3. Design Guidelines

3.1. General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

Based on established good practice, this section provides a number of questions against which the design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution. As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in the proposals. The proposals or design should:

a) Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

b) Reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, greens and other spaces;

c) Respect the rural character of views and gaps;

d) Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;

e) Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long distance views.

f) Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

g) Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

h) Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

i) Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

j) Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

k) Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

l) Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;

m) Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours; and

n) Positively integrate energy efficient technologies.

To promote these principles, there are number of questions related to the design guidelines outlined later in the document.

Street Grid and Layout

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?
- Do any new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Local Green Spaces, Views and Character

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal affect trees on or adjacent to the site?
- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

Gateway and Access Features

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between villages?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings Layout and Grouping

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

Building Line and Boundary Treatment

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building Heights and Roofline

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

Building Materials and Surface Treatment

- What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?
- Does the proposal use high quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roofs been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

Car Parking Solutions

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

Architectural Details and Contemporary Design

- If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height, massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

Sustainability and Eco Design

- What effect will services have on the scheme as a whole?
- Can the effect of services be integrated at the planning design stage, or mitigated if harmful?
- Has adequate provision been made for bin storage, waste separation and relevant recycling facilities?
- Has the location of the bin storage facilities been considered relative to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?
- Has the impact of the design and location of the bin storage facilities been considered in the context of the whole development?
- Could additional measures, such as landscaping be used to help integrate the bin storage facilities into the development?
- Has any provision been made for the need to enlarge the bin storage in the future without adversely affecting the development in other ways?
- Have all aspects of security been fully considered and integrated into the design of the building and open spaces? For standalone elements (e.g. external bin areas, cycle storage, etc.) materials and treatment should be of equal quality, durability and appearance as for the main building.
- Use of energy saving/efficient technologies should be encouraged. If such technologies are used (e.g. solar, panels, green roofs, water harvesting, waste collection, etc.), these should be integrally designed to complement the building and not as bolt-ons after construction.

Managing Lighting

- Does a new development proposal, or a major change to an existing one, materially alter light levels outside the development and/or have the potential to adversely affect the use or enjoyment of nearby buildings or open spaces?
- Does a proposal have a significant impact on a protected site or species e.g. located on, or adjacent to, a designated European site or where there are designated European protected species that may be affected?
- Is the development in or near a protected area of dark sky or an intrinsically dark landscape where it may be desirable to minimise new light sources?
- Are forms of artificial light with a potentially high impact on wildlife (eg white or ultraviolet light) being proposed close to sensitive wildlife receptors or areas, including where the light shines on water?

3.2. Design Guidelines

3.2.1. Street Grid Layout

- Streets must meet the technical highways requirements as well as be considered a 'space' to be used by all, not just motor vehicles. It is essential that the design of new development should include streets that incorporate needs of pedestrians, cyclists and if applicable public transport users.
- Streets should tend to be linear with gentle meandering - providing interest and evolving views. Routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Any cul-de-sacs should be relatively short.
- Access to properties should be from the street where possible.
- The distribution of land uses should respect the general character of the area and road network, and take into account the degree of isolation, lack of light pollution and levels of tranquillity.
- Pedestrian paths should be included in new developments and be integrated with the existing pedestrian routes.

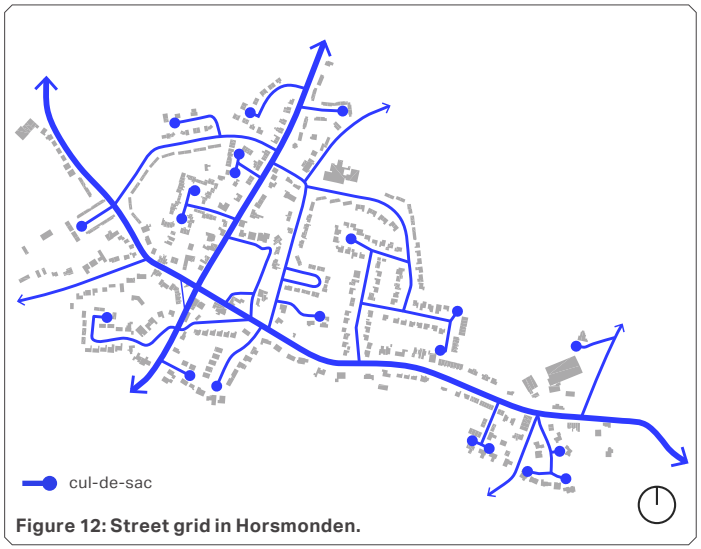


Figure 12: Street grid in Horsmonden.

Figure 13: Semi-detached houses along Gibbet Lane.

Figure 14: Building accessible via stairs from Goudhurst Road.

Figure 15: Converted Oast house, Kirkins Close.

Figure 16: Cul-de-sac development, Orchard Close.

Figure 17: Detached house with dedicated access way from Goudhurst Road.

3.2.2. Local Green Spaces, Views and Character

- Development adjoining public open spaces and important gaps should enhance the character of these spaces by either providing a positive interface (i.e. properties facing onto them to improve natural surveillance) or a soft landscaped edge.
- Existing trees should be considered at the earliest design stage to allow them to be successfully integrated into new development. In case there is loss of any tree or woodland to new development, they must be replaced.
- The spacing of development should reflect the rural character and allow for long distance views of the countryside form the public realm. Trees and landscaping should be incorporated in the design.
- Landscape scheme should be designed and integrated with the open fields that currently border the village.
- A combination of native and complimentary non-native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the rural character of the village and provide climate resiliance.
- See chapter 5 below for specific consideration of landscape buffers.

Figure 18: Sprivers.

Figure 19: Long distance views from St Margaret's graveyard.

Figure 20: Views of/from Horsmonden Sports Ground.

Figure 21: Long distance views towards south.

3.2.3. Landmarks and Gateways

Landmarks and gateway buildings act as visual guide and aid navigations through places. It is important to include these type of buildings in new developments so that to ensure new developments are recognisable, memorable and distinct:

- In the case of any future development, the design proposals should consider placing gateway and built elements highlighting the access or arrival to the new developed site.
- The gateway buildings should reflect local character. This means larger houses in local materials with emphasis on the design of chimneys, roof shape and fenestration, as well as well laid and cared for landscape. This can add interest and act as positive landmarks which aid legibility and make it easier for people to orientate and recognize their area.
- Besides building elements acting as gateways, high quality landscaping features, gates or monuments could be considered appropriate to fulfil the same role.

Figure 22: Oast houses facing Lamberts Place.

Figure 24: Horsmonden War Memorial facing the Village Green.

Figure 23: St Margaret's Church 13th Century , Horsmonden.

3.2.4. Pattern and Layout of Buildings

- The existing rural character must be appreciated when contemplating new development, whatever its size or purpose.
- Where an intrinsic part of local character, properties should be clustered in small pockets showing a variety of types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided (to create variety and interest in the streetscape).
- Boundaries such as walls or hedgerows, whichever is appropriate to the street, should enclose and define each street along the back edge of the pavement, adhering to a consistent building line for each development group.
- Properties should aim to provide rear and front gardens or at least a small buffer to the public sphere where the provision of a garden is not possible.
- The layout of new development should optimise the benefits of daylighting and passive solar gains as this can significantly reduce energy consumption.

Figure 28: Building types and street network in Horsmonden.

Figure 25: Deatched houses along Orchard Way with deep frontgardens.

Figure 26: Detached family house facing Goudhurst Road.

Figure 27: Cul-de-sac development, Willard Place.

3.2.5. Building Line and Boundary Treatment

- Buildings should be aligned along the street with their main facade and entrance facing it, where this is in keeping with local character. The building line should have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions but will generally form a unified whole.
- Buildings should be designed to ensure that streets and/or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from buildings. This can be ensured by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows overlooking towards the street.
- Boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the rural character of the area. The use of panel fencing, metal or brick walls in publicly visible boundaries should not be considered good practice. Also, boundary treatments should not impair natural surveillance.
- Brick wall can dominate if used to much, therefore it is recommended to use soft landscaping and hedgerow planting where possible to soften the impact of brick walls.
- Front gardens should be included where this is characteristic of the area.
- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the property. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers.

Figure 29: Quality landscaping as boundary treatment.

Figure 30: Positive example of front garden tretment.

Figure 31: Local example of positive boundary treatment.

Figure 32: Hedgerows acting as boundaries in defining public and private space.

Figure 33: UPDATE TEXT.

3.2.6. Building Heights/ Roofline

Creating a good variety in the roof line can be a significant element of designing attractive places. There are certain elements that serve as guideline in achieving a good variety of roofs:

- Scale of the roof should always be in proportion with the dimensions of the building itself;
- Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, therefore subtle changes in roofline should be ensured during the design process;
- Dormers can be used as design element to add variety and interest to roofs. However, care needs to be taken with their design elements, proportions and how they are positioned on the roof;
- To minimise the visual impact of guttering and down pipes these should be integrated with the design of the roof and facade;
- Chimneys are recommended to be placed symmetrically on the ridge, either centrally or built up from the gable; and
- Depending on the roofing material used, pitches from 25 to 40 degrees are generally found of traditional houses in Horsmonden (except for the Oast houses which are greater than 40 degrees). Steep pitches allow the loft space to be utilized for accommodation and are suitable to fit photovoltaic panels. In case of contemporary flat roofs, they should be designed with sufficient fall for drainage.

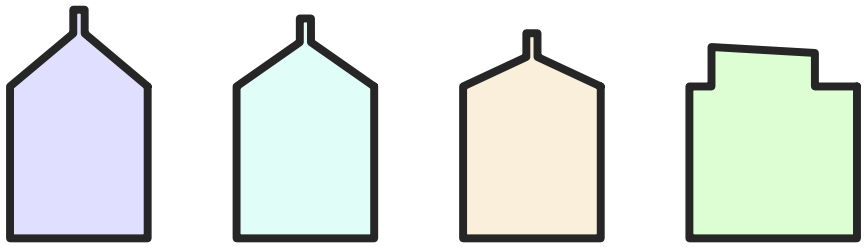
Figure 34: Local example of good amount of variety in roofline.

Figure 35: Distance view of quality roofscape.

Figure 36: Local example of good amount of variety in roofline.

Figure 37: Hipped roof with symmetric chimneys and sash window dormers.

Traditional roofing pitches



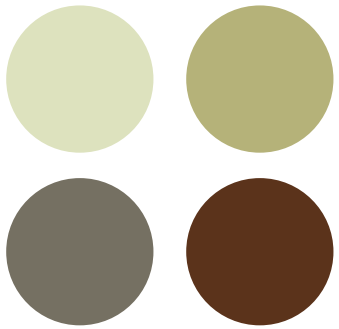
3.2.7. Materials and Building Details

The materials and architectural detailing in Horsmonden contribute to the rural character of the area and the local vernacular. It is therefore important that the materials used in proposed development are of a high quality and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Any future development proposals should demonstrate that the palette of materials has been selected based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment.

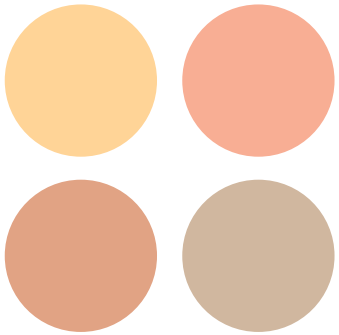
This section includes examples of building material that contribute to the local vernacular of Horsmonden which could be used to inform future development.

COLOR PALETTES



Warm beige tones for rendering and as color choice for building material.

Undertones: ochre , grey and brown.



Earthy tones for rendering and as color choice for building material.

Undertones: yellow, orange, and taupe.

MIXED TONALITY RED BRICK

ARCHED DORMER WITH SASH WINDOW

BEIGE WALL RENDERING

SASH WINDOW

SHINGLES

BAY WINDOW

MULTIPLE SKYLIGHTS

ADAPTED SOLAR PANELS

TRIANGLE FRONT PORCH

WHITE PAINTED TIMBER WEATHERBOARDING

NEO CLASSIC PORCH WITH PILASTERS AND TRIANGLE PEDIMENT

TIMBER GATE

CHIMNEYS

TIMBER WEATHERBOARDING

OAST HOUSE CONICAL ROOF- COWL AND VANE DETAIL

HALF -TIMBER DETAIL ON GABLE

HALF-TIMBER BUILDING

ACCENTED FEATURE WITH WHITE RENDERING

3.2.8. Parking

- Car parking solutions should favour on plot and garage parking, with some on street parking.
- For family homes cars should be placed at the front or side of the property. For flats and small pockets of housing a front or rear court is acceptable. Also, multiple garage parking is encouraged.
- Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles also, parking areas where soil conditions allow should be designed with permeable paving materials.
- When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting and use of differentiated quality paving materials.
- The garage should not obscure the dwelling from the street nor dominate the front garden. Garages should be not put in front of the building at any time as it is considered bad practice (to avoid prominence on the streetscape and overshadowing of the building).

Figure 38: On site parking, on the front.

Figure 39: Various parking modes, on site, garage and on street parking.

Figure 40: Double garage parking.

Figure 41: Parking on the front.

Figure 42: On street parking.

3.2.9. Public Realm and Streetscape

- High quality building and surface materials should be used across any new development. Care should be taken when selecting the materials that will be used for the paved areas.
- High quality stone, gravel, granite and bricks can provide durable and attractive hard surface throughout the public realm.
- Expensive materials such as sandstone and limestone could also be used to further enhance the quality of particular spaces.

All development within Horsmonden should incorporate the following landscape principles:

- Areas of public realm can be soft or hard or a combination of both.
- Landscaping and public realm should be interconnected to create a network of green infrastructure both within any site and to connect to wider routes and places;
- Existing landscape features (such as tree, flower beds, hedgerow) should be retained and where possible their presence should be enhanced by new landscape elements; and
- All public space should be clearly defined and designed to fulfil specific roles and functions for different range of users.

Figure 43: Horsmonden Village Green.

Figure 44: Horsmonden Parish Council notice boards, The Green.

Figure 45: Horsmonden Social Club and the War Memorial.

Figure 46: Locket Green.

Figure 47: Shared surface in residential development, Willard Place.

3.2.10. Managing Lighting

Artificial light provides valuable benefits to society, including through extending opportunities for sport and recreation, and can be essential to a new development.

Equally, artificial light is not always necessary, has the potential to become what is termed 'light pollution' or 'obtrusive light' and not all modern lighting is suitable in all locations. It can be a source of annoyance to people, harmful to wildlife, undermine enjoyment of the countryside or detract from enjoyment of the night sky.

For maximum benefit, the best use of artificial light is about getting the right light, in the right place and providing light at the right time. Lighting schemes can be costly and difficult to change, so getting the design right and setting appropriate conditions at the design stage is important. The following guidelines aim to ensure there is enough consideration given at the design stage.

- Ensure that lighting schemes will not cause unacceptable levels of light pollution particularly in intrinsically dark areas. These can be areas very close to the countryside or where dark skies are enjoyed;
- Consider lighting schemes that could be turned off when not needed ('part-night lighting') to reduce any potential adverse effects; e.e. when a business is closed or, in outdoor areas, switching-off at quiet times between midnight and 5am or 6am. Planning conditions could potentially be used to require this;
- Impact on sensitive wildlife receptors throughout the year, or at particular times (e.g. on migration routes), may be mitigated by the design of the lighting or by turning it off or down at sensitive times;
- Glare should be avoided, particularly for safety reasons. This is the uncomfortable brightness of a light source due to the excessive contrast between bright and dark areas in the field of view. Consequently, the perceived glare depends on the brightness of the background against which it is viewed. It is affected by the quantity and directional attributes of the source. Where appropriate, lighting schemes could include 'dimming' to lower the level of lighting (e.g. during periods of reduced use of an area, when higher lighting levels are not needed);
- The needs of particular individuals or groups should be considered where appropriate (e.g. the safety of pedestrians and cyclists). Schemes designed for those more likely to be older or visually impaired may require higher levels of light and enhanced contrast, together with more control, as the negative effects of glare also increase with age; and
- Consider the location of premises where high levels of light may be required for operation or security reasons, such as transfer depots, sports fields, airports and the like.

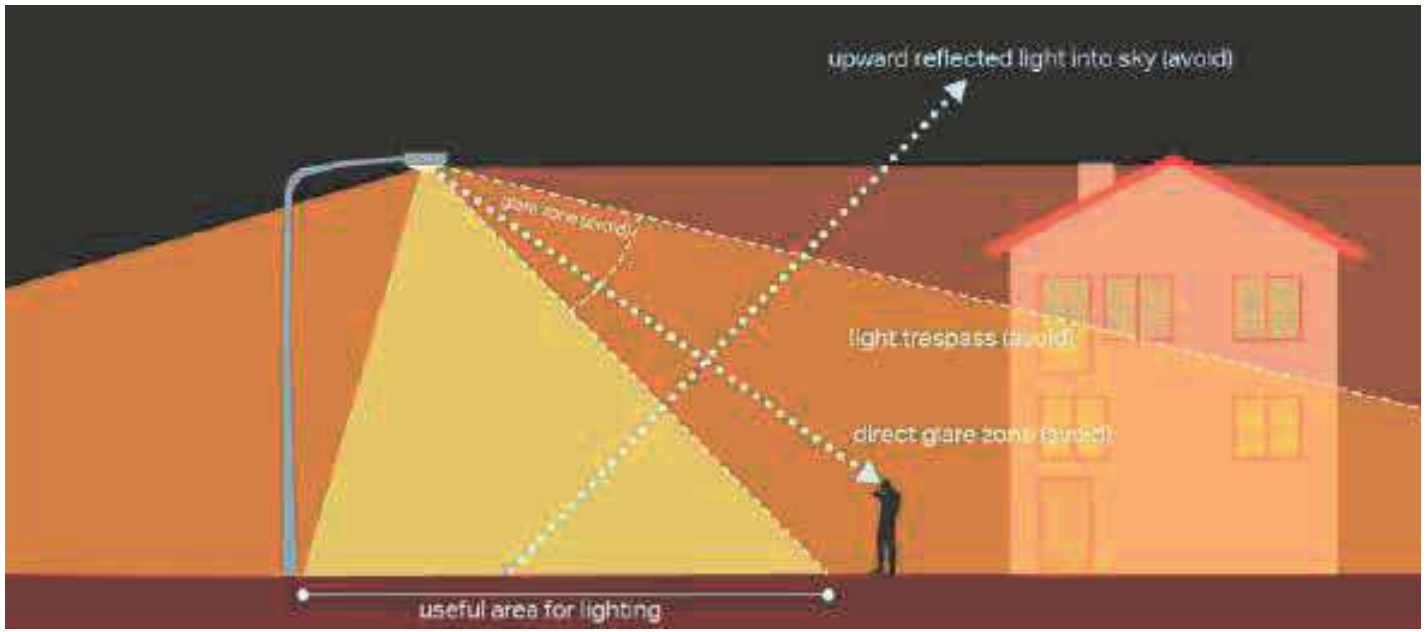


Figure 48: Lighting considerations diagram.

3.2.11. Traditional Architecture

The gradual evolution of the village over the centuries has resulted in an organic character to development. Each building has its own individuality resulting in variations in height, the pattern of openings and detailing. This variety is balanced in several ways; through the proximity of each property to each other and broad similarities in scale, width, design and materials.

Buildings are predominantly 2 storeys and the change in roof heights and the presence of chimneys contribute to the visual interest of the historic core. The most prominent and symbolic vernacular of the village are the oust houses.

Oast houses

- Oast buildings are built of various materials, icluding bricks, timber, ragstone, sandstone. Their cladding could be timber weatherboards, corrugates iron or asbestos sheet.
- Oasts are examples of vernacular architecture in Horsmonden and in general of Kent.

Figure 49: Converted oast houses facing Labert's Place.

Figure 50: Crowhurst, listed building.

Figure 51: Typical rural detached house in south Horsmonden.

Figure 52: Building accessible via stairs from Goudhurst Road.

Figure 53: Half-timber cottage along Goudhurst Road.

3.2.12. Sustainability and Eco Design

Energy efficient or ecological design combines all around energy efficient construction, appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar water heating and solar electricity.

Starting from the design stage, there are strategies that can be incorporated towards passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient landscaping which are determined by local climate and site conditions.

The aim of these interventions is to reduce overall domestic energy use and to do so as cost effectively as the circumstances allow for.

Wildlife friendly environment

New developments should always aim to strengthen biodiversity and the natural environment. This can be done by the creation of new habitats and wildlife corridors, aligning gardens and public spaces and linking with existing ecological assets. Hedges, wildflower meadows, old trees, ponds, hard landscaping features such as rock piles, nest boxes installed at the eaves of the buildings, frog habitat corridors, dry stone walls and bug houses can all make a significant contribution to species diversity.

Figure 54: Frog habitat corridor.

Therefore, protecting and enhancing existing landscape assets is important. It should always be aimed to minimise the damage to natural habitats, add to the character and distinctiveness of a place and contribute to climate change adaptation.

Solar roof panels

Solar panels on roofs should be designed to reduce their visual impact.

On new builds, they should be designed in from the start, forming part of the design concept. Some attractive options are solar shingles and photovoltaic slates or tiles. In this way, the solar panels can be used as a roofing material in their own right.

On retrofits:

- Analyse the proportions of the building and roof surface in order to identify the best location and sizing of panels;
- Aim to conceal wiring and other necessary installations; and,
- Consider introducing other tile or slate colours to create a composition with the solar panel materials.

Figure 55: Local example of fitted solar panels.

Figure 56: Integrated design for solar panels.

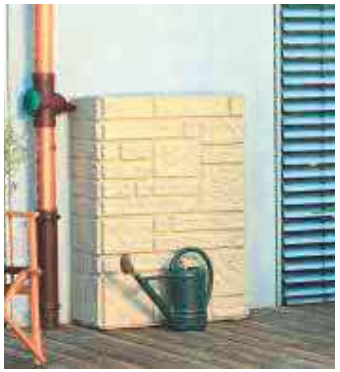


Figure 57: Water harvesting tank.

Figure 58: Bug and bee house.

Rainwater harvesting

This refers to the systems allowing the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse in-situ of grey water. These systems involve pipes and storage devices that could be unsightly if added without an integral vision for design. Therefore some design recommendation would be to:

- Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials;
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes;
- Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems;
- Underground tanks; and,
- Utilise water bodies for storage.

Permeable pavements

Pavements add to the composition of the building. Thus permeable pavements should not only perform its primary function which is to let water filter through but also:

- Respect the material palette;
- Help to frame the building;
- Create an arrival statement;
- Be in harmony with the landscape treatment of the property; and,
- Help define the property boundary.

Waste collector integrated design

With modern requirements for waste separation and recycling, the number of household bins quantum and size have increased. This poses a problem with the aesthetics of the property if bins are left without a solution. Thus we recommend the following:

- Create a specific enclosure of sufficient size for all the necessary bins;
- Place it within easy access from the street and, where, possible, able to open on the pavement side to ease retrieval;
- Refer to the materials palette to analyse which would be a complementary material;
- Use it as part of the property boundary;
- Add to the green feel by incorporating a green roof or side planting element to it; and,
- Combine it with cycle storage.

Figure 61: Permeable paving.

Figure 59: Integrated design for differentiated waste collectors.

Figure 60: Integrated design for differentiated waste collectors and cycle storage.