



Appendix A:
ACNF Design Code

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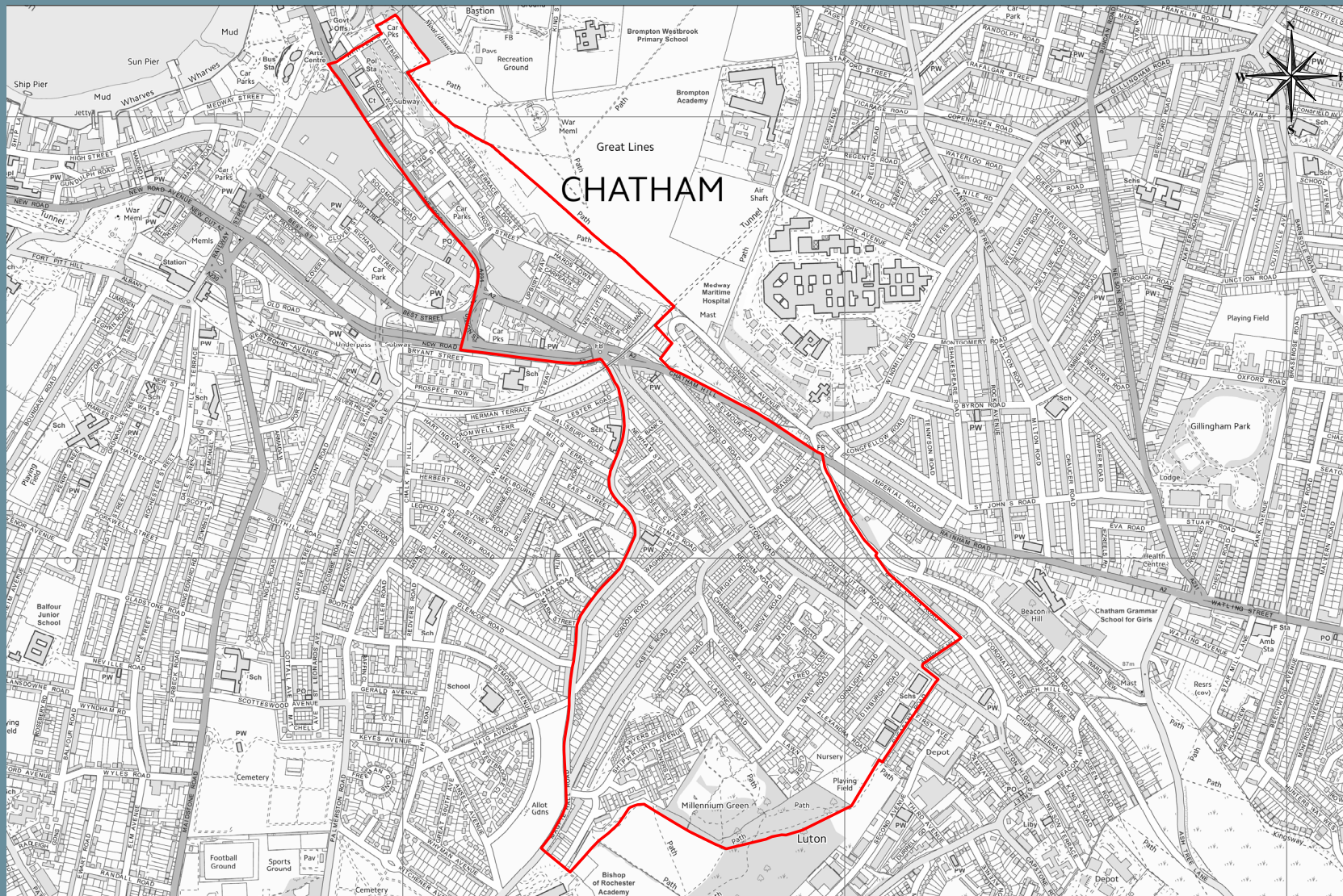
Chapter 3 Design Code

- Building Heights
- Building Typology
- Materials & Ornamentation
- Roofs, Doors & Windows
- Shopfronts
- Streets



“Our vision is to transform the neighbourhood area into a beautiful, green and prosperous place in which people **wish to stay, live and work**; a neighbourhood to raise children, help others and grow old; a place in which people can **rediscover** a sense of **community, pride and purpose**; a place with a beating heart. We seek to achieve this through **re-greening** our streets and supporting a long-term approach to the development and management of places that supports well-being, and is **sustainable and inclusive**.”

Arches (Chatham) Neighbourhood Plan



Great Lines
CHATHAM

Map 1
Designated
Neighbourhood Area

We've put together an ambitious vision for the area's future, to transform our neighbourhood into a beautiful, green and prosperous place.

Our design code will positively contribute to the area's historic character and livability and aid those making the decisions that affect our homes, shops and streets. Our design code encourages popular, healthy, sustainable and beautiful homes, plentiful green and open spaces, and a thriving high street. This approach will contribute to the creation of a strong sense of place and civic pride in the neighbourhood area, and should lead to developments that last for hundreds of years.

This document has two main sections; a study of the valued characteristics of the area and a design code.

The design code is divided into six sections:

- Building Heights
- Building Typology
- Materials & Ornamentation
- Roofs, Doors & Windows
- Shopfronts
- Streets

Our area is located in the town of Chatham within Medway. It is a well-connected town located next to the River Medway with a rich heritage and great potential. However, over the past several decades, a number of design interventions have harmed the town. In particular, the high volume of through traffic on roads like Luton Road, New Road and The Brook, poor quality infill developments and the absence of greenery have made the area an unpleasant place to walk, play and shop.

Both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the 2020 government planning white paper encourage the use of design codes to help promote and deliver high quality, inclusive and sustainable development. The 2021 changes to the NPPF in particular emphasise that developments should adhere to local design policies and should aim to raise design standards. Additionally, this document builds on the guidance of the National Model Design Code as a baseline for high quality design and practice.

How to use this code:

Chapter 3 of this document consists of a design code which can be applied to existing streets, shopfronts and new developments. Each subsection sets out best practice for each of the key elements that goes into our neighbourhoods' design.

The code divides these practices into three areas:

MUST: Mandatory design practices; developments that do not abide by them will not be permitted.

SHOULD: Design practices which are strongly encouraged due to the benefit that it will have to the neighbourhood, except in situations where the design practice cannot be applied for specific reasons.

COULD: Design practices which are recommended but whose absence will not drastically affect the overall quality of a development.

Implementation

The design code will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development. It will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised below.

Applicants, developers and landowners:

As a guide to the community's and Local Planning Authority's expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be required to follow the design code when planning permission is sought.

Local Planning Authority:

As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The design code should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.

Statutory consultees:

As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Chapter 2: Valued Characteristics

Terms like ‘existing town character’ and ‘street scene’ have led to developments which echo past failings and have not been supported by the wider community. Modern developments, such as Harnam Court, Ocelot Court and Evorg House, have not reflected the valued characteristics of the area and have also contributed to their loss.

We define valued characteristics as the qualities of a place that we, local people, have defined as important and would like to see more of. These characteristics are illustrated through the following table and swatches throughout. Forthcoming proposals should be required to reinforce and enhance our valued characteristics.

Valued characteristics	Description
Building typology & heights	Pre-war buildings, including terraced housing, range from 2 - 3.5 storeys across the area. The human-scale of these heights increases people’s relation with the built environment and fosters neighbourliness.
Materials	Brick is the most commonly used and preferred building material in the area. Unlike other materials such as render and cladding, brick acquires a patina that reflects its age and creates character.
Ornamentation	Ornamentation and architectural detailing contribute to fostering civic pride, identity and a sense of place. This can be found in various styles across a range of buildings from the humble Victorian terrace of Connaught Road to the Edwardian splendour of 4a Luton Road.
Windows & doors	Timber sash windows, bay windows, four-panel and windowed doors, and transoms are locally valued despite their modern counterparts, such as white uPVC doors, being commonplace.
Gardens	Landscaped front gardens that set back houses from the footway are important in softening car-dominated street scenes and enhancing biodiversity. Back gardens are particularly important in the post-pandemic era for their social and amenity value.

Chapter 3: Building Heights

Heights

Building heights in the area predominantly range from 2 to 3.5 storeys. However, some poor precedent developments exist, including Caulkers House (12 storeys) and Market Hall multi-storey car park (8 storeys), which are demonstrably unpopular with the local community and harm the area's traditional human-scale character.

This design code accommodates intensification to sustainably grow and develop Chatham, while maintaining the community's identified valued characteristics. **Proposals must adhere to the permissible building heights illustrated by the map.** The indicated heights are maximum parameters that will apply to new-build developments and alterations to existing buildings.

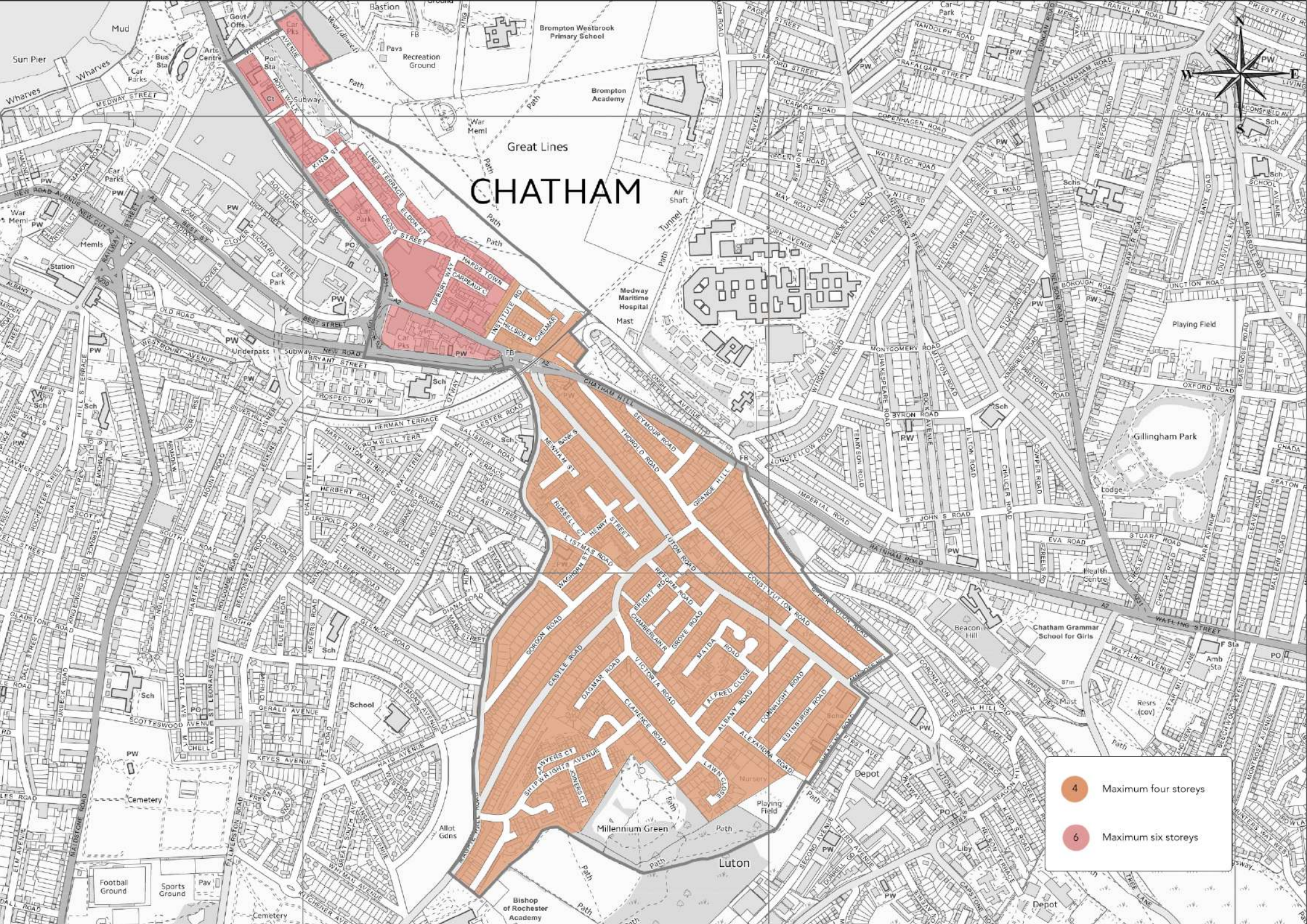
Developments in areas designated for up to 6 storeys in height should be designed to mitigate the impact of their height, such as through creating a setback on the top floor or introducing half storeys. Consideration must be given to the significance of the Grade I-listed Naval War Memorial and the Brompton Lines Conservation Area by retaining views to these assets to aid understanding and appreciation.

Bay widths should not surpass 6 metres. Material planning considerations, including overlooking and overshadowing, must continue to be taken into account during the design and formal planning process.

Noteworthy examples of sympathetic intensification are showcased on the following pages.

Map 2
Permissible
building heights





CHATHAM

- 4 Maximum four storeys
- 6 Maximum six storeys

Great Lines

Luton

Bishop of Rochester Academy

Chatham Grammar School for Girls

Gillingham Park

Medway Maritime Hospital Mast

Brompton Westbrook Primary School

Brompton Academy

Recreation Ground

Mud

Sun Pier

Wharves

War Meml

Memls

Station

Albaki

Wesley

Haymer

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

St Michaels

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Football Ground

Sports Ground

Cemetery

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Case Study

Tottenham, London

Recognising the need to tackle overcrowding and provide for additional habitable accommodation, Haringey Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) with a design code to allow intensification through roof extensions in parts of the South Tottenham area of the borough.

Its recommended approach was to allow roof extensions that match the existing house, with three approved ways in which houses may be extended at roof level.

The SPD creates a framework for those local residents who have large, extended families and want to extend their homes and remain within the community, whilst at the same time protecting the character of South Tottenham and the amenity enjoyed by their neighbours.

It aims to provide viable ways for homeowners to extend their houses whilst not undermining the visual coherence of the area or neighbour's amenity.



Photo
Samuel Hughes



Case Study

Wellington House, London

Matt Architecture describes the overhaul of Wellington House, from a mid 20th century mixed use block to a prominent corner building today, as a repair in the townscape and architectural fabric by creating a 'Conservation Area friendly' façade – all red brick and green ceramic – like a classic Victorian corner pub.

The development impressively intensified the site by doubling its net area with the introduction of an additional floor whilst maintaining 80% of its original structural frame.

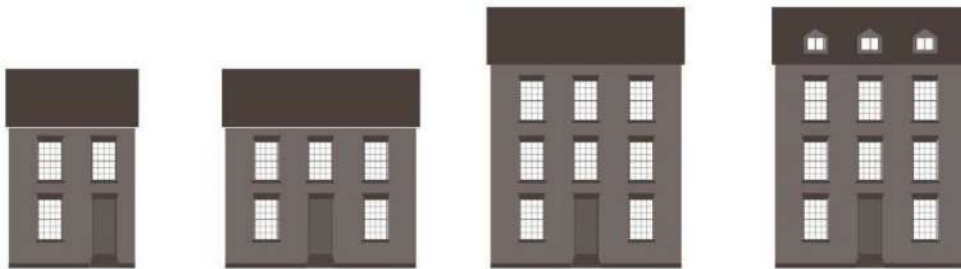
As to its success, Wellington House is featured within the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission report 'Living with beauty'.

Photo
Will Pryce

Chapter 3: Building Typology

The character of our area is intrinsically influenced by its variety of building types and forms. Our area encompasses a mix of building typologies, including terraces, villas, semi-detached, bungalows and apartment blocks. Pre-war terraces are particularly valued by the local community, while post-war and modern developments are not and have been seen to the harm the character of the area through slab-like massing and scale.

Developments should contribute to and enhance the valued building typologies in our area by providing mews, terraces, townhouses and mansion blocks regardless of the building use (i.e. houses, apartments or commercial).



Case Study Roussillon Park, Chichester



Roussillon Park is a site in the centre of Chichester, just to the north of the historic town centre. A former military barracks was redeveloped to provide 250 dwellings as townhouses, terraces, mews and apartment blocks.

Local building typology & heights



Large Victorian villa residences



A typical Victorian terrace with bay window



A steeply sloping Victorian terraced street

Chapter 3: Materials & Ornamentation

The materials and details of design combine to enhance the appearance of a building. Symmetry, the use of colour, quality materials and detailing drawn from the valued characteristics of the surrounding context will ensure that buildings are attractive from a distance and close-up.

Materials must be of high quality, durable and easy to maintain. They should be natural where possible. Preference is given to materials that match and enhance the pre-established valued characteristics, which is mostly brick with stone detailing.

When using brick, engineering bricks must not be used as the primary material for facades.

Ornamentation must be included in all new developments.

This could be provided as brickwork detailing of aesthetical value (e.g. bonds, patterns, cornices, lintels, etc.) or stone detailing (e.g. decorative lintels, quoins, datestones, window/door surrounds, etc.).

Poor quality attempts at ornamentation must not be considered. Examples include soldier course brickwork above or below window and door openings, which can be found in existing modern developments locally, such as Harnam Court, Pembroke Court and Five Ways Court.



Case Study Bourne Estate, London

Bourne Estate provides 75 mixed tenure homes, in buildings that respond to the original architecture: fine brick detailing emulates the pride and care shown in the old buildings, while the footprints respond to those of the original 1905 estate.

Local ornamentation

Decorative stone lintel



Flat stock brick lintel



Arched lintel with contrasting brick keystone



Brick diamond motif



Dentilled cornice



Chevron-patterned console bracket

Chapter 3: Roofs, Doors & Windows

Existing Roofs

In order to provide more suitable family homes, half storey roof extensions of existing homes should be done. While rear and side dormers can be achieved through permitted development rights (PDR), front dormers will require planning permission. Front dormers which follow the below code will be supported.

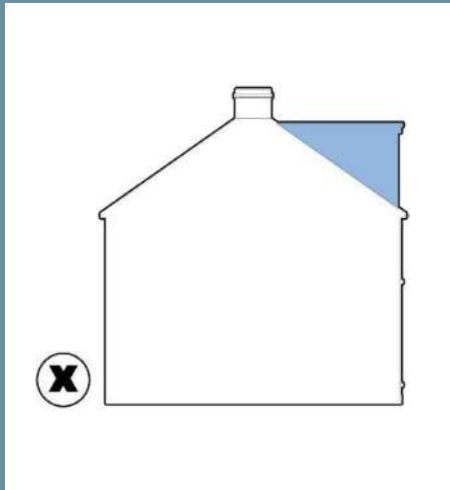
The dormer extensions must be proportionate to the size of the roof of the building. In practice this will mean that any dormers are unlikely to be more than the sizes set out below. They can take the form of one large dormer or several smaller ones. They must not be used to create additional dwellings. Oversized dormers that don't meet the quality criteria will not be permitted.

- For traditional roofs, minimum floor-to-ceiling height of the dormer must be 2.2m – 2.4m;
- For trussed rafter roofs, minimum floor-to-ceiling height of the dormer must be 2.4m – 2.6m;
- The top of the dormer must be set below the roof line;
- Minimum window width must 450mm and minimum height 330 (to allow for escape in case of fire) and the window style should match the existing original windows on the building;
- The dormer extension must be set back at least 200mm from the roof eaves and at least 400mm from the party wall on either side. They should not be set back more than 800mm;

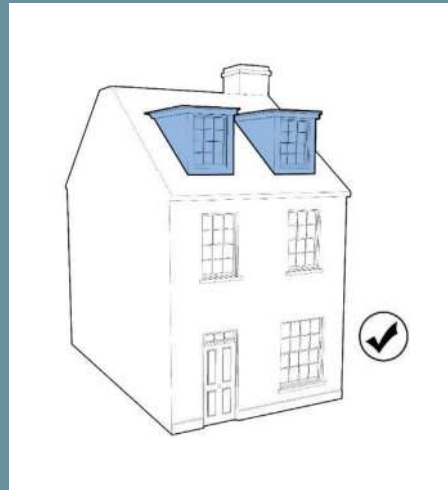
- The material of the dormer extension should be of high quality which are in keeping with the rest of the house. Suggested materials include prefabricated GRP (glass reinforced plastic) which can be painted in a neutral colour, as well as lead cladding or slate tile. Red concrete tiles should not be used.
- The mass adoption of mansard roof extensions in pre-war areas will be supported.

New Roofs

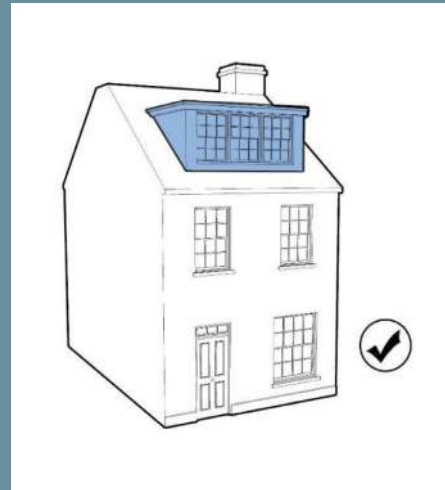
- The area predominantly encompasses front-to-back and left-to-right gable roofs, which are both valued by the local community. Roof designs of new developments should enrich the townscape by using varied roof heights and forms, or contribute to a more formal, consistent roofline. However, flat roofs are generally discouraged. Roof tiles could be sourced from natural materials, such as slate, or recycled from reclamation yards.



Oversized dormer due to small setback from the roof lines.



Proportionate multiple dormers (left) and proportionate single dormer (right).



Multiple dormers must be in line with existing vertical building lines.

Local windows & doors

Original six over six sash windows



Double height Victorian bay window



Original twelve over one sash window



Victorian four-panel door with stained glass transom light



Modern six over six sash window



Four-panel door with decorative metalwork



Windows & Doors

- The loss of original or reproduction windows and doors from pre-war buildings poses a threat to the architectural heritage of our area. These windows and doors make an important contribution to the creation of a sense of place and identity. They are particularly vulnerable elements of a building as they are relatively easily replaced with uPVC or altered.
- Developments should revitalise this lost sense of place by incorporating timber sash and casement windows, and timber panelled doors with transoms. Fenestration should follow a coherent pattern.

Fitzroy Road,
London

Chapter 3: Shopfronts

Most of the shopfronts in the area are situated towards the northern stretch of Luton Road and the eastern end of the High Street. These can be broadly categorised as contemporary aluminium shopfronts with few surviving traditional shopfronts. While some of these shopfronts retain their traditional elements - such as console brackets, awning crank handles, iron railings and ornamentation - often these are poor quality and do not suit the building.

Shopfronts which focus on proportion, high quality materials and harmonious colour schemes are linked to higher footfall, prosperity and more vibrant streets.

In order to achieve this outcome, surviving original Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts (whether surviving in part or in full) must be maintained and retained. Where a contemporary shopfront is to be replaced or remodelled, a façade similar to one of the relevant era must be installed. In the following pages, particular components of shopfronts are explored in detail and should be used as part of the design process.

In the case of a retail to residential conversion, where shopfronts that form part of a collective (adjoining a pair, row or parade), the original Victorian or Edwardian shopfront must always be conserved. Where the original shopfront has been replaced, often with low quality aluminium framing, a facade similar to the era should be reinstated as part of the conversion.



411 High Street, Chatham



Fascias

- Lettering on fascias should be centred and properly aligned. It should include the shop name and avoid all other writing as this can make the shop front feel cluttered.
- Where a shop occupies several units each should have a separate fascia, linked visually by a common design. One continuous fascia is considered to be too dominant and cuts across the pattern of the terrace.
- Fascias should be made from a durable material and avoid plastic finishing.

Pilasters

- Pilasters provide a framework within which a shop front can be set and are decorative elements in their own right. They should not, therefore, be removed, damaged or clad.

- Pilasters are usually capped by a capital, used as a visual element that transitions from the pilaster to the console bracket. The capital can be designed using a simple design or one that is more ornate, depending on the overall style of the shopfront.
- Shops without pilasters are encouraged to repair or reinstate pilasters. The pilaster should be treated as one, coherent feature. Therefore, neighbours should not clad or paint it in different colours or materials. Where a long unit is being subdivided, pilasters must be provided between each structural bay.

Stallriser

- The stallriser is the base of the shopfront. Like the fascia, it should be in proportion to the rest of the shopfront elements, although a minimum height of 50cm is recommended.

Lettering

- The type of lettering used on shopfront signs should be easily legible but within proportion of the fascia. The colouring of the letters must stand out against the colour of the fascia board without a harsh contrast. The typeface used should reflect the nature of the shop. Gimmicky fonts should be avoided.

Windows & Doors

- Respect the small scale and vertical (taller than wider) proportions of the premises by avoiding large and long panes of glass or by removing pilasters and glazing to create a wide open 'shop'.
- For shops that retain their original doors and windows, these must be kept and used as a blueprint for other non-original doors. This will help establish continuity in the terrace and contribute positively to the streetscape.

- Avoid mismatches of different styles; bow windows, bottle glass, multi-pane windows that are not in character with the host premises should be avoided.
- Treatments (panelling, reflective or tinted glass, etc.) used to restrict the view into a shop should be kept to the very minimum. The use of graphic window vinyls which cover the whole or the majority of a shop window will not be permitted.

Shutters

- Rolling mesh grilles (internal) can be placed over windows as they deter and hinder theft whilst permitting chance observation of intruders or fire. They also allow out-of-hours window shopping, offer good security and allow for additional lighting on the street. External shutters should not be used.

Electronic devices and cooling fans

- Electronic devices, such as alarm boxes, and other installations such as cooling fans, should be hidden where possible, in order to reduce the appearance of 'clutter' on the shopfront. This includes electrical wires and satellite antennae.

Materials and colours

- The materials used on the shopfront should reflect the history of the building. In most cases, the use of painted solid timber is preferred. Where artificial materials are used, they should not have high reflectivity. Use of materials should be limited to two or three per shopfront.
- Glazing should not cover more than 70% of the entire shopfront.

Accessibility

Shopfront design should be as inclusive as possible, ensuring that everyone can access the shop. This includes people with mental and physical disabilities, the elderly and people with children. The main elements of accessible shopfront design include:

- Fronts should have an entrance that is level with the street (no steps) with a door frame not protruding above the threshold. If this is not possible, they should have a ramp at a low angle (approx. 2 degrees).
- Doorways should be a minimum of 100cm wide.
- Shopfronts should ensure that the colour of the door and frame contrast well with its surroundings, for people with visual disabilities.
- New door handles should be easy to operate from a wheelchair and allow for a clear opening. Where possible automatic doors can be installed.

Illumination

- In a well-lit location there should be no need to light the fascia of a shopfront and a high quality, well-lit shop window display is likely to have far greater impact than any illuminated sign. However, if illumination is required it should be external by means of discreet LED spotlights or by a trough light discreetly positioned below the cornice.

KING STREET
City of Stirling

MADE *in* STIRLING

3

5

Wanted
Good Quality
Books, CDs & DVDs

Example of good quality shopfront in Scotland

Chapter 3:

Streets

Pavements

Pavements should be surfaced with natural, high quality and durable materials such as natural stone, granite and brick. Raised crossings should be used at crossing points, and guard railings should not be installed. Tarmac should not be used. New pavements should be a minimum of 2m wide.

Street Furniture

Street furniture should be carefully placed in areas of high footfall and must not obstruct the desire line of pedestrians. Street furniture should be made of high quality and durable material which is easy to maintain.

Parking

New and existing developments should aim to reduce the spatial impact of parking as much as possible. Car parking space must be a maximum width of 2.7m, and ideally should be 2.4m wide. Where possible, parking spaces can be paved with permeable paving such as grasscrete or brick paving.

Traffic calming

Due to the high volume of traffic in the area, design-led traffic calming measures must be incorporated to aid walkability. These include the use of street trees in the carriageway, as well as widening and narrowing the road at various points.

Cycle Infrastructure

In order to enable and encourage cycling, segregated cycle tracks should be inserted on main roads where speeds are 30mph or greater - these are currently New Road and The Brook. Where space is more competitive on narrow roads, other interventions should be explored such as modal filters.

Urban Greening

Urban greening in the form of tree and hedgerow planting is important for their contribution towards the climate, mental and physical health, and the streetscape. Green infrastructure should not block or narrow pavements, and should be planted in build-outs on the carriageway. Careful consideration must be given to the selection and maturity of greenery, over ornamental material items, such as ornate tree guards, grilles, etc.

Accessibility

It's vital that new features of streets are designed to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling, are inclusive. Street design must make provisions for elderly people or those with disabilities to ensure that they can easily access facilities and services, such as step-free access. Further guidance can be found in the latest Manual for Streets and at livingstreets.org.uk.



Some of the neighbourhood plan's aims have already been realised through road safety improvements in Luton Road in 2020-23, including street tree planting in build-outs and the removal of pedestrian guard rails. This CGI depicts the potential for further change in the road.



This image is a before and after render produced by Infra CGI to illustrate how streets can be radically improved whilst maintaining car provision and giving greater priority to active travel users.

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