West Bedlington

Design Guidance & Codes

October 2024

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Quality information

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Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
1	20 September 2024	Partial draft (s1-2)	Michael Holt	Associate Director
2	25 September 2024	Partial draft (s1-2) comments	Steven Young	Town Clerk
3	30 September 2024	Full draft	Michael Holt	Associate Director
4	3 October 2024	Full draft (s1-4) comments	Steven Young	Town Clerk
5	4 October 2024	Final issue	Michael Holt	Associate Director

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01
Introduction

This document aims to empower the local community to influence the design and character of their neighbourhood; delivering attractive, sustainable development that meets the needs of local people.

1.1 Background

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been appointed to provide design support to the West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) by preparing this Design Guidance document. The NPSG seek to establish a design guide (including design codes) to influence the character and design of future development across the West Bedlington Neighbourhood Area (NA).

West Bedlington is a civil parish located in the south-east of Northumberland, in the north-east of England. The neighbourhood area consists of the historic town centre and a townscape which varies in character and design. The town centre is designated as a conservation area.

The Wansbeck Local Plan provided a requirement of 560 homes; however, this has been met by recent development and the NPSG do not intend to allocate sites.

This document seeks to provide important clarity for future development by setting codes and guidance which meet the aspirations of local stakeholders and support the delivery of high-quality, sustainable development.

To develop design guidance and codes for West Bedlington, this report first outlines Place Types agreed with the NPSG, identified during the site visit and a desktop analysis.

The codes are applicable to the whole neighbourhood area.

Figure 01: Broader context and strategic location of West Bedlington.

1.2 Purpose of the design guidance

Design guidance aims to raise the quality of new development by providing a clear framework for creating healthy, safe, green, environmentally responsive, sustainable, and distinctive places.

A design code is a set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements that are visual and numerical wherever possible in order to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. They can provide greater assurance for communities and clarity for developers about the design of new development. They generally apply to new development that requires planning permission.

The guidance and codes within this document have been produced by AECOM and the West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group following engagement and consultation. They are underpinned by an analysis character, layout, materiality, boundaries, and landscape.

This document is relevant to all new developments, for all uses, including extensions to existing buildings and land. It helps to ensure new development is in keeping with local character.

This document is made up of guidance and codes:

Guidance: desirables that will help achieve a high standard of design which the Town Council would like to see demonstrated as part of applications.

Codes: requirements that the designer can apply with confidence that they will be acceptable to the Town Council and local planning authority without further discussion.

Section 01: Introduction

Sets out the background to this design guidance, its purpose, and how to use it.

Section 02: Analysis and Place Types

Presents character analysis and establishes Place Types.

Section 03: Design codes and guidance

Includes design guidance that must be followed for all development proposals and those codes applicable to specific Place Types.

Section 04 - Appendix: Policy Review

Overview of national and local policies or guidance.

1.3 Using this Document

The design guidance is a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high-quality development in West Bedlington. It will be used differently by different users in the planning and development process, as summarised in the adjacent table.

A valuable way guidance can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that seeks to understand and takes account of local preferences and expectations for design quality. As such the guidance and codes can help to facilitate conversations on various topics to help align expectations, aid understanding and the balancing of key local issues.

A Design Code supports paragraphs 130 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the latter affirming that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Design codes alone will not automatically optimise outcomes but will help all involved.

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

Table 01: User groups and how they will use the guidance

1.4 Process, site visits, and engagement

An inception call between AECOM and representatives of West Bedlington Town Council was undertaken on 30 July 2024 to introduce the team and coordinate a suitable date to visit the area and conduct site observations. The site visit took place on 6 August 2024. Prior to the walking route, the design code process was discussed, the group's key aims and objectives were explored, and any initial concerns or queries were addressed.

The site visit route was verified by members of the group. The Place Type boundaries were established following the site visit and confirmed by the group. The visit covered the whole of the town. The visit allowed AECOM to gather an extensive photographic survey and undertake a comprehensive place analysis forming the basis of this document. This document has resulted from a collaborative effort reflecting the priorities of the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

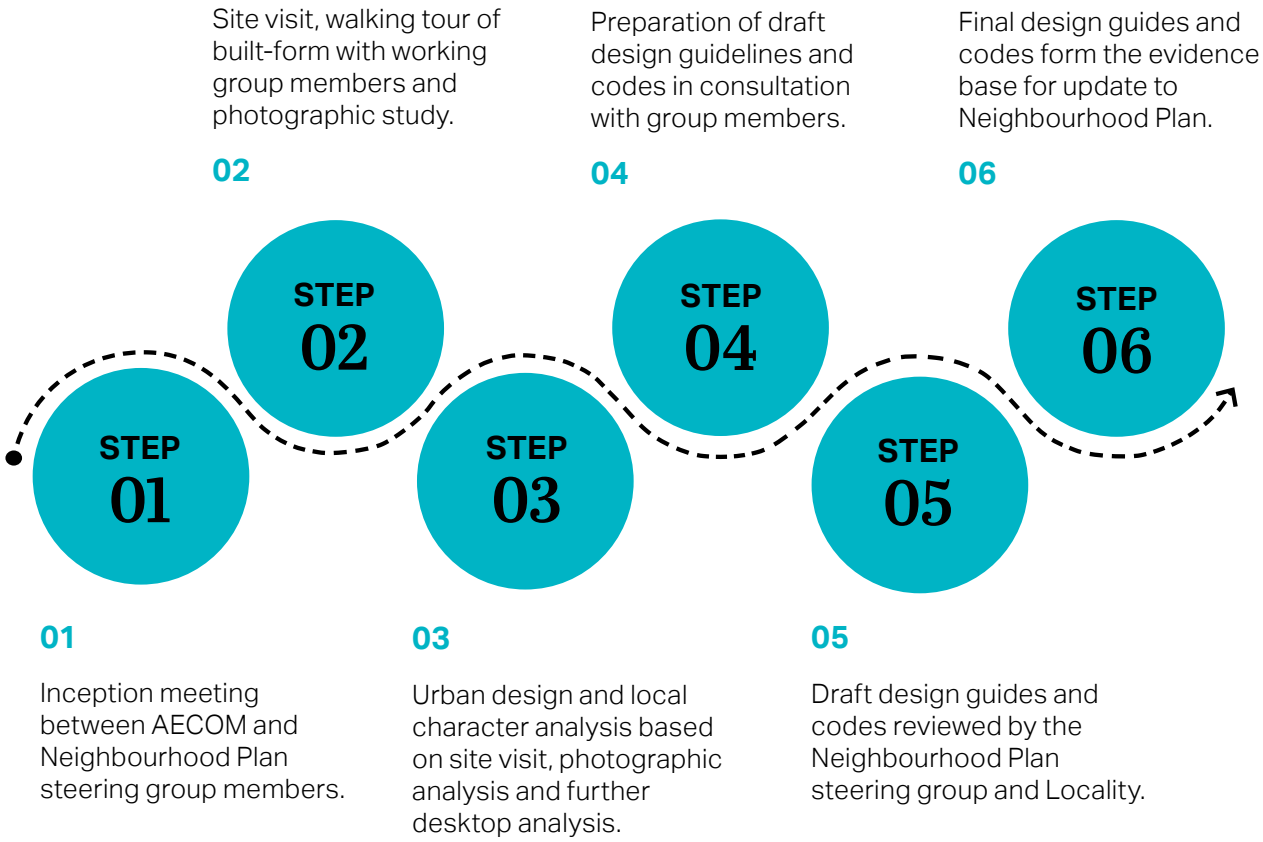

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Figure 02: Design codes and guidelines production process

1.5 Aims and objectives

The overarching aim of the West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan (WBNP) is to shape and ensure the historic or distinctive features are enhanced and maintained, serving current and future residents. A Neighbourhood Plan enables West Bedlington to set design standards and policies for development within the Neighbourhood Area, aligned to local and national planning policy.

This document forms part of the evidence base for the WBNP on design related issues; it is locally specific and sets clear requirements that relate to West Bedlington and its Place Types.

The overarching aim of this document is to protect and enhance the urban and rural character of West Bedlington through the following objectives:

- To positively influence the character and design of new development.
- To enhance the sense of place and quality of the existing built and natural environments.
- To ensure that future development promotes community cohesion, with particular focus on access to green space and community amenities.
- To promote sustainability through environmentally friendly development, protection of green spaces and enhancement of biodiversity within the area.

Neighbourhood Plan Vision

"By 2036 West Bedlington will comprise a sustainable and cohesive community. There will be an appreciation of the importance of the heritage of the area, which is vital to the areas sense of place, as well as giving local communities a sense of belonging.

Improvements will have been made to the local environment, employment opportunities, services and facilities which will enhance the quality of life of residents. Communities will be well-connected, via sustainable transport routes to major employment opportunities as well as greater services and facilities beyond the plan area.

The important environmental and historic character of the area will have been maintained and enhanced by ensuring new development is of an appropriate scale and design, as well as reflecting the rural setting of the plan area. Important green spaces will be protected for the benefit of current as well as future generations."

1.6 Study Area

West Bedlington covers two thirds of the town of Bedlington, with its neighbourhood area including West Bedlington town centre, the villages of Nedderton and Hartford Bridge, and the surrounding countryside and Green Belt. There is a population of 9,962 according to the 2021 Census.

The town is approximately 12 miles from Newcastle upon Tyne via the B1318, 8 miles from Ashington via the A189, 7.5 miles from Newbiggin-by-the-Sea via the B1334, 5 miles from Blyth via the A193, and 5 miles from Cramlington and 4.5 miles from Morpeth both via the A192.

The centre of West Bedlington is designated as a conservation area and contains 33 Listed buildings, three of which are grade II*. The conservation area is described as one long core street with an elbow at the central Market Place, creating three distinct parts (West, Market and East).

The neighbourhood area provides a number of services and facilities to meet the day to day needs of local residents, including: schools, convenience stores, public houses and social clubs, cricket and golf clubs, a community centre and churches.

However, residents rely on neighbouring towns such as Cramlington and Morpeth for a wider range of services and facilities. The town centre includes a large vacant brownfield site with proposals for its redevelopment to improve the retail offer of the town.

A large part of the area is open countryside, of which land to the west lies within the Green Belt, which includes Hartford Hall but excludes properties in Nedderton and at Hartford Bridge.

The area boasts numerous environmental designations, including ancient woodland, local nature reserves and local wildlife sites.

The River Blyth borders the southern outskirts of Bedlington running through Bedlington Country Park. Whilst the River Sleek Burn borders the north edge of the neighbourhood area where it joins to a small tributary Netherton Letch running along the top of the area west to east.

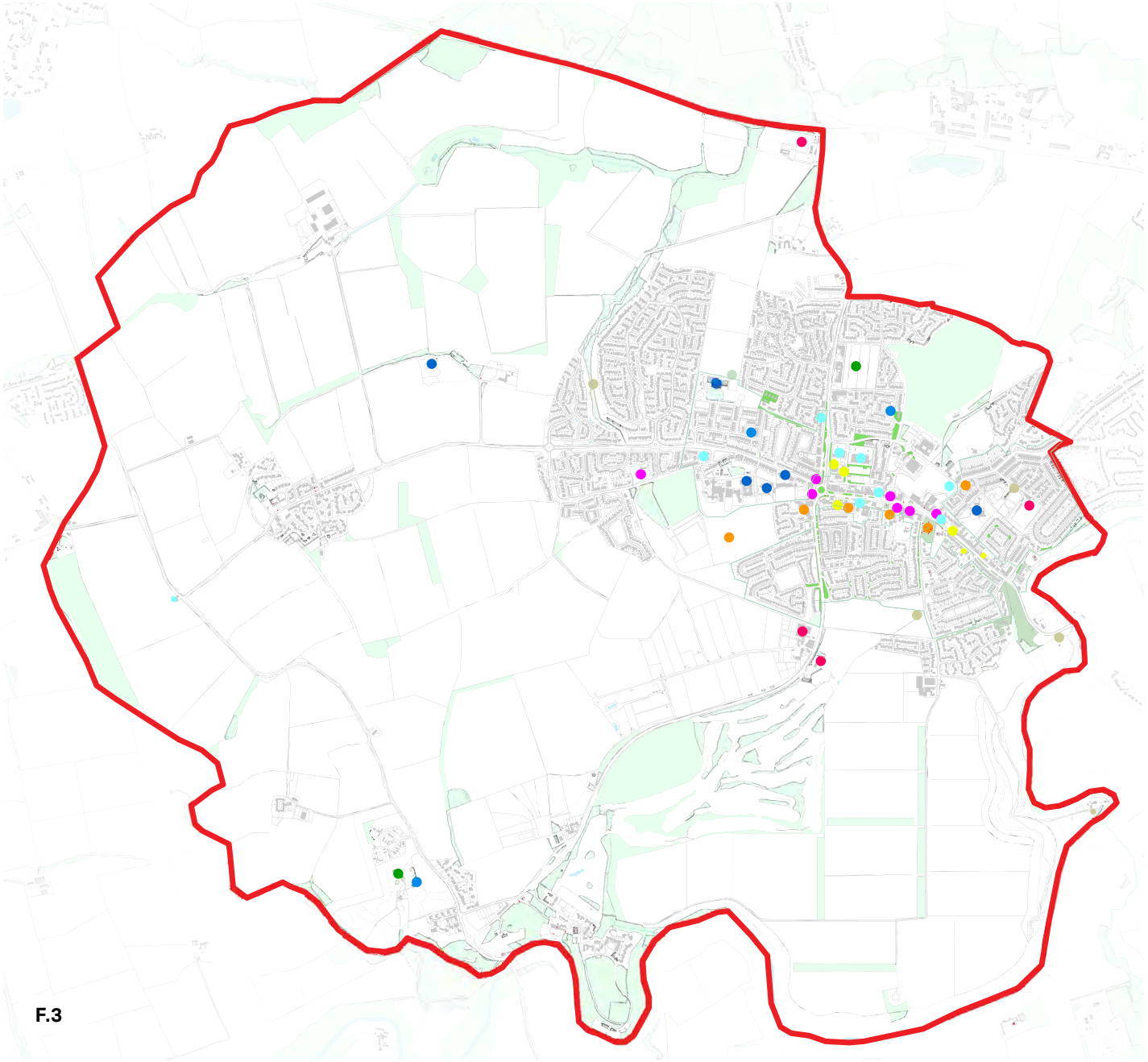
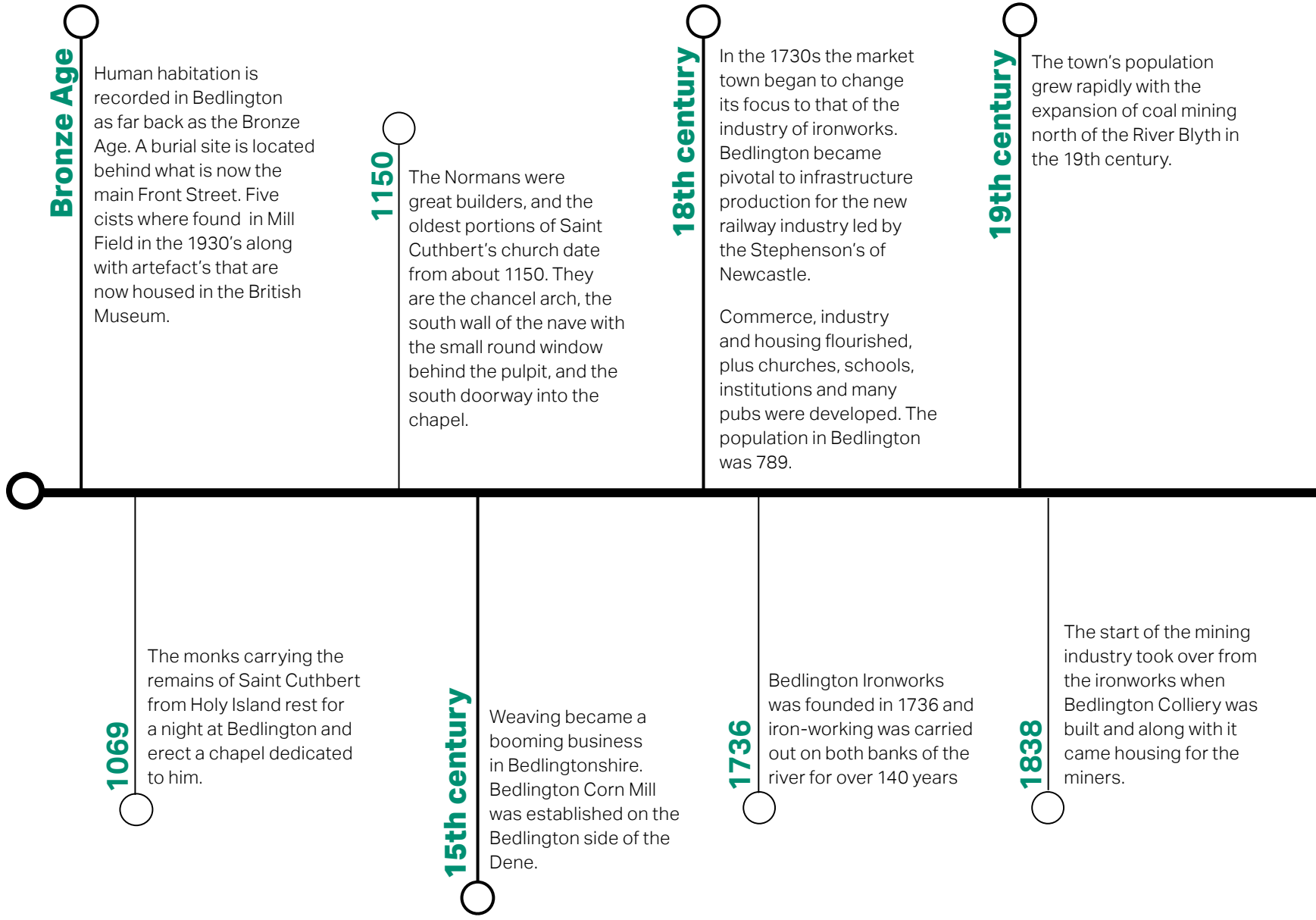


Figure 03: Study area diagram for West Bedlington, showing key amenities located mostly in the town centre

Historical Timeline

This timeline provides a summary of the historical development of the West Bedlington Neighbourhood Area.



1850 The railway station, built to serve the town of Bedlington, was opened on the 3rd of August 1850 by the Blyth and Tyne Railway. It was located in Sleekburn, just over a mile north-west from the town centre, along Station Road in the area now known as Bedlington Station.

1858 Bedlington's first post office had a telegraph system installed. It was situated in the Baptist Yard.

1866 An attempt to control sewage disposal began with a sewer laid down Newcastle Road to Browns Farm field. The first Miners Picnic was held at Polly's Folly at the north end of Shankhouse. Miners from Bedlington & other areas attended.

1867 The first candle-makers, William Barnes of Blyth, set up at eastern side of the Clayton Estate what was known as Moor Lane.

1876 The Bedlingtonshire Health Board completed its fresh water scheme for the area. Gas works were installed at the Doctor Pit. Bedlington Brick Manufacturing Company established

20th century The mining industry declined and ceased after World War II, but the local economy was sustained by the development of light industries.

1923 The war memorial in Bedlington designed and sculpted by R. Oliver was unveiled on the 20th January 1923 by Major E.W. Burden of Hartford House. The memorial commemorates 180 local servicemen who lost their lives in the First World War.

1930 In 1930 the wooden viaduct was demolished and the London and North Eastern Railway replaced it with the present iron bridge.

1959 The most important historic building in Bedlington was Bedlington Old Hall, which consisted of a 15th-century Pele tower with a long early 18th century stone block adjoining was controversially demolished in 1959, and replaced with council offices.

21st century There has been an increase in housing throughout the 21st Century with new housing replacing the old miners double rowed terraced housing. The Neighbourhood area remains surrounded by agricultural land.

Figure 04: View of Front Street, c.1930

Figure 05: View of Front Street c.1930 showing the characteristics still present today.

Figure 06: Aerial view showing the extent of Bedlington Colliery and Railway Station in 1924.

Figure 07: Bedlington Old Hall, demolished in 1959.

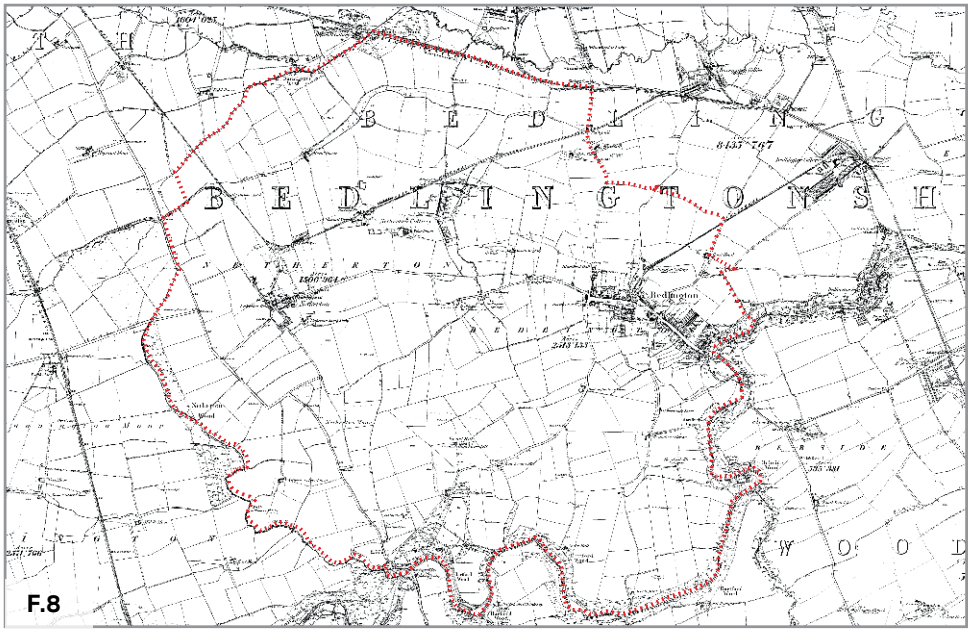


Figure 08: Map from 1860

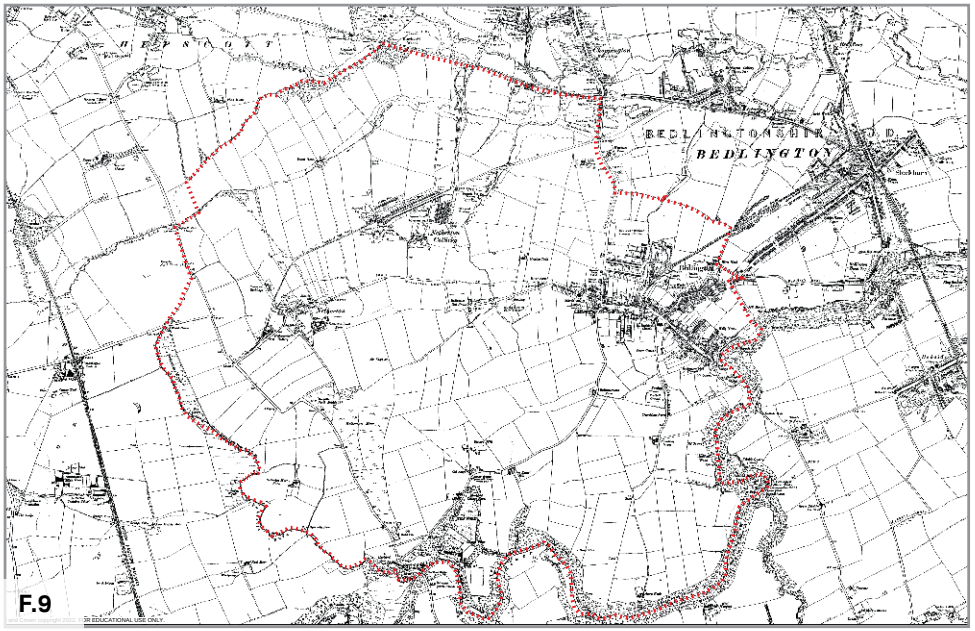


Figure 09: Map from 1920

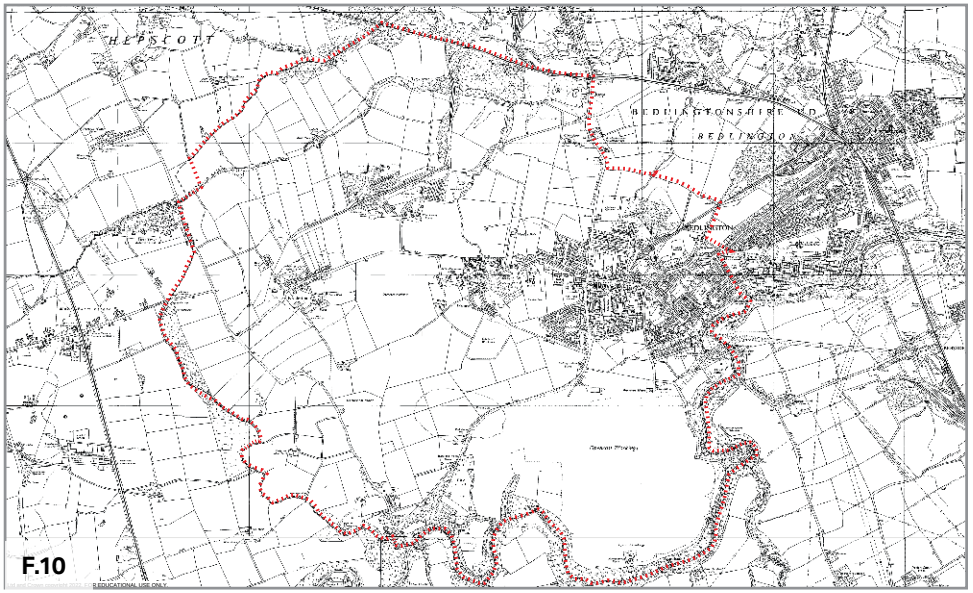


Figure 10: Map from 1950

Figure 11: Image from 2024

02

Analysis and Place Types

Achieving quality development starts with a comprehensive understanding of a place.

All new development must undertake its own comprehensive analysis of place to understand a proposal's broader context and establish aspirations and place-specific responses to the location, siting and design of new development.

2.1 Understanding Place

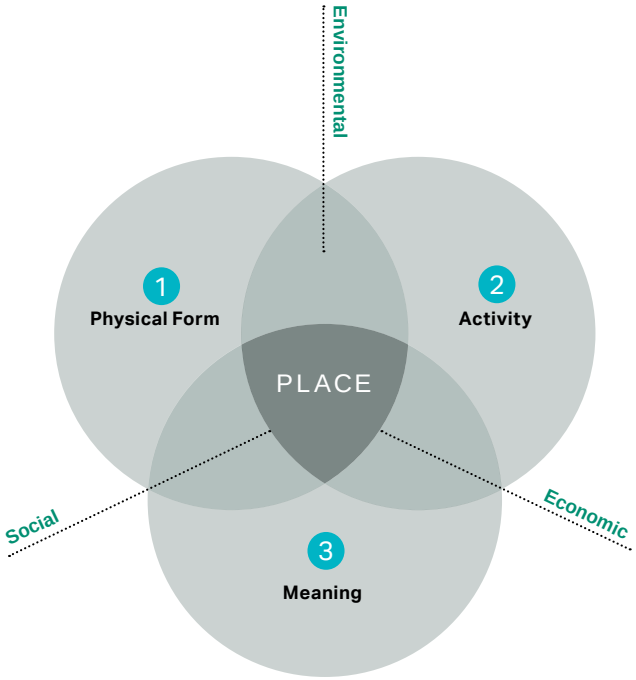
Places have a clear and strong identity and character. They are a combination of their physical form, their activities and their meaning to people.

This section presents the variation in character across West Bedlington. This helps to inform the series of area-wide codes (Section 3), applicable to all development within the West Bedlington Neigbourhood Area boundary.

The analysis is based on a desktop study, site visit and engagement with the NPSG.

Defining Place Types and establishing what the key features or distinctive attributes are in each area, helps to determine the appropriate design codes and to support future development. Place types are a method of dividing the neighbourhood area into portions so that the description of the area's features are documented.

This analysis was crosschecked on site as part of the walking tour and photographic study.



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1. Physical conditions of existing built development including layout, form, scale, appearance, landscape character, waterways and flood risk.
2. Use, vitality and diversity, including community facilities and local services.
3. How a place is perceived, including local heritage, views inwards and outwards and social histories.

Figure 12: Exploring the features which come together to create a successful place.

2.2 Identifying Place types

For the purposes of this design code, West Bedlington has been divided into 5 Place Types, describing an area's urban layout, development period, context and character. The Place Types provide a basis for setting consistent parameters within this design code.

Devised through a thorough analysis in a baseline study, observations on site and with input from the NPSG, the Place Types are comprehensive and do not adhere strictly to defined boundaries.

The following attributes were considered when developing the Place Types:

- Street pattern and urban grain.
- Context and local character.
- Shape and sizes of blocks and plots.
- Public or open spaces.
- Green and blue infrastructure.
- Boundary treatment and building lines.
- Building size, scale and features.

The following descriptions give a broad understanding of what constitutes a typical Place Type. These are extrapolated in the analysis of each area:

Town centres are focal points offering amenities and services. They have linear streets, flanked by shops or houses. Public spaces usually have historical significance and provide community activities. Buildings reflect development periods, ranging from medieval to Victorian or Edwardian. Town centres have landmarks such as religious buildings or civic buildings with features such as monuments, street lighting, storefronts or signage. There is typically a strong mix of uses and generally with terraced or semi-detached housing or flats above retail units.

Inner suburbs radiate from a core or linear street. Often served by an urban grid of connecting streets with terraced or semi-detached housing. Houses generally face the street with small front gardens. On-street parking is often a feature. Local shops and amenities are in proximity. Parks and public spaces are not typically present.

Outer suburbs are residential areas with detached, semi-detached, bungalows, and terraced houses, often with driveways and gardens. They have wide roads, grassed verges, street trees and cul-de-sac street patterns. On-plot parking is typical and there is a lack services within walking distance. Architectural styles are often post-war or contemporary. Outer suburbs often transition to green belt and countryside.

Retail and employment include industrial uses such as warehousing, storage, and manufacturing but excludes noxious or hazardous risk activity. Areas of retail and business parks are often located at the edge of settlements. Public services are located within proximity to centres.

Open countryside is often areas in a rural context with a scenic quality - used for farming or left in its natural condition. Hamlets set among a patchwork of field boundaries are a feature, which are sparsely populated with farmsteads or isolated dwellings. They may include woodlands and scheduled monuments.

PT 1 - Town centre

PT 2 - Inner suburb

PT 3 - Outer suburb

PT 4 - Retail and employment

PT 5 - Open countryside

Settlement focus areas

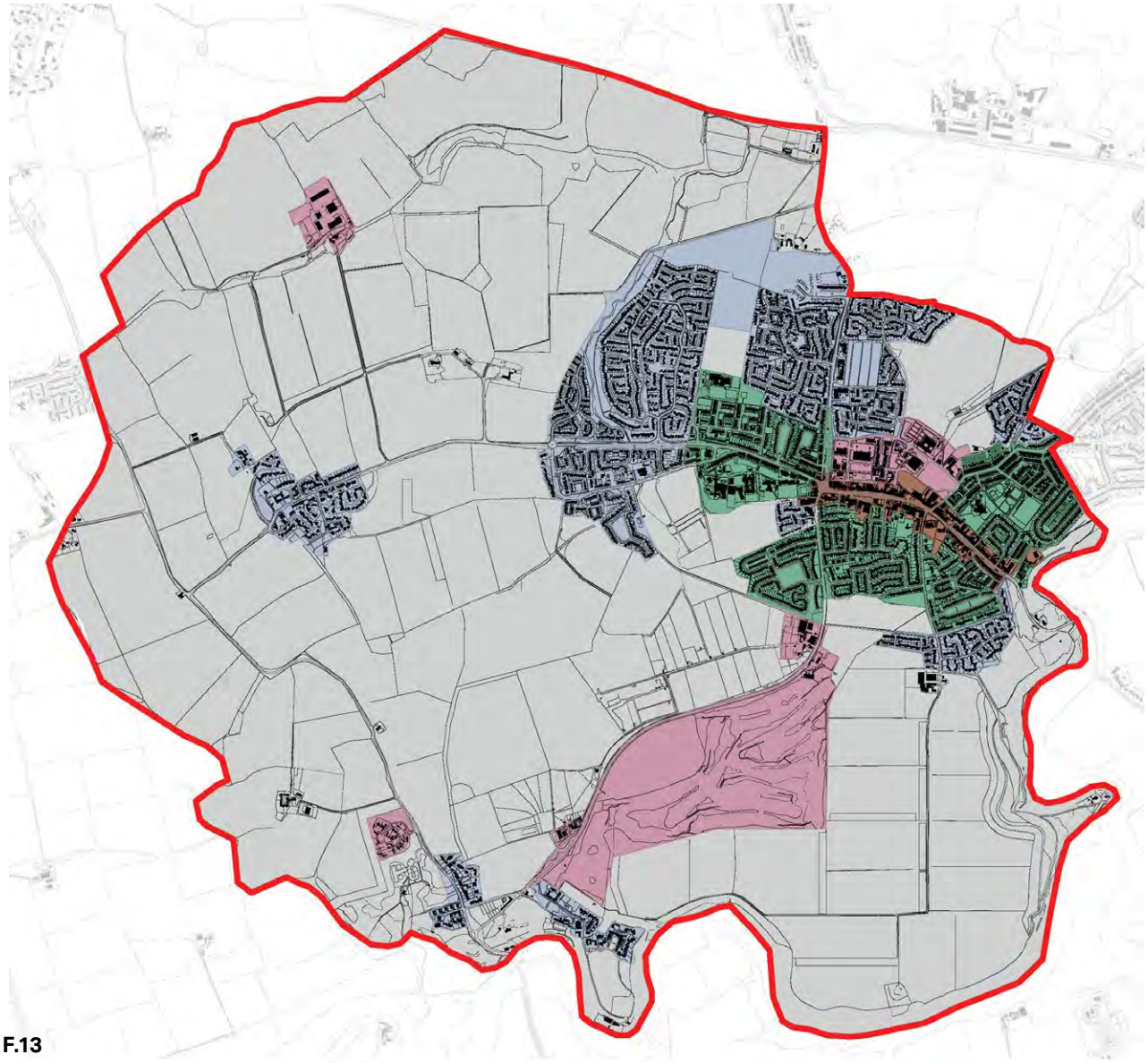

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Figure 13: Diagram showing West Bedlington's Place Types.

1 Town centre

Town centre	Calculations
Average Dwellings per Hectare (DpH)	28 DpH
Typical plot size range	4m (W) x 10m (L) 25m (W) x 28m (L)
Typical block size range	70m (W) x 40m (L)

Figure 14: Figure ground illustrating the linear historic core of West Bedlington town centre.

Connections Context; urban form; layout; and, movement networks	Buildings are primarily arranged along the linear West End Front Street and East End Front Street, a key east/west axis. Most buildings directly face the street. The undulating topography is a feature, providing for separation between vehicles and pedestrians. This is a Conservation Area.
	Front Street is wide with several loop roads providing access to businesses. It is serviced by a bus route. The permeability is enhanced by connecting alleyways and crossings. Pavements are generally wide but get narrower in the east. On street parking is a feature, making good use of the level changes and slopes.
Built form Building massing, scale and type; blocks and plots; density; boundary treatments and building lines; and, public spaces	Older buildings are typically 1-3 storeys with newer developments ranging between 3-4 storeys (with dormers). Buildings are typically terraced with civic buildings as standalone.
	Plots are relatively small with varied size and shape, typically they are rectangular plots on perimeter blocks with uninterrupted street frontages.
	Architectural style is largely Edwardian/Victorian with contemporary. Several features as such monuments, storefronts, flowerbeds, and planter boxes are notable. Rooflines are discontinuous due to topographical changes and building heights. Roof features include dormers and brick chimneys. Architectural details include sash windows and mullions, brick bandings, lintels, dentil brick courses, and quoins.
	Buildings have a consistent building line with 90-96% active frontage emphasising the continuous edge to the street. Setbacks vary, ranging from extensive (up to 20m) to shops/houses fronting directly onto the pavement.
	Market Place is the only public space in the area, which has a small, grassed area, benches, lighting, cycle stands, and hard-surface space for events.
Nature Landscape; green and blue infrastructure; open spaces; and, biodiversity	Green verges, planter boxes, and mature trees line Front Street with civic gardens and open spaces contributing to the green infrastructure network in this area. The River Blyth sits in close proximity to the southeast of the area but there is a low risk of flooding.
Activity Homes; uses; and, community	Housing is largely terraced, hard to the pavement edge, ranging between 1-3 storeys, and of Victorian or Edwardian building stock. A contemporary 3 storey apartment building is located on the corner of Church lane/Front Street. Flats can often be found above retail units.
	There is a strong mix of uses as well as civic buildings, St Cuthbert's Church, hospitality uses at Birkinshaw Manor, the Jobcentre, and several public houses offering night-time economy.

2.2.1 Streetscape

Front Street is a wide, characterful main thoroughfare with shops and homes flanking the street.

It is a wide street with various topographical level changes. The slopes are effectively used for grass verges, flowerbeds and off-road parking.

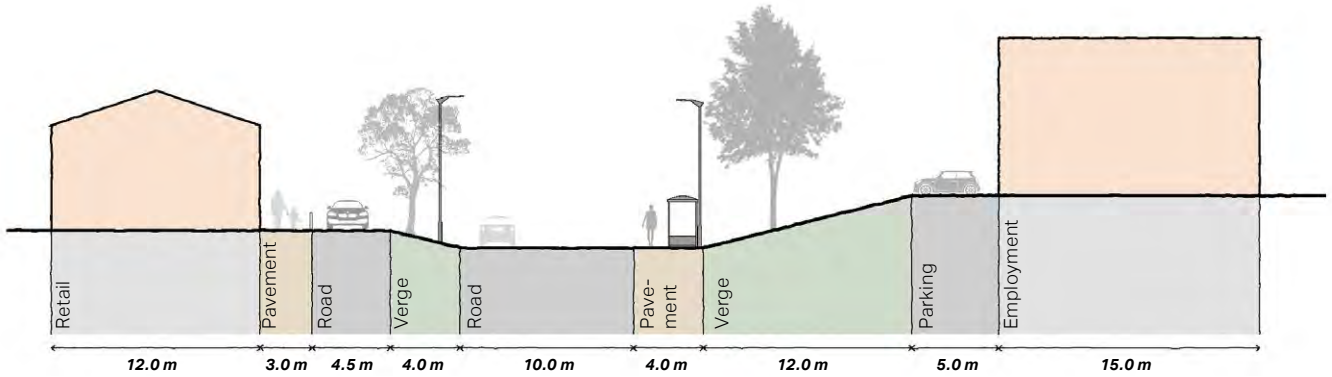
The streetscape is characterised by its mature trees and greenery with several monuments at civic or public spaces. Public spaces have hard-stand materials with low boundary walls or bollards separating users.

Pavements are sufficiently wide. Loop roads and bollards separate pedestrians from vehicles, but this is sometimes difficult to navigate on foot. There are cycle stands and good street lighting.

Buildings either spill out on to pavement edge or are extensively setback from main street.

Figure 15: Apartments are elevated from the road to create a greater sense of enclosure at the eastern end of Front Street.

Figure 16: Lay-bys with mature trees are a feature at the western end of Front Street, creating large setbacks.



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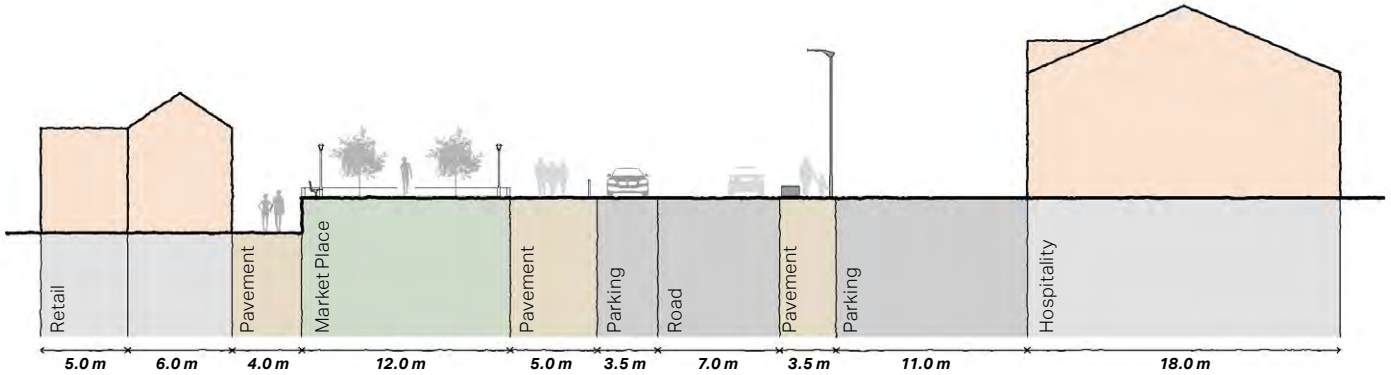

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Figure 17: Topographical changes are a distinctive feature, mature trees line the street with large green verges.

Figure 18: Public spaces are generous with good seating, lighting and soft landscaping. Bollards line the streets and spaces.

2.2.2 What good looks like

The buildings span from the Victorian era to the contemporary, offering an array of ground-floor shops, homes, apartments, religious structures, and community assets.

Built form varies between single storey homes and shops to 3 storey apartment buildings. Most typically buildings are 2 storeys. There is an active, primary frontage along the street with a sense of enclosure resulting from mature trees.

It is a relatively dense area with a good variety of housing types.

The material palette provides a clear identity. Sandstone and red brick is predominant for all buildings. Red pantiles and grey slate are used for roofs. Due to the topography, rooflines are not typically consistent and are instead staggered. The level changes are the area's most distinctive feature.

Quoins and contrasting lintels are a feature. Traditional shopfronts are distinctive. Details include entablature/ banding, sash windows, and muntins and mullions.

Good design includes: traditional material palettes and shopfronts, public space provision, vehicle separation, off-street parking utilising the slopes, greenery and flowers, and heritage and monuments.

A continuous frontage along Front Street enhances the sense of place.

Public space is green, programmable, with cycle provision and resting points.

Green verges, planting and flowerbeds improve public realm.

Newer developments reflect local character for materials and massing.

Traditional shopfronts

Public realm resting space

Parking makes use of the the topographical change along Front Street.

Appearance


F.19


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Figure 19: Boundary treatment features include flowerbeds, grass verges and greenery often expressing slope level change.

Figure 20: Monuments and public spaces are common and well maintained.

Figure 21: Sash windows and mullions, and signage.

Figure 22: Quoins and lintel features are common, sometimes in contrasting colours offset against cream render finish.

Figure 23: Contemporary development, render and brick material palettes with gables and bay windows.

Figure 24: Ornate doorways with gable fronts. In some buildings, gables are in contrasting materials.

Figure 25: Traditional shopfronts open direct to the pavement.

Figure 26: Pathways are often at different levels with fencing.

Figure 27: Catslide roofs and bay windows.

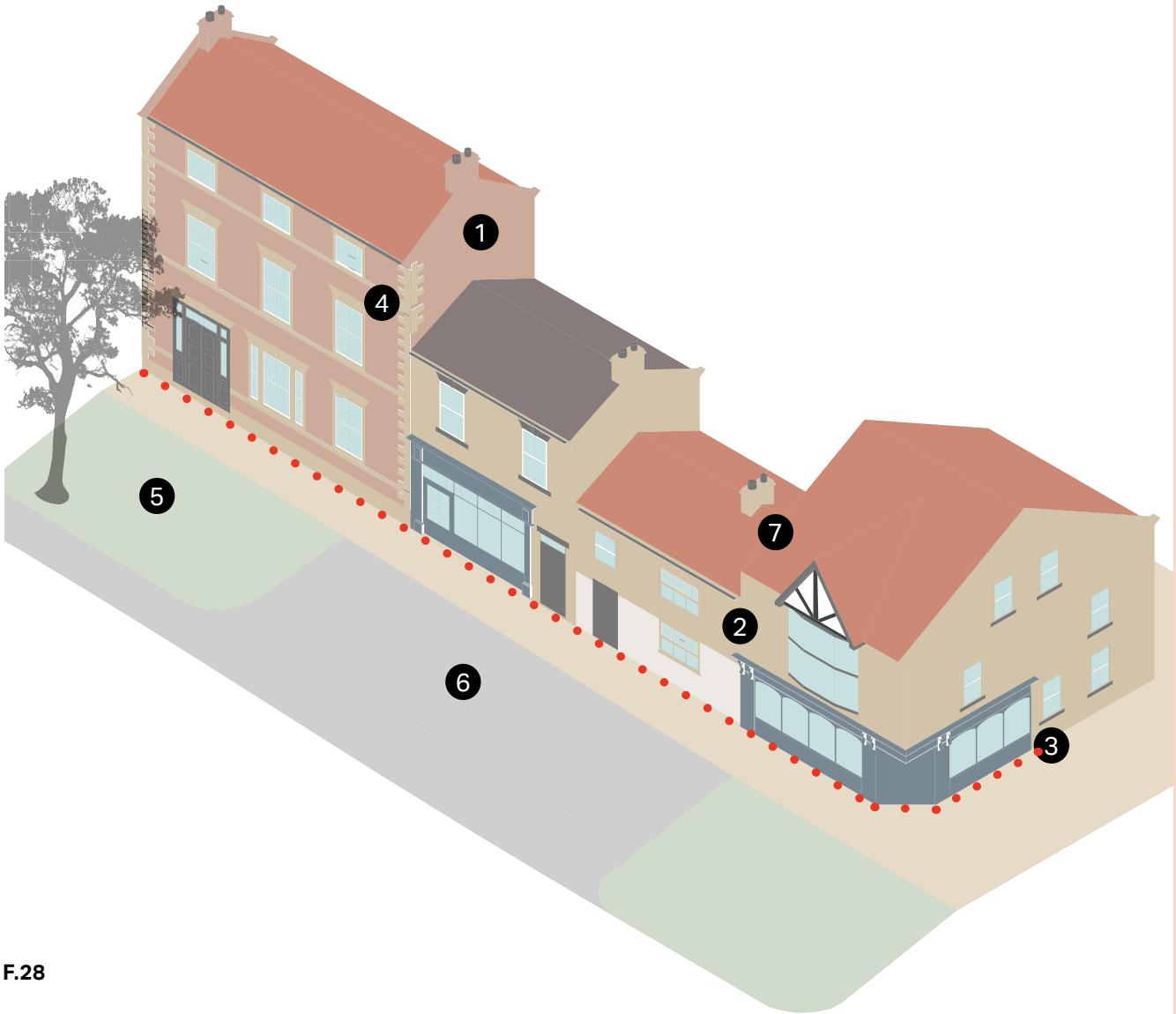

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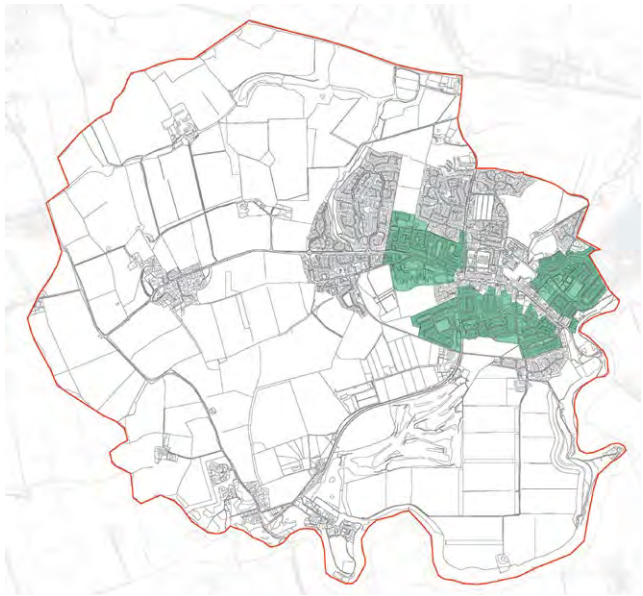
Figure 28: Indicative diagram, bringing together various elements of 'good design' from across the Place Type. The analysis, site visit observations, and photo study of the area have been used to inform the diagram, and show what elements or design features that may be relevant to future development..

2.2.3 Good urban form

The annotated sketch highlights what good urban form looks like in the Place Type. The following items are notable:

1. Scale and massing - Building heights range from 1-3 storeys. They form a continual edge to the pavement. Topography changes create greater distinction between buildings of different heights.
2. Orientation - Most buildings have a main facade which faces the street. Shops and businesses turn the corner and present to adjoining streets and Front Street.
3. Building line - No variation in building line, defines a clear edge to the high street. There are few facade projections with access to shops provided direct to the street. Setbacks vary but are mostly reasonably large.
4. Built form - Material palettes include quoins, chimney stacks, sash windows, timber fascia, bay fronts, and traditional shopfronts.
5. Boundary treatments - Grass verges with mature trees are prominent and distinctive. They provide separation from the road. Low walls (sometimes combined with hedges) are typical in residential areas. Flowerbeds and planters help to soften the public realm.
6. Parking - Parking makes use of the topographical changes, parking on slopes, within the grass verges and public spaces.
7. Roofscapes - Variation in scale contributes to a shifting roofscape, commonly featuring ends of gables.

2 Inner suburb



Inner suburb	Calculations
Average Dwellings per Hectare (DpH)	28-52 DpH
Typical plot size range	4m (W) x 20m (L) 10m (W) x 36m (L)
Typical block size range	50m (W) x 115m (L) 95m (W) x 265m (L)

Figure 29: Figure ground illustrating the inner suburbs. The diagram shows examples of each item noted.

Connections Context; urban form; layout; and, movement networks	Area surrounds the town centre, with public services and supermarkets providing local amenities. Connected street network, most streets have a formal, suburban layout. Loop roads - notably Millfield, Hartlands, and Cornwell Crescent - are a feature, typically with central green spaces, often dominated by on-street parking, limiting access on single-lane roads. Loops roads with back-to-back houses are notable on Cumberland Avenue and Hollymount Street.
	Church Lane, Ridge Terrace, and A108/Choppington Road service the area and are largely flanked by homes and businesses facing the street. Traffic calming measures are evident in many of the loop roads.
Built form Building massing, scale and type; blocks and plots; density; boundary treatments and building lines; and, public spaces	1-2 storey homes and some instances of 3 storey apartment buildings in a contemporary style. Most homes are semi-detached properties (notably postwar style along East Riggs) or terraced units (typical examples found on Millbank Road).
	Sometimes in a grid structure or rectilinear street layout, generally featuring perimeter blocks where buildings define spaces. Rectangular blocks with generally narrow plots.
	Buildings generally face the street with a strong building line and strong sense of enclosure. Area has net residential densities of 28-52 DpH. Lower densities with semi-detached properties around Hartlands with medium/high densities with short-run terraced housing around Millbank, Millfield and Deaney Street. Homes that chamfer a corner (evident on the intersection of East and South Riggs) are good examples of successful layout.
	Typically, post-war architectural style with pockets of Victorian terraces, often with small front yards and back gardens with adjoining alleyways. Rooflines are generally uniform due to terraced housing type. Rooflines in semi-detached properties are hipped or gable fronted, which provides distinctive massing.
	On-street parking is a feature, typically with traffic calming measures such as speed bumps or single lane passing points. Parking is usually at the side of properties, with garages.
	Small front gardens (2-5m deep) but sometimes homes have no front garden (Deaney Street). Planting and on-plot trees are a feature. Buildings hold a consistent building line and create an active frontage. Low brick walls are most typical.
Nature Landscape; green and blue infrastructure; open spaces; and, biodiversity	Grass verges and street trees are notable in more urban areas immediately south of the town centre; front gardens are often well maintained with landscaping and greenery. Open spaces are often bounded by roads and homes as central, grassed areas. They are typically unprogrammed and often dominated by on-street parking.
Activity Homes; uses; and, community	Mainly a residential area with amenities catered for by the town centre or supermarkets. A mix of short terraces and semi-detached units with some small businesses or stores typically along main roads

2.2.4 Streetscape

Streets in this area are typically more urban when within proximity of the town centre and become more suburban at the edges.

Loop roads are a distinctive feature. They either have semi-detached properties flanking open green space or the homes are either side of a road. Often on-street parking reduces the road width and clutters the open space.

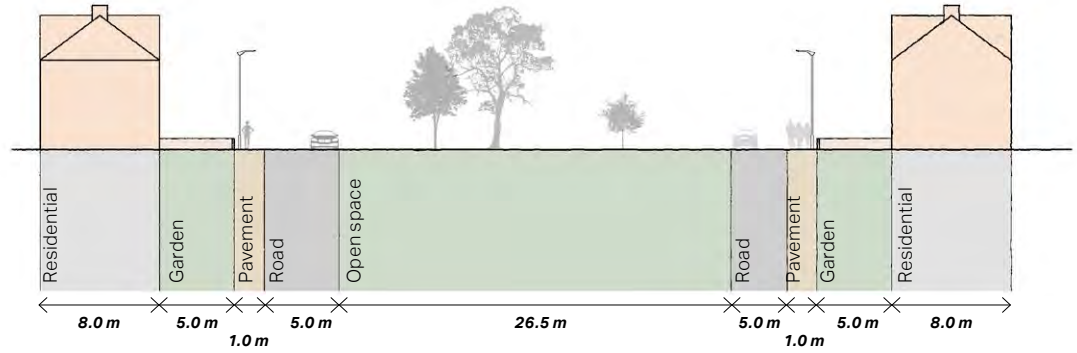
Front gardens are commonplace, normally with approximately 3-5m setbacks.

Grass verges at street corners are a feature and help to soften the street edge and provide good pedestrian/vehicle separation.

At times terraced homes have rear access lanes, which create a poor streetscape and lack natural surveillance.

Figure 30: Loop roads often dominated by on-street parking that spills onto green spaces. Traffic calming also notable.

Figure 31: Stronger enclosure to terraced homes, on-street parking dominate and restrictive to movement.



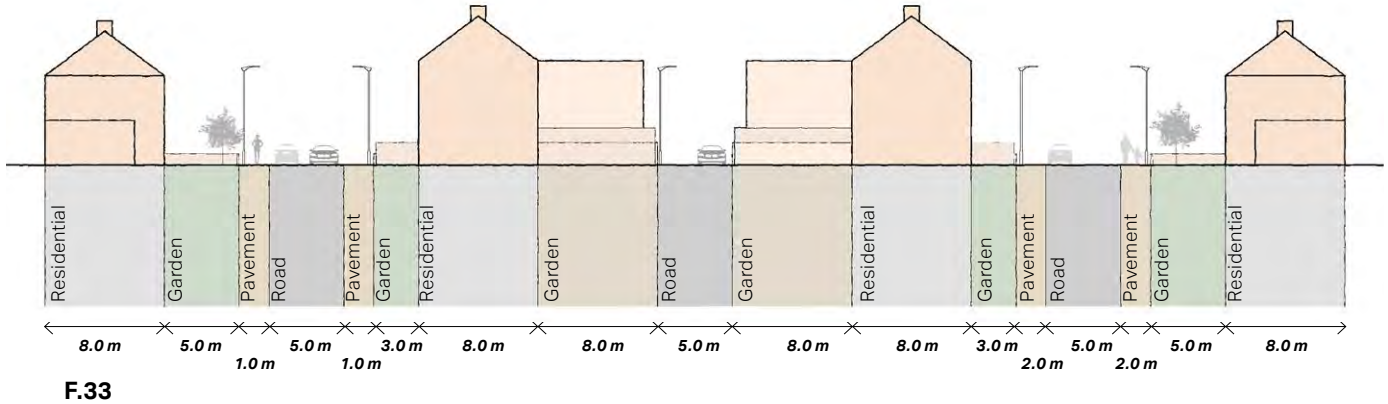


Figure 32: Large green verges provide good quality amenity and reduce sense of density, given proximity to town centre.

Figure 33: Tightly packed blocks show semi-detached and terraced properties sharing streets. Alleyways are to the rear.

2.2.5 What good looks like

The area has a variety of architectural styles and features ranging across Victorian, to post-war and late 20th century.

A distinct feature for the area is the corner turning in some homes where the home addresses the corner so that there is an active edge to intersecting streets. These instances give greater scope for large gardens often with mature trees and hedges.

Grass verges are an example of good quality layout. Trees and planting provide shade and greenery.

Terraced properties create a strong street edge and chimney stacks and continual roofline create an animated roofscape.

Formally, bay windows are commonplace for either terraced properties or semi-detached dwellings. They create visual interest and material change.

Semi-detached homes often have a variety of massing, which creates distinctiveness in buildings on the same or neighbouring block.

Street trees and verges enable separation but also create moments of shade and greenery, providing the area with a clear identity.

Alleyways to the rear of terraced units provide limited natural surveillance.

Homes turning the corner to address the street, no blank facades.

Loop roads provide green space and amenity to local residents.

A continuous frontage creates a strong relationship to the street.

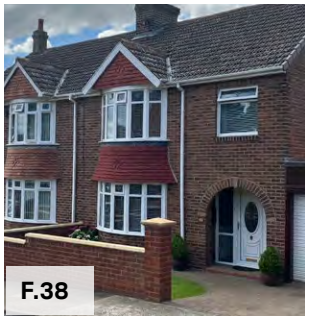
Built form is different for homes within the same development.

Tree lines and green verges provide separation from homes and the street.

Rear access lanes and garages have limited passive surveillance.

Appearance


F.34


F.38


F.41


F.42


F.35


F.39


F.43


F.36


F.40


F.44

F.37

Figure 34: Boundary treatment feature grass verges, planting, hedgerows and mature street trees.

Figure 35: Corners often have greenery or verges.

Figure 36: Pathways connect areas but sometimes without passive surveillance.

Figure 37: Local amenities are often along main roads, conversions from homes is common.

Figure 38: Porch projections or bay fronts are notable.

Figure 39: Homes often address the corner with angled form.

Figure 40: New homes typically have low hedges and metal railings at the boundary.

Figure 41: Boundaries are typically low walls, either red brick or local stone. Hedgerows often sit behind the walls.

Figure 42: Variety of homes: some grand, detached mansion houses with large gardens.

Figure 43: Semi-detached homes with side garages.

Figure 44: On-street parking or parking on green space is an issue.

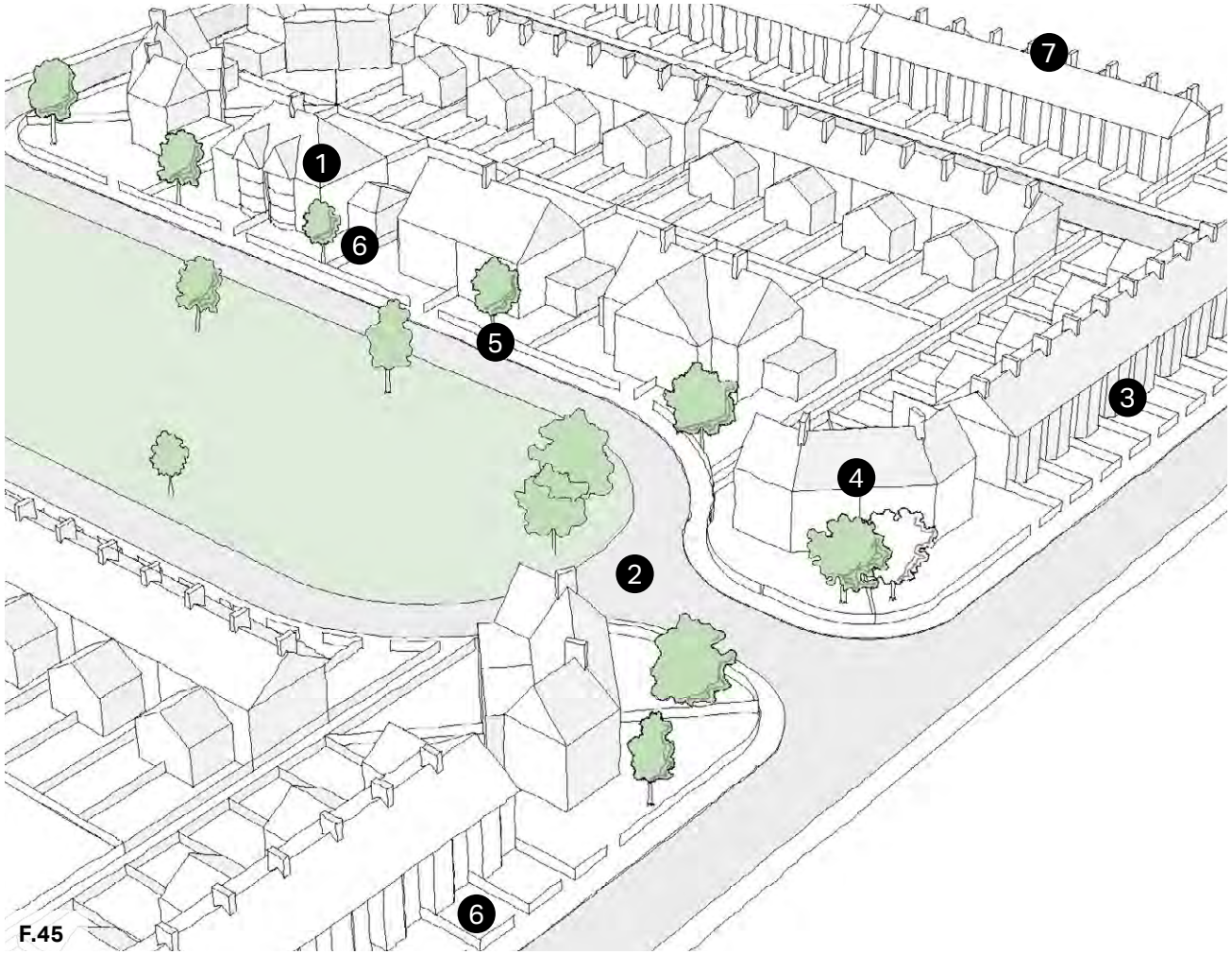


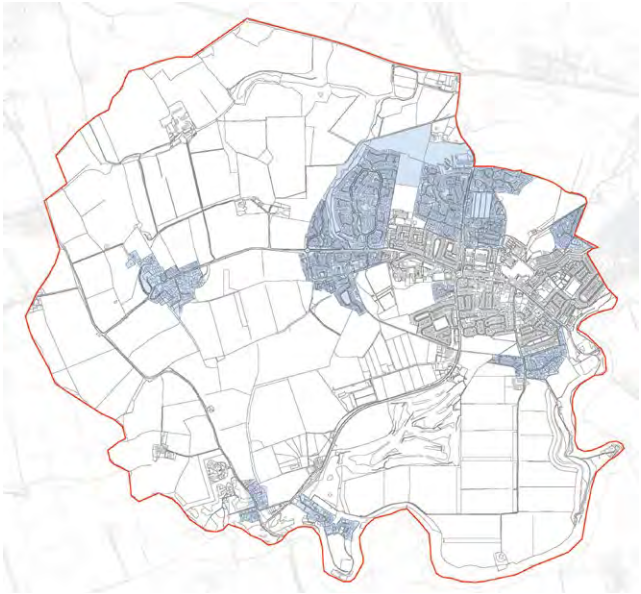
Figure 45: Indicative diagram, bringing together various elements of 'good design' from across the Place Type. The analysis, site visit observations, and photo study of the area have been used to inform the diagram, and show what elements or design features that may be relevant to future development..

2.2.6 Good urban form

The annotated sketch highlights what good urban form looks like in the Place Type. The following items are notable:

1. Scale and massing - Building heights range from 2-3 storeys with some formal variation in homes with bay fronts, gable fronts and pitched roofs.
2. Layout - Loop roads are flanked by semi-detached properties or terraced units with front of house or side of property parking. The residual space in the road layout is used for green space that should be programmed, maintained and green. Alleyways connect between blocks and provide access to homes.
3. Building line - There is a strong edge to the building line along main streets with few breaks other than alleyways in terraces. Buildings hold a consistent line throughout.
4. Built form - Homes turn the corner by creating a chamfered form that addresses each street at main intersections. There is a mix of semi-detached and terraced units with some apartments.
5. Boundary treatments - Grass verges with trees are notable. Low walls and fences (sometimes combined with hedges) are common.
6. Parking - Parking is at front of property in terraced units and to the side of properties for semi-detached homes.
7. Roofscapes - Variation in roof form makes for a distinctive roofscape. Gables and hipped roofs are notable. Pitched roofs on terraced units create a strong roofline.

3 Outer suburb



Outer suburb	Calculations
Average Dwellings per Hectare (DpH)	14-35 DpH
Typical plot size range	8m (W) x 26m (L) 15m (W) x 42m (L)
Typical block size range	95m (W) x 95m (L) 85m (W) x 105m (L)

Figure 46: Figure ground illustrating the outer suburbs. The diagram shows examples of each item noted.

Connections Context; urban form; layout; and, movement networks	Typically, a mix of suburban development in a cul-de-sac arrangement ranging from detached homes with large front gardens and roads featuring mature trees and established hedgerows - commonplace in Nedderton. Around Alnwick Drive, the area is more formal with defined building lines, consistent setbacks, and connected roads. House types include semi-detached and detached. At Ewart Drive and Humford Way, homes have less rigid layout, with smaller cul-de-sac roads in a more organic form. Generally, there are wide roads with generous verges or pavements and significant setbacks from building line to plot boundary. Sometimes there are private lanes for detached contemporary houses.
Built form Building massing, scale and type; blocks and plots; density; boundary treatments and building lines; and, public spaces	A largely residential area with 1-2 storey homes and some instances of 3 storey apartment buildings in a contemporary style. Most homes are detached in a postwar or latter 20th century style. Typically, informal blocks are squarer shaped with some longer blocks also present. Modern housing schemes around Hawthorn Close are notable. Plots are generally relatively short and rectangular. Buildings generally face the street with a fairly consistent building line, sometimes homes are staggered around corners, which create blank facades. Area has net residential densities of 14-35 DpH with lower densities around The Grange and Humford Way (14-15 DpH), and low/medium densities around Alnwick Drive and Corchester Road (26-35 DpH). Architectural styles are often inter-war / post-war or latter 20th century housing development. This can often be semi-detached, privately-owned properties or former council housing stock. Newer more recent developments have contemporary architectural styles, featuring sustainable materials, energy-efficient designs, and modern aesthetics. On-plot parking is characteristic, typically at the front/side of the house, or integrated garage/driveway. Generally, homes face the street, and the building line follows the organic street layout. Front gardens range between 7-10m deep, sometimes homes have low stone walls or metal rail fencing in a countryside style. In some cases, gardens are open to the street with driveways. Planting and on-plot trees are a feature. Buildings hold a consistent building line but typically have gaps in it, enabling views to the open countryside. Parks and public spaces are not typically in the area, given the proximity to open countryside. Church Lane bounds a Local Nature Reserve.
Nature Green and blue infrastructure; open spaces; biodiversity	Grass verges and street trees are in abundance. Front gardens are often well maintained with landscaping and greenery. Homes have rear gardens facing the open countryside. Green Letch (LGS12) runs along the edge of part of the area and is a prominent feature. The areas around Humford Way are within the Network Enhancement Zone 1, any development must consider the ecological impact.
Activity Homes; uses; and, community	Houses are often detached or semi-detached, accessed via driveways. There are a few apartments and less of a mix of uses.

2.2.7 Streetscape

Streets in this area are varied, ranging from typical suburbs streets from the postwar period, to tighter streets in the contemporary style.

In more recent developments, there is a greater sense of enclosure (1:2.5) whereas in more traditional suburban streets, enclosure is much less pronounced (1:6).

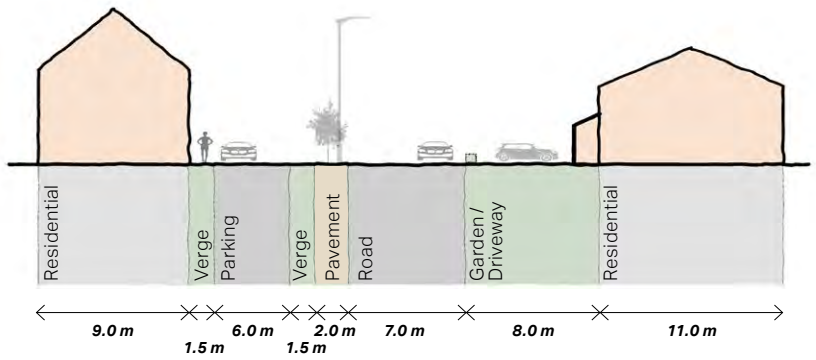
There are similarities to the streetscape in both instances: driveways are often accessed directly from the road with limited or no pavements. On primary or secondary roads there are pavements either side of the carriageway.

Grass verges and low hedges are common, often with mature trees and foliage or planting.

In areas around recent development, there are accessways (shown in F.49) that provide parking directly outside properties. This creates very large setbacks from the roads and a poor sense of enclosure and material palette.

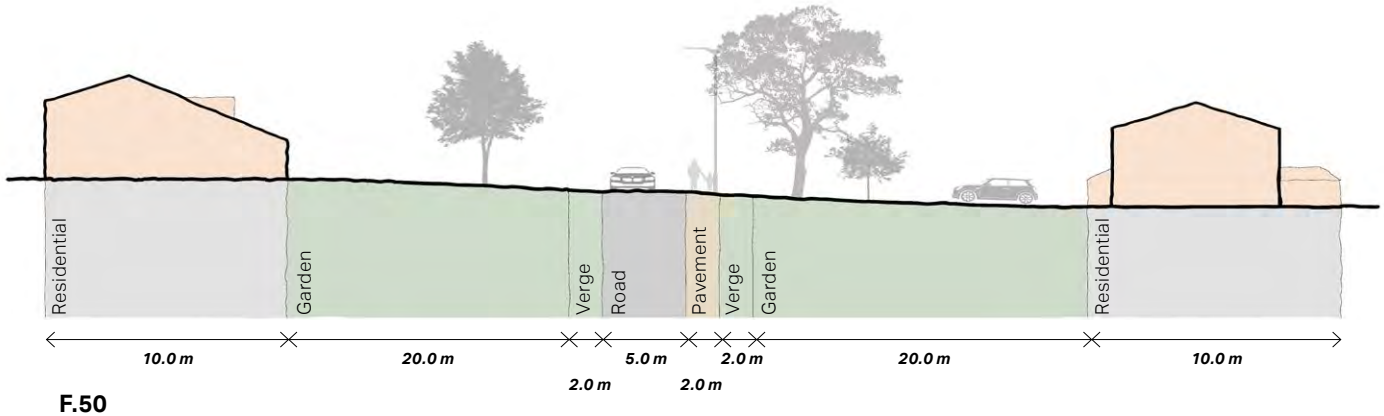
Figure 47: Recent development has a strong sense of enclosure, with low boundary treatments and little greenery.

Figure 48: Connecting roads are more luscious and green with verges and mature trees providing enclosure.



F.49

Figure 49: Townhouses have parking via an accessway directly at the front of property. Other homes have driveways.



F.50

Figure 50: Slope changes at the edge of settlement allow homes to have view of open countryside at the rear. Limited pavements.

2.2.8 What good looks like

The area is largely late 20th century development and homes that are built in a contemporary style.

Modern homes generally follow the prevailing stylistic character of homes in this area: open gardens with no boundary treatments, low hedges, driveways with integrated or side garages, and formal variation in roofscape.

Road treatments often call out slower speed areas or more residential streets, with coloured tarmac or pavers.

Views to the open countryside are possible through gaps between buildings at the settlement edge. Homes sometimes face the open countryside, in more successful development.

Allotments are a feature in parts of the area, which add to the green infrastructure network.

Boundary treatments are used in recent development and are often unobtrusive.

The layout of some homes on cul-de-sac arrangements mean that roads have blank facades and tall fences, which is a poor streetscene.

The layout of homes not following a building line that addresses the street mean homes sometimes have a staggered appearance and blank walls are not visually engaging.

New development responds to local charcter with gable fronts.

Road material change provides road users with need for speed reduction.

Views of open countryside from homes facing vista.

Allotments

Trees and planting

A continuous blank wall is not a good response to the street.

Homes staggered along a curved road leads to blank facades.

Appearance


F.51


F.52


F.53

Figure 51: Footpaths connect cul-de-sacs and enable connection to open countryside

Figure 52: Limited or no pavements in cul-de-sacs with gardens open to the road, some on-plot trees.

Figure 53: Scale and house type variation in contemporary development. Accessways and parking create hard surfaces.


F.54


F.57

Figure 54: Houses in recent developments are more tightly packed with limited front gardens, driveways and integrated garages.

Figure 55: Late 20th century developments are on larger plots with integrated garages and large front gardens.

Figure 56: Boundary treatments include stone walls, planting/hedges, and rural fencing.

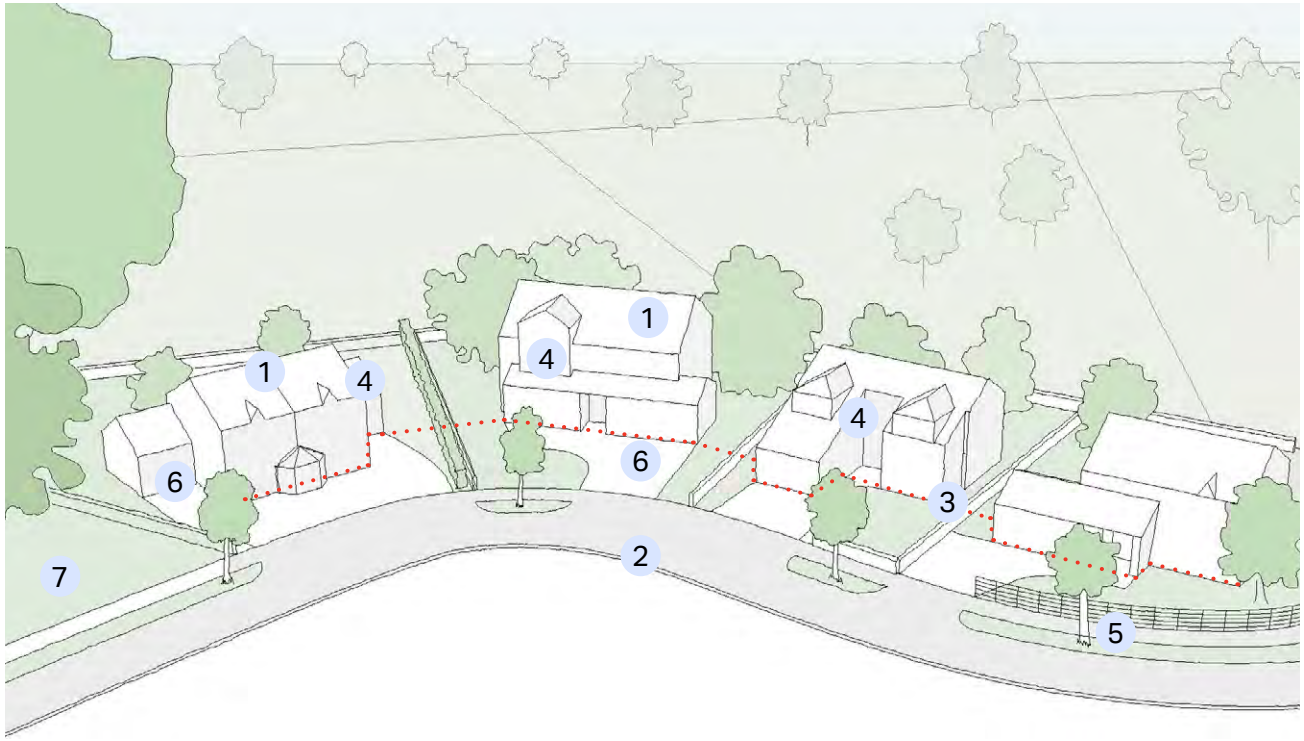

F.55


F.56


F.58

Figure 57: Postwar developments have parking courts, connected by footpaths. Lighting and passive surveillance is an issue.

Figure 58: Views to the open countryside and green gaps are important



F.59

Figure 59: Indicative diagram, bringing together various elements of 'good design' from across the Place Type. The analysis, site visit observations, and photo study of the area have been used to inform the diagram, and show what elements or design features that may be relevant to future development..

2.2.9 Good urban form

The annotated sketch highlights what good urban form looks like in the Place Type. The following items are notable:

1. Scale and massing - Building heights range from 1-2 storeys with large detached homes and bungalows as well as semi-detached properties.
2. Layout - Organic road layouts and cul-de-sac arrangements are typical. Buildings generally face the street but do not always follow the building line for larger detached homes. Pavements are often not present or on one side of the road.
3. Building line - There are breaks between detached homes but the building line is more consistent in other areas with more tightly packed properties.
4. Built form - Homes range in style and material palette. There are different roof types notable: skirt, hipped, catslide and pitched. Some projections at entry porches are apparent in semi-detached homes.
5. Boundary treatments - Grass verges with street trees are notable. Often gardens spill directly out on to the road. Properties generally have large setbacks and driveways. Countryside fencing is used.
6. Parking - Parking is at side or rear of property. Garages are integrated to the home or separate for detached homes and to the side of property for semi-detached homes.
7. Green gaps - Breaks in development provide views towards the open countryside, enhancing the edge of settlement.

03

Design codes and guidance

This chapter presents a series of design codes to be applied to all development across West Bedlington.

There are Area-wide codes, which respond to broader conditions and issues. Alongside these codes are for each of the Place Types identified in Section 02, which are specific to local context.

Introduction

This chapter provides analysis on a number of key themes including Layout, Landscape and open space, Built form, and Parking.

This analysis sets out the analysis and understanding of West Bedlington based upon a desktop study, a site visit and subsequent engagement and discussions with the Council. This analysis underpins a series of design codes to be applied to all development within the Neighbourhood Area.

The design codes will address the following key topics:

- Layout - streets, blocks, corners, footways, plots, building line and setbacks
- Landscape and open space - green infrastructure, green and public spaces, landscape setting, settlement edge, Sustainable drainage systems, biodiversity, and energy efficiency.
- Built form - heritage, house types and mix, infill and backland development, extensions and alterations, shopfronts, details, and boundary treatments.
- Parking - vehicle parking in residential contexts

The design codes in this section are either applicable to the entire neighbourhood area or to a specific Place Type.

The following colour coding applies:

- Applicable to all development types across the Neighbourhood Area.
- Applicable to all development types specific to PT1 - Town Centre.
- Applicable to all development types specific to PT2 - Inner Suburbs.
- Applicable to all development types specific to PT3 - Outer Suburbs.

Figure 60: Green verges along a typical Inner Suburb local connector street, showing active travel, greenery and heritage

3.1 Layout

Streets

Streets are the connections between places. They often determine the qualities of a place and they can support its vitality. It is important that in all street design, pedestrians and non-vehicle users are considered first and that the needs of drivers are tempered with the opportunities to improve the walking and cycling environment.

The approach in this section is based on the *Manual for Streets* guidance.

There are a mixture of street types across West Bedlington. To create a co-ordinated approach to street design and movement, a clear street hierarchy is identified in table overleaf which helps to differentiate the role and character of a street.

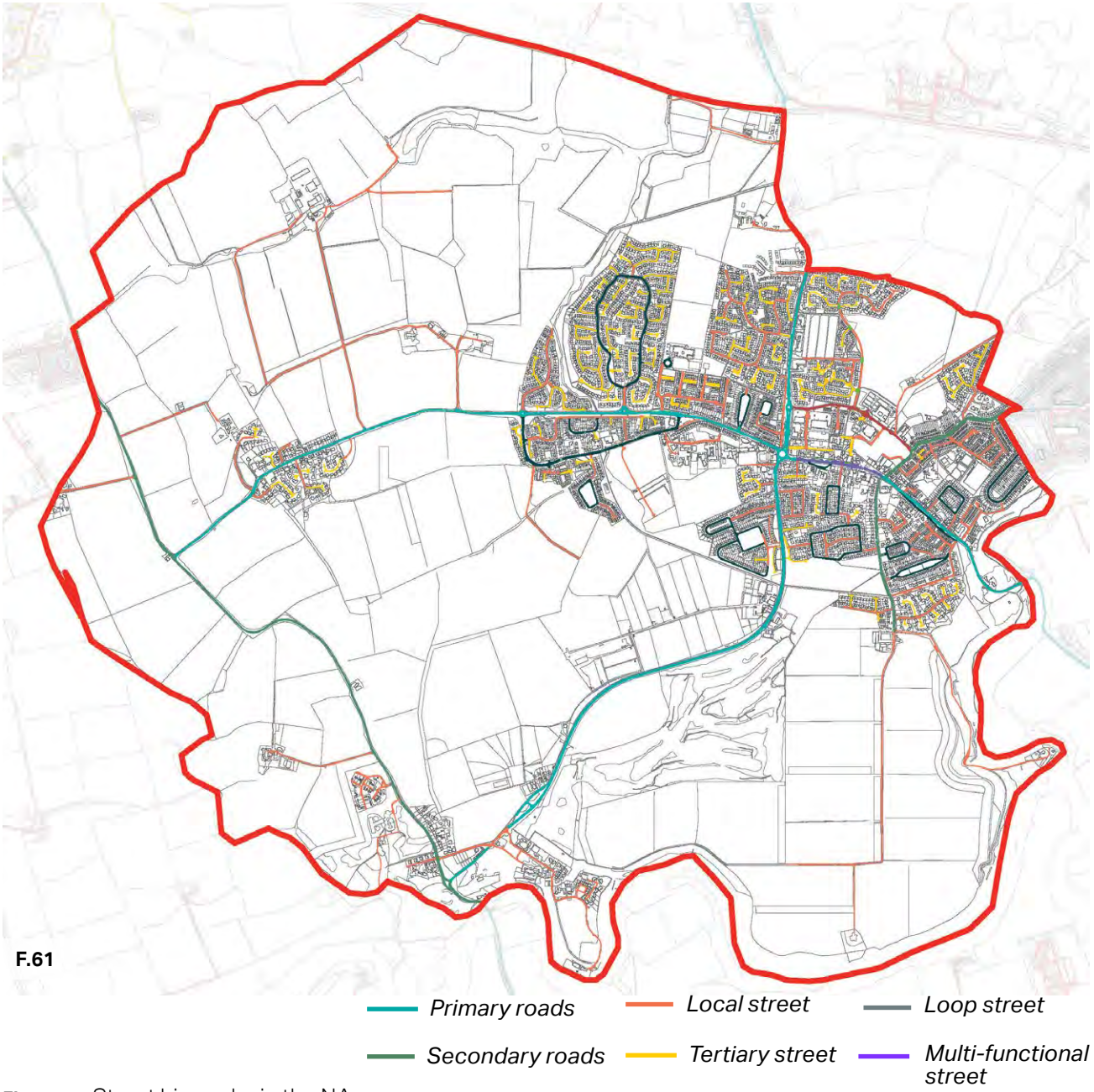


Figure 61: Street hierarchy in the NA

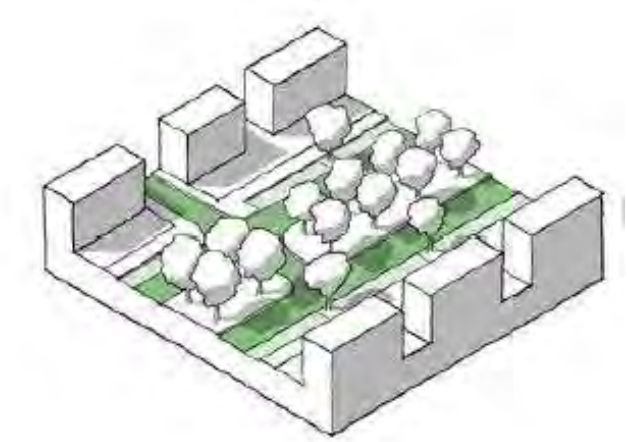
The design of streets must refer to the West Bedlington street typologies shown below. See Place Types for appropriate streets in each area.

Broad hierarchy	Street typology	Definition	Example	
Primary	Local distributor	Primary routes that connect the town centre to surrounding settlements. Has public transport and cycle lanes. Often acting as the main movement corridor, it has a high movement function.	A1068 / Hartford Road	
Secondary	Local connector	Secondary routes branch out from and connect primary routes to residential developments. Movement corridors, removing traffic from the local / residential street network. It has a high movement function.	Church Lane	
Local	Local residential	Streets that link residential areas to the rest of the network. Act as the streets which provide structure for new residential development. They are often cul-de-sacs. They have medium movement function.	Alnwick Drive	
Tertiary	Multiheaded cul-de-sacs	Smaller streets intended for local traffic. Low significance of traffic and of local importance. Often short-run cul-de-sacs, pedestrian dominated. Low movement function.	The Grange	
Tertiary	Loop roads	Local roads that re-join the road at its entry point. A one-way, single lane road intended for local traffic. Low significance of traffic and of local importance. Low movement function.	Cumberland Avenue	
Multifunctional	High street	The main street for the town, accessed via the local distributor and local connector roads. Very high place function, with a high movement function.	Front Street	

3.1.1 Streetscene

Development proposals that propose new streets or propose altering the existing streetscene must:

- Reflect the green character of existing streets through the placement of street trees within adequate verges alongside the carriageway, on plot, or in open spaces.
- Retain good quality trees wherever possible, especially those which contribute to the streetscene. Tree surveys and impact assessments should be provided if the removal of trees is proposed.
- Enhance the sense of enclosure on the street through the use of natural elements such as trees and hedges.
- Native UK trees and planting should be preferred or non-native trees where a specific reason exists.
- Avoid using cul-de-sac solutions to promote a connected movement network that does not impede pedestrians and cyclists
- There must be a clear reduction of vehicle speed moving down the street hierarchy.



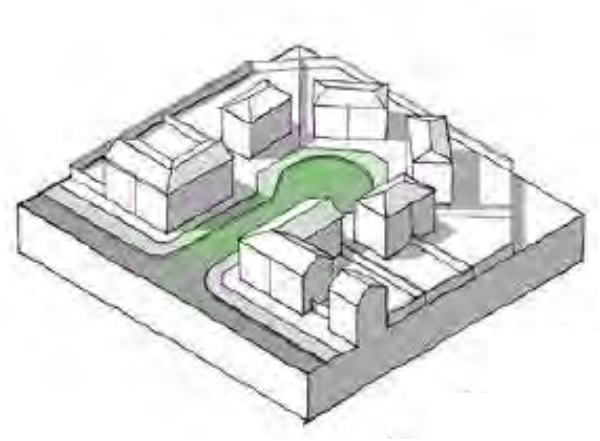
3.1.2 Actvitiy on the street

Streets within PT1 - Town Centre must offer space free from permanent street furniture and other infrastructure in front of shop windows and eateries to encourage dwell time these must be a minimum of 0.5m wide.

Figure 62: Level changes support pedestrian/vehicle separation.

Streets within PT2 - Inner Suburbs must offer space free from permanent street furniture and other infrastructure in front of shop windows and eateries to encourage dwell time, this must be a minimum of 0.75m.

Figure 63: Accessways and side-roads are common.



3.1.3 Design Speed

Appropriate measures to reduce speed in PT3 - Outer Suburbs and increase areas for non-car uses must be sought via the following methods:

- road alignment;
- staggered junctions;
- road surfaces closely aligned with materials used in footways;
- reducing carriageway widths; and
- incorporating non-typical highway uses - e.g. planting, sculpture etc.

Speed restraint features must be provided on roads with design speed <30mph at 60-100m separation.

3.1.4 Resting points

Resting points, including some form of perch or seating, must be provided at a minimum of 100m intervals along high use areas such as high streets.

At least 50% of resting points provided must have arm and back rests.

At least 1sqm must be provided for a wheelchair user to pull up comfortably and sit alongside a bench.

3.1.5 Footways

Footways must be designed to be comfortable, durable, accessible, safe, and direct in order to encourage use.

Provide a clear footway zone of 2m minimum width. Where the footway is narrower, it must not be continued for more than 6m in length.

A detectable kerb of at least 100mm upstand must be provided between footway and carriageway on primary and secondary streets.

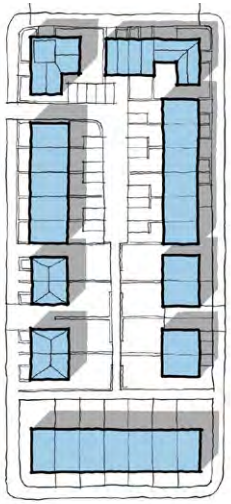
Tactile paving must be provided at all side-road junctions and crossings.

In high pedestrian flow areas, where access is required across the footway, pre-cast kerb units with an 'integrated drop' must be used.

Blocks

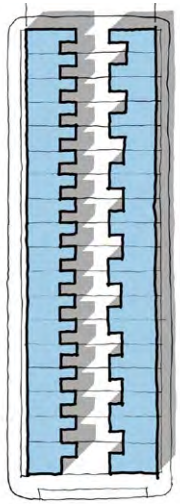
Most built form is structured in blocks. The overarching composition of those and how they are brought together and articulated has a significant effect on the character of the streetscape and internal amenity of the buildings within the block.

The information here shows the block typology for West Bedlington.



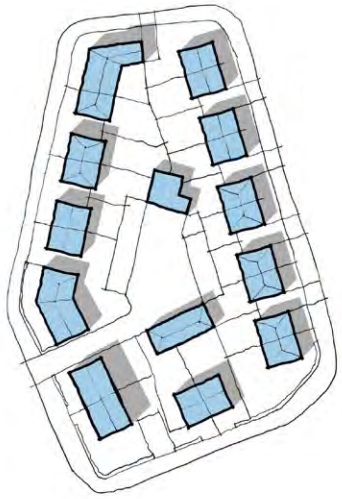
F.64

Figure 64: The most regularly used blocks in West Bedlington. There is a common rectilinear shape to these and typically they have parallel sides of equal length, i.e. square or a rectangle. These blocks can be formal: the building form, primary frontage, plot width, and articulation are tightly controlled with little variation; or informal: where building form, primary frontage, plot width, and articulation is varied. Typically have short-run terraces or semi-detached homes.



F.65

Figure 65: Terraced blocks are most notable in the western aspect of the area. The building typology is uniform and is most commonly, terraced housing. These typically have small gardens or yards, sometimes spilling out to the pavement. A rear alleyway for vehicular access is common. Typically have short-run terrace homes, often parallel to semi-detached homes.



F.66

Figure 66: Irregular blocks are more curvilinear, often featuring cul-de-sac arrangements. Used in late 20th century and early 21st century developments, they generally respond to topography and prevailing site features. They can be formal, i.e. the building form, primary elevations, plot width and articulation are tightly controlled with little variation. Or, they can be informal where typical landscape features such as small greens and wide verges characterise the block. Blocks typically defined by semi-detached or detached houses. Often with strong green character due to surrounds.

Figure 67: Perimeter blocks notable in more urban areas.

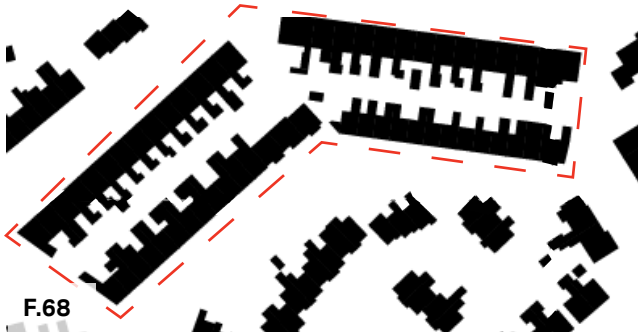


Figure 68: Terraced blocks notable in western areas.

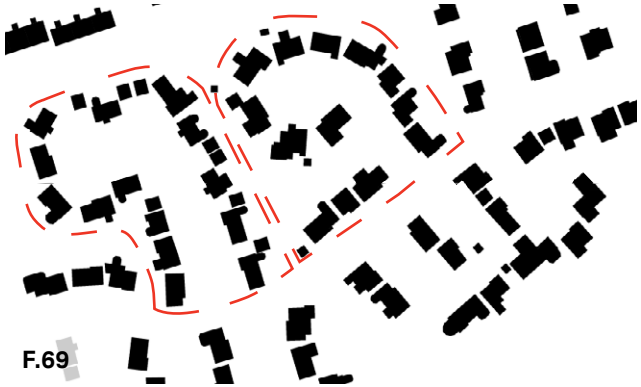


Figure 69: Informal blocks in postwar or recent development.

3.1.6 Block size

New development must respect the traditional patterns of growth that have come before, but must also consider the needs of the current and future generations.

As we seek to become less reliant on cars, smaller blocks can promote walkability and pedestrian-friendly environments, as they provide more frequent intersections and a greater concentration of destinations.

They can also facilitate a more diverse mix of uses and support smaller businesses.

Typical block sizes are:

- PT1 - Town Centre context: 40-60m (long) x 70-100m (wide). Within the street pattern, there are often snickets which allow for access and permeability.
- PT2 - Inner suburb context: 50-95m (wide) x 115-265m (long). Within the street pattern, there are often alleyways for private access or through-roads.
- PT3 - Outer suburb context: 85-95m (wide) and 95-105 (long).

3.1.7 Layout and density

Development within West Bedlington must:

- Not exceed a density of more than 40DpH in new development. Consulting the Place Type will determine the density range appropriate to the context.
- The scale and massing of adjacent blocks must be respected, such that blocks are no more than 25% larger than the adjacent block.
- Respect and respond to the immediate context in terms of built form and layout - including plot sizes and formal/informal building layouts.
- Not orient the rear of homes facing the street. Where possible, orient frontage to face open countryside.

3.1.8 Breaks in block

- Maximum centres for breaks in the block must be no greater than 80m.
- Where public access is permitted through a block, or where private access is allowed to more than five dwellings, passive or natural surveillance of these areas must be employed to promote safe and comfortable spaces.

Marking corners

Emphasis and articulation on corners can create legible places and interest in the streetscape. Architectural features or details, and increasing building height at the street corner can also give prominence.

Key corners must be identified and methods of marking these and rational for choice demonstrated.

F.70

Figure 70: Hard and soft landscaped verges/spaces.

F.71

Figure 71: Corner turners.

F.72

Figure 72: Featured gables.

F.73

Figure 73: Feature buildings with strong architectural features.

3.1.9 Marking corners

Depending on the block, marking the corners will include:

Perimeter Blocks

- Hard landscaped public space.
- Class E uses (shops, offices, cafés; restaurants etc.) in line with sequential testing.
- Taller buildings - a maximum of + two storeys on the prevailing height.
- Feature buildings with strong architectural features, detailing, roof type and materiality.
- Corner turners.

Terraced Blocks

- Feature gables.
- Class E uses (shops, offices, cafés; restaurants etc.) in line with sequential testing.
- Corner turners.

Irregular Blocks

- Hard and soft landscaped verges.
- Feature buildings or groups of buildings with strong architectural features, detailing, roof type and materiality.
- Corner turners.

Where development is mending an existing block the rational must be applied to the whole block.

Figure 74: Loop roads are a distinctive feature in PT2-Inner Suburbs. Millfield North has housing inside the loop road. Millfield has homes flanking a large green space. In both instances semi-detached homes create a strong building line.

Figure 75: Loop roads provide greenery and open space, with trees a feature.

Figure 76: Due to the lack of parking in homes facing the road, vehicles are often parked on the grass verges or on-street.

Figure 77: Roads are often characterised by mature trees on access loop roads on main streets.

Figure 78: In recent development, homes address both corners and have soft landscaping and material change on access roads.

Figure 79: Homes are chamfered to the corner so they address both streets and provide a more continual building line.

Figure 80: Shops turn the corner on the main high street to address all streets and create active frontage.

Building line & Setbacks

The amount of building frontage that holds the prevailing building line adds to the formality of the street. The amount of conformity with the building line, (i.e. variation from the building line) along with any gardens largely shapes the character of the streetscape.

Generally, a prominent building line can be determined in existing places, this is the line on which the primary frontage of most properties sit. When designing in an existing setting, it is important to respect the alignment of adjacent properties, to keep a consistent approach to the streetscape and out of courtesy for neighbouring properties.

Each Place Type is examined here to determine the relationship of the building line and setbacks in the specific contexts. The percentage ranges given demonstrate the amount of conformity expected to encourage variation where appropriate.

3.1.10 Building line

In PT1 - Town Centre a block must have >70% of buildings
abutting the building line.
– Of the % of building not abutting the prevailing building line, limited variation from this alignment is permitted; and this must be no more than + 0.5 in front, and - 1m behind the prevailing line.
– On primary - local distributor streets and secondary - local connector streets, this must increase to >85% on the building line.
– Terraced blocks must be within + 0.3 in front and - 0.5m behind the prevailing line.

Figure 81: Building lines along the northern edge of Front Street are clearly defined with little variance. On the southern edge, it is more inconsistent, often with large setback variation.

3.1.11 Building line

In PT2 - Inner Suburb a block must have >80% of buildings
abutting the building line.
– Of the % of building not abutting the prevailing building line, limited variation of the building line is permitted, and this must be no more than + 0.5 in front and - 1m behind the prevailing line.
– On primary - local distributor streets and secondary - local connector streets, this must increase to >85% on the building line.
– Terraced blocks must be within + 0.3 in front and - 0.5m behind the prevailing line.

Figure 82: Along Millbank Terrace and Beech Grove, the Victorian style terrace block creates a strong building line. Bay window projections create a sense of variation.

Figure 83: Homes along Windsor Gardens generally have a consistent building line but it is much less continual and fragmented.

3.1.12 Building line

In PT3 - Outer Suburb a block must have >60 and <80% of buildings abutting the building line.

– On secondary - local connectors this should increase to >75% on the building line.

– Where development faces the wider countryside, the allowance for this can be 50-60%, to allow for breaks between buildings to view open countryside.

– Of the % of building not abutting the prevailing building line, variation of the building line is permitted, and this must be no more than +/- 3m behind the prevailing line.

– Where garages are permitted, the maximum back of pavement to dwelling distance is increased to 6m.

Figure 84: 20th Century development in Nedderton are lower density cul-de-sac arrangements, with detached buildings set within large plots, and no defined building lines.

Figure 85: Inconsistent building line along Winchester Way, staggered built form does not address the street, creating a series of blank facades as the road layout navigates topography.

Plots

Each building or group of buildings situated within a plot has a relationship to the plot and the wider context.

Plot layout including the position of the buildings and landscape within it has a significant impact on the character of a street or setting.

3.1.13 Plots

In PT1 - Town Centre the following plot width must be demonstrated:

- Perimeter: largely uniform width, no greater than 16m (where larger floorplates are required this can be negotiated based on elevational treatments). Variation is desired and:
  - in commercial areas +/- 6m difference from adjoining building
  - in residential areas +/- 4m difference from adjoining building is permitted.
- Terraced: largely uniform width, no greater than 8m difference; with only +/- 1m variation from adjoining building.

3.1.14 Plots

In PT2 - Inner Suburb the following plot width must be demonstrated:

- Perimeter: largely uniform width, no greater than 10m (where larger floorplates are required this can be negotiated).
- Terraced: largely uniform width, no greater than 8m difference; with only +/- 1m variation from the adjoining property.

3.1.15 Plots

In PT3 - Outer Suburb the following plot width must be demonstrated:

- Perimeter: no greater than 10m width. Some variation is encouraged +/- 5m difference from the adjoining property.
- Irregular: no greater than 15m width. Some variation +/- 5m difference from the adjoining property and/or
  - there must be greater than 10m between the dwelling and the rear boundary.
  - allow for a total back-to-back distance (including other uses) to be no less than 20m.

3.1.16 Separation distances

In PT1 - Town Centre back-to-back distances must:

- be no more than 10m between the dwelling and the rear boundary.
- allow for a total back-to-back distance (including other uses) to be no less than 20m and no greater than 40m.

3.1.17 Separation distances

To encourage tighter urban grain in PT2 - Inner Suburb back-to-back distances must be reduced where practical and:

- be no more than 10m between the dwelling and the rear boundary.
- allow for a total back-to-back distance (including other uses) to be no less than 20m.

3.1.18 Separation distances

In PT3 - Outer Suburbs back-to-back distances must:

- be greater than 10m between the dwelling and the rear boundary.
- allow for a total back-to-back distance (including other uses) to be no less than 25m.

3.2 Landscape & Open space

This section outlines the broad physical, historical and contextual characteristics of West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan Area. Character assessment is used to describe and articulate what is special and distinctive about a place.

Existing character assessments

National Character Assessment - The NA is covered by NCA Profile: 13 South East Northumberland Coastal Plain (NE498), which states that West Bedlington is:

- A flat, low-lying strip along the coast of the North Sea which is largely urbanised in the south and more rural to the north;
- Widespread urban and industrial development, extending north from the urban edge of Newcastle across the coastal plain, with mining towns and villages, merging into rural landscape;
- Large-scale, opencast coal mining sites and restored sites which include deep mine spoil heaps;
- Sweeping sandy beaches and rocky headlands remain within largely developed coast;
- Large open arable fields, with large scattered country houses, and institutional establishments;
- Extensive urban fringe effect near settlements;
- Prominent blocks of mixed and coniferous woodland on reclaimed colliery sites, with broadleaved woods on steeper valley sides, and within estate parkland; and
- Frequent areas of open water and wetland in areas of mining subsidence and as features within restored landscapes.

Landscape Character Assessment- The NA is covered by two Landscape Character Areas:

LCA 39c Stannington - Flat coastal plain that has been heavily modified by adjoining urban areas and their associated infrastructure. Several transport corridors run north-south through this landscape, including the A1, East Coast Main Line, A192, and another rail line. Significant features include the Blyth and Wansbeck rivers

Figure 86: Views of the countryside near Howard House School

Figure 87: Humford Woods Stepping Stones, crossing the River Blyth within Bedlington County Park (LNR).

Guiding Principle: Protect

'In general, it could be argued that the most significant changes to this landscape have already occurred, in the form of extensive mining activity and urbanisation. Where key qualities remain intact, their long-term viability should be secured. The approach for this landscape is therefore one of restoration where possible, and recreation where the landscape has been overly damaged' (p.136).

LCA 42a Ashington, Blyth and Cramlington - This landscape is comprised of mainly developed areas including the towns of Ashington, Blyth and Cramlington and surrounding smaller settlements and fragmented, mostly arable, farmland. Development includes a mixture of 19th Century through to 21st Century development. The River Blyth, River Wansbeck and smaller watercourses cut through this landscape.

Guiding Principle: Plan

'The approach for the remaining areas of open landscape within this area should be one of restoration and enhancement, to ensure their future as an open space resource for the numerous local residents, while at the same time permitting the managed growth of the settlements to accommodate housing needs' (p.142).

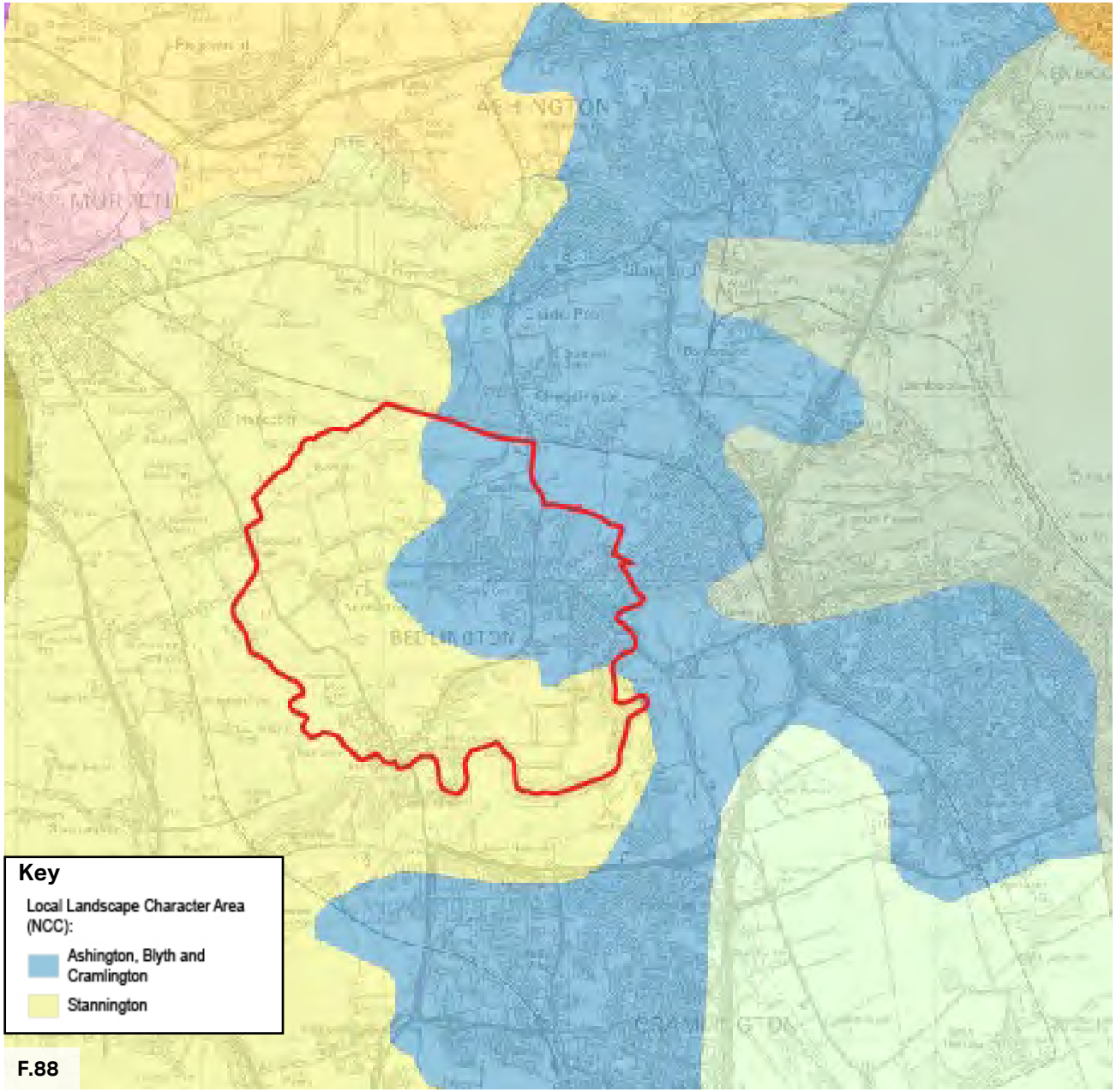


Figure 88: Landscape Character Areas covering West Bedlington.

Landscape and ecology

West Bedlington's green, open spaces are a defining part of its identity, and contribute greatly to residents' quality of life. The way in which development responds to its surrounding natural landscape is a critical component of a well-designed place.

The Neighbourhood Area contains a number of Statutory and non-statutory landscape and heritage designations.

These include:

- Green Belt located on the western side of the Neighbourhood Area surrounding Nedderton;
- Bedlington Country Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which runs along the eastern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area;
- Ancient Woodland areas exist along the southern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area;
- There are three rivers than run through or sit on the boundary of the area the river Blyth the river Sleek Burn and Netherton Letch
- The Neighbourhood Area lies within a priority area for targeting curlew and lapwing and is important for both farmland and sea birds.

Outside the Neighbourhood Plan Area:

- Whilst there are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the parish, the Willow Burn Pasture SSSI lies just outside the boundary within Choppington Parish; and
- The Neighbourhood Area lies within 10km of the Northumberland Coast SSSI, which is also designated as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site.

Figure 89: River Blyth within Bedlington County Park (LNR).

Figure 90: Plessey Woods County Park.

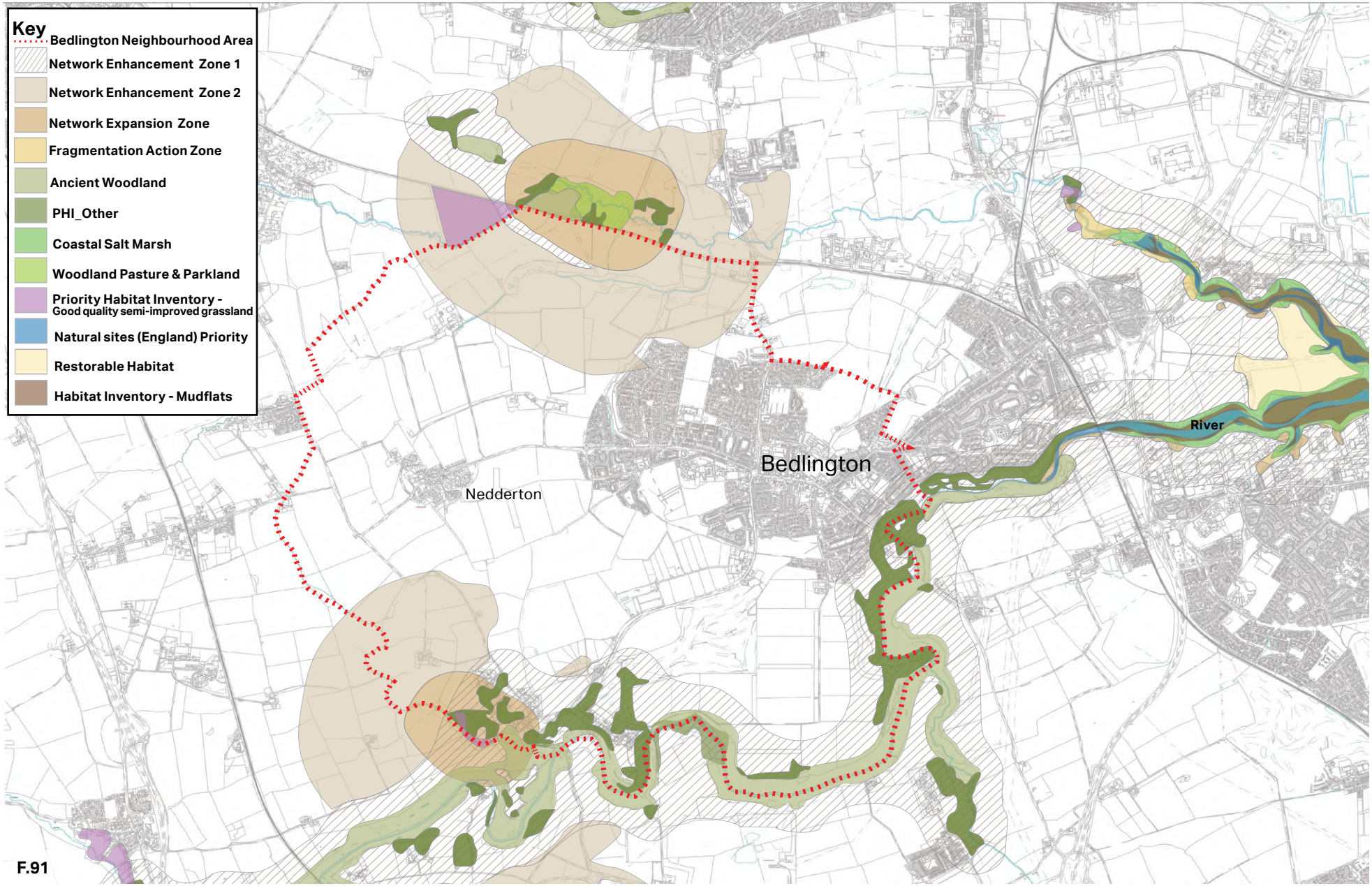


Figure 91: Diagram showing West Bedlington's habitats

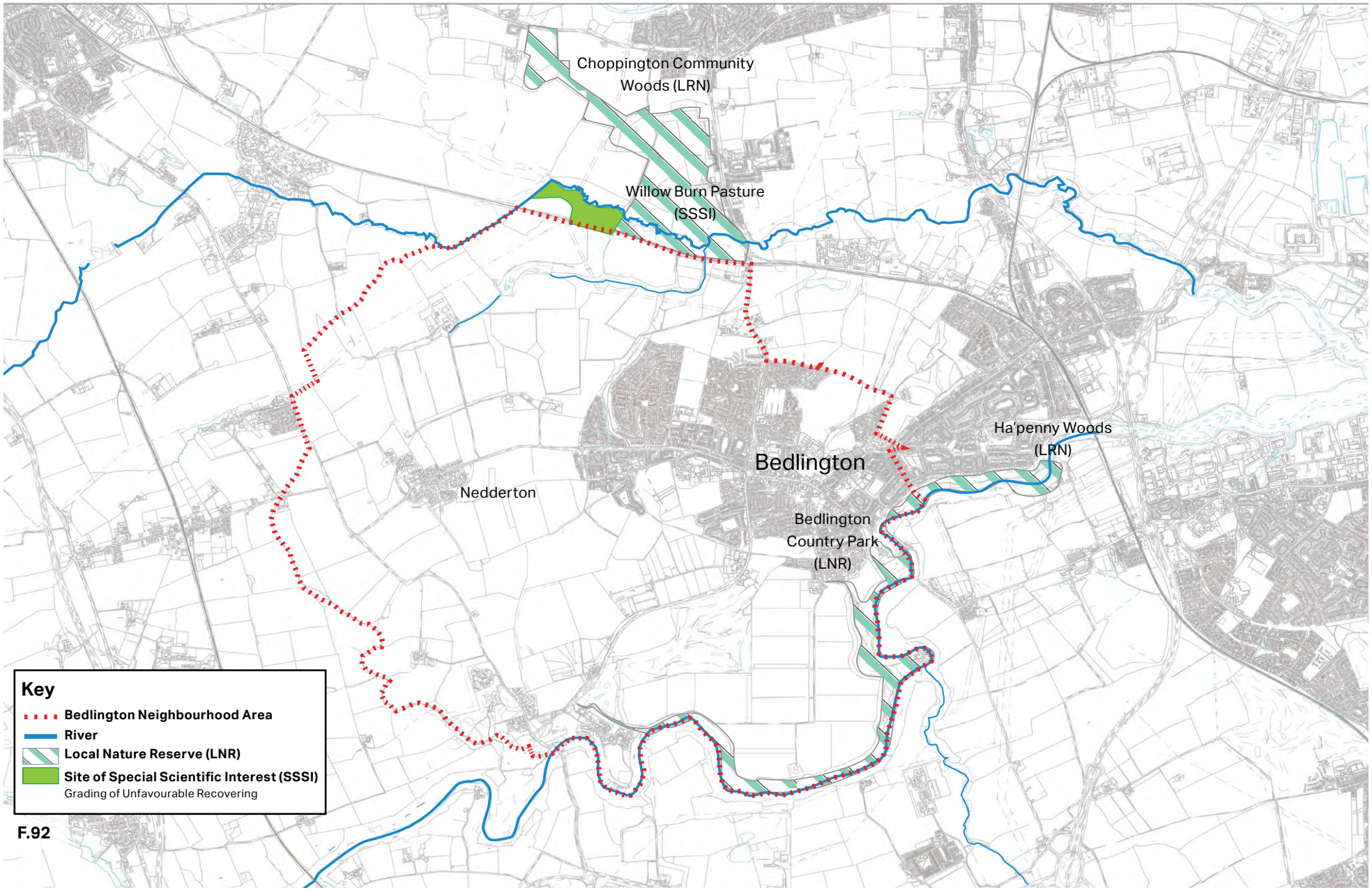


Figure 92: Landscape, Ecology and Heritage Designations

Green infrastructure

It is now widely acknowledged that access to nature and green space has an extremely therapeutic effect on the mind. The National Model Design Code recognises this in paragraph 57:

"Nature is good for health and wellbeing, for biodiversity, shading and cooling, noise mitigation, air quality and mitigating flood risk as well as contributing to tackling the climate emergency. Nature is also central to the creation of beautiful places."

Specific opportunities to protect and improve the existing green infrastructure network within West Bedlington should be a key driver for all new development.

3.2.1 Green infrastructure network

Development proposals within West Bedlington must:

- Maintain West Bedlington's 'green' identity by protecting important and valued existing open spaces, identified as Local Green Spaces or Protected Open Spaces.
- Development should contribute to a multifunctional green infrastructure network made up of a variety of elements: including private gardens, tree planting, grass verges, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), amenity green space, the cemetery, and surrounding countryside.
- An arboricultural report must record trees with a stem diameter of 75mm or above, measured at 1.5m above ground level. Any trees shown in this report which are removed, must be replaced on a 1:2 basis within the first 3 years of development commencing. At least 75% of new trees must be provided within the public realm to ensure retention and management.
- Meet the National Urban Greening Factors of at least 0.4 for residential development and 0.5 for residential greenfield development.
- Verges play an important part of local character. They often planted with native trees, however, they are managed to a clear stem for visibility.

3.2.2 Open spaces

- Have benches every 100m within parks, play areas and civic space, in all other spaces this can be up to 300m: unless specifically stated.
- Use footpath widths as noted in code 3.1.5 and any gates to comply with BS5709. Minimise gradients to less than 1:20; steeper changes in level managed with longer gently sloping routes.

Figure 93: The surrounding countryside and the way in which this abounds the settlement edge is a key part of the green infrastructure network.

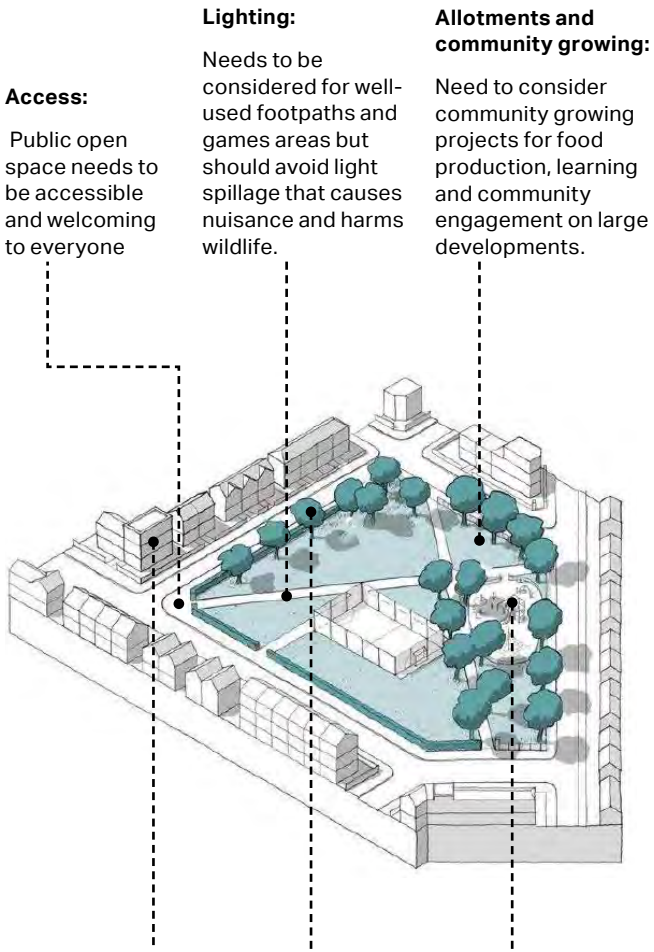


Figure 94: Open space design as set out in the National Model Design Code.

Figure 95: Allotments around Carisbrooke /Hassop Way.

Figure 96: Large allotment site bounded by Choppington Road, Hassop Way and Court Road.

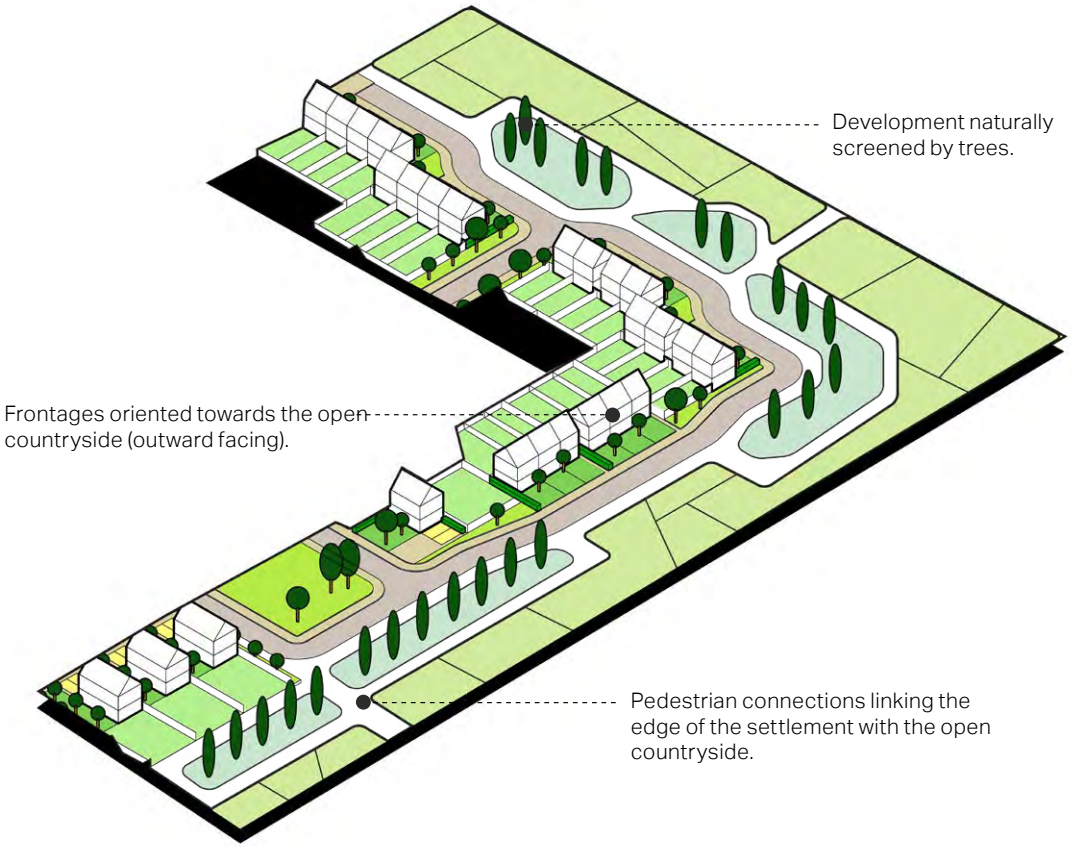
Figure 97: Footpath leading from Raby Close to Green Letch.

3.2.3 Green and public spaces

- Green spaces must be overlooked by buildings of an appropriate scale and density that reflects the local character (as set out in Section 02) to provide a sense of enclosure and natural surveillance.
- Green spaces and the areas surrounding them shall contain trees and planting (of native species) that interconnect with a wider Green Infrastructure Network.
- Central green spaces are often part of the layout for loop roads, they have a function for high visual amenity, good quality recreation, and low maintenance. The treatment of these spaces must align well to habitat creation and more informal landscape treatment in future development.
- New public spaces should be well connected with the surroundings including crossings, footpaths and cycleways.
- Proposed public spaces should be safe for pedestrians, have appropriate lighting and include activities and spaces (such as playgrounds) that make them vibrant and used all day.

Landscape setting and settlement edge

As West Bedlington is surrounded by open countryside, the way in which new development responds to the settlement edge is a key design consideration.



F.98

Figure 98: Indicative edge lane development model example (built form facing surrounding landscape), including trees and hedgerows that soften views to development.

3.2.4 Landscape setting and the settlement edge

Development proposals that are located on the settlement edge must:

- Integrate development sensitively with the surrounding landscape, particularly on the periphery.
- Ensure dwelling frontages are orientated outwards and avoid rear boundaries facing the landscape.
- Create 'soft' boundaries between built form and the wider landscape by encouraging soft landscape planting such as hedgerow, wildflower, and tree planting.
- Retain the visual quality of the landscape by prioritising lower density development. Buildings should not exceed 2 storeys.
- Not obstruct key views looking both inwards and outwards of the settlement. Significant sized developments must undertake a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to ensure the impact on views is minimised and mitigation measures are implemented successfully.

3.2.5 Water sensitive urban design

The following design guidance applies to new development:

- Avoid siting homes in high risk flood areas and seek to adopt the use of permeable paving in hard landscape areas.
- Integrate SuDS into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices.
- Reduce runoff rates by facilitating infiltration into the ground or by providing attenuation that stores water to help slow its flow down so that it does not overwhelm water courses or the sewer network.
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area. When integrated into the landscape, they can also provide biodiversity and amenity benefits.
- Natural barriers (e.g. planting) and appropriate side slopes should be introduced to help manage perceived safety risks.

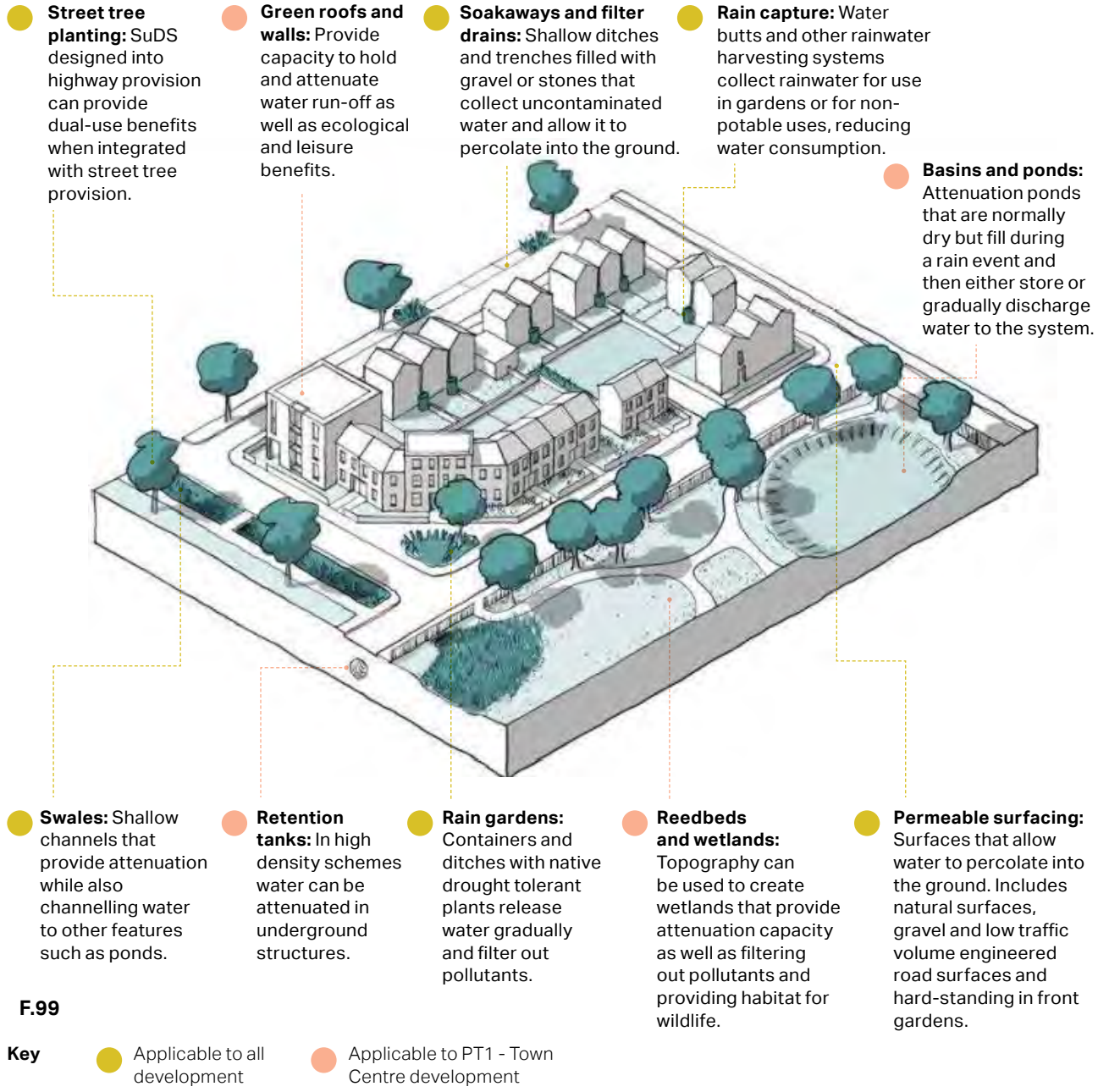


Figure 99: Sustainable drainage system design as set out in the National Model Design Code (NMDC).

3.2.6 Biodiversity

Planning applications must be supported by proposals for the incorporation of features for biodiversity enhancement, in addition to what may be required to address any adverse impacts resulting from the development. Appropriate features include:

- Features for nesting birds associated with the built environment such as swifts and house sparrows.
- Features for roosting bats.
- Green walls and green/brown roofs.
- Mixed native species hedgerows.
- Creation of new wildlife ponds.
- Native scrub and tree planting.
- Orchard/fruit trees.
- Creation of species rich grassland.
- Creation of rough grassland suitable for foraging barn owls and provision of barn owl nest boxes.
- Log piles and compost heaps.
- Provision of gaps in boundary fences to allow access by hedgehogs and provision of hedgehog domes. Hedgehog Highways should be marked out on site to ensure they are not blocked up by future landowners.

The loss of trees, hedgerows and native planting should be avoided and instead these features should be incorporated into the design of proposed development. All major development should be accompanied by a landscape layout which prioritises the use or and incorporation of native species and promotes overall biodiversity net gain.

Aim to develop a multifunctional green infrastructure network made up of a variety of elements: including hedgerow, private gardens, tree planting, grass verges, SuDs, amenity green space, watercourses, cemetery, allotments, orchards, meadows, and playing fields.

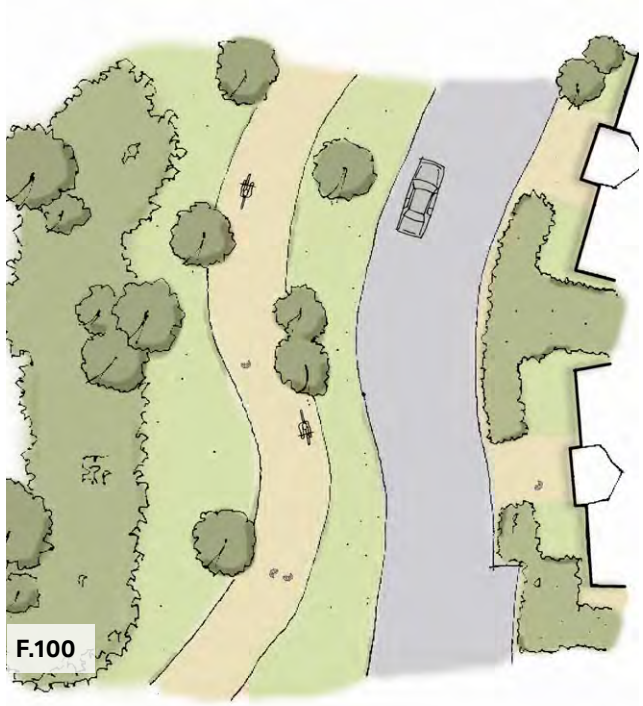


Figure 100: Promoting a multifunctional green infrastructure network including verges, hedgerow, gardens, trees and planting

Energy efficiency measures

Existing homes

1. Insulation
2. Double or triple glazing with shading
3. Low-carbon heating
4. Draught proofing
5. Highly energy- efficient appliances
6. Highly water- efficient devices
7. Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)
8. Flood resilience and resistance

Additional measures in new build homes

A. High levels of airtightness
B. More fresh air
C. Triple glazed windows and external shading
D. Low-carbon heating
E. Water management and cooling
F. Flood resilience and resistance
H. Construction and site planning
I. Solar panels
J. Electric car charging point

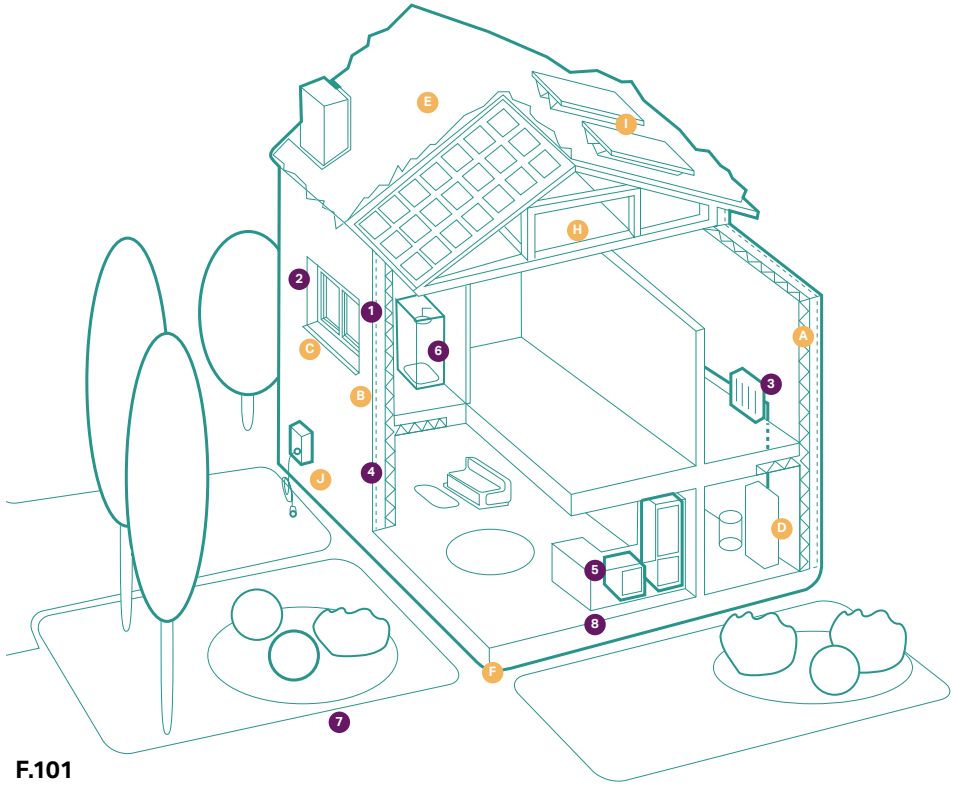


Figure 101: Cut-through diagram of an energy efficient home and its features.

3.2.7 Energy efficiency measures

Key considerations in the assessment of renewable energy sources for development to be net zero for power generation may include (but are not limited to):

- Maximising on-site renewable energy generation where appropriate.
- Considering a heat network for any new development.
- Ground conditions to accommodate loops for ground source heat and space for air source heat pump units.
- Opportunities to create links to local estates for sustainable coppicing, harvesting or recycling of biomass fuels.
- Understanding local wind speed and direction for micro-generation wind turbines.
- Collaborating with utilities, highway authorities, telecoms companies and other stakeholders when designing and delivering projects to minimise energy usage and disruption during the construction stage and reinforcement of the electricity grid for additional electric vehicles and renewables.

3.3 Built form

Historical development

West Bedlington has a rich and diverse history as a market town dating back to the Bronze Age, with a burial site behind what is now known as Front Street. The place-name "Bedlingtun" is mentioned in St Cuthbert's biography c.1050.

Bedlington and its hamlets were bought by Cutheard, Bishop of Durham, between 900 and 915 and granted royal rights by William the Conqueror. St Cuthbert's Church which stands in the heart of the town's Conservation Area is the longest standing building in the town, with parts of this dating back to the 11th Century.

The fabric of the medieval town have all but disappeared aside from the street layout, with its linear high street and connecting passageways.

The advent of the Industrial revolution changed the look and feel of Bedlington, as the village became a town due to the introduction of the Iron Works in 1736. The Iron Works were notable for the production malleable rails used early railways.

Industry shifted again in 1867, with the introduction of coal mining. New Housing Estates were built to house the coal miners to the east of the town centre, mostly adjacent to River Blyth.

Subsequent closure of the coal and ironwork industries in the latter half of the 20th century caused the town to undergo many changes, becoming more of a dormitory town for those working in the surrounding areas.

Housing in the 'Pit Rows' estate were razed by the council in the early to mid 1970s, as was part and parcel of the government's national policy of this time.

Bedlington Conservation Area has a wide range of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings most of which are two storey built from yellow sandstone.

Quarried from the local area, the key building material gives the town a unique feel and strong relationship to the local vernacular.

Bedlington has lost much of its medieval heritage, notably the demolition of the 'Bedlington Old Hall', and other works at the market place. It is, therefore, imperative heritage is preserved for future generations.

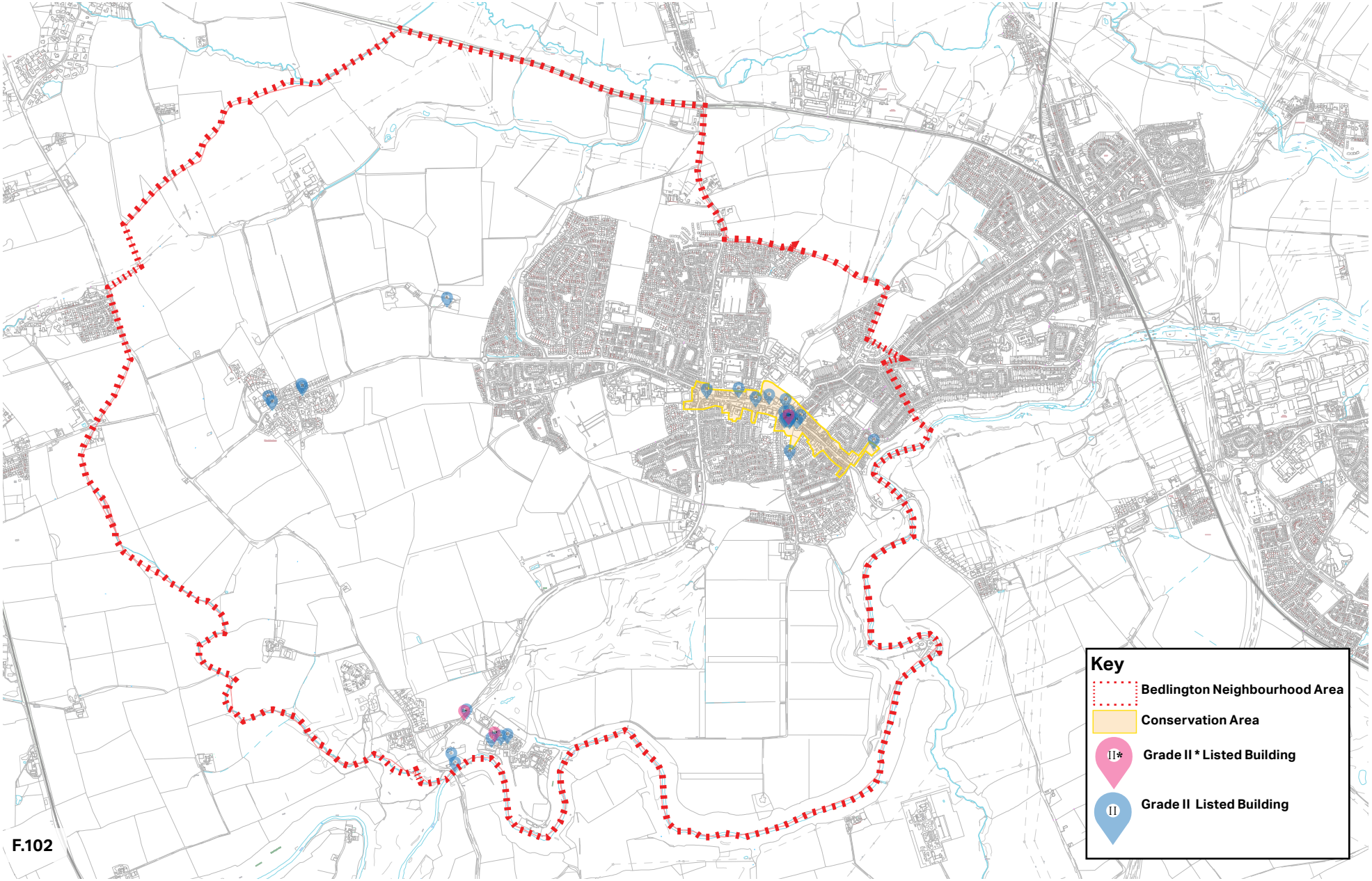


Figure 102: Heritage designations and historic buildings in West Bedlington.

3.3.1 Responding to heritage

The majority of West Bedlington's town centre is a designated Conservation Area. There are 33 Listed Buildings throughout the Neighbourhood Area, three of which are grade II* status.

Development proposals within proximity to a Listed asset, or positive buildings (as identified on F. 102) including alterations and extensions must:

- Respect the historic layout and pattern, responding to positive characteristics in terms of street pattern, density and layout, plot series and boundary treatments - as set out in Section 02.
- Respond appropriately by respecting scale, massing, and height, especially where visible from public routes and spaces.
- Retain and frame key views of Listed assets and positive buildings.

House types

There are a variety of housing types and styles across West Bedlington.

1 The Victorian era is represented by the terraced houses in the eastern aspect of the town. They have small front and rear yards. Features include angled bay windows with hipped roofs, and stone lintels. Parking is on-street or via rear alleyways with garages. Typically red brick with grey slate roofs.

Postwar development largely flanks Ridge Terrace in estates that feature terraced or semi-detached homes.

2 Terrace entrances are setback from the street with out-buildings at the front of property, creating a hard street edge.

3 Semi-detached properties have small front gardens and have hipped roofs with upper storey render or pebble-dash.

4 In some areas, semi-detached houses have gable fronts or bay windows, creating a variance in form. On-street parking is most common for semi-detached homes whereas parking courts are a feature for terraced properties.

5 As the town expanded in the 1970s, houses were built north of Ridge Terrace. Homes are mostly semi-detached properties with bungalows adding to the mix. Homes are on narrow plots, with rear property, side garages/driveways separating homes. Homes feature fascia boards, small porches and mostly red brick with concrete roof tiles.

6 Further expansion of the town, east and west, in the 1990s sees greater house type diversity. There are detached, semi-detached and bungalows, mostly on largely plots with setbacks often with no boundary treatment. Houses feature a softer red brick or yellow brick. Features include dormers, and catslide or skirt roofs. Local stone is also used as either fascia or building stock. Red pantiles or grey slate are roof materials. Parking is typically within integrated garages with substantial driveways.

7 Development in the 2000s occurs mostly north of the town around Edinburgh Drive. Mostly detached homes with centralised gables and small bay windows at ground level. They feature an integrated garage and garden with no boundary treatment.

8 Recent development around Ewart Drive shows a greater mix of housing, ranging from semi-detached homes to 3-storey apartment/townhouses. There is a variety of front of property treatments including driveways or gardens. Parking is in integrated garages or front of property. Road layout often has large setbacks with accessways. Homes in a contemporary style or a modern version of farmstead are popular.

3.3.2 House types and mix

- Successful developments have a mix of house types. Development must provide a mix of homes: detached, semi-detached, terraced, townhouses, corner houses, and wide frontages. Apartments can be included but must comply with building heights.
- A mix of tenures is encouraged in new developments.
- Material palette must relate to the context and Place Type guidelines in Section 02.
- New development should maintain the traditional low to medium-rise profile of West Bedlington. Development should not exceed the height of predominant building forms, which is generally 2 storeys, to preserve the visual harmony and scale (see place specific guidelines in Section 02 for any variance).
- A variable eave line and ridge line is encouraged to create interest but variation between adjacent buildings, but should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys in general.

F.103

Figure 103: House type examples across West Bedlington. Houses are in approximate locations, observing houses typical to that general area.

Infill and backland development

New development will likely come forward via applications in the form of infill or backland development of generally fewer than 10 homes. In the context of West Bedlington, infill and backland can be defined as:

Infill development: New development that is located in-between two existing properties, most likely in PT1-Town Centre.

Backland development: refers to the development of land set back behind existing properties, on allocated or non-allocated sites.

The overarching aim of these design guidelines is to promote context-sensitive infill housing of a high quality. This should help reinforce local character and create sustainable growth in West Bedlington.

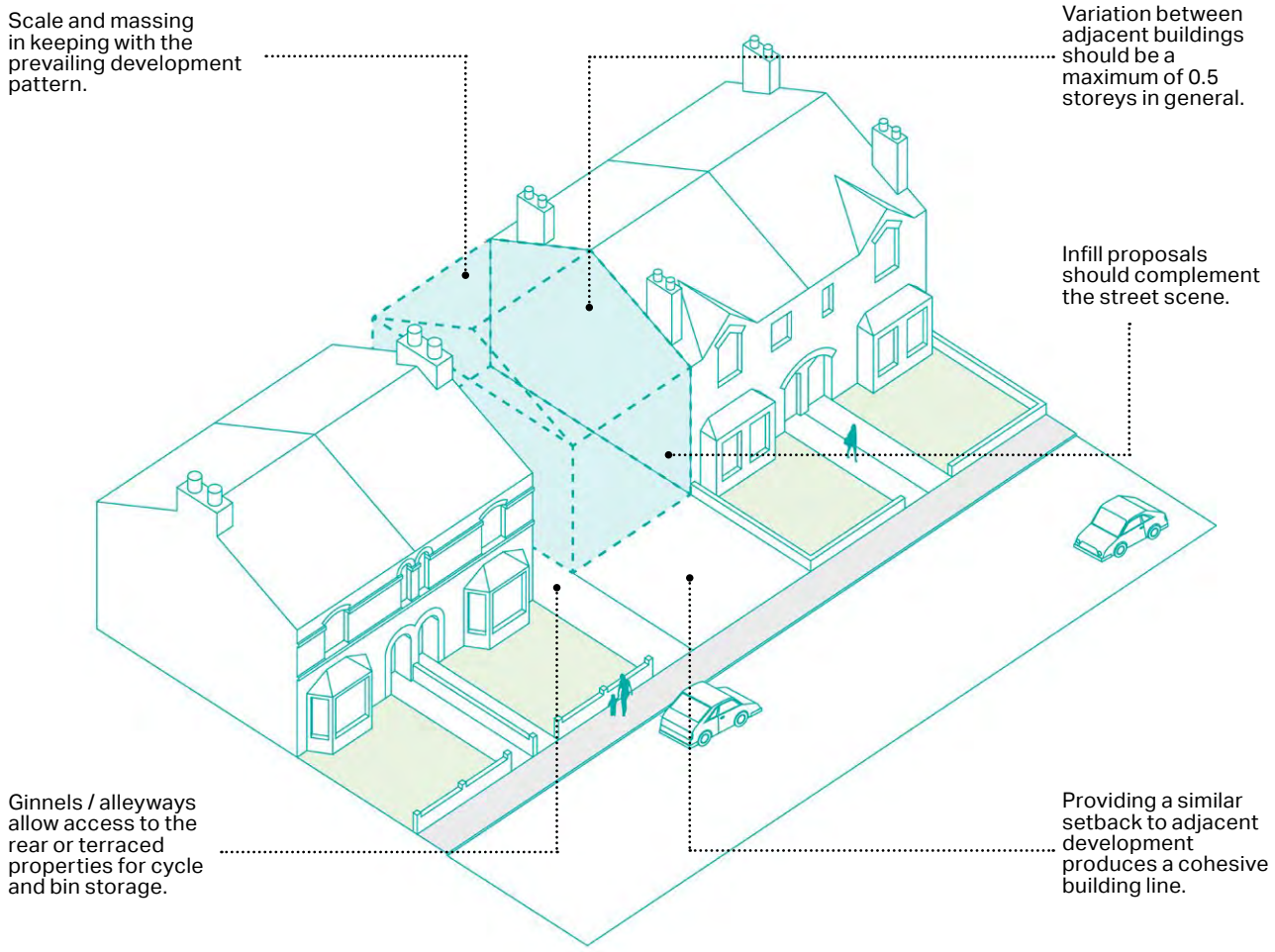


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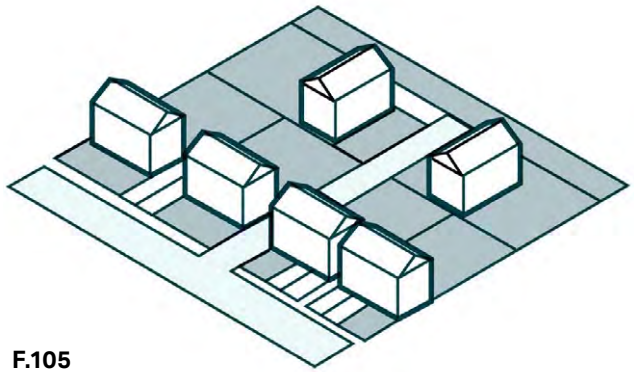
Figure 104: Diagram illustrating infill development



F.105

Figure 105: A good example of backland development, which reflects the scale of the existing dwellings. Main facades face a different direction to existing development, protecting privacy. Good access is also provided.

3.3.3 Infill and backland development

Infill development proposals must:

- Be in keeping with the scale and massing found within the prevailing development pattern. Views must not be compromised.
- Where there is an existing strong building line, the building line of new development should reflect the street and be set back no more than a maximum of 1.5m from adjacent buildings (unless additional landscaping or tree planting is being introduced to the street scene).
- Where buildings are set back from the pavement, boundary features should define the plot and link up to the adjacent buildings (for example, low hedgerows or red brick walls).
- Building entrances should address the street with their main facade. Corner buildings should address both streets with fenestration but the main entrance could be on either, subject to access requirements.
- Building fenestration and facade design should be in keeping with the predominant positive building character on the street, or harmonise with adjacent buildings.
- Building heights should vary from 1.5-3 storeys depending on adjacent plots. A variable eave line and ridge line is allowed to create interest, but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys in general.

Backland development proposals must:

- Ensure that the density, scale and appearance reflect the immediate context (i.e. the original dwelling or adjacent buildings). Backland development should not be larger in height, massing or scale than dwellings in the immediate context. Only on exceptionally large plots would it be deemed acceptable for any backland proposal to be larger or vary in character.
- Protect the privacy, integrity and amenity of dwellings within the immediate context.
- Backland access should minimise the removal or alteration of existing boundary treatments within the original plot where feasible.

Extensions and alterations

In addition to the likelihood of infill and backland development as set out previously, development is also likely to come forward via applications in the form of extensions and alterations.

Although some residential extensions and alterations do not require planning permission, the following design codes can still act as best-practice design guidelines for West Bedlington.

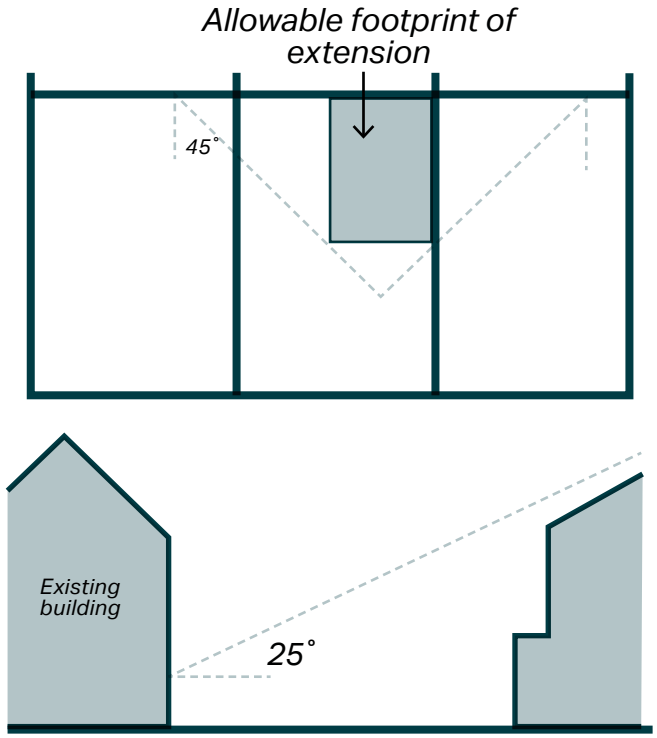


Figure 106: 25˚ / 45˚ rule

3.3.4 Extensions and alterations

Extensions:

- Extensions to existing properties must be subservient or of an appropriate scale in relation to the original building.
- Extensions to historic buildings (or within the setting of listed assets) should be sympathetic and respond sensitively to the original character of the building or nearby listed assets.
- Material palettes and the style of the extension should be carefully chosen to respond sensitively to the form and features of the original building.

Alterations:

- Wherever possible, alterations should reuse existing materials on site in order to harmonise with the original structure.
- Alterations should seek to restore original features such as windows, chimneys, and brickwork.
- Within the conversion of buildings, any new openings should complement the original character in size, form, and location.

F.107

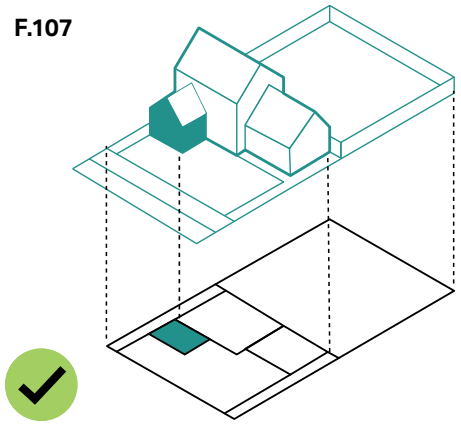


Figure 107: An acceptable example of a front extension which is smaller in scale than the existing building, mirrors the roof pitch, and covers less than 50% of the front elevation.

F.108

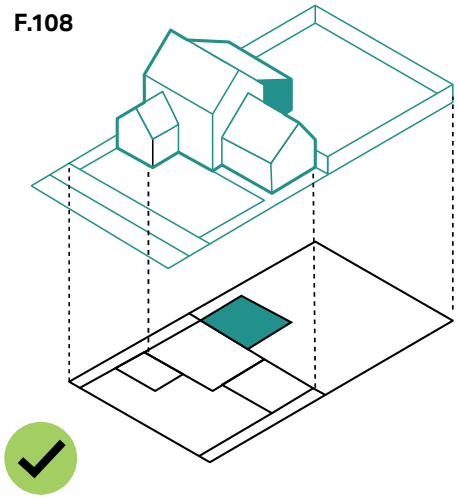


Figure 108: An acceptable example of a rear extension with a roof form and pitch which sits below the main ridge line of the original building.

F.109

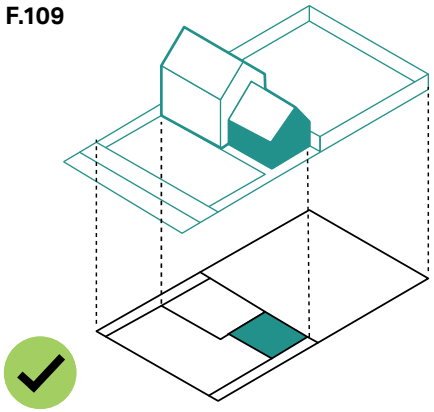


Figure 109: An acceptable example of a side extension which is single storey and set back from the main building line, with a roof form that responds to the original building.

F.110

Figure 110: Side extensions to existing properties to create new homes should be discouraged.

Front extensions should generally be avoided. If proposed, they should have a ridge which is below the existing ridge height, and cover less than 50% of the front elevation.

Rear extensions: Single storey rear extensions will be set below first-floor windows. Rear extensions should also be designed to minimise any effects on neighbouring properties. In the occasion the size, style and setting of a dwelling allows for a two storey extension, special consideration should be given to how the building might impact neighbouring properties.

Side extensions: Poorly designed side extensions can negatively impact on the streetscene, disrupting existing building lines or the rhythm of spaces between buildings. As such, both single and two storey side extensions should be set back from the main building line (at the front of the dwelling) and complement the materials and detailing of the original building.

Shopfronts

There are good examples of traditional shopfronts in West Bedlington.

A traditional shopfront is composed of a number of elements that come together to form a cohesive holistic design that responds to the character of the building while also providing an active frontage. Although based on classical shopfront design these elements are often reflected and modified in contemporary shopfront design.

When designing a traditional shopfront, care needs to be taken to ensure that each element is well selected and well related to one another.

F.111

Figure 111: An example of a shopfront along Front Street

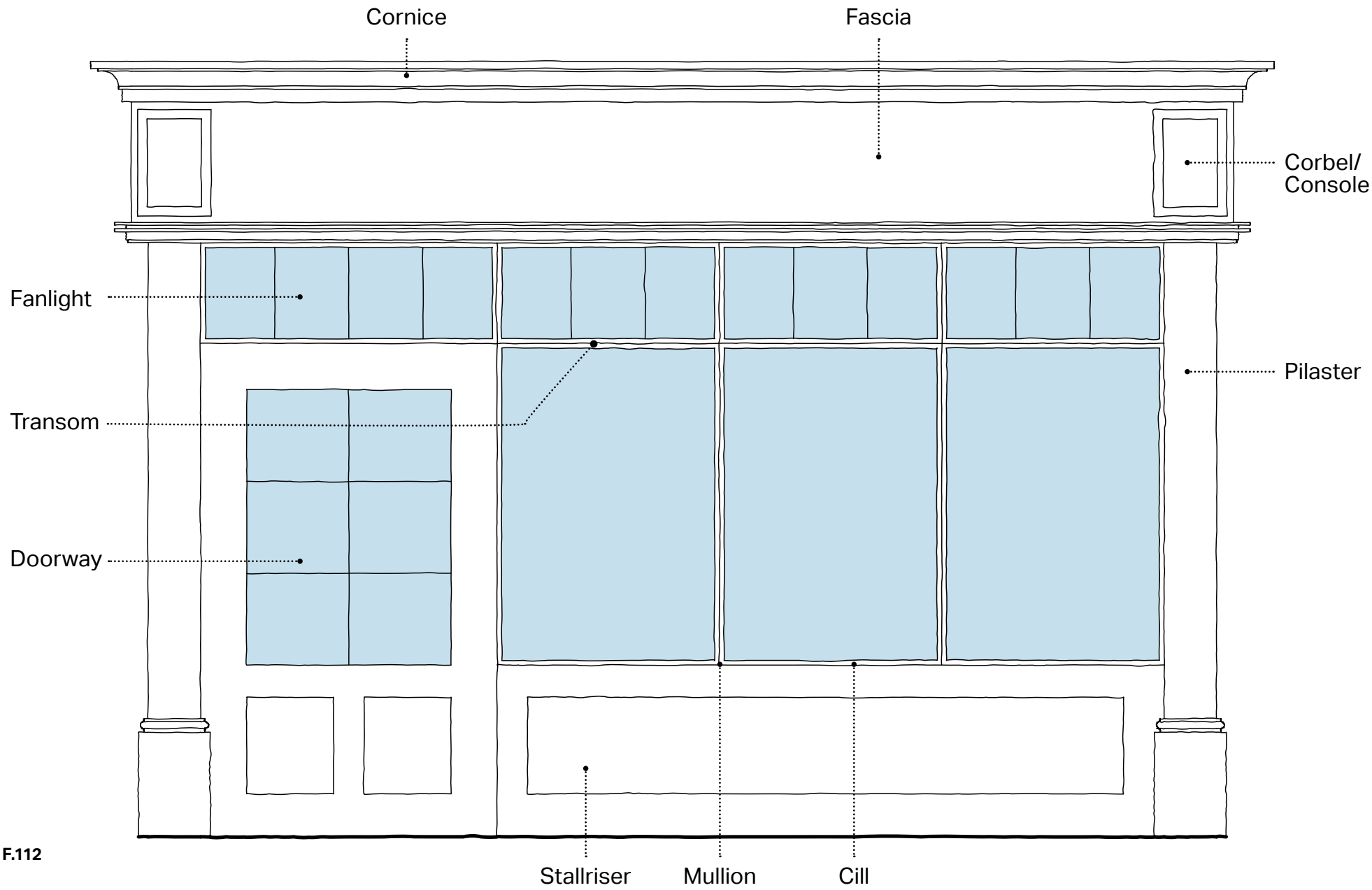
3.3.5 Shopfronts

The design of a shopfront must:

- Not be standardised or crude shopfronts which are unsympathetic to context.
- Ensure consistent use of materials, colours and finishes, which should be sensitive to its context.
- Ensure fascia boards, stallrisers, pilasters and other elements of the shopfront are sympathetic to the building and well-coordinated.
- Consider the full building elevation and reference the vertical and horizontal architectural elements to create a strong relationship between shop front and building.
- Avoid garish and vivid colours, bold colours may be appropriate.
- Ensure lighting is externally mounted and carefully designed.
- Where a hanging sign is illuminated, discrete external illumination is favoured.
- Retain or restore architectural features, where possible. This includes windows, doors, and any decorative elements.
- Security features should not dominate and security shutters should be avoided.
- Modern shop fronts may be appropriate but should typically employ a 'less is more' approach to their design. The colour, style and materials used within shop frontages should be respectful of the host building's character. This might include lettering and signage, materials and finishes, glazing and lighting or other design aspects.

General rules when designing and scaling shopfronts include:

- Fascia deeper than stallriser
- Glazing in door deeper than panel
- Pilaster narrower than stallriser is deep
- Symmetry preferred to asymmetry where space allows
- Subdivision of glazing laterally where shopfronts taller than the standard unit
- Recessed doorway
- One colour and a simple palette of materials should provide harmony.



F.112

Figure 112: Traditional shopfront details.

Built form details

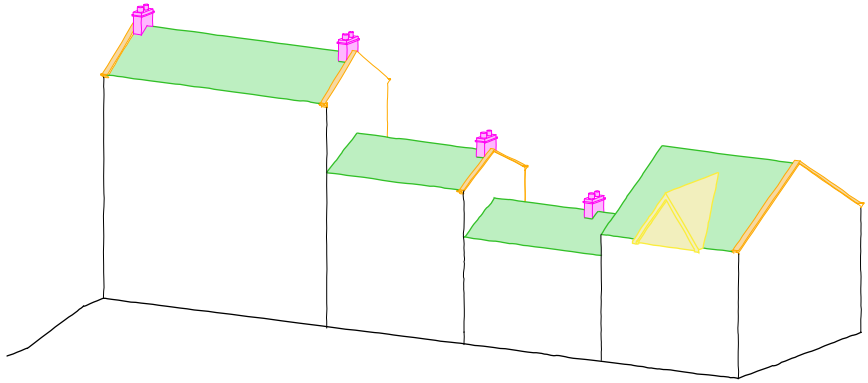
The town centre and Conservation Area in West Bedlington has an array of differing built form and architectural features. The undulating topography create variance in roof planes.

However, built form variety is also apparent in other areas through formal massing and shape of buildings and different roof types.

- Rooflines do not need to be consistent in **PT1 - Town Centre**. Topography and building heights will dictate the roofline.
- In **PT2-Inner Suburb** and **PT3 - Outer Suburb** - roof form can be pitched, hipped, or gable with skirt roofs or catslide roofs providing variation.

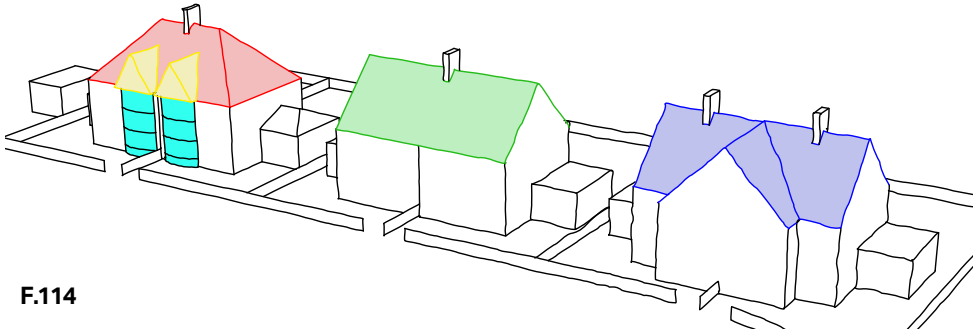
Figure 113-115 Key

- Pitched roof
- Hipped roof
- Catslide roof
- Gable front/dormer
- Pitched roof/ Gable front
- Parapet
- Chimney stacks
- Skirt roof
- Porches/ projections



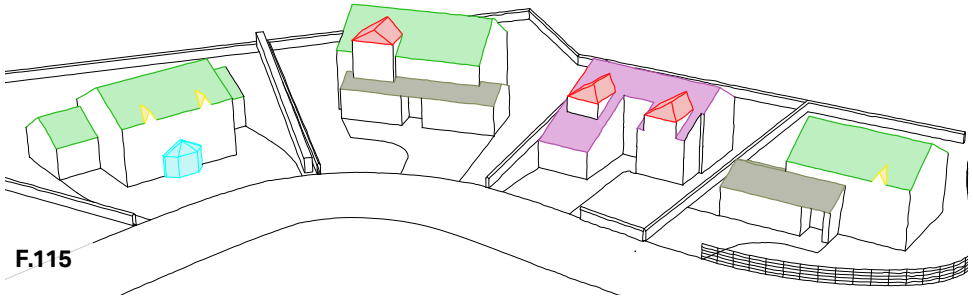
F.113

Figure 113: Roofscape is not consistent as the level changes and building heights creates difference. Features include parapets, gable fronts and chimney stacks.



F.114

Figure 114: Different roof forms and types are notable with hipped roofs and pitched roofs the most common. Gable fronted semi-detached buildings are notable and used for bay windows.



F.115

Figure 115: In outer suburbs, there is a variety of roof types, most are pitched but there are catslide and skirt roofs evident. Projections are also a feature.

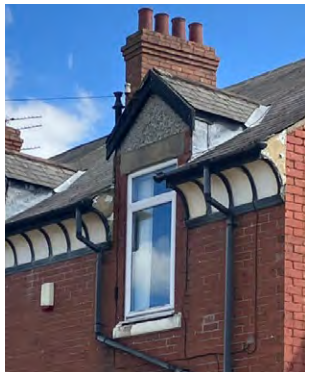
Figure 116: Selection of roof images from across the area, showing a consistent roofline in suburban areas and less formal arrangements in the town centre.

3.3.6 Built form details

Built form details must respond to the place specific context.

- Roofs must be between 40-50 degrees to allow adaptation of roof space. – Where ridge heights are limited, this pitch is achieved by narrowing the plan depth. Ensure either a gable or the ridgeline addresses the street.
- Chimneys must:
  – Match the primary elevation material.
  – Be placed symmetrically to the ridge-line.
  – Rise well above the roof, a maximum of 1m.
- Chimney guidance:

  – Open chimneys are discouraged as they are not compatible with air tightness and low carbon design so should be avoided. Where there is an exceptional reason for including chimneys, they must:
  – Only be incorporated where they serve a function, this can include addressing local character where this is a predominant feature.



3.3.7 Built form details

- The size of any dormer must ensure the primary roof remains dominant and that there is not an excessive increase in overall scale ie. not greater than 33% of the roof elevation fronting the street.
  – Dormers to front elevations must have pitched or hipped roofs, set down from the ridge line by at least 200mm.
  – Where the height of the dormer is less than 200mm from the ridge, the width of the dormer must not extend the full width of property.
- EXCEPTION:
  - Roof lights may be more appropriate than dormers in historic areas, where dormers are not appropriate. In conservation areas, these must be the smaller flush fitting conservation type with a central glazing bar.
  - Where used on buildings of multiple dwellings e.g. apartments, the number of dormers may be increased with appropriate justification.

3.3.8 Built form details

- The use of bays and projections must extend no more than 1m from the prevailing building line. – In the conservation area, windows must be timber casement or sash. In other areas, if timber casement or sash cannot be achieved, windows must otherwise have an appearance equivalent to a painted finish (high gloss UPVC is not permitted).
  – If sash windows are used, they must be a double-hung type and not spring balance (a top- or bottom-hung hinge is acceptable for cleaning or escape purposes only and not for normal opening). Top-hung vents shall not be allowed.
- Porches and canopies must not obstruct the highway/footpaths or compromise visibility splays.
- In the conservation area, external doors must be made of timber and either hardwood or softwood, painted or natural finish. In other areas, if timber doors cannot be achieved, doors must otherwise have an appearance equivalent to a painted finish. (high gloss UPVC is not permitted).

Boundary treatments and gardens

3.3.9 Boundary treatments

Front gardens must be between 1.5m - 5m in depth from back of pavement to dwelling.
All gardens must include planting to at least 50% of the area.
Any boundary to the countryside must have a natural edge condition with hedgerows and trees.

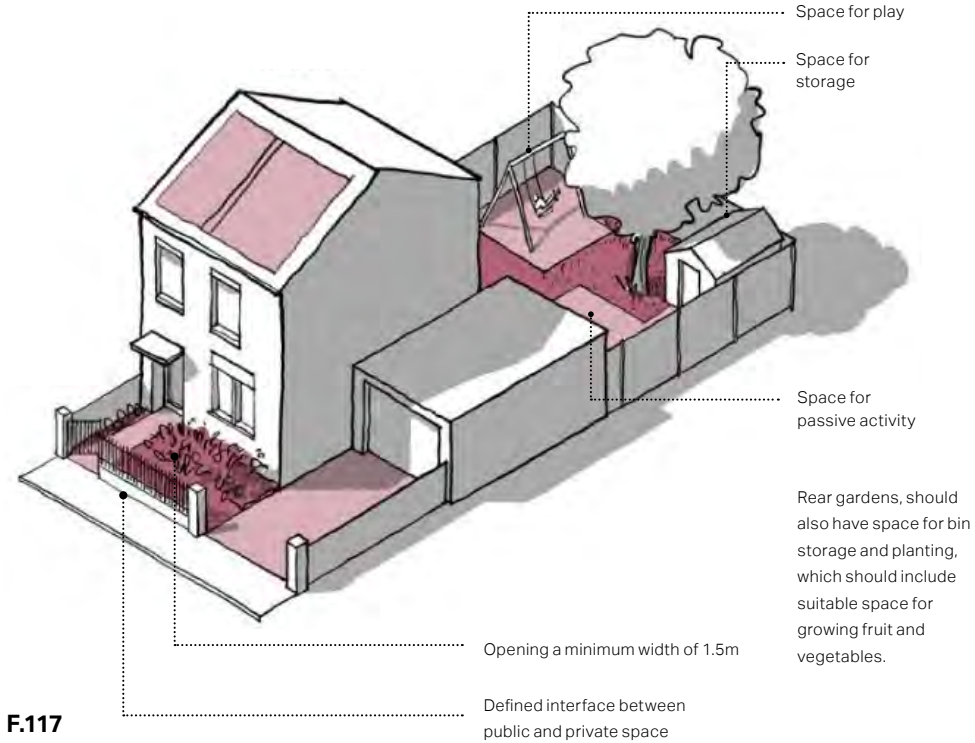


Figure 117: Front and back gardens. Diagram from the National Model Design Code.

3.3.10 Boundary treatments and gardens

In PT1 - Town Centre boundary treatments are typically low stone walls.

Spill out space for shops should be designed in materials and layout to read with the public realm. Typically this will mean that the space uses material sympathetic to the footway treatment.
– These spaces are commonly hard landscaping with some simple treatments,
– Planting if provided is usually formally laid out in planters.

3.3.11 Boundary treatments and gardens

In PT2 - Inner Suburbs boundary treatments are typically low red brick walls with hedges and grassed verges with on-plot trees.

Front gardens must be 2-5m in depth.

3.3.12 Boundary treatments and gardens

In PT3 - Outer Suburbs typically have no boundary treatments with front garden open to the street. Occasionally low stone walls can be used. Setbacks are 7-10m. There will be a maximum total height of 1m to maintain privacy.

3.4 Parking

3.4.1 Parking

In PT1 - Town Centre the following parking solutions are permitted in the assigned blocks:

Perimeter blocks:
- parking courtyards, where secure gated and overlooked;
- on street parallel parking for cars.

Terraced blocks:
- parking courtyards, where secure gated and overlooked;
- on street parallel parking for cars.

3.4.2 Parking

In PT2 - Inner Suburbs the following parking solutions are permitted in the assigned blocks:

Perimeter blocks:
- on plot parking to the rear of properties accessed from a gated courtyard;
- parking courtyards, where secure gated and overlooked;
- on-street parallel parking for cars;
- occasional Integrated garages <15% of the parking on offer.

Terraced blocks:
- occasional Integrated garages and associated garages <15% of the parking on offer;
- on-street parallel parking for cars.

3.4.3 Parking

In PT3 - Outer Suburbs the following parking solutions are permitted in the assigned blocks:

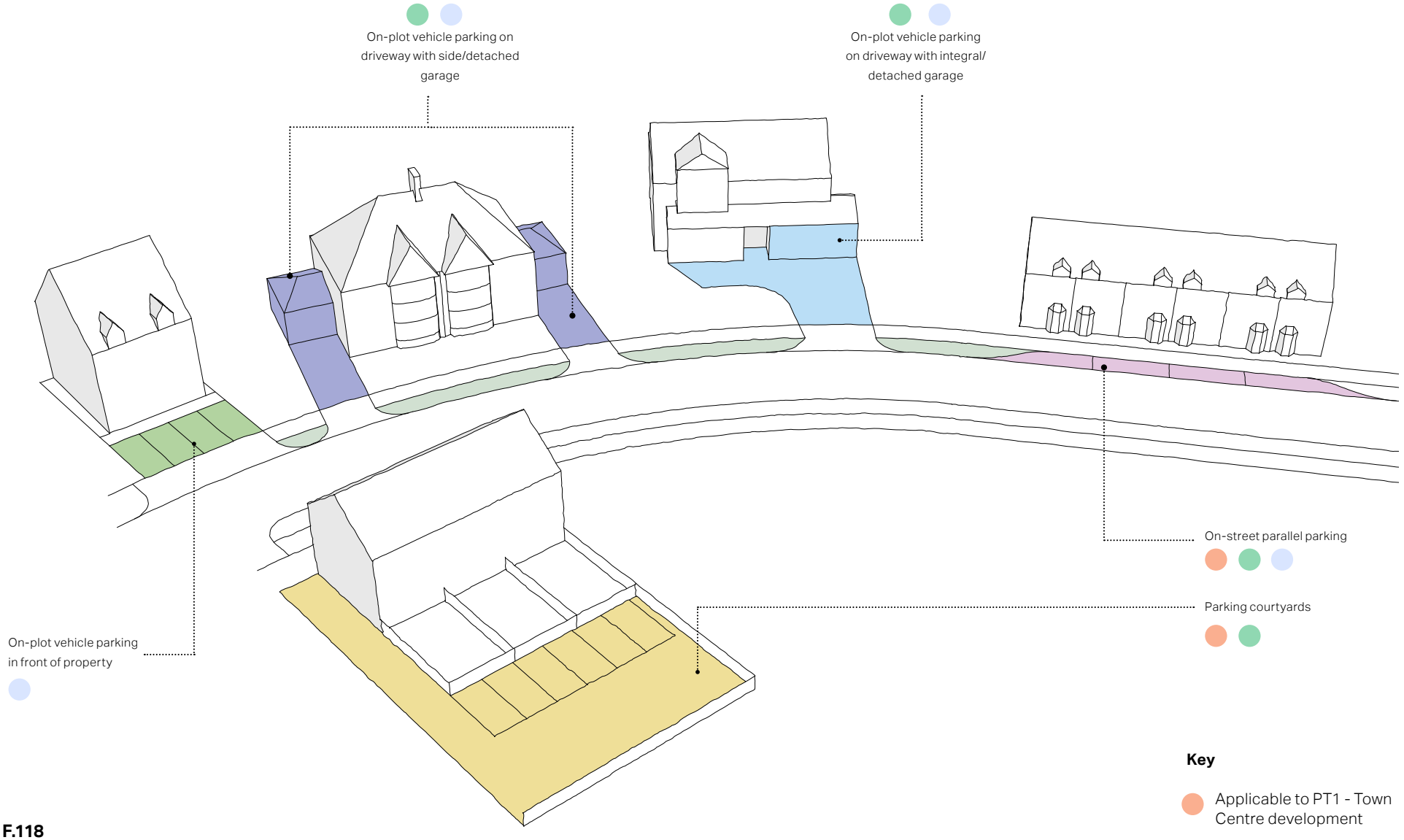
Perimeter blocks:
- on plot vehicle parking with side or rear of property garages accessed via a driveway;
- on plot parking to the front of properties;
- on street parallel parking for cars.

Irregular blocks
- on plot vehicle parking on driveway with integral or detached garages;
- on plot parking to the front of properties.

3.4.4 Parking

- All parking bays must be a minimum of 2.5m x 5m unless in front of a garage, in which case they must be atleast 2.5m x 6m, however;
  – The dimensions of bays for electric vehicle (EV) charging takes precedence and must be a minimum of 2.8m wide and must take account of the minimum space requirements set out for EV charge points in Building Regulations Part S, which vary depending on whether they are free standing, or wall mounted.
- The width of parent and child parking bays should be atleast 3.6m and a length atleast 6.6m.
- On-street, parallel bays must be marked out to ensure parking does not impact footways. Parallel parking bays must at least 6m long and 2m wide.

NOTE: *Building Regulations Part S* is a requirement for new and existing homes undergoing large renovations to have facilities electric vehicle charging. Further guidance can be found via Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Approved Documents.



F.118

Figure 118: Indicative diagram showing only different parking types, it is not illustrative of road layouts or plot configurations

04
Appendix

4. Appendix

4.1 Planning Policy and Guidance

4.1.1 National Frameworks and Regulations

National Planning Policy Framework (Revised December 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the UK Government's overarching economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. It is a high-level document that attempts to make good design pivotal and to put communities at the heart of planning. The policies within the NPPF apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood areas, and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications.

The NPPF notes that "development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes".

The parts of the NPPF which are of particular relevance to this design code are:

- Part 2: Achieving sustainable development;
- Part 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- Part 6: Building a strong, competitive economy;
- Part 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres;
- Part 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities;
- Part 9: Promoting sustainable transport;
- Part 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places;
- Part 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change (section 14);
- Part 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and
- Part 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Part 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) emphasises the need to create high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

The NPPF can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2.

Permitted Development Rights

Permitted development rights allow the improvement or extension of homes without the need to apply for planning permission where that would be out of proportion with the impact of the works carried out. For further information, please refer to the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/permitted-development-rights-for-householders-technical-guidance.

Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) was enacted to "speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy, and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes". The LURA ensures new development is built beautifully, produces more local infrastructure, is shaped by local people's democratic wishes, enhances the environment and creates neighbourhoods where people want to live and work. The LURA can be found at the following link: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/enacted.

The Building Regulations 2010

The Building Regulations 2010 cover the construction and extension of buildings. Building regulations approval is separate from planning permission and both may be required. Building regulations approval may also be required for alteration projects including:

- replacing fuse boxes and connected electrics;
- installing a bathroom that will involve plumbing;
- changing electrics near a bath or shower;
- putting in a fixed air-conditioning system;
- replacing windows and doors;
- replacing roof coverings on pitched and flat roofs;
- installing or replacing a heating system; and
- adding extra radiators to a heating system.

The Building Regulations 2010 can be found at the following link: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2214/contents/made.

The Future Homes Standard (emerging)

The emerging Future Homes Standard (FHS) will complement the Building Regulations 2010 and aims to ensure that new homes built from 2025 produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under the existing regulations. The FHS aims to decarbonise new homes by focusing on improving heating, hot water systems, and reducing waste. This will be achieved in part by replacing current technologies with low-carbon alternatives.

To meet the specifications set out in the FHS, the Government updated Parts F and L of the current Building Regulations in 2021. These specifications must be adhered to when constructing, extending or renovating UK homes. Part F introduces new standards for ventilation, while Part L sets out minimum energy efficiency performance targets for buildings, airtightness requirements and improved minimum insulation standards.

For further information on the changes to Part L and Part F, please refer to the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings.

4.1.2 National Guidance

National Design Guide (2019)

The National Design Guide (NDG) sets the ten characteristics of a well-designed place and demonstrates what good design is in practice. The characteristics are: Context; Identity; Built Form; Movement; Nature; Public Spaces; Uses; Homes & Buildings; Resources; and, Lifespan.

The NDG should be used as an overarching reference for new development where topics are not covered in local guidance. The NDG notes that a well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings.

The NDG can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide.

National Model Design Code (2021)

The National Model Design Code (NMDC) is the Government's detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guidelines and policies to promote successful design. It expands on the following ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide (NDG):

- Context
- Identity
- Built Form
- Movement
- Nature
- Public Spaces
- Uses
- Homes and Buildings
- Resources
- Lifespan

The NMDC and NDG are companion documents setting out characteristics of well-designed places. They support the ambitions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to utilise the planning and development process in the creation of high-quality place-making. The NDG states that "specific, detailed and measurable criteria for good design are most appropriately set at the local level",

The guides are expected to be used by local authorities, applicants and local communities to establish further design codes and guidance (such as this design code) that can deliver in line with local objectives.

The NMDC can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code.

Building for a Healthy Life (2020)

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) was formerly known as Building for Life and is the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the key role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing.

The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed schemes, as well as useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

BHL can be found at the following link: https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life.

Manual for Streets (2007)

Manual for Streets (MfS) aims to bring about a fundamental culture change in the way streets are designed and adopted. It comprises technical guidance focusing on lightly trafficked residential streets. Many of its key principles may be applicable to other types of street, for example high streets and lightly-trafficked lanes in rural areas. MfS is used predominantly for the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new residential streets, but it is also applicable to existing residential streets subject to redesign.

MfS can be found at the following link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6270d4838fa8f57a360f8b91/Essex_Manual_for_Streets_Redacted.pdf.

Figure 119: The front cover of the National Model Design Code (Part 1: The Coding Process).

Figure 120: The front cover of Building for a Healthy Life.

4.2 District level

2026-2034 Northumberland Local Plan

This document contains new policies that provide an, up-to-date basis for making decisions on housing applications submitted whilst setting the general scale and distribution of new development. It provides planning principles, including detailed development management policies, where new homes, workplaces and facilities will be through allocations of land; and key environmental designations that include site specific proposals,conservation and enhancement of historic and natural assets.

2015 Northumberland Green Belt Review

This report provides detailed guidance on the designated green belt areas. The Green Belt extends across southern and south eastern Northumberland around a number of towns and villages including West Bedlington.

2007 Wansbeck District Local Plan

This local plan together with the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan forms the development plan for Wansbeck which sets out the overall strategy for development in the County.

4.3 Local level

2021 West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan

The West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan sets out the opportunities and challenges to address. It includes a positive vision, strategy and range of policies that will guide development in West Bedlington for the period to 2036. These include, but not limited to, the quality of life for our residents, community well-being, local economy and accessibility.

2021 West Bedlington Sustainability Appraisal

This document was prepared on behalf of West Bedlington Town Council to inform the preparation of the West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan using four key objectives, quality of life, community wellbeing, local economy and accessibility.

2011 Bedlington Conservation Area Management Strategy Supplementary Planning Document

This document was prepared to proactively manage Bedlington's conservation area in order to preserve and enhance its character and appearance.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) – which creates special controls for the demolition, alteration or extension of buildings, objects or structures of particular architectural or historic interest, as well as conservation areas;

Climate Change Act (2008) – which set legally binding emissions targets;

Delivering our low carbon future (2011) – sets out how the UK will achieve decarbonisation to make the transition to a low carbon economy whist maintaining energy security and minimising costs to consumers, including reference to low carbon buildings;

Mainstreaming sustainable development (2011) – outlines the government's commitment to sustainable development and how it will be mainstreamed into overall government policy;

Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2014) – explains how the government is implementing international and EU commitments on biodiversity.

The Northumbria River Basin Management Plan (NRBMP - 2015) – provides a framework for protecting and enhancing the benefits provided by the water environment The management plan provides information on:

- the baseline classification of water bodies;
- statutory objectives for protected areas;
- statutory objectives for water bodies; and
- summary programme of measures to achieve statutory objectives.

West Bedlington Neighbourhood Plan (Pre submission Draft 2021) - informed by the adopted Wansbeck Local Plan policies and the emerging Northumberland Local Plan

Policy WB2: Design

Policy WB4: Green Infrastructure

Policy WB5: Biodiversity

Policy WB6: Local Green Space

Policy WB7: Protected Open Space

Policy WB9: Shopping Fronts in Bedlington Conservation Area

Policy WB13: Allotments

Policy WB17: Active Travels Routes

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