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1. About this guidance

- 1.1** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that Local Development Documents form the framework for making decisions on applications for planning permission. Decisions have to be taken in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. NPPF advises that a local planning authority may prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide greater detail on the policies in its Local Plan. Supplementary Planning Documents are a 'material' consideration when planning applications are decided.
- 1.2** As required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 we have prepared a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out how we will involve the community in preparing our Local Plan and consulting on planning applications. In accordance with the SCI we have involved people who may be interested in this Supplementary Planning Document and asked them for their comments. We have produced a consultation statement which summarises all the comments people made to us and our response. This is available on request.
- 1.3** This document covers new housing development, conversion of non residential buildings to residential use and adapting residential properties to different house types, for example dwellings to flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation.

2. Introduction

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making

Design Principles:

Development is expected to be of high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features of Barnsley, including:

- Landscape character, topography, green Infrastructure assets, important habitats, woodlands and other natural features;
- Views and vistas to key buildings, landmarks, skylines and gateways; and
- Heritage and townscape character including the scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form in the locality.

Through its layout and design development should:

- Contribute to place making and be of high quality, that contributes to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment; Complement and enhance the character and setting of distinctive places, including Barnsley Town Centre, Penistone, rural villages and Conservation Areas;

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- Help to transform the character of physical environments that have become run down and are lacking in distinctiveness;
- Provide an accessible and inclusive environment for the users of individual buildings and surrounding spaces;
- Provide clear and obvious connections to the surrounding street and pedestrian network;
- Ensure ease of movement and legibility for all users, ensure overlooking of streets, spaces and pedestrian routes through the arrangement and orientation of buildings and the location of entrances;
- Promote safe, secure environments and access routes with priority for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Create clear distinctions between public and private spaces;
- Display architectural quality and express proposed uses through its composition, scale, form, proportions and arrangement of materials, colours and details;
- Make the best use of high quality materials;
- Include a comprehensive and high quality scheme for hard and soft landscaping; and
- Provide high quality public realm.

2.1 In terms of place making development should make a positive contribution to achieving qualities of a successful place such as character, legibility, permeability and vitality.

Policy GD1 General Development

Proposals for development will be approved if:

- There will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents;
- They are compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of the neighbouring land;
- They will not adversely affect the potential development of a wider area of land which could otherwise be available for development and safeguards access to adjacent land;
- They include landscaping to provide a high quality setting for buildings, incorporating existing landscape features and ensuring that plant species and the way they are planted, hard surfaces, boundary treatments and other features appropriately reflect, protect and improve the character of the local landscape Any adverse impact on the environment,

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natural resources, waste and pollution is minimised and mitigated;

- Adequate access and internal road layouts are provided to allow the complete development of the entire site for residential purposes, and to provide appropriate vehicular and pedestrian links throughout the site and into adjacent areas;
- Any drains and, culverts and other surface water bodies that may cross the site are considered;
- Appropriate landscaped boundaries are provided where sites are adjacent to open countryside;
- Any pylons are considered in the layout; and
- Existing trees that are to remain on site are considered in the layout in order to avoid overshadowing.

2.2 This document primarily supplements Local Plan policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making, and sets out the principles that will apply to the consideration of planning applications for new housing development, including conversions, infill and backland development.

2.3 Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

"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, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used)."

2.4 Further detailed guidance on residential development is provided in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, which is available on the Council's website. The guide includes information requirements, design guidelines and technical requirements. The guide looks at the design of residential development at three scales: the wider neighbourhood scale, the streets scale and the finer scale of plots, blocks and buildings.

2.5 The Council uses Building for a Healthy Life, (the latest edition of, and new name for Building for Life 12), to structure discussions with housebuilders, to help steer and assess the design and layout of developments of ten or more dwellings. The 12 considerations within Building for a Healthy Life should guide housebuilders from an early stage of their design and form the basis for any discussions with the Council on design at pre-application stage. A Building for a Healthy Life assessment should be incorporated into any design and access statement accompanying a planning

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application for ten or more dwellings. The assessment should respond to and expand upon the 12 considerations set out in Building for a Healthy Life.

- ~~2.5~~ The Council uses Building for Life 12 to structure discussions with housebuilders, to help steer and assess the design and layout of developments of ten or more dwellings. It sets out twelve questions about new housing developments plus recommendations of things to achieve and avoid. It should be used by housebuilders from an early stage of their design. Any design and access statement should include a Building for Life assessment, answering the twelve questions.
- 2.6 You are advised to discuss your proposal with the Council at an early stage. Formal pre-application discussions can help avoid problems and delays once an application is submitted. Further information, including the pre-application advice protocol and charges for this is available on the Council's web site.

General Criteria

- 2.7 The Council will assess your proposal against the guidelines set out below. However, if your scheme matches these guidelines it does not necessarily mean that your application will be approved or that you have fulfilled your responsibility to achieve quality development. The guidelines should ensure that development which would have an unacceptable impact will be avoided. However, in some instances higher standards may be required and in other cases standards may be relaxed if there are mitigating circumstances and the development would result in overall benefits to the community and the environment.

3. Relationship with existing dwellings and space between proposed dwellings

- 3.1 The layout and design of new housing development must ensure that high standards of privacy, light and outlook are provided for existing and proposed residents.
- 3.2 Developers in the first instance should consider design led solutions to ensure layouts deliver high standards by avoiding:-
1. Close overlooking of the windows in any existing dwelling or its garden from the proposed development.
 2. The introduction or intensification of vehicular and pedestrian movements close to an existing dwelling, its garden or its boundary.
 3. The overbearing or overshadowing effect of new buildings on an existing dwelling or its garden.
- 3.3 In order to ensure adequate levels of privacy are provided/maintained, to ensure residential development does not result in unacceptable levels of overshadowing or loss of outlook and in order to provide adequate amenity space, development will usually be expected to comply with the external spacing standards set out below.

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4. External spacing standards

1. Where front elevations face a road the dwellings should be an appropriate distance apart. The Council will accept a minimum of 12 metres where the dwellings are of the same storey and it will achieve a streetscape that reflects local character.
2. The minimum back-to-back dimension between facing habitable rooms, (i.e. any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, cooking, living or eating purposes), should be 21 metres. Where housing abuts the edge of existing settlements, the back-to-back dimension towards existing housing should be greater than 21 metres. Advice will be given on a case by case basis, based on the privacy and outlook of the existing dwelling.
3. Where the proposed dwelling(s) is/are more than two storeys in height (excluding rooms in the roofspace), the back-to-back separation distance(s) should increase by 3 metres for every additional storey.
4. Proposed habitable room windows at first floor level and above should be a minimum of 10 metres from the boundary of any private garden which they would face and habitable room windows in existing dwellings at first floor level and above should be a minimum of 10 metres from any proposed private garden which they would face. A reduced distance may be accepted for bungalows provided they meet garden size standards and ensure adequate levels of amenity for occupants in terms of outlook, privacy and daylight.
5. Proposed walls without habitable room windows (usually side elevations) should be at least 12 metres from original habitable room windows. Where the proposed dwelling is more than two storeys in height (excluding rooms in the roofspace), the separation distance should increase by 2 metres for every additional storey.
6. Rear gardens of proposed dwellings should be at least 50m² square metres in the case of two bedroom houses/bungalows and 60m² square metres for houses/bungalows with three or more bedrooms. Smaller gardens may be acceptable in corner plots if privacy and daylighting can be maintained.
7. Distances between new buildings and existing dwellings may be relaxed depending on a number of factors including site level relationships, (i.e. if at a lower level), existing screening or landscaping between the existing and proposed buildings and location. Each case will be judged on its merits but detailed information must be submitted to demonstrate that adequate levels of amenity would be retained for existing residents and provided for residents of proposed dwellings (e.g. cross sections, sun path diagrams).
8. Shared private space for flats must be a minimum of 50m² square metres plus an additional 10m² square metres per unit as balcony space or added to shared private space. Where private space cannot be provided balconies must be provided. Balconies must be a minimum of 3m² square metres. The amount of shared private space to be provided will also depend on the quality, quantity and

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accessibility of local public open space.

9. Full compliance with standards is expected in predominantly residential areas whereas they may be slightly relaxed in town centre situations/higher density areas.

5. Internal spacing standards

- 5.1 All developments should achieve the internal spacing standards set out in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide – Technical Requirements section 4A.2 (pp130-131).

6. Accessibility

- 6.1 Given the aging population and identified levels of disability amongst the population, housing development should be built to the following accessible standards¹:
 - 26% of all new dwellings should be built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard
 - 6% of new dwellings should be built to wheelchair accessible M4(3)(2)(b)²

6.2 An increasing proportion of the population is experiencing dementia. Advice specifically on the accessibility and usability of dwellings with regards to dementia is provided in the Dementia-friendly Housing Guide, produced by the Alzheimer's Society, in the chapter 'Place: the physical environment' (pages 34 - 47). The online resource is available via: https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-06/Dementia%20Friendly%20Housing_Guide.pdf

7. Character

- 7.1 Development must respect local context, history, built heritage, character and communities, ensuring that proposed developments preserve or enhance local physical, environmental, social, cultural, historical and economic characteristics.
- 7.2 The design of new developments must be based on an appraisal of existing landscape and settlement character. The primary design source for maintaining character should be the character area in which the site is located if this is a positive source. Where there is no specific positive source to draw on, the development should be designed to create character. Using the lack of local character as a justification for poor and characterless design will not be accepted.
- 7.3 The design of all new development must be based on an appraisal that identifies any existing positive features within the site and assesses the advantages and disadvantages of retaining them.

¹ Accessible standards as set out in The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document M Access to and use of buildings Volume 1: Dwellings (2015 edition as amended and including any subsequent amendments)

² Where calculated if this does not result in a whole number, where it is below .5 the figure will be rounded down. If above .5 it will be rounded up.

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- 7.4** The design of all new development must be based on an appraisal of the townscape of the site and surrounding area and their relation to topography. All new development should be designed as a considered response to topography and townscape.
- 7.5** Views into and out of the site should be considered at an early stage of the design process. Where the site is visible from a distance, especially where the local topography varies, a visual impact assessment should be undertaken to help influence the layout and design of the development.
- 7.6** The use of standard layouts, plot sizes and building designs which relate poorly to their surroundings and could be anywhere in the country should be avoided. Where standard house types are used they should be adapted to complement local character, beyond just changing external materials.
- 7.7** The design of new developments should be specific to their location and should seek to co-ordinate the landscape framework, street pattern, route hierarchy and townscape to create a coherent public realm and open space network.
- 7.8** Innovative design solutions that depart from the local context may be allowed if they are considered to have a positive impact on the character of the area.
- 7.9** Within larger schemes the pattern of house types and designs should be varied to create visual interest and support character areas within the development.
- 7.10** In all proposals elevations and fenestration should be designed in such a way that they provide relief, depth texture and modelling. This helps to provide visual interest, break down the massing of dwellings and contribute to the character of a development.
- 7.11** Window and door openings should have sufficient recess in the reveal to give visual articulation. Typical cross sections of windows and doors at 1:5 or 1:20 scale should show a minimum 50mm set back within the reveal. Exceptions can be made where flush detail is part of a deliberate and coherent architectural composition.
- 7.12** A Design and Access Statement should include the above analysis.
- 7.13** Further guidance on character is given in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, for example on pages 62-66.

8. Protection of existing larger dwellings

- 8.1** Local Plan policy H9 Protection of Larger Existing Dwellings resists development within the curtilage of existing larger dwellings where it will have an adverse impact on the setting of the original dwelling, and the size of the remaining garden area.
- 8.2** For the purposes of this policy we consider 'larger dwellings' to be those that have four or five **more** bedrooms, or are capable of accommodating four or five **more** bedrooms without significant adaptation.

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9. Health and wellbeing

9.1 If considered at an early stage of design there are opportunities for developers to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of new development. The pandemic has especially highlighted the value and importance to health and wellbeing of access to green spaces and walking and cycling connections to local facilities.

9.2 For example on larger schemes the layout could should include walking and cycling routes linking through the development, or the creation of green corridors to improve air quality. For the design of open spaces an inclusive approach may should look not only at the needs of children and young people but also at the needs of an increasingly elderly population.

9.2 The external layout for larger schemes should include walking and cycling routes linking through the development, or the creation of green corridors to improve air quality and mental wellbeing. For the design of open spaces, an inclusive approach should consider the needs of children and young people and the needs of an increasingly ageing population. This includes innovative design for shared space and public realm for positive health & wellbeing and developing community cohesion, for example food growing or community gardens.

9.3 The Council uses the new edition of Building for Life 12, 'Building for a Healthy Life,' to guide the design and layout of developments of ten or more dwellings. This edition has been written in partnership with Homes England and the NHS and has a stronger health and wellbeing emphasis. For example, in the light of the pandemic, it recognises the importance of designing to encourage active travel (cycling and walking) to essential services and work and the importance of access to green spaces.

9.4 Sport England has produced guidance showing how to promote 'active lifestyles' in the design and layout of housing developments. Their 'active design guide' sets out 10 principles to help increase activity in everyday lives, helping to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and neighbouring communities. The guide has been developed in partnership with Public Health England. The online resource, including case studies, is available via: <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/active-design/> https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/spe003-active-design-published-october-2015-high-quality-for-web-2.pdf?VersionId=uCz_r6UyApzAZlaiEVaNt69DAaOCmklQ

9.5 The external environment for housing schemes should consider the needs of the elderly and people with dementia, for which proportions of the population are both rising. The external environment can have a major impact on the mobility, independence, and quality of life of older people and affects their ability to 'age in place.' It should enable social interaction and connect people with places and other people. An overriding principle of the Royal Town Planning Institute's advice note on 'Dementia and Town Planning' (Sept 2020) is that if you get an area right for people with dementia, you can also get it right for older people, for young disabled people, for families with small children, and ultimately for everyone.

9.6 Dementia friendly features include legible street layouts (with a hierarchy of street types, simple, well-connected street layouts with minimal use of cul-de-sacs and limited use of

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shared spaces), distinctive landmarks and other environmental features to aid orientation (and familiarity), clear street signage, open space which is well defined and overlooked (preferably with seating), safe, well-lit and direct footpaths to local facilities (for example shops and services), access to local green space, and, where changes in level occur, a choice of ramp or steps, with handrails provided

- 9.5 Supporting information on the promotion of health and wellbeing ~~could~~ **should** be included in the design and access statement which accompanies a planning application.

10. Designing out crime

- 10.1 Measures to design out crime should be considered at an early stage of the design process. These should include maximising opportunities for natural surveillance and ensuring a clear definition of public and private spaces. Development should take account of the guidance within the Secured by Design website. Please see the link below.

~~<http://www.securedbydesign.com/industry-advice-and-guides/>~~
<http://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>

11. Streets

- 11.1 The design and layout of new residential streets should reflect the principles of Manual for Streets, which are expanded upon in pages 75-82 of the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide. **The Design and Access statement should take account of connectivity.**

- 11.2 Developments should therefore comply with the following:

- The design of all new development must be based on an appraisal of the surrounding street pattern, which identifies the hierarchy of routes and the pattern of movement through the area.
- The design of the street pattern should form a connected network of streets. There should be enough connections with surrounding streets and neighbourhoods and within new development to create a layout that is walkable, offers direct connections, choice and flexibility.
- As far as possible, new streets should be connected at both ends to form a through street. Cul-de-sacs should only be used sparingly, where they are the only appropriate design solution and should be short and straight. Proposals should allow for the future expansion of the movement network to enable future phases of development to be fully integrated.
- All new streets should be defined by the fronts of plots with buildings orientated to face the public highway, space or private street space to create an active frontage. Blank side elevations facing onto streets should be avoided.
- Where the development site abuts an existing public highway, the new development should where possible front the existing street.
- Management and maintenance of the public highway, as well as private street spaces, must be considered from the outset and general principles agreed with the adopting authority at the concept stage.
- By default, development should form perimeter blocks by creating connected streets and maintaining well defined frontages. The design of blocks should not be

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uniform but should reflect the character of the different surrounding streets that make up the block.

- The character of new streets should not be uniform but should vary as part of a hierarchy, depending on their location in order to integrate development into the locality, to retain local distinctiveness and create vibrant, legible and memorable places. Longer streets with continuity of elements tend to have a stronger sense of integration whereas short blocks, arbitrary curves and the lack of a continuous building line create a greater sense of fragmentation and can be disorientating.
 - Street spaces should have an appropriate sense of spatial enclosure suitable to their location and role. Height to width ratios of between 1:2 and 1:4 provide good spatial enclosure. Ratios of less than 1:4 will usually need street trees to create an adequate sense of enclosure. Higher ratios (e.g. 1:1) may be appropriate in central urban areas with higher buildings and proportionately wider streets.
 - Streets should have a clear definition between the public and private realms. External private space between the frontage line and building, such as front gardens or shared private gardens, is best if defined by a physical boundary or 'means of enclosure'.
 - All streets should be designed to achieve the appropriate vehicular speeds:
 - No more than 20mph where principally serving residential areas;
 - No more than 15mph for shared space streets where segregation between motor vehicles and other road users is reduced;
 - Higher design speeds of up to 30mph may be appropriate on existing routes within built up areas, on bus routes and on larger developments where the extent of 20mph streets would exceed around 1km but proposals for design speeds exceeding 20-mph will be determined on a case by case basis.
 - We expect residential developments to incorporate access for buses where reasonable and practical.
- 11.3** Speed restraints can significantly affect the layout of a housing development. Vertical deflection, (for example speed humps), are not permitted by the highway authority in Barnsley. Instead the emphasis is on using horizontal deflection, (for example corners), to restrain speed. Long, straight roads should therefore be avoided in housing layouts where speed restraint is required. Early consultation with Highway Development Control on the layout of residential schemes is therefore advised.
- 11.4** Developments will be expected to meet the technical requirements relating to street and parking geometry contained in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, in Annex 4B (p133-154).

12. Design of residential car parking and garages

- 12.1** Developments will be expected to meet the standards for parking design set out in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide considering parking as an integral part of the design of residential development. Particular attention should be given to sections S2.5 On-street parking (p102) and B1.6 Off-street parking (p116-117). Developments will also be expected to meet the technical requirements set out in annex 4B Street and

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parking geometry (p133-154).

- 12.2** A range of parking solutions should be used, appropriate to the context and the types of housing proposed.
- 12.3** Parking areas to the front of dwellings should be designed to reduce their dominance. ~~Building for Life considers that~~ An over reliance on in front of plot parking ~~that tends to~~ can create over wide streets dominated by parked cars and driveways, unless there is sufficient space to use strong and extensive landscaping to compensate for the lack of builtform enclosure, ~~is avoided.~~
- 12.4** Continuous strips of front of dwelling parking are not acceptable. The starting point should be the guidance from Building for Life of a 50:50 hard/soft landscaping balance at the front of dwellings. The guidance from Building for a Healthy Life where front of dwelling parking is used is there should be a generous landscaping to settle parking into the street.
- 12.5** The maximum number of front of dwelling parking spaces acceptable in a row is four. These should be used sparingly in a development and be separated from other parking spaces by a considerable width of soft landscaping, i.e. more than the width of a parking space.
- 12.6** Side of dwelling parking spaces should not occur on the corners of junctions, as they weaken the streetscene.
- 12.7** The design and location of garages should be subservient to dwellings. Integral garages should be set back from the frontage of the dwelling. In semi-detached dwellings any integral garages should be located at the outer edges of the dwellings and not in the centre, to reduce their visual dominance. Detached garages should ideally be located behind the frontage of their dwelling; they should not be a dominant feature of the streetscene. Garages, integral or detached, should not form the end view of any vistas or be prominent in important views.
- 12.8** New parking areas proposed to the front of existing historic dwellings, or dwellings in historic areas, will be resisted where they would result in the loss of characteristic or historic front boundary walls and gardens.

13. Front gardens and boundary treatments

- 13.1** The area between dwellings and the highway provides one of the best opportunities for enhancing the appearance of a housing development. Careful attention to matters such as paved surfaces rather than tarmac, tree and shrub planting, and the erection of walls and railings can have a major impact. The use of a physical boundary or 'means of enclosure' helps to define the extent of private space which has been shown to help with crime prevention and helps to reduce the visual impact of any off-street, front of dwelling, parking. Where front garden physical boundaries exist in neighbouring areas these should continue to be used in new development. In order to reduce opportunities for crime it is appropriate for front gardens to be overlooked by other dwellings.

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14. Landscape design

- 14.1** Careful attention must be given at any early stage to the design of a comprehensive landscape scheme. The scheme should be designed to help the development fit into its surroundings and soften its visual impact. The planting of trees, hedges and shrubs in prominent locations will improve the appearance and saleability of a site and may in time prove ecologically valuable.
- 14.2** A landscaping scheme should be submitted with your planning application. The benefits of employing a qualified Landscape Architect cannot be overstated. Generally the Council will not require a landscaping scheme for a single dwelling.
- 14.3** **Trees:** New streets should be tree lined and opportunities should be taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks, and community orchards, informal green spaces and green corridors). To maximise the benefits of tree planting, the Council will expect a minimum of 1 tree per dwelling, including street trees to be designed into the public realm where appropriate. More than 1 tree per plot will be expected for larger dwellings. Planting can be particularly advantageous on prominent frontages, to the front of individual houses and on the edge of green space and open countryside. ~~The development should achieve an overall tree planting based on an average of one tree per plot. While smaller 'garden' trees such as Rowan and Cherry can be attractive, larger trees should also be provided (e.g. Oak, Beech and Chestnut). Planting will usually be most advantageous on prominent site frontages, to the front of individual houses and on the edge of open space and open countryside.~~
- 14.4** Landscape planting should be considered as an integral part of the design and layout of housing development, and should include linear features, for example boulevards of large, canopied specimen trees, and/or feature planting at junctions or community focal spaces along streets where they can aid legibility and place making.
- 14.5** While smaller 'garden' trees such as Rowan and Cherry can be attractive, larger trees should also be provided where appropriate (e.g. Oak, Beech and Chestnut).
- 14.6** Where trees are proposed in the street, they should reflect the technical guidance on pages 170-182 of the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide.
- 14.7** **Shrubs:** Tree planting will be most successful when underplanted with shrubs and/or ground cover. This helps protect the tree from vandalism and accidental damage until it is established. Careful shrub planting can also form an attractive feature in itself.
- 14.8** **Hedges:** Hedges are an attractive alternative to walls, fences and open plan frontages. Prickly hedges such as hawthorn can also provide a deterrent to burglars.
- 14.9** The SPD on Trees and Hedgerows gives advice on protecting existing trees during development.

15. Walls and fences

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- 15.1** The type of fencing or walls around back gardens will generally be the choice of future residents. However, higher quality boundary treatments will usually be required where they are visible from public vantage points. This is particularly so for front and side boundaries, which will be clearly visible from the street. Where residential development is proposed adjacent to Listed Buildings, in or adjacent to Conservation Areas or in other areas where the local vernacular is dominated by natural materials, it will usually be necessary to use natural materials on prominent boundaries.
- 15.2** A freestanding retaining wall retaining over 1.5 metres of ground would need approval under the South Yorkshire Act 1980. Retaining walls forming part of a building will normally require approval under the Building Regulations. For further information you should contact the Building Control Section on (01126) 772678.

16. Existing trees and hedgerows and other features of ecological value

- 16.1** If there are mature trees, hedgerows, rock faces or other features of ecological or geodiversity value (including quarries, watercourses and ponds) the Council will expect them to be incorporated into the design and layout of the development, and retained, wherever possible, for their visual and ecological value.
- 16.2** The retention of these features can greatly improve the appearance of a new housing development, giving it an instant maturity and making a significant contribution to its character and distinctiveness. Their careful integration into the landscape framework of the development can help further enhance habitats for wildlife.
- 16.3** A tree survey of the site should inform the layout of any development and should accompany a planning application.
- 16.4** For further advice refer to the SPD's 'Trees and Hedgerows' and 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'.
- 16.5** If any trees are to be removed during the development then it is expected that these will be replaced elsewhere on site, or as nearby as possible, at a ratio of 6-1.

17. Public rights of way

- 17.1** It is important that you check whether any public rights of way cross the site. Most public paths are shown on the Definitive Map. However, if a path or track is not shown on the Definitive Map, but exists on the ground and has been used for many years, it may also be a public path and should be treated as such.
- 17.2** Existing rights of way should be incorporated into the site design. Paths should, where possible, be on convenient and attractive routes through landscaped, or open space areas and away from vehicular traffic. Shady alleys between high fences, particularly at the rear of private gardens should be avoided.

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- 17.3** It is important that public rights of way are direct, safe, lit and DDA compliant to ensure that people are not discouraged from using public transport due to access to the bus stop and railway station. It is essential where applicable that development is designed to integrate into the existing PROW network to encourage sustainable travel behaviour.
- 17.4** Public rights of way also provide the opportunity for informal recreation to take place.

18. Drainage and flood risk

- 18.1** New residential development will be expected to comply with Local Plan policies CC3 and CC4, which relate to flood risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems. Drainage and flood risk issues should therefore be considered at the outset as they will have an impact on the design and layout of residential schemes. **Flood risk mitigation should be carefully considered in relation to accessible properties.** In many cases it will be possible to include sustainable urban drainage systems as part of wider Green Infrastructure provision but early discussions will be essential to ensure that the design meets the requirements of the various parties involved in drainage matters (e.g. The Council's Highways & Engineering Service, Yorkshire Water & the Environment Agency). Detailed technical drainage guidance can also be found on pages 155-161 of the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide.

19. Recycling/waste provision

- 19.1** The Council encourages waste minimisation, re-use and recycling. All new development must be designed to accommodate the waste and recycling regimes in force, for example providing sufficient space for the full range of waste and recycling bins.
- 19.2** Policy WCS7 of the Joint Waste Plan requires a waste management plan for all developments except minor planning applications. A waste management plan should include design and layouts that allow effective sorting and storing of recyclables and recycling and composting of waste, and facilitate waste collection operations.
- 19.3** In design terms bins should not be visible from within the public realm and shared private space when stored. Communal bin storage areas should be in robust materials that will withstand vandalism.
- 19.4** In most instances access must be provided to the rear garden for the storage of wheelie bins, via a clear pathway unimpeded by cars parked within the boundary of the dwelling. For terraced properties the use of ginnels to provide direct rear garden access should be considered as they are more likely to be used than fenced pathways along the rear of adjoining gardens.

20. Obscure glazing

- 20.1** A simple rule that needs to be applied is that if a site can only be developed by introducing unusual design features then it probably should not be developed in the first place.

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- 20.2** It is often argued that overlooking can be overcome by using obscure glazing, borrowed light or high level windows. If such solutions are proposed this can only apply to non-habitable rooms such as landings or to secondary windows in a habitable room. For the amenity of future occupiers it is not reasonable to create habitable rooms that have no outlook. Furthermore, in the summer occupiers will want to open windows and this is more sustainable than mechanical ventilation.

21. Signage and street furniture

- 21.1** As far as possible use the overall design of the street to make it obvious how the space should be used in order to avoid unnecessary signage. Use signage only to fulfil legal requirements and provide essential information not obvious from other sources. As far as possible attach signs to walls and buildings.
- 21.2** Specify simple, high quality street furniture and signage that is appropriate to the character of the area. Street furniture as well as buildings should share characteristics with the locality in order to maintain character. Traditional materials are more likely to be more suited to rural locations and contemporary styles more suited to central areas.
- 21.3** Further guidance on signage and street furniture is provided in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide on pages 187 & 188.

22. Technical requirements

- 22.1** The South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide provides further guidance on technical requirements including those on: highway structures (p162-163), street lighting (165-166), public utilities (p167-170), (surface) materials (p184-186), adoption of highways (p189- 193), construction waste (p194) and management (p95). Highways Development Control will refer to this section in checking through detailed proposals, which will normally be the subject of planning conditions.

23. Removal of permitted development rights

- 23.1** Residential developments are often designed to maximise density and make the most efficient use of land. In such circumstances the separation distances between buildings are close to the minimum recommended such that future extensions, insertion of windows, additional outbuildings etc. could be highly detrimental to nearby occupiers. Where this would be the case, normal permitted development rights may be taken away so that the impact of such matters can be assessed.

24. Infill development

- 24.1** As well as the general criteria, including the external spacing standards, infill development should aim to comply with the following:
- Dwellings should be orientated to have a frontage to the existing public highway. Sides and backs and garages should be sensitively located so the frontage of the new development integrates with the existing street scene.

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- The space between the proposed dwelling and adjacent dwellings should reflect the prevailing character of the street.
- The siting of the dwelling should reflect the building line of the dwellings on the same side of the street.
- The eaves and ridge heights of dwellings should usually be comparable with the heights of adjacent dwellings.
- Parking provision should be accommodated in a similar manner to how it is accommodated elsewhere on the street (e.g. if existing dwellings are set forward on their plots with parking at the side, the proposed dwelling should not be set back with parking at the front).
- Architectural features, fenestration and materials should reflect the positive elements elsewhere on the street.
- Infill development should not be piecemeal so as to prejudice potential comprehensive development of a larger area of land.
- Landscaped features such as trees, particularly those prominent in the street scene, should be retained and provided with sufficient space for future growth.

25. Backland development

25.1 As well as the general criteria, including the external spacing standards, backland development should aim to comply with the following:

- Tandem development, with one dwelling directly in front or behind another sharing the same access, will almost always be resisted.
- Piecemeal development, which could prejudice the potential comprehensive development of a larger area of land, should be avoided.
- Backland development is most effective where it includes a number of dwellings served by an adopted highway, which is capable of being used by refuse and other servicing vehicles. Long, narrow private drives (typically in excess of 30m), which would result in excessive 'man carry distances' should be avoided.
- Backland development may be more acceptable in circumstances where there is an existing use at the rear of dwellings and where residential development would benefit the amenity of existing residents and the character and appearance of the locality.

26. Corner sites

26.1 Corner sites can be particularly difficult to design sensitively and, as well as the general criteria, they should usually comply with the criteria relating to infill and backland development. In addition, the following matters should be considered:

- Two dwellings set at right angles can be wasteful in terms of site coverage and also create rear gardens that are overlooked and should be avoided.
- If a pair of semis is set at 45 degrees to the road frontages this can result in triangular rear gardens providing inadequate private amenity space and awkward parking areas on the frontage. This should be avoided.

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- If a single aspect dwelling is proposed one frontage invariably ends up with a blank side wall and a long fence or wall facing the highway. This can be softened by introducing some side aspect windows and setting the wall or fence back behind a planted verge. A dwelling that is specifically designed to occupy a corner plot with two active frontages is therefore likely to be the best solution.

27. Conversions of buildings to dwelling houses or apartments/flats (excluding HMOs, bedsits³ or studio apartments⁴)

27.1 The conversion of buildings to dwelling houses or apartments/flats will be supported where internal spacing standards, garden sizes (where relevant) and external separation distances meet the requirements set out in the general criteria and where:

- There will be no unacceptable noise nuisance for either existing neighbouring residents or occupants of the proposed dwelling(s)
- Satisfactory provision is made for off-street car parking in accordance with the Council's standards or, exceptionally the development is considered unlikely to give rise to unacceptable conditions of congestion or safety on the adjoining public highway(s) by reason of inadequate off street car parking.
- The appearance of the building or its curtilage would not be altered to the detriment of the visual amenities of the area.

28. Conversions of buildings to residential accommodation Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), studio apartments or bedsits

28.1 The following guidance applies to proposals for conversion of non residential buildings or smaller dwellings (i.e. those not protected by policy H9 – refer to paragraph 8.2 of this guidance) to HMOs, studio apartments or bedsits. Such proposals will be allowed where the following criteria are satisfied: Conversion of buildings to dwellings, flats or houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) will be allowed where the following criteria are satisfied:

- On the street in question, HMOs and studio apartments/bedsits account for less than 10% of the residential properties.
- HMOs and studio apartments/bedsits account for less than 10% of the residential properties within a 50 metre radius of the site.
- That the proposal would not result in 3 or more HMOs being located immediately adjacent to each other or the sandwiching of a dwelling house between two HMOs.
- The building and curtilage are of sufficient size to provide suitable facilities for residents.

³ Bedsit – “a one-roomed unit of accommodation typically consisting of combined bedroom and sitting room with cooking facilities” Definition from Oxford dictionary

⁴ Studio apartment – “a flat consisting of a large single room serving as bedroom and living room, with a separate bathroom” Definition from Oxford dictionary.

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- In the case of HMOs, each one should have a shared lounge and shared dining room, and garden sizes should be comparable with the general criteria for dwellings (i.e. a minimum of 60 square metres).
 - ~~For dwellings and HMOs, garden sizes and external separation distances should reflect the requirements set out in the general criteria.~~
 - In all cases, amenity space, external and internal spacing standards and separation distances should adhere to the requirements within the general criteria.
- There will be no unacceptable noise nuisance for either existing neighbouring residents or occupants of the proposed residential unit(s).
 - Satisfactory provision is made for off-street car parking in accordance with the Council's standards or, exceptionally the development is considered unlikely to give rise to unacceptable conditions of congestion or safety on the adjoining public highway(s) by reason of inadequate off street car parking.
 - The appearance of the building or its curtilage would not be altered to the detriment of the visual amenities of the area.

Approach to determining planning applications

- 28.2** Based on the information provided, and on the Council's own records, the Council will calculate the number of HMOs and bedsits in the relevant area for each individual planning application. The applicant should undertake their own estimate of the number of HMOs and bedsits to accompany the planning application and provide all their supporting data.

How to apply the threshold

- 28.3** The percentage concentration of HMOs, studio apartments and bedsits surrounding the application site will be calculated through three main stages:

Stage 1 – identify residential properties

- 28.4** The residential properties identified are those located within the defined area of impact surrounding the application site i.e. the street in question or a 50m radius measured from the centre of the site curtilage. To be clear which residential properties are identified, all sub-divided properties including flatted blocks within the same curtilage are counted as one whole property at the first stage

Stage 2 – Count HMOs

- 28.5** The residential properties identified at stage 1 will be investigated to check whether they are an existing HMO or bedsits as well as whether or not there are live planning permissions for HMOs and bedsits.

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Stage 3 – Calculate concentration

- 28.6** The concentration of HMOs and bedsits surrounding the application site as well as those with live planning permission is calculated against the ‘total number of residential properties’.

The approach to sandwiching

- 28.7** This document seeks to avoid dwellings being sandwiched between HMOs and bedsits. However, this would not apply where the properties are separated by an intersecting road or where properties have a back to back relationship in different streets.

Recycling and Waste Provision

- 28.8** Any proposals for conversion to dwelling houses or apartments/flats, HMOs, bedsits or studio apartments should provide appropriate waste and recycling facilities. Please see section 19 of this document for further guidance.