SECTION 2 Common Principles for All Developments



2.1 Access for All

The Planning Authority is a strong advocate of universal access for all and ensuring that land use planning is used to create and shape accessible environments that can be enjoyed by everyone regardless of their age or ability. In this regard, the Planning Authority will require buildings and their external environments to meet the needs of all the people who wish to use them. This is not a special requirement for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design as everyone benefits when an environment is accessible, usable and convenient to use.

2.2 Place Making and Design

The Planning Authority is committed to ensuring that best practice urban design principles are applied to all new developments. Well-planned and integrated residential, amenities, shops, employment and transport facilities contribute to the development of sustainable communities, enhance sustainability and the attractiveness and quality of an area. Regard must be hard to Table 2.1 which provides a summary of the 12 key urban design criteria that will be applied to new residential schemes. These criteria will also be adapted, as relevant, to other types of schemes e.g. commercial and office developments. Table 2-1 Key Urban Design Criteria to be considered in Residential Schemes and Other Developments (as appropriate to the scheme)

Level	No.	Criteria	Key Questions	Relevant CDP Policy Areas	Positive Indicators
Neighbourhood	1	Context	How does the development respond to its surroundings? How does it create quality and add to the sense of place? Where is the centre of the town / village? How did the settlement evolve? What is the existing pattern of development? What are the settlement's distinctive characteristics? Are there any landmarks or important views? Can the settlement absorb new development? How can new development enhance the characteristics of the settlement?	Quality architecture, density, building heights, role of local area plans in defining character, landscape and green infrastructure and the use of design statements.	 The development seems to have evolved naturally as part of its surroundings. Appropriate increases in density respect the form of buildings and landscape around the site's edges and the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring users. Form, architecture and landscaping have been informed by the development's place and time. The development positively contributes to the character and identity of the neighbourhood. Appropriate responses are made to the nature of specific boundary conditions.
	2	Connections and Sustainable mobility	How well connected is the new neighbourhood? How permeable is the development? How have users been prioritised? How does it fit into the Route Hierarchy? Does the scheme reflect the Place context and Route Context How has the street design incorporated enclosure?	Design of roads and streets (DMURS), sustainable travel patterns and higher density, especially on public transport corridors.	 There are attractive routes in and out for pedestrians and cyclists. The development is located in or close to a mixed-use centre. The development's layout makes it easy for a bus to serve the scheme. The layout links to existing movement routes and the places people will want to get to. Appropriate density, dependent on location, helps support efficient public transport

Level	No.	Criteria	Key Questions	Relevant CDP Policy Areas	Positive Indicators
Neighbourhood	3	Inclusivity	How easily can people use and access the development?	Universal design, connections and permeability, community facilities, public open space, personal safety, privacy and security and access for all.	 New homes meet the aspirations of a range of people and households and adaptability for varying life stages. Design and layout enable easy access by all. There is a range of public, communal and or private amenity spaces and facilities for children of different ages, parents and the elderly. Areas defined as public open space that have either been taken in charge or privately managed will be clearly defined, accessible and open to all. New buildings present a positive aspect to passers-by avoiding unnecessary physical and visual barriers.
Neighbo	4	Variety	How does the development promote a good mix of activities?	Place concept, community facilities, mix of house types and tenure, ensuring compatibility of uses.	 Activities generated by the development contribute to the quality of life in its locality. Uses that attract the most people are in the most accessible places. Neighbouring uses and activities are compatible with each other. Housing types and tenure add to the choice available in the area. Opportunities have been taken to provide shops, facilities and services that complement those already available in the neighbourhood.
Site	5	Efficiency and Compact Growth	How does the development achieve compact growth and an efficient use of lands and resources?	Climate action, efficient use of resources, biodiversity, flood risk, SUDS, increased densities	 The proposal looks at the potential of higher density, taking into account appropriate accessibility by public transport and the objectives of good design. Landscaped areas are designed to provide amenity and biodiversity, protect buildings and spaces from the elements and incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems.

Level	No.	Criteria	Key Questions	Relevant CDP Policy Areas	Positive Indicators
				in main towns, suitable densities in small towns and villages, daylight, sunlight and energy efficiency in design.	 Buildings, gardens and public spaces are laid out to exploit the best solar orientation. The scheme brings a redundant building or derelict site back into productive use. Appropriate recycling facilities are provided.
Site	6	Distinctive- ness	How do the proposals create a sense of place?	High quality urban design and architecture, conservation of the built and natural environment, historic buildings, green infrastructure and biodiversity, landscape, culture, protecting the character of small towns and villages.	 The place has recognisable features so that people can describe where they live and form an emotional attachment to the place. The scheme is a positive addition to the identity of the locality. The layout makes the most of the opportunities presented by existing buildings, landform and ecological features to create a memorable layout. The proposal successfully exploits views into and out of the site. There is a discernable focal point to the scheme, or the proposals reinforce the role of an existing centre.
Site	7	Layout	How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?	Design of residential streets (DMURS), good quality architecture, quality public open spaces.	 Layout aligns routes with desire lines to create a permeable interconnected series of routes that are easy and logical to navigate around. The layout focuses activity on the streets by creating active frontages with front doors directly serving the street. The streets are designed as places instead of roads for cars, helping to create a hierarchy of space with less busy routes having surfaces shared by pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

Level	No.	Criteria	Key Questions	Relevant CDP Policy Areas	Positive Indicators
					 Traffic speeds are controlled by design and layout rather than by speed humps. Block layout places some public spaces in front of building lines as squares or greens, and some semi private space to the back as communal courts.
Site	8	Public Realm	How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?	Street design, public open space standards, personal safety, traffic safety, privacy and security and communal open space.	 All public open space is overlooked by surrounding homes so that this amenity is owned by the residents and safe to use. The public realm is considered as a usable integrated element in the design of the development. Children's play areas are sited where they will be overlooked, safe and contribute to the amenities of the neighbourhood. There is a clear definition between public, semi-private, and private space. Roads and parking areas are considered as an integral landscaped element in the design of the public realm.
Home	9	Adaptability	How will the buildings cope with change?	Lifetime homes and adaptable layouts/ design, energy efficiency, climate action.	 Designs exploit good practice lessons, such as the knowledge that certain house types are proven to be ideal for adaptation. The homes are energy-efficient and equipped for challenges anticipated from a changing climate. Homes can be extended without ruining the character of the types, layout and outdoor space. The structure of the home and its loose fit design allows for adaptation and subdivision, such as the creation of an annexe or small office. Space in the roof or garage can be easily converted into living accommodation.

Level	No.	Criteria	Key Questions	Relevant CDP Policy Areas	Positive Indicators
	10	Privacy and Amenity	How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?	Private open space standard, orientation and dual aspect, privacy and storage.	 Each home has access to an area of useable private outdoor space. The design maximises the number of homes enjoying dual aspect. Homes are designed to prevent sound transmission by appropriate acoustic insulation or layout. Windows are sited to avoid views into the home from other houses or the street and adequate privacy is afforded to ground floor units. The homes are designed to provide adequate storage including space within the home for the sorting and storage of recyclables.
Home	11	Parking	How will the parking be secure and attractive?	On-street parking, communal parking areas, quality materials, bicycle storage.	 Appropriate car parking is on-street or within easy reach of the home's front door. Parked cars are overlooked by houses, pedestrians and traffic, or stored securely, with a choice of parking appropriate to the situation. Parking is provided communally to maximise efficiency and accommodate visitors without the need to provide additional dedicated spaces. Materials used for parking areas are of similar quality to the rest of the development. Adequate secure facilities are provided for bicycle storage.
	12	Detailed Design	How well thought through is the building and landscape design?	Quality architecture, materials and maintenance, good landscape design.	 The materials and external design make a positive contribution to the locality. The landscape design facilitates access and usability by all, universal design pinciples, of the public spaces from the outset.

Level	No.	Criteria	Key Questions	Relevant CDP Policy Areas	Positive Indicators
Home					 Open car parking areas are considered as an integral element within the public realm design and are treated accordingly. Care has been taken over the siting of flues, vents and bin stores. Design of the buildings and public space will facilitate easy and regular maintenance.

2.3 **Design Statements**

A Design Statement is a short document which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most suitable for a particular site, especially for larger or more complex forms of development. The statement will usually consist of both text and graphics, but is not intended to duplicate planning application documents. It may be of special value in explaining why the context requires an exceptional – rather than a conventional – design approach. The statement should address all relevant development plan or local area plan design policies and objectives, and relate them to the site.

The use of Design Statements enables the applicant to explain why the selected design solution is the most suitable in terms of the buildings and the quality of spaces created. A building may be good architecturally but if it is inappropriate for its context it may not contribute to a quality place.

While a Design Statement can be prepared for all developments, the Planning Authority will only require all medium to large scale development proposals (50 dwellings and above and/or commercial, retail or community development of 1,000 m² and above, or as otherwise required)¹ to be accompanied by a Design Statement.

Design statements should explain and illustrate the design principles and design concept of the proposed layout; landscape; scale and mix; details and materials; and maintenance. It should show, as briefly as necessary, how these will help to achieve place-making. It should include:

- A site analysis
- · A concept plan and/or a master plan
- A statement based on the design criteria set out in the relevant national planning guidance e.g. the 12 urban design criteria set out in the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide – the companion document to the Sustainable Residential Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Table 2-1 above
- A statement or quality audit addressing street design as outlined within the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)(See Section 2.2.1 below)
- A statement addressing how the Landscape Concept, green infrastructure and biodiversity have been incorporated into the design.

¹ Note: Section 5.6 The Design Process and Objective TV16 in Chapter 5 Design and Place-making in Towns and Villages also requires a Design Statement to accompany all development over 2ha.

• A statement or audit informing of/demonstrating the universal design principles applied throughout the proposed development.

2.3.1 Application of DMURS

To effectively communicate how the principles, approaches and standards of DMURS have been applied, all proposed developments, regardless of their scale, must be accompanied by documentation that provides a clear rational for the project. The details, which can be set out within the Design Statement, include:

- A clear set of objectives for the project (see Section 5.3.2 Process).
- How context and function were determined (see Sections 3.2.1 Movement Function and 3.2.2 Context).
- Strategic drawings outlining the structure of the street network (see Section 3.3.1 Street Layouts).
- Detailed street layouts that clearly illustrate all relevant geometric standards and other treatments aimed at promoting a sense of place, sustainable forms of transportation and traffic calming.
- A comprehensive auditing process (see Section 5.4 Auditing).

To ensure that street layout plans communicate a complete picture of the design, it is recommended that the following information be presented, as appropriate (see Figure 5.5 in DMURS):

- The width of streets, footways, verges, medians and privacy strips.
- The location, type and configuration of crossings and junctions.
- Corner radii (including swept paths).
- On-street parking.
- Horizontal and vertical alignment data.
- · Horizontal and vertical deflections.
- Forward visibility splays.
- Kerb lines (including heights).
- Surface materials and planting.
- Street furniture and facilities.

- Signage and line marking.
- · Lighting.

2.4 Building Heights and the Development Management Process

In relation to the assessment of individual planning applications and appeals, it is Government policy that building heights must be generally increased in appropriate urban locations. There is therefore a presumption in favour of buildings of increased height in our town/city cores and in other urban locations with good public transport accessibility.

Planning authorities must apply the following broad principles in considering development proposals for buildings taller than prevailing building heights in urban areas in pursuit of these guidelines:

- Does the proposal positively assist in securing the National Planning Framework objectives of focusing development in key urban centres and in particular, fulfilling targets related to brownfield and infill development and in particular, effectively supporting the National Strategic Objective to deliver compact growth in our urban centres?
- 2. Is the proposal in line with the requirements of the development plan in force and which plan has taken clear account of the requirements set out in Chapter 2 of these guidelines?
- 3. Where the relevant development plan or local area plan pre-dates these guidelines, can it be demonstrated that implementation of the pre-existing policies and objectives of the relevant plan or planning scheme does not align with and support the objectives and policies of the National Planning Framework?

Section 3.2 of the guidelines sets out the relevant development criteria that must be complied with. Where the relevant planning authority or An Bord Pleanála considers that such criteria are appropriately incorporated into development proposals, the relevant authority shall apply Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) No. 3 under Section 28 (1C) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). It is a specific planning policy requirement that where:

- An applicant for planning permission sets out how a development proposal complies with the development management criteria in Section 3.2 of those guidelines, and
- The assessment of the Planning Authority concurs, taking account of the wider strategic and national policy parameters set out in the National Planning Framework and those guidelines

Then the Planning Authority may approve such development, even where specific objectives of the relevant development plan or local area plan may indicate otherwise.

With regard to building heights in suburban/edge locations in towns, the guidelines set out density and design criteria in Sections 3.4 to 3.7. It outlined that where the Planning Authority or An Bord Pleanála considers that such criteria are appropriately incorporated into development proposals, the following Specific Planning Policy Requirement can be applied:

SPPR 4:

It is a specific planning policy requirement that in planning the future development of greenfield or edge of city/town locations for housing purposes, planning authorities must secure:

- The minimum densities for such locations as set out in the Section 28 Guidelines Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) or any amending or replacement guidelines;
- A greater mix of building heights and typologies in planning for the future development of suburban locations; and
- Avoid mono-type building typologies (e.g. two storey or own-door houses only), particularly, but not exclusively so in any one development of 100 units or more.

2.5 Sustainable Design

The Planning Authority will require buildings and layouts to conform to the highest possible standards of energy efficiency. Buildings must be designed to minimise resource consumption, reduce water, waste and energy use. Designs should optimise natural ventilation, minimise glare and excess solar gain, avoiding large areas of glazing and providing an appropriate balance between solid and void elements.

2.6 Amenity

All developments should be designed to protect the amenities of adjoining properties and properties in the vicinity.

Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

Siting, layout and design should ensure that the development would not give rise to undue overshadowing of properties in the vicinity, in particular, residential properties such as private residences, nursing/retirement/residential care homes, schools and childcare facilities.

Daylight and sunlight levels, as a minimum, should be in accordance with Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (Bre 2011) and British Standard (BS 8206) Lighting for Buildings, Part 2 Code for Practice for Daylighting or any update on these documents.

Overlooking

The siting, layout and design should also ensure that the development does not give rise to undue overlooking of properties in the vicinity, in particular, residential properties such as private residences, nursing/retirement/residential care homes, schools and childcare facilities. In general, a minimum distance of 22m between opposing above ground floor windows will be required for habitable rooms. In cases where an innovative design solution is proposed, this standard may be relaxed.

Noise

Noise emanating from any proposed development shall not cause to be measured at the facing elevation (outside) of any dwelling in the area, during the hours 0700 – 2100 a noise level of 55 dB(A) (Laeq 1 hour) and during the hours 2100 – 0700 and Sundays and Bank Holidays a noise level of 42 dB(A) (Laeq 1 hour). The noise shall not be impulsive in nature or have any tonal element which is 4 dB(A) above the adjacent frequencies. As and when required by the Planning Authority, a survey of noise levels at monitoring stations on adjacent properties (to be agreed with the Planning Authority) shall be undertaken by an agreed professional (at the expense of the developer) and the results submitted to the Planning Authority within one month of such a request.

2.7 Public Lighting

Developments should be appropriately lit to ensure a safe environment for users. This includes residential schemes, commercial, retail, employment and recreational areas. The lighting should be designed to provide appropriate levels of light whilst also ensuring that the lighting does not affect the amenities of nearby properties.

2.8 Open Space and Green Infrastructure

The provision of suitably located and quality open space is an important component of the layout and design of developments. The open space requirements for specific land uses are dealt with under Section 3, Section 4 and Section 5 of this Manual and the design of public open space is discussed in Volume 1 Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy. In terms of green infrastructure, all developments must respect locally distinctive landscape features such as tree lines and field boundaries and enhance these as part of the proposal. Developments must also contribute to improved quality and connectivity of biodiversity, amenity and local water management. Chapter 11 Landscape and Green Infrastructure and Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy provides further guidance on integrating green infrastructure into developments.

2.9 Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments must be appropriate to their setting-urban and rural.

2.9.1 Roadside Boundaries in Rural Areas

New development in rural areas must respect its rural setting and ensure that it does not erode the rural character of the area. The boundary of a site to the road is very important in this regard, as it is an important component of a rural setting and its character, in particular, hedgerows, trees and traditional stone boundary treatments.

Traditionally in Wexford, entrances were composed from simple elements - cylindrical piers, gate, wall and hedge. The simple entrance arrangements had little impact on the rural landscape. It is important that new entrances adopt a similar approach.

Accordingly, the Planning Authority will carefully consider all proposals relating to roadside boundary treatments in rural areas, in particular, any proposed removal of existing roadside boundaries and the design of replacement and/or new boundary.

The Planning Authority will apply the following considerations and standards

- Front vehicular entrance walls should be modest, generally not exceeding 1.2 metres in height. Where higher boundaries are required, a hedgerow should be planted to the rear of the wall. Concrete block work that hasn't been rendered, concrete balustrading and post and wire fencing is not considered appropriate boundary treatment for rural sites.
- The existing roadside hedgerows, trees and stone walls, where present, should be retained. However, it is noted that it will be necessary to remove some of an existing roadside boundary in order to facilitate the new or widened vehicular entrance and/or to provide the required sightlines at that entrance. The removal of the full length of a roadside boundary to achieve sightlines should be avoided. The Planning Authority will consider the acceptability of this on a case by case basis having regard to the type and quality of boundary and its contribution to the rural character at that location. Where removal of the hedgerow is permitted, it must be replaced with appropriate native hedging and trees.
- The construction of a wall along the full length of a roadside boundary (regardless of its finish) will not be permissible. The construction of a 1.2m high timber fence with appropriate native hedging planting may be considered, depending on the location.

The Planning Authority may consider deviations from these standards for nonresidential developments where there are security requirements; however, the protection of the rural character of the area will remain the priority consideration.

2.9.2 Boundary Treatments in Urban Areas

Further standards on boundary treatments in urban areas, including in new residential schemes, is provided under the relevant land use section in this manual.

2.10 Naming of Developments

The names of residential, commercial and community developments including roads should reflect local placenames. Local townlands, local names, a local historical person, a local landscape and its features and/or the culture or history of the area should be reflected in the name. The name must be in English and Irish.

Where a placename condition has been attached to a planning permission, the applicant must provide the Planning Authority with a written explanation of the origin/inspiration of the name. The Planning Authority must approve the name of the development before any advertising launch.

The Council has prepared a Placenames Guide to provide assistance, which is available to view on the Council's website.

2.11 Undergrounding of Services

In order to preserve the amenity and visual character of an area and in the interests of public safety, all services including electricity, broadband, public lighting, telephone and television cables shall be provided underground in all new developments. Provision should be made for the unobtrusive siting of transformer stations, pumping stations and other necessary service buildings. Pole mounted equipment (such as transformers) will not be permitted.

2.12 Construction and Demolition Waste

Applicants/developers will be required to submit a Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan prepared in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2006) and any updated version of these guidelines. Such plans shall include proposals to ensure that the maximum amount of waste material is reused and recycled and shall be submitted for the following proposed developments:

- Residential development of 10 houses or more.
- Developments including institutional, educational, health and other public facilities, with an aggregate floor area in excess of 1,250m².
- Demolition/renovation/refurbishment projects generating in excess of 100m³ in volume, of Construction and Demolition waste.
- Civil engineering projects producing in excess of 500m³ of waste, excluding waste materials used for development works on the site.

2.13 Signage and Advertisements

Signage relates to all signs erected on the exterior of buildings, within windows, as standalone structures or attached to public utilities. Signage has the potential to give rise to visual clutter and to alter the character of an area and as such will be carefully assessed. All advertisements and advertisement structures, other than those exempted by the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) shall be the subject of a planning application. Table 2-2 provides details on advertising signage, design criteria and appropriate locations.

Development proposals in towns and villages that include signage should take account of the following:

- In general, signs on a building should only advertise goods or services that are associated with the premises and no more than two advertising signs should be erected on any elevation.
- Signs should generally be limited to the ground floor of a building unless located directly over the entrance to a major commercial or retail building.
- No signage/advertisement or its supporting structure, including flag poles, should exceed a height of 5.2 metres above ground level.
- Signs should be simple in design and not obscure any architectural features.
- Signs should be proportionate to the scale of the building to which they are attached and sensitive to the surrounding environment.

- Signs attached to Protected Structures and in Architectural Conservation Areas should be in keeping with the character of the buildings and adhere to best conservation principles.
- Any sign or associated structure should not create an obstruction to pedestrian or cyclist movement or create a traffic hazard.
- The use of plastic, PVC, Perspex flashing, reflectorised or glitter type signs on the exterior of buildings or where they are located internally but visible from the outside will be prohibited.
- Advertisement hoardings will not normally be permitted.
- Within rural areas, permanent signs on public land along the public road network, for example finger post signs and signs for businesses are subject to a license under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- Advertising signs will not be permitted along roads in rural areas outside the boundaries of towns and villages save for a limited number, which relate to heritage or tourist attractions and which are of national interest.
- The proliferation of non-road signage on and adjoining national roads shall be controlled in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Spatial Planning and National Roads 2012, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland's policy statement on the Provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads (March 2011) and any updated version published during the lifetime of the Plan.
- No advertisement hoarding (billboards) will be permitted in the open countryside.

Type of Signs	Restrictions on Use	Design Criteria
Backlit Signs	Generally appropriate	Lettering should be no more than 400mm in height.
Bus Shelters	Generally appropriate	The primary purpose of illumination should be to light the shelter.
Digital Signs	Generally not appropriate. May be considered in town centres and/or large retail precincts and at other suitable locations throughout the County. Not permitted on major roads unless signage relates to traffic management and safety.	Should make a positive contribution to the public domain, omit no sound, have a minimum dwell period of 30 seconds (with a crossfade), not result in obtrusive light that will create unacceptable glare (adjusting to environmental conditions), have limited hours of operation (especially at night), not contain dynamic content (i.e. video) and not constitute a traffic hazard.
Fascia and Box Signs	Generally appropriate	Should not be internally illuminated. Lettering should be no more than 400mm in height.
Public Information Panels	Generally appropriate	Should not obstruct footpath/cycle paths. Advertising permitted on public information panels will be restricted and should constitute not more than 50% of the total area.
Wall Panel/ Poster Board Advertisements	Generally appropriate	Should not exceed 30% of the surface of the wall or screening on which it is mounted.
Window Signs	Generally appropriate	Must not occupy more than 25% of window space.
Free Standing Advertisement Displays	Generally not appropriate. May be considered at the entrances to shopping centres/major commercial premises and service stations.	A maximum of 5.2m in height. Freestanding signs on petrol forecourts should not extend above the height of the canopy.
Projecting Signs	Generally not appropriate	Must be positioned no lower than 2.4m above pavement level (but not on upper floors). Maximum of one per unit. Should not be internally illuminated.

Table 2-2 Advertising and Signage

Type of Signs	Restrictions on Use	Design Criteria
Neon Signs	Generally not appropriate	Should not be displayed in historic village centres.
Signs above Parapet	Not permited	
Prismatic/Moving Vane Signs	Not permitted	
Structures on Public Footpaths and Public Area	Not permitted	
Sundry Advertisement Devices	Not permitted	Includes pavement sign or sandwich boards, spotlights, flags, bunting, banners, neon moving message signs, fly posting and barrage/balloons.