44.6% increase to 2041 from the 2016 baseline within this group. Figure 1 shows that the number of over 75's is expected to exceed those aged 65-74 by 2039. This is over 1.5 decades later that in the region where over 75's are expected to outnumber 65-74's by 2023.

Figure 1: 2016 based population projections of older people in Birmingham



Household projections

- 6.9 Since 2009, the number of households headed by those aged 65 and above has been increasing in Birmingham. ONS' 2016-based household projections show that there will be an increase in households headed by those aged 65 years and over. In 2041, 28% of total households will be headed by a person aged 65 years and older compared to 23% in 2011 an increase of 5 percentage points.

Figure 1: 2016 based population projections of older people in Birmingham

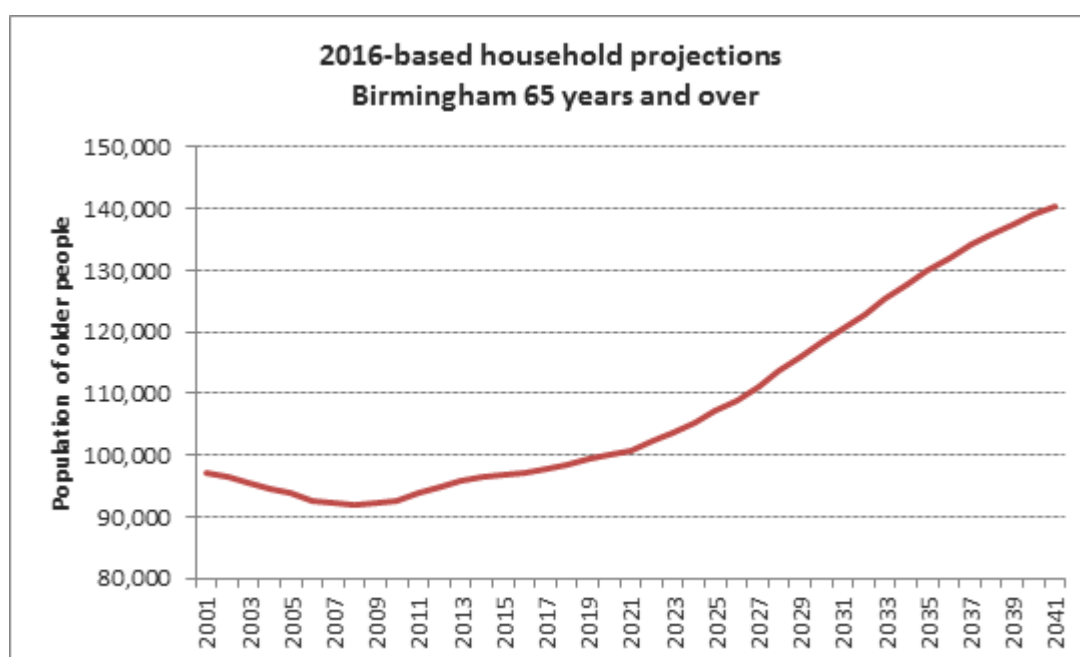


Table 1: Household projections

Age Group	2011	2021	2031	2041
65-69	23,500	24,200	30,400	29,100
70-74	20,700	23,500	26,700	31,300
75-79	19,400	19,800	22,900	29,400
80-84	15,700	16,200	20,300	23,800
85-89	9,700	10,900	12,600	15,500
90+	4,800	6,200	7,700	11,300
65+	93,800	100,800	120,500	140,400
total household population	1,052,604	1,150,048	1,223,933	1,289,026
% of city population in households	8.9	8.7	9.8	10.9
% of city population	8.7	8.6	9.7	10.7

Source: ONS

Healthy life expectancy

- 6.10 Life expectancy increased both locally and nationally between 2001 and 2010 but has stagnated since then. Life expectancy in Birmingham is lower for both men and women than the national average. Life expectancy for a man in Birmingham is 77.2 years compared to 79.5 years for England. Females in Birmingham can expect to live to 81.9 years compared to 83.1 years for England.
- 6.11 Healthy life expectancy is the number of years a person can expect to live in good health. Healthy life expectancy in Birmingham is much lower than the national average with men in Birmingham expecting to live only 50 years in good health compared to 63 years nationally. For women in Birmingham this is 59 years, compared to 64 years nationally. The gap between healthy life expectancy and life expectancy gives an estimate of how many years a person will be in need of health and social care.

Disability Living Allowance

- 6.12 There are over 11 million people with a limiting long-term illness, impairment or disability in the UK. The most commonly-reported impairments are those that affect mobility, lifting or carrying. The prevalence of disability rises with age. Around 6% of children are disabled, compared to 16% of working age adults and 45% of adults over State Pension age. Although the gap in non-decent accommodation has closed over recent years, 1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation. 1 in 5 disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is not suitable⁶.
- 6.13 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a tax-free benefit to help claimants with the extra costs they may have because they are disabled. It is not 'means tested', so having savings or other income won't affect whether people can claim and it will not usually affect any other benefits they may be getting. As such it constitutes a useful source of data on people whose lives are affected to some extent by disability and which may have an impact on the type of housing that they require. Cases in payment figures show the number of people in receipt of an allowance. At February 2019, 26,248 people were in receipt of DLA
- 6.14 DLA, however, is being replaced by Personal Independence Payments (PIP). PIP helps with some of the extra costs caused by long term health or disability for those aged 16-64 years. At July 2019, 48,377 claims in payment were made representing approximately 4% of the population.

Attendance Allowance

- 6.15 Attendance Allowance is a tax-free benefit for people who have a disability and need someone to help look after them. The number of people claiming Attendance Allowance in Birmingham in February 2019 was 22,965. Attendance Allowance is payable to those aged 65 or over, were aged 65 or more when they first claimed, and the following apply:

⁶ Department for Works and Pensions, Official Statistics Disability facts and figures, January 2014

- They have a physical disability (including sensory disability, e.g. blindness), a mental disability (including learning difficulties), or both; and
- Their disability is severe enough for them to need help caring for themselves or someone to supervise them, for their own or someone else's safety.

Census 2011: Health assessment

6.16 The general health question within the 2011 Census was a self-assessment of a person's general state of health. People were asked to assess whether their health was very good, good, fair, bad or very bad. This assessment is not based on a person's health over any specified period of time. Birmingham has a slightly higher proportion of people whose activities are limited due to a health problem than the English average.

Table 2: Health Assessment Census 2011

Area	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities not Limited	Total
Birmingham	98,181 (9.1%)	99,720 (9.3%)	875,144 (81.6%)	1,073,045 (100%)
England	4,405,394 (8.3%)	4,947,192 (9.3%)	43,659,870 (82.4%)	53,012,456 (100%)

Source: Census 2011

Housing register

6.17 Analysis of Birmingham's housing register indicates that in July 2019, there were 894 active applications with adaptation requirements. The range of adaptations required include wheelchair access, wider doorways, ramped/ level access from external, through floor lift, ceiling track hoist, lowered kitchen facilities, accessible bathing facilities, level access internal layout and stair lift. This number accounts for 7% of those in total on the housing register (12,911 applications at 29 July 2019). Of those who required adaptations, 199 specifically required wheelchair access (1.5% of those on register).

6.18 There were also 1,137 people on the housing register requiring sheltered accommodation of which 159 required extra care.

Projecting Older People Population Information (POPPI)

6.19 In terms of older persons, the POPPI database (2019) suggest that for Birmingham:

- There will be an increase in the number of people aged 65+ from 12.99% of the total Birmingham population in 2019 to 15.44% in 2035.
- In terms of those 65+, there is predicted to be 51,511 people with a limiting long term illness whose day-to-day activities will be limited a little and 61,426 people whose day-to-day activities will be limited a lot by 2035. This represents an increase of 30.6% and 31.8% respectively from the 2019 baseline.

- By 2035, it is suggested that 37,181 people aged 65+ will not be able to manage at least one activity on their own and 56,616 people who need help with at least one self-care activity.
- An additional 1,412 people aged 65+ will be living in a care home by 2035.
- A large number of older people also act as a carer to a partner, family member or other person. There is predicted to be a 30% increase in people aged 65+ providing unpaid care.

Housing for Older People in Birmingham: The existing housing stock, current issues and opportunities (Housing in Later Life Market Position Statement)

- 6.20 The Market Position Statement stated that there is a significant amount of older person's specialist housing in Birmingham at present, the majority of which is within the affordable sector. The vast majority of both the affordable and market supply is sheltered housing. There are relatively small amounts of other types of specialist older person's housing, and this is especially true for the Council's own stock.
- 6.21 The quality as well as the quantity of accommodation is crucial to the ongoing health and wellbeing of older people. While there is specialist housing that meets current best practice and design standards, other dwellings were developed or converted under historic standards and are now unable to meet the expectations of citizens. *"Innovation and capital investment can enable some properties to be improved to meet current standards and residents' expectations, but for others, the problems are more fundamental.".... "Issues like this, which are not unique to the Council, will mean that some current older person housing provision will cease to operate in their current form, especially as best practice evolves. However, such changes also offer opportunities for re-development (full or partial) or a change of use.*
- 6.22 The Statement observes that currently around a third of older people receive some level of informal help (unpaid) support or care, mainly provided through family, neighbours or local community networks. *"However, the future demand will see a growing number of older people experience reduced access to these support routes because of general demographic changes, including the increasing number of childless older people and resource pressures within the voluntary sector."*

Viability

- 6.23 In terms of viability testing, following the consultation Preferred Options Document version, the Council commissioned BNP Paribas Real Estate UK to undertake a full plan viability assessment of the DMB. The viability assessment has informed development of the Publication version of the DMDPD, including Policy DM10: Standards for Residential Development. It is included in the Council's package of evidence supporting the DMB.
- 6.24 The Viability Assessment details the site appraisal methodology in full, including the full range of residential development scenarios that were tested and employed to ensure that the policies proposed in the plan would not cumulatively threaten the ability for sites to be developed viably. The Viability Assessment included an additional amount of £521 per

house and £921 per flat to the build costs to meet the access requirements set out in Policy DM10. As such the viability of Policy DM10 has been fully assessed in line with the NPPF and is viable.

Conclusions

- 6.25 The above evidence suggests that the optional building regulations M4(2) for accessible and adaptable homes could be justified in Birmingham due to the proportions of people and households with a long-term health problem or disability, the ageing population and the projected increase in the number of people with long term health problems and disability.
- Birmingham's older population makes up 12.9% of the total Birmingham population. Population forecasts show that this will increase to 16% in 2041. (ONS 2016 sub national population projections).
 - The number of households headed by those aged 65+ has been increasing in Birmingham and is projected to increase to 28% of total households in the city.
 - The Census 2011 shows that 18.4% of people currently report themselves as having a long term health problem or disability (being limited a little and a lot).
 - Healthy life expectancy of men and women in Birmingham is much lower than the national average. The gap between healthy life expectancy and life expectancy indicates that the older population will therefore spend more years in poor health.
 - In terms of those 65+, there is predicted to be 30.6% increase in people with a limiting long term illness whose day-to-day activities will be limited a little and 31.8% increase in people whose day-to-day activities will be limited a lot by 2035.
- 6.26 The above evidence suggests that there will be a larger elderly population who will be living longer and are likely to be living with disabilities in their later years. A requirement of 30% of new homes to meet the optional building regulation M4(2) for accessible and adaptable homes is considered appropriate given the above evidence.

Internal space standards

- 6.27 With regards to internal space standards the PPG refers specifically to LPAs considering 'need', 'viability' and 'timing' if national space standards are to be adopted⁷. These are dealt with in turn below.

Need

- 6.28 The PPG states that '*evidence should be provided on the size and type of dwellings currently being built in the area, to ensure the impacts of adopting space standards can be properly assessed, for example, to consider any potential impact on meeting demand for*

⁷ PPG Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327

starter homes. General information on annual housing completions by house type and number of bedrooms is provided in the Authority Monitoring Report 2018/19.

6.29 An appraisal of development sites with planning permissions granted between July 2016 and June 2019 was undertaken to understand the current type of units being built within the city and to understand what implications may arise as a result of seeking to introduce the nationally described space standards. The results of this are summarised in Tables 3 and 4 below. To ensure a representative sample, sites from each part of the city (North West, South, East and City Centre) comprising minor residential schemes (below 10 dwellings); small scale major (10-49 dwellings) and large scale major schemes (50+ dwellings) were analysed. In total 3,849 dwellings within 54 schemes were measured and analysed. The tables below provide a summary of the results.




Table 3: Summary of planning permissions granted by type, area and compliance with NDSS

Scheme (PA Ref)	Type	Area	Total number of dwellings	% of compliant dwellings within scheme	% deviation of non-compliant dwellings within scheme
2017/08883/PA	Large Scale	North West	110	100	N/A
2017/01495/PA	Large Scale	North West	139	9.4	0.6 – 30.1
2018/01601/PA	Large Scale	City Centre	258	9.7	1 – 10.4
2017/03355/PA	Large Scale	City Centre	214	100	N/A
2017/07207/PA	Large Scale	City Centre	389	96.4	1.4
2017/09461/PA	Large Scale	City Centre	326	100	N/A
2017/10448/PA	Large Scale	City Centre	238	68.1	2.6 – 31.8
2016/09139/PA	Large Scale	South	229	40.2	0.8 – 2.8
2017/07621/PA	Large Scale	South	212	100	N/A
2018/04103/PA	Large Scale	South	210	55.7	0.5 – 10.5
2015/10025/PA	Large Scale	East	201	23.9	1.0 – 19.7
2017/07055/PA	Large Scale	East	54	55.5	3.7 – 11.8
2018/02828/PA	Large Scale	East	124	91.9	16.7 – 22.4
2017/07024/PA	Large Scale	East	233	94.8	No NDSS
2018/07578/PA	Large Scale	East	161	100	N/A
2017/01428/PA	Small-Scale Major	North West	20	65	18.9
2016/08631/PA	Small-Scale Major	North West	8	0	0.8 – 14.7
2018/05145/PA	Small-Scale Major	North West	15	100	N/A
2018/08269/PA	Small-Scale Major	North West	10	50	No NDSS
2016/09866/PA	Small-Scale Major	North West	12	100	N/A
2016/10371/PA	Small-Scale Major	City Centre	10	60	5.2 – 17.4
2017/00544/PA	Small-Scale Major	City Centre	32	59.3	0.6 – 18.0
2017/10701/PA	Small-Scale Major	City Centre	67	100	N/A
2016/10683/PA	Small-Scale Major	City Centre	146	100	N/A
2018/10092/PA	Small-Scale Major	City Centre	40	95	5.7 – 7.1
2016/09442/PA	Small-Scale Major	South	12	100	N/A
2016/08455/PA	Small-Scale Major	South	12	0	7.9 – 18.1
2017/07064/PA	Small-Scale Major	South	12	100	N/A
2017/07682/PA	Small-Scale Major	South	28	42.9	11.2 – 23.8
2016/07628/PA	Small-Scale Major	East	64	1.6	7.0 – 7.1
2017/00077/PA	Small-Scale Major	East	136	83.9	0.7 – 10.9
2017/07927/PA	Small-Scale Major	East	26	80.8	No NDSS
2017/07182/PA	Small-Scale Major	East	5	100	N/A
2018/00037/PA	Small-Scale Major	East	14	0	7.1 – 8.9
2016/08063/PA	Minor	North West	1	0	12.9
2017/07245/PA	Minor	North West	4	0	13.8 – 15.4
2017/02889/PA	Minor	North West	7	85.7	0.1

2017/06546/PA	Minor	North West	1	0	No NDSS
2018/02559/PA	Minor	North West	1	100	N/A
2018/02831/PA	Minor	City Centre	3	33.3	7.2
2018/09611/PA	Minor	City Centre	1	0	1.4
2017/00934/PA	Minor	City Centre	2	0	6.4
2018/08051/PA	Minor	City Centre	1	100	N/A
2018/02257/PA	Minor	City Centre	6	83.3	13.0
2016/09819/PA	Minor	South	1	100	N/A
2018/03674/PA	Minor	South	1	100	N/A
2018/01297/PA	Minor	South	5	100	N/A
2017/09739/PA	Minor	South	9	100	N/A
2018/07934/PA	Minor	South	2	100	N/A
2017/07183/PA	Minor	East	8	100	N/A
2018/04519/PA	Minor	East	1	100	N/A
2017/10477/PA	Minor	East	9	11.1	7.1 – 24.3
2019/03200/PA	Minor	East	1	0	27.9
2018/08576/PA	Minor	East	6	50	5.7

Key

% of compliant dwellings in scheme

	100 -75% of dwellings
	74 – 50% of dwellings
	Below 49% of dwellings

% deviation of non-compliant dwellings




	100% compliant
	Within 10% below the NDSS
	More than 10% below the NDSS

Table 4: Summary of dwellings permitted by number of bedrooms and NDSS compliance

Type	Number of dwellings	% of compliant dwellings	% deviation of non-compliant dwellings
1b1p	39	99.8	7.2
1b2p	108	47.7	1.0 – 23.8
2b3p	131	72.2	0.6 – 31.8
2b4p	149	59.8	0.1 – 30.1
3b4p	174	77.4	0.7 – 5.2
3b5p	278	76.7	4.0 – 27.9
3b6p	305	78.8	4.2 – 8.5
4b5p	97	100	N/A
4b6p	106	56.1	2.6 – 5.8
4b7p	236	62.3	4.5 – 11.7
4b8p	254	0	0.1
5b6p	N/A	N/A	N/A
5b7p	N/A	N/A	N/A
5b8p	262	100	N/A
6b7p	N/A	N/A	N/A
6b8p	N/A	N/A	N/A

6.30 The overall percentage of dwellings which are 100% compliant with the NDSS is 42%. The percentage of dwellings which are not 100% compliant but within a 10% deviation below the NDSS is 34%. Finally, 24% of dwellings fell more than 10% below the standard. The majority of units are therefore compliant or close to compliant with the NDSS.

- 6.31 Table 3 shows compliance by scheme and area within the city. 100% compliance of dwellings in large scale major schemes was 33.3% compared to 36.8% small scale major schemes and 45% in minor schemes. In terms of differences by location, all of the large scale major schemes in East Birmingham had issues complying within 10% of the NDSS. Non-compliance in the small scale major and minor schemes were more evenly spread across the 4 locations.
- 6.32 Table 4 shows compliance of the dwellings granted permission within the 54 consents against the individual standards set out for each dwelling size in the NDSS. The table shows that 1-bed 2-person dwellings are least compliant with only 47.7% of dwellings meeting the minimum area of 70sqm (single-storey) and 79sqm (double-storey). There is also a large deviation range of between 1.0-23.8% within the non-compliant dwellings. Contrastingly, 4-bed 5-person and 5-bed 8-person dwellings were 100% compliant across all four parts of the city.
- 6.33 In regard to non-compliant dwellings, 2-bed 3-person dwellings demonstrate the widest range of deviation from the standard 0.6 - 31.8% but it should also be noted that this same size dwelling is 72.2% compliant with the NDSS.
- 6.34 While the majority of units are already being designed to accord with or exceed the space standards, 24% of units have been found to fall below the standard by more than 10%. A number of similar scaled schemes were appraised in the four different parts of the city, with some schemes demonstrating more compliance than others within a similar location and scale of development. It proceeds that the standard is capable of being met across the city and that the size and type of dwellings currently being delivered confirms this. Albeit, that some are not meeting the standard which may be due to the lack of policy in relation to space standards currently or other site specific reasons. It is considered that Policy DM10 as worded provides sufficient flexibility to allow for exceptions to meet the NDSS to be considered.
- 6.35 Beyond the specifics of the size and type of dwelling currently being built in the area, Officers are of the view that there is an argument to be made for the social benefits of implementing the nationally described space standard. The Housing Standards Review Final Implementation Impact Assessment (March 2015) outlines a number of these benefits:
- Improved cohesion within family units - evidence gathered in support of the London Plan requirement for space standards identifies a range of benefits that families derive from good standards of space in the home. These include better ability to socialise with family members and guests; improved storage; improved space for solitary activities; greater flexibility in arranging rooms to meet different preferences; the ability to work from home; more space for managing waste and recycling and improved day light and ventilation.
 - General Health and Wellbeing - space standards help to mitigate impacts from overcrowding, particularly relating to mental health (reducing depression), giving children room to play within the home and helping to ensure a good night's sleep.

- Reducing the risk of market failure -the UK builds some of the smallest homes in Europe, and there is a long term downward trend in the size of new homes in the UK. There are concerns as to the longevity of smaller housing where these are crammed on to sites and address only a narrow segment of the market place, because having a narrow market appeal increases the risk that these homes will be less desirable in the longer term. Space Standards provide one approach to offsetting these risks.
- Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour - poor internal space is linked to poorer health and lower educational attainment. It is also suggested that where there is insufficient space for adults and younger family members to inhabit a property comfortably, there are increased risks of children and young adults being displaced into the external environment where they are more vulnerable to falling into patterns of anti-social behaviour.
- Adaptability and Inclusion - internal space is a key criterion in relation to how accessible a home is, and how capable it will be to adapt to a range of changing household needs over time. Where people suffer permanent or temporary impaired mobility, larger floor plates offer inherently greater potential for adaptation to meet specific needs.

6.36 Further to these observations, there have been instances where the introduction of a poor living environment has had a bearing on recent appeal decisions and it is considered that the authority would benefit from the introduction of a space standard, both in terms of achieving a good standard of living and avoiding the unnecessary costs associated with the appeal process on the basis of ambiguous interpretations of policy.

6.37 The appeal (APP/P4605/W/19/3222566) relates to a change of use from B1 (offices to) to 13 no.1 bed affordable housing flats (C3 residential) at 87 Bracebridge Street, Birmingham, B6 4PJ. The inspector noted that:

“8. Birmingham City Council has not adopted the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (the NDSS). However, the NDSS indicates that for one bedroomed flats there should be a minimum of 37 sqm of gross internal floor area and storage. There is no standard set out for studio flats. I do though attach significant weight to the NDSS as a guide.

9. The flats are very small and less than half the minimum space standard for a one bedroomed flat set out in the NDSS. From my observations, the flats were extremely cramped with little room for storage, cooking and preparing food and for sitting. The space required for opening the door of the flat, severely constrains the usability of the internal floor space.”

Viability

6.38 The PPG states that ‘*the impact of adopting the space standard should be considered as a part of the plan’s viability assessment with account taken of the impact of potentially larger dwellings on land supply. Local planning authorities will also need to consider impacts on affordability where a space standard is to be adopted*’.

- 6.39 For the purposes of testing viability BNP Paribas Real Estate adopted the standard house/apartment sizes set out in Tables 5 and 6 below in each of the site typologies that were tested.

Table 5 – Standard housing sizes used in viability testing in the Viability Assessment

No. of Beds	Size (sq.m)	Size (sq. ft)
1 bed 2 person (two storey)	58	540
2 bed 4 person (two storey)	79	750
3 bed 5 person (two storey)	93	1,001
4 bed 6 person (two storey)	106	1,259

Table 6 – Standard apartment sizes used in viability testing in the Viability Assessment

No. of Beds	Size (sq.m)	Size (sq. ft)
1 bed 2 person (one storey)	50	540
2 bed 4 person (one storey)	70	750

- 6.40 The construction costs employed in the study reflect the figures presented in Tables 5 and 6 above and were based on the principle of adopting the space standards in Birmingham.
- 6.41 Based on house price and sales data, the Viability Assessment identifies a range of average sales values across the City (£2,500 to £4,200 per square metre), with highest values in the centre of the City.
- 6.42 The viability and policy impacts of the wide range of viability testing undertaken by BNP Paribas Real Estate are set out in detail in Section 4 of the Viability Assessment. It importantly notes that the viability of an individual development very much depends upon the specific site circumstances. In summary however, based upon the wide range of testing undertaken, and in an attempt to provide a strategic overview, the Viability Assessment concludes that the developments will be viable with the NDSS in place. In many cases, the space standards proposed do not differ markedly from unit sizes delivered by the market and consequently there is no additional 'burden' upon development viability.
- 6.43 The Viability Assessment undertakes economic profiling and sensitivity analysis, demonstrating how development viability will change depending on economic cycles. The current assessment levels (base position) used as the basis for the policy consideration represent a reasonable moderate to low position within the economic cycle. The Viability Assessment therefore concludes that development will be viable in the City with the Nationally Described Space Standards in place. Viability of some developments is shown to be viable in current market conditions, but this will present challenges for achieving other DMB policies, most notably affordable housing, which has a more significant impact on viability than the proposed space standards.

- 6.44 Based on the study findings, the Council consider there to be a strong case on viability grounds for the space standards in the DMB. The costs of implementing the space standards are included within the 'baseline' position.
- 6.45 The fact that the majority of residential units already comply with, or is close to, the NDSS adds weight to the conclusion that the introduction of a minimum space standard does not have a notable impact on scheme viability. This reflects market demand for unit sizes that are aligned with those in the NDSS; developments which meet these standards are likely to be more attractive to purchasers in comparison to smaller units. Units built to the NDSS standards are also more likely to be capable of being used more flexibly than would be the case for smaller units (e.g. two bed apartments that meet the NDSS standards can be used to accommodate families, or alternatively can be used for rented housing by sharers). Flexibility of use is likely to enhance demand for the completed housing units, which in turn will improve velocity of sale and reduce finance costs over a development period.
- 6.46 Affordable housing stock in the city is already built to a standard equivalent to the NDSS as this is the preferred approach of the Registered Providers that operate within Birmingham including the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT).
- 6.47 The PPG refers to the need to consider any potential impact on meeting demand for starter homes to be taken into account. From the findings set out in the Viability Assessment it is clear that the provision of Starter Homes is less of a financial burden on developers than more traditional forms of affordable housing. As such in the context of the viability information presented above there is not considered to be a significant impact.

Timing

- 6.48 The PPG states that '*there may need to be a reasonable transitional period following adoption of a new policy on space standards to enable developers to factor the cost of space standards into future land acquisitions*'.
- 6.49 As set out above, there are no notable viability impacts anticipated from the introduction of the NDSS and the majority of permitted/emerging schemes within the last three years have sought to meet, or come close to, the national standards of their own accord.
- 6.50 It should also be noted that the intention to introduce a space standard was first suggested at the Initial Consultation Document which was consulted on September – October 2015. Subsequently, the intent to introduce the standard has been in the public domain for over 4 years and by the time of adoption of the Local Plan, this period will have surpassed five years.
- 6.51 In light of the findings above, it is not proposed to allow for a transitional period before adoption of a new policy on space standards but rather seek to adopt and implement the policy alongside the other policies within the Local Plan.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Council is seeking to introduce optional access and space standards into its Local Plan via Policy DM10: Standards for Residential Development in the DMB DPD. This paper provides a summary of the evidence, reasoning and justification for the policy. Consideration has been given to demonstrating the need, viability and a transitional period. In conclusion, the Council considers that appropriate justification has been provided for inclusion of the access and space standards within the emerging DMB and that the requirements of NPPF and the PPG have been met.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (March 2015 as updated)

Table 1 - Minimum Gross Internal floor Areas (GIA) and Storage

Number of bedrooms	Number of bedspaces (people)	1 storey Dwellings (sq.m.)	2 storey Dwellings (sq.m.)	3 storey Dwellings (sq.m.)	Built-in storage* (sq.m.)
1	1	39 (37)**	n/a	n/a	1
	2	50	58	n/a	1.5
2	3	61	70	n/a	2
	4	70	79	n/a	
3	4	74	84	90	2.5
	5	86	93	99	
	6	95	102	108	
4	5	90	97	103	3
	6	99	106	112	
	7	108	115	121	
	8	117	124	130	
5	6	103	110	116	3.5
	7	112	119	125	
	8	121	128	134	
6	7	116	123	129	4
	8	125	132	138	

* The built-in storage figures are included within the GIAs (i.e. are not additional)

** Where a studio has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m², as shown bracketed.

The Standard requires that:

- the **dwelling** provides at least the GIA and built-in storage area set out in Table 1
- a **dwelling** with two or more bedspaces has at least one double (or twin) bedroom
- in order to provide one bedspace, a **single bedroom** has a floor area of at least 7.5 sq.m and is at least 2.15m wide
- in order to provide two bedspaces, a **double (or twin) bedroom** has a floor area of at least 11.5 sq.m
- one double (or twin) bedroom** is at least 2.75m wide and **every other double (or twin) bedroom** is at least 2.55m wide
- any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m** is not counted within the GIA unless used solely for **storage** (if the area under the stairs is to be used for storage, assume general floor area of 1sq.m within the GIA)

- g. any other area that is used solely for **storage** and has a headroom of 900-1500mm (such as under eaves) is counted at 50% of its floor area, and any area lower than 900mm is not counted at all
- h. a **built-in wardrobe** counts towards the GIA and bedroom floor area requirements, but should not reduce the effective width of the room below the minimum widths set out above. The built-in area in excess of 0.72 sq.m in a double bedroom and 0.36sq.m in a single bedroom counts towards the built-in storage requirement
- i. the **minimum floor to ceiling height** is 2.3m for at least 75% of the GIA

Compliance

All areas are to be denoted in square metres (sq.m) and all linear dimensions in metres (m). Developers are to provide a schedule of dwelling types indicating their overall GIA and in-built storage areas.

Developers will be able to achieve 'type approval' for standardised designs. (Note that internal floor plans will still normally need to be submitted in order to assess amenity impacts and to demonstrate compliance with design principles such as active frontages, natural surveillance and the 45 degree code). For dwellings without type approval, drawings will need to be submitted at a scale of no greater than 1:100 showing room dimensions and heights for plan checking purposes

The City Council will accept type approval of plans where this is confirmed by a building control body (which can be either a Local Authority Building Control Body, or a Government Approved Inspector) providing that the information used to assess compliance is also submitted, to enable checking by the City Council.

If the proposed development does not comply with the Standard, room floor plans with indicative furniture layouts will be required to demonstrate the functionality of internal spaces.