SWANLEY VILLAGE

Design Guide

FINAL REPORT

February 2021

locality
the power of community

AECOM

Quality information

Project role	Name	Position	Action summary	Signature	Date
Qualifying Body	Swanley Town Council	Swanley Town Council	Draft Report Submitted for comments	Lorraine Hart	15-02-2021
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INTRODUCTION

01

1. INTRODUCTION

1.01 CONTEXT

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Swanley Parish Council.

The Steering Group is making good progress in the production of its Neighbourhood Plan and has requested to access professional advice on design guidelines for future development within Swanley Village. This document should support Neighbourhood Plan policies that guide the assessment of future development proposals and encourage high quality design. It advises on physical development helping to create distinctive places that integrates with the existing village.

1.02 OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this report is to develop design guidelines that future development in Swanley Village should follow to retain and protect the rural, tranquil character and scenic beauty of the area.

1.03 PROCESS

At an inception meeting, AECOM and the Swanley Neighbourhood Plan steering group members carried out a high level assessment of the village. Following this AECOM carried out a site visit. The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:

- Initial meeting and site visit;
- Urban design analysis;
- Preparation of design principles and guidelines to be used to assess future developments;
- Draft report with design guidelines; and
- Final report.

1.04 AREA OF STUDY

Swanley is a parish with a large population of 17,138 based on 2017 ONS estimates. The parish is located in the Sevenoaks District in the County of Kent immediately adjacent to the Greater London Boroughs of Bexley and Bromley. The parish covers a mixture of urban and rural environments. The main settlement, Swanley town, is located in the west of the parish and has a wide range of facilities and services, including a retail district and train station with regular services to Kent, London and the Medway towns. The town is bypassed by the A20 to the south and is close by the M25 to the east. Swanley Village is located in the north-east of the parish and is a linear settlement with a Conservation Area and several listed buildings. This part of the parish also contains a large area of Metropolitan Green Belt. It is in proximity to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which lies to the south-east.

1.05 GOOD DESIGN

Paragraph 124 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, February 2019) states that, "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."

Research, such as for the Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, 'The Value of Good Design[1]') has shown that good design of building and places can:

- Improve health and well-being;
- Increase civic pride and cultural activity;
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- Reduce pollution.

1 https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/report/value-good-design


Sevenoaks District Boundary
Swanley Village
Swanley Station
M25
A20
Swanley Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
M20
0
1km

POLICY REVIEW

02

2. POLICY REVIEW

2.01 INTRODUCTION

The Neighbourhood Plan policies and allocations must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan, and it is recommended that consideration is given to the direction of travel of the emerging development plan so that policies are not superseded by a newly adopted Local Plan.

A number of sources have been reviewed in order to understand the context for potential site allocations. This includes national policies, local policies (adopted and emerging Local Plan policies) and relevant evidence base documents.

National policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)[1] and is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF is a high-level document which sets the overall framework for the more detailed policies contained in local and neighbourhood plans.

The key documents making up the adopted statutory development plan (Sevenoaks Local Plan 2011-2026) for Swanley are:

- Core Strategy Development Plan (2011) ;
- Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015);
- Countryside Character Assessment SPD (2011) ; and
- Development in the Green Belt SPD (2015) .

Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) submitted the emerging Sevenoaks Local Plan covering the whole of the Sevenoaks District to the Secretary of State on 30 April 2019. Stage 1 hearings took place from 24 September to 11 October 2019, however, the Inspector cancelled further hearings. The Inspector deemed that there were serious concerns about the soundness of the emerging Local Plan in terms of the Duty to Co-operate and unmet housing need, and recommended the plan be withdrawn from examination. The Inspector's final report was published on 6 March 2020. Subsequently, the High Court has granted permission to SDC for a judicial review of the Inspector's decision to reject the plan. The key document making up the emerging statutory development plan (Sevenoaks Local Plan 2015-2035) is:

- Proposed Submission Version Sevenoaks Local Plan (2018) .

To aid the preparation of the emerging Local Plan, SDC prepared the Sevenoaks District Green Belt Assessment (2017) and Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment (2017) .

The parish of Swanley contains a Conservation Area which covers historic Swanley Village. SDC prepared a Conservation Area Appraisal in 2019 which identifies heritage assets and provides guidance to shape future development in and around the Conservation Area.

The relevant policies and findings of the above documents are highlighted below.

2.02 NATIONAL POLICY

The policies of relevance to development in Swanley are set out below, but this report has regard to all other aspects of national planning policy where appropriate.

Paragraph 77 sets out that, in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.

Paragraph 78 adds that, to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

Paragraph 133 sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts being their openness and permanence.

Paragraph 134 adds that the Green Belt services five purposes: a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 136 requires that once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

Paragraph 137 adds that before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph, and whether the strategy: a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land; b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development.

Available at www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

Paragraph 149 requires that plans take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, and take into account the long-term implications for flood risk, biodiversity and landscapes.

Paragraph 170 sets out that plans should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity in a manner commensurate with their statutory status. They should also recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Paragraph 174 requires that plans should identify, map and safeguard the hierarchy of designated sites of importance for biodiversity, promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of habitats and ecological networks, and pursue measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraph 185 states that plans should set out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and seek new development which makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 193 sets out that great weight should be given to the impact of a proposed development on any designated heritage assets.

Paragraph 200 states that proposals in Conservation Areas should be encouraged where they enhance or better reveal their significance.

2.03 SEVENOAKS CORE STRATEGY

SDC adopted the Core Strategy Development Plan[1] on 22 February 2011. The document covers the period 2006 to 2026 and sets out the scale and location of development across the district. It provides general guidance and more detailed policies based on the Core Strategy are provided through other Development plan documents (DPDs) and SPDs.

Policy LO1 – Distribution of Development sets out that Swanley will be a secondary focus for development with the emphasis on maintaining and enhancing its role and promoting regeneration to meet the needs of the local community. This will involve provision for 660 housing units and 30.8 Ha of employment land.

Policy LO4 – Development in Swanley adds that provision will be made for 660 dwellings and the local economy will be sustained by the regeneration and redevelopment of existing suitable employment sites and through the allocation of additional land not in the Green Belt for employment purposes adjoining the M25. In allocating sites for development, the emphasis in this area will be on: the town centre and adjoining areas for employment development, existing employment areas and land adjoining Junction 3 of the M25; providing additional public open space where opportunities arise: and protecting the setting of the town and the physical and community identity of the adjoining settlements, and prevention of coalescence.

Swanley is surrounded by Green Belt land, and land to the south east is also within the AONB which should be safeguarded from encroachment. The Green Belt land to the north and north east plays an important role in separation Swanley from Hextable and Swanley Village, and to the south from Crockenhill.

[1] Available at https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20069129/current_local_plan/249/core_strategy_development_plan

Policy LO8 – The Countryside and the Rural Economy sets out that the extent of the Green Belt will be maintained. The countryside will be conserved and the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of its landscape and its biodiversity will be protected and enhanced where possible. The distinctive character of the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs and their settings will be conserved and enhanced.

Policy SP7 – Density of Housing Development sets out a net density of 75 dwellings per hectare in the defined Swanley town centre, a net density of 40 dwellings per hectare in the defined Swanley urban area and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare in all other areas of the parish.

2.04 SEVENOAKS DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

SDC adopted the Allocations and Development Management Plan[1] on 17 February 2015 as a tool to implement and build on the strategic vision of the Core Strategy. The document covers the period 2006 to 2026 in line with the Core Strategy. It includes site specific allocations for open space, residential, employment and mixed use as well as policies for managing development. The policies and aspects of policies most relevant to the Swanley Design Codes are listed below.

Policy EN1 – Design Principles supports proposals which meet the following criteria: the proposal would not result in the loss of buildings, open spaces or green infrastructure that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area and the proposal would ensure satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians.

[1] Available at https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20069129/current_local_plan/248/allocations_and_development_management_plan

Policy EN2 – Amenity Protection adds that proposals will not be permitted if they are located in areas where occupiers of the development would be subject to: excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity or vehicle movements.

Policy EN5 – Landscape sets out that The Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs and their settings will be given the highest status of protection in relation to landscapes and scenic beauty. Proposals across the district will be permitted where they will conserve the character of the landscape, including areas of tranquillity, and meet the requirements of the Countryside Character Assessment SPD.

Policy EN7 – Noise Pollution requires that proposals would not result in unacceptable noise levels from existing noise sources that cannot be adequately mitigated.

2.05 COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT SPD

SDC adopted the Countryside Character Assessment SPD[1] in partnership with Kent County Council (KCC) and Natural England in 2011. The document defines and describes the different types and character areas of the landscape in the Sevenoaks District.

As a broad context, Sevenoaks District has a high proportion of designated areas including the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs. There are areas of unique ancient woodland and grass download across the district. Long views are particularly important, and there are also significant distinctive buildings and local vernacular architecture which contribute to the small-scale historic landscape pattern.

The most significant pressure on the landscape is new development. A particular issue for Sevenoaks is unremarkable development without local distinction, relevance to the site or local settlement pattern. Linear ribbon development since the 19th and 20th century has impacted the landscape. In addition, urban extensions have introduced incongruous or harsh urban edges into the adjacent landscape.

Swanley Parish is comprised of the Fringe Landscapes Type. Adjacent to the parish to the south-east is the Downs Farmlands Landscape Type. In terms of the more detailed Character Areas, Swanley Parish is comprised of the Hextable Fringe Character Area. To the east of the M25 lies the Farningham Woods Character Area, to the south-east the Eynsford and Shoreham Downs Character Area and to the south of the A20 the Crockenhill Fringe Character Area.

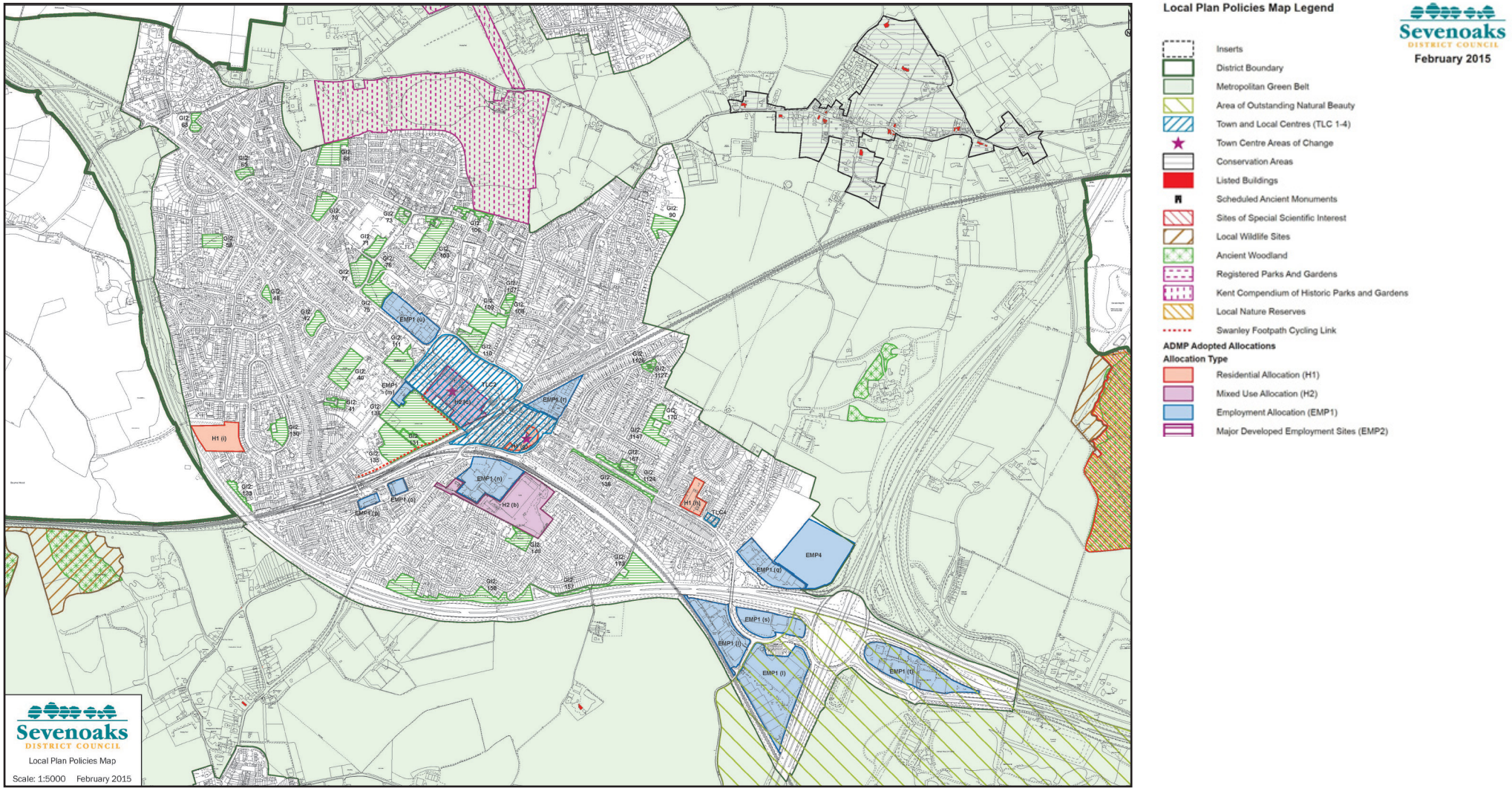
The Fringe Landscapes Type consists of a gently undulating enclosed landscape with large areas of coppiced ancient woodland and fragmented remnant broadleaved woodland on hilltops. The area's agriculture is characterised by market gardening with small scale field patterns. The conservation and management of native broadleaved woodland and coppices is particularly important. The Hextable Fringe Character Area consists of a rural-urban fringe landscape with a strong sense of enclosure created by small rectangular fields. Land use is divided between market gardening, arable and horsiculture. On the urban fringe some fields have become amenity facilities such as playing fields. Visual detractors include mixed style housing and horse stabling blocks, incongruous suburban planting and embankments of major transport routes. The condition of this area is judged to be deteriorated with low sensitivity. It has an incoherent pattern of elements with detracting features, and a lack of visual unity. New features should emphasise the small-scale pattern of this landscape and enhance semi-natural habitats. In order to create more local distinctiveness, local landmarks and views should be identified and enhanced.

2.05 EMERGING SEVENOAKS LOCAL PLAN

Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) submitted the emerging Sevenoaks Local Plan covering the whole of the Sevenoaks District to the Secretary of State on 30 April 2019. Stage 1 hearings took place from 24 September to 11 October 2019, however, the Inspector cancelled further hearings. The Inspector deemed that there were serious concerns about the soundness of the emerging Local Plan in terms of the Duty to Co-operate and unmet housing need, and recommended the plan be withdrawn from examination. The Inspector's final report was published on 6 March 2020. Subsequently, the High Court has granted permission to SDC for a judicial review of the Inspector's decision to reject the plan. It should be noted that it may be possible this emerging Local Plan is withdrawn and therefore the emerging policies would no longer be of relevance to Swanley. However, they do provide an indication of the direction of travel of local policy and a new emerging Local Plan might include some similar policies.

Policy ST2 – Housing and Mixed Use Site Allocations sets out allocations to support the District's identified housing supply of 10,568 between 2015 and 2035. In Swanley these include allocations for 13 sites including the Swanley Centre for 250 units and Land south of Wood Street (Site SWN3) for 10 units, a site which lies in Swanley Village.

Available at https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/376/countryside_character_assessment_spd_adopted_october_2011



Sevenoaks Adopted Local Plan Policies Map, Swanley extract.

VILLAGE WIDE ANALYSIS

03

3. VILLAGE WIDE ANALYSIS

3.01 MOBILITY

Swanley Village can be defined as a ribbon development with one main road, Swanley Village Road, running east-west through the village. Housing is generally set back from the road and is arranged in clusters along both sides of the road. Swanley Village Road connects to Swanley town centre to the west and the east the road becomes Wood Street which passes under the M25 and continues to neighbouring village, Sutton at Hone. Due to the proximity to the M25, Swanley Village Road has high levels of traffic and can become congested at certain times of day. Traffic uses Beechenlea Lane and Button Street, which are mostly single tracks, to avoid Swanley or avoid northbound traffic on the M25. Furthermore, the road is not safe for pedestrians as there is no footpath along much of the road and where there is a footpath it is not generally very wide. The M25 produces high levels of noise and air pollution that effect the village.

To the north of Swanley Village Road is School Lane which leads to housing located outside of the conservation area, as well as the village primary school. This road is fairly wide and has a footpath along both sides making it safe for pedestrians.

There are no public transport links from the village, with the nearest bus stop located to the west of the village, although there is no pavement to walk to the bus stop from the village. The bus runs services to Swanley town centre as well as towards Bluewater shopping centre. The nearest train station can be found in Swanley town centre with services into London and out towards Kent.

There are a number of public right of ways in the area, linking the village with the surrounding countryside offering pleasant walking routes for the residents.

Takeaways:

- The main route through the village, contributes to the strong identity of the village both in terms of layout and character.
- Any new development will need to consider how additional traffic around the village and in particular along Swanley Village Road will impact its character as a rural village.
- The numerous public right of ways surrounding the village provide key views to the village, therefore development will need to consider how it effects the footpaths and the views to the village.

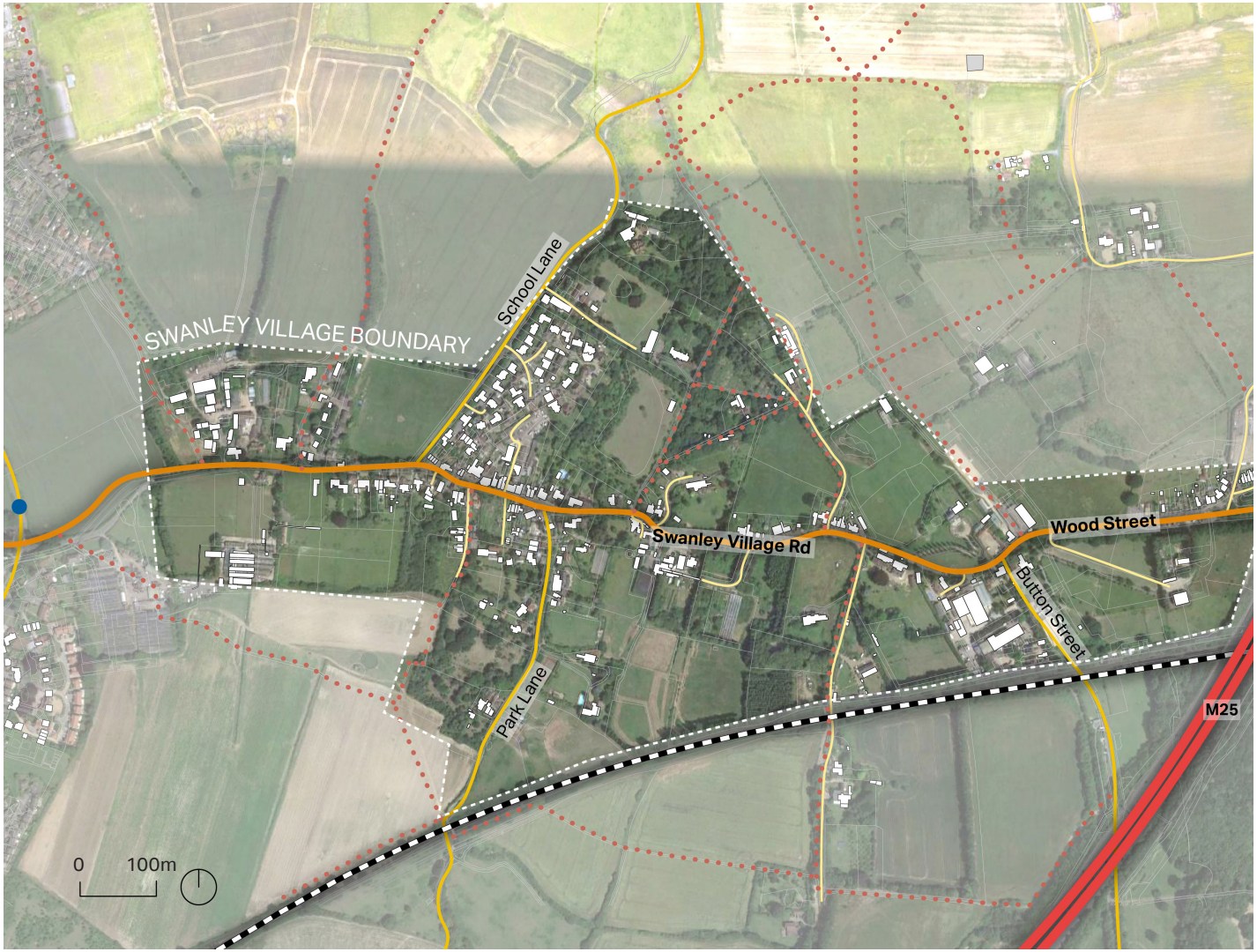


Figure 1: Mobility plan

Figure 2: Section of Swanley Village Road without a footpath.

Figure 3: Footpath along Swanley Village Road.

Figure 4: View along Wood Street, leading under the M25.

Figure 5: School Lane.

Figure 6: Lane leading to contemporary development.

Figure 7: Public footpath.

3.02 ENVIRONMENT & LANDSCAPE

Swanley Village is located within the Hextable Settled Farmland Landscape Character Area as identified in the Sevenoaks Landscape Sensitivity Assessment[1]. The area is defined by gentle undulating chalk and sandstone landform with small-scale fields, mature hedgerows and woodland.

The historical village is well-integrated into the landscape and retains a rural character with narrow lanes and plenty of greenery, increasing the sensitivity of the area. The village is within the Green Belt, however the neighbouring urban areas of Swanley and Hextable have hard development edges and are at risk of coalescing with Swanley Village, which may damage its rural character.

Within the village there are two main public open spaces. Firstly, the Village Green which is owned and maintained by a charitable organisation, the Swanley Village Trust. The Glebe, which is owned by the church is located in between the church and the local primary school. This space is used by the school and for other local sports activities. The village also has two allotments for residents, one of which is owned by the church and the other by Swanley Village Trust.

1. https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/1519/env006_sevenoaks_landscape_sensitivity_assessment_-_main_report_may_2017

Takeaway:

- The majority of the open spaces are located in the North of the village and are situated amongst the Victorian school buildings and the historical church. This landscape and built heritage come together to provide a special sense of place.

Figure 8: Environment and landscape plan.

Figure 9: Swanley Village Green.

Figure 10: Village Allotments.

Figure 13: Public footpath.

Figure 11: View across field looking towards the village.

Figure 12: St. Paul's churchyard.

3.03 HERITAGE

A large portion of Swanley Village lies within the Swanley Village Conservation Area. The Conservation Area, designated in 1984, encompasses the main east-west village street and extends north to include the Victorian school building, church and the old vicarage, built by Victorian architect Ewan Christian. The Conservation Area also extends to the south to include Beechenlea Lane. The Conservation Area has special historic and architectural features including its character as a rural Kentish hamlet with a well-defined boundary, despite its proximity to Swanley town and the M25. The incremental development of the village can be seen in the mix of historic buildings dating from the late medieval to the early twentieth century. Furthermore, many of the buildings display traditional craftsmanship using original building materials and architectural features. Figure 20 shows the marking which can be seen in a number of places around the village indicating where the Conservation Area starts and ends.

The village has a number of Grade II listed buildings which all fall within the Conservation Area. Figure 15 shows a cottage dating back to the Elizabethan era and was restored and decorated in 1880 with painted brick and decorative tiles. Figure 18 shows a pair of early 19th century cottages with white weatherboard, a typical material used within the village. Much of the newer development, outside of the Conservation Area is influenced by the older buildings in the village in terms of materials and

Takeaways:

- As most of the village sits within the Conservation Area boundary it is important that the built environment outside the Conservation Area responds sensitively and does not detract from its special character.
- Reinforcing the character and connectivity of the Conservation Area will strengthen the sense of place in Swanley Village and therefore increasing its identity and attractiveness.
- The listed buildings and other historical buildings can act as a catalogue of inspiration for contemporary development.

Figure 14: Heritage plan

Figure 15: Elizabethan Cottage.

Figure 16: Hillbrow.

Figure 17: The Old Place.

Figure 18: White Cottages, numbers 1 and 2.

Figure 19: St. Paul's Church.

Figure 20: Cobbled paving marks the start of the Conservation Area within the village.

OVERARCHING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

04

4. OVERARCHING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.01 INTRODUCTION

This section will introduce overarching design principles for the whole village as well as demonstrating how each principle has been applied throughout the Conservation Area and outside. The village examples will be categorised into two sections, the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village**. The map in Figure 21 indicates the boundaries for both of these areas.

The document has be organised in this way in order to allow the distinct characteristics of the Conservation Area to be identified and showcase how the development outside is sympathetic to the historical part of the village and should act as a precedent for future development, indicating what would be acceptable in this context.

The design principles set out in the following pages comprise of all the elements that contribute to the urban form and character of the village.

It should also be noted that the Conservation Area will be subject to further restrictions relating to the special historical character of the Conservation Area[1]. For more information on the Swanley Village Conservation Area see the Conservation Area Appraisal[2].

Figure 21: Map showing the extent of Swanley Village and the conservation area.

1. See Sevenoaks District Conservation Area Design Guide: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/2998/design_guidance
2. See Swanley Village Conservation Area Appraisal: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/2996/swanley_village_conservation_area_appraisal

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 22: Grade II listed lynchgate located within the Conservation Area.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

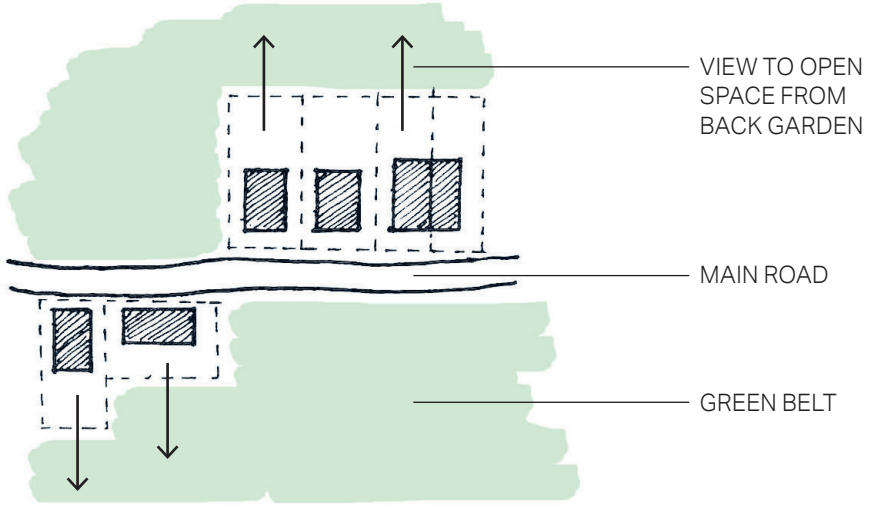
Figure 23: Contemporary housing development within New Swanley Village.

4.02 LAYOUT

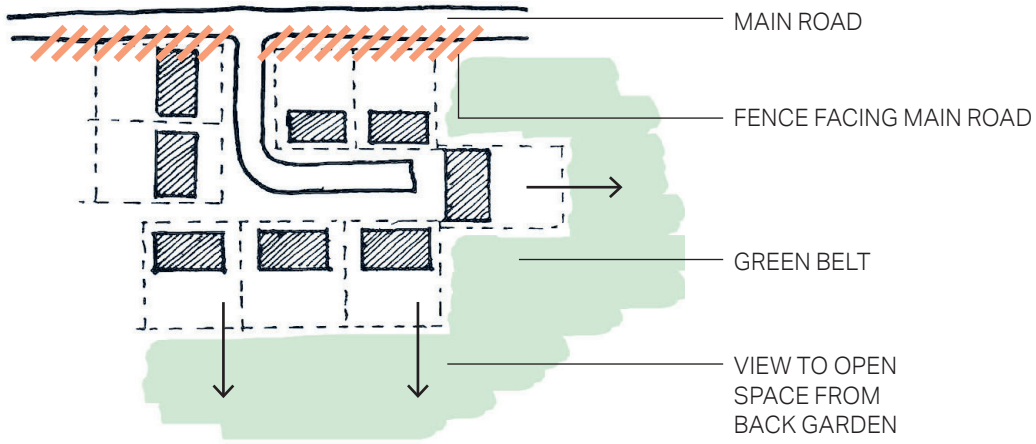
The village has two main types of arrangements of buildings and streets, which make up the layout of the village. The Conservation Area consists of a linear road with housing either side which has views to the countryside to the rear. The dominant layout within New Swanley Village is a series of cul-de-sacs which fork off from the main road.

Some key characteristics for new development to consider include:

- The view to the surrounding Green Belt from back gardens is an important feature within the whole village. For the **Conservation Area** this means that new development should seek to follow the existing ribbon development layout and should not encroach on existing dwellings views. For **New Swanley Village**, where there is a hard development edge with adjacent open space, back gardens should look out over it, making the most of the views.
- The buildings within the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** should be orientated so the primary frontage faces the road allowing the dwelling to be accessed directly from the street.
- For both areas but particularly within **New Swanley Village** high rear fences and walls adjacent to the main road should be avoided.
- While cul-de-sacs are a characteristic of the village, new development should seek to enhance and create permeability, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists around the village.



Ribbon development found in the Conservation Area.



Cul-de-sacs found in New Swanley Village area.

Figure 24: Diagrams showing the common layout within Swanley Village.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 25: Houses with a view across the field.

Figure 26: Bungalow with view to the countryside.

Figure 27: Building fronting onto the road.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 28: View of cul-de-sac.

Figure 29: High fence fronting onto the road, this should be avoided.

Figure 30: Bungalows with access from the street and a view to the Green Belt from the back gardens.

4.03 ENCLOSURE

The level of enclosure along the streets contributes to an area's sense of place through cohesion and clearly defined spaces. Collectively, buildings and trees along streets can create a sense of enclosure by ensuring the building heights and densities are in proportion to the width of a street.

Any future development will need to consider its impact on the streets of Swanley Village and how it may alter the current levels of enclosure. Below are key characteristics for both the Conservation Area and New Swanley Village in relation to enclosure, which should be used as guidance for any new development:

- Throughout the whole of Swanley Village there is generally a strong sense of enclosure along the streets, which contributes to the rural atmosphere and should be retained.
- Both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** use greenery such as tall trees and hedges to create a sense of enclosure, with an emphasis on the arching trees, as shown in Figure 36, which are characteristic of the village.
- The historic streets within the **Conservation Area** are generally narrow and have a 1:1 ratio, shown in Figure 32.
- Along Swanley Village Road, within the **Conversation Area,** a high retaining wall runs along one side often with a hedge, as shown in Figure 34, which is another key characteristic of the village and contributes to the sense of enclosure along the main road.
- Within **New Swanley Village** the level of enclosure varies, however generally it has a more open feel than the Conservation Area due to wider streets and more generous building setbacks on residential streets, as shown in Figure 35.

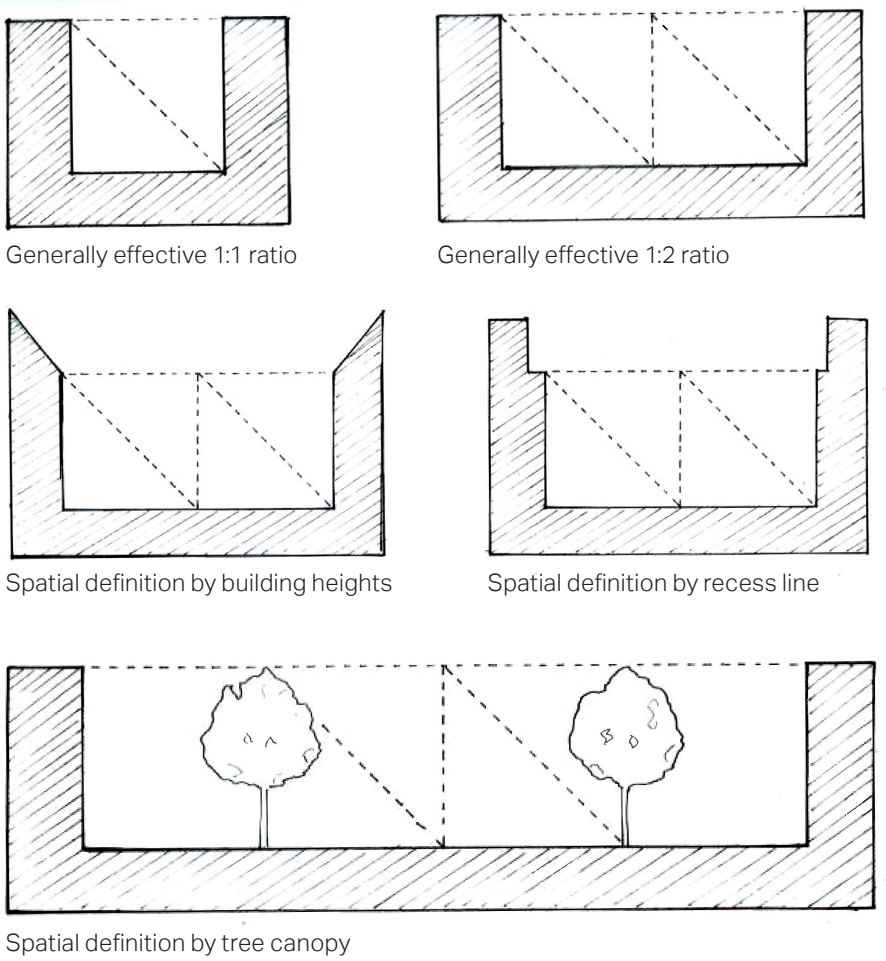


Figure 31: Diagram showing building height to street width ratio to create a good level of enclosure.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 32: Strong sense of enclosure created with tall hedge and building.

Figure 33: Varying sense of enclosure along Swanley Village road due to different building heights, tall trees and varying street widths.

Figure 34: Sense of enclosure created by characteristic retaining wall with hedge.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 35: A wider street and larger building setbacks create a more open feel.

Figure 36: Strong sense of enclosure created by arching trees, a key characteristic of the village.

Figure 37: Large trees create enclosure, while lower bungalows give a sense of openness.

4.05 BOUNDARY TREATMENT

A boundary treatment refers to how a plot addresses the street and helps to define public and private space. A variety of high-quality materials and vegetation used to for low walls and hedges help create a strong identity within Swanley Village. Below are some key considerations regarding boundary treatments:

- New development within both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** should have a boundary treatment of a brick or stone wall or a hedge or other vegetation and should not exceed the maximum height of 1.2m, as shown in Figure 38.
- In the **Conservation Area**, boundary treatment walls should not be demolished.
- In the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village**, wide, open driveways without a boundary treatment should be avoided.
- Where a retaining wall is required within the **Conservation Area,** it can be taller than 1.2m.

4.04 SETBACKS AND FRONT GARDENS

Building setbacks affect the sense on enclosure and contribute to the overall character of a place.

- Within the **Conservation Area** the building setbacks vary. Figure 41 shows only a small setback from the road and a continuous building line giving this area a strong identity.
- The buildings in **New Swanley Village** generally have a larger setback from the street and new development should generally have 3-6m setback.
- Front gardens or landscaping are important in both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** as they contribute to the rural setting of the village by providing additional greenery.

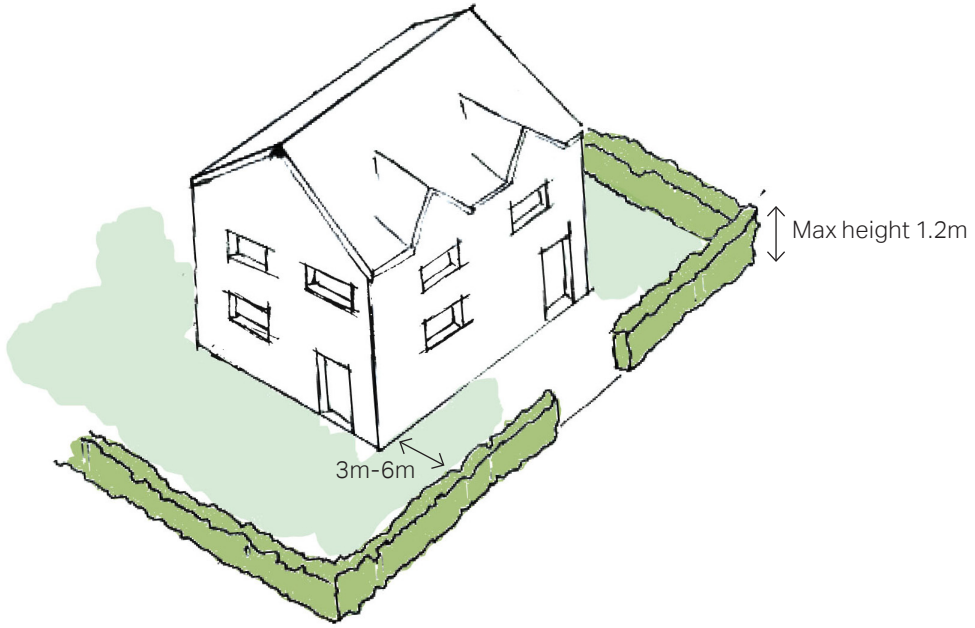


Figure 38: Diagram showing the maximum height of a boundary treatment and distance of a building setback from the street.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 39: Planters acting as a boundary treatment.

Figure 40: Good example of a fence as a boundary treatment.

Figure 41: Metal railing used as a boundary treatment.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 42: Low hedge with flowers as boundary treatement.

Figure 43: Low retaining wall at the boundary of the front garden.

Figure 44: Wide, open driveways should be avoided.

4.06 SCALE, FORM AND MASSING

Built form makes up a large portion of a place meaning the scale, form and massing of buildings can have a big impact on the identity and character of a place. The existing context can guide new development to preserve and enhance the best characteristics of Swanley Village, ensuring a harmonious relationship with neighbouring buildings, spaces and streets. Furthermore, new development should react sensitively to the exisiting environment, especially within the Conservation Area. Below are some of the most important characteristics relating to scale, form and massing for Swanley Village:

- The **Conservation Area** consists mainly of detached houses and short terraces. There are very few semi-detached houses. Along Swanley Village Road there is a tighter urban grain produced by narrow, long plots.
- **New Swanley Village** predominantly consists of larger detached houses which sit on wider, shallow plots.
- Within both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** building heights are a maximum of 2.5 storeys or 6-7.5m to the eaves, therefore new development should be in keeping with the existing heights.
- Figure 48 shows a varied roofline from within the **Conservation Area** creating an exciting and distincitive streetscape. This is achieved by providing subtle changes to the roofline and avoiding monotonous elevations.
- The building within the **Conservation Area** are generally simple rectangular forms.
- The massing of the buildings within **New Swanley Village** contributes to its character as many of the buildings are an L shape, as shown in Figures 45 and 51 These buildings add an additional sense of enclosure to the street.

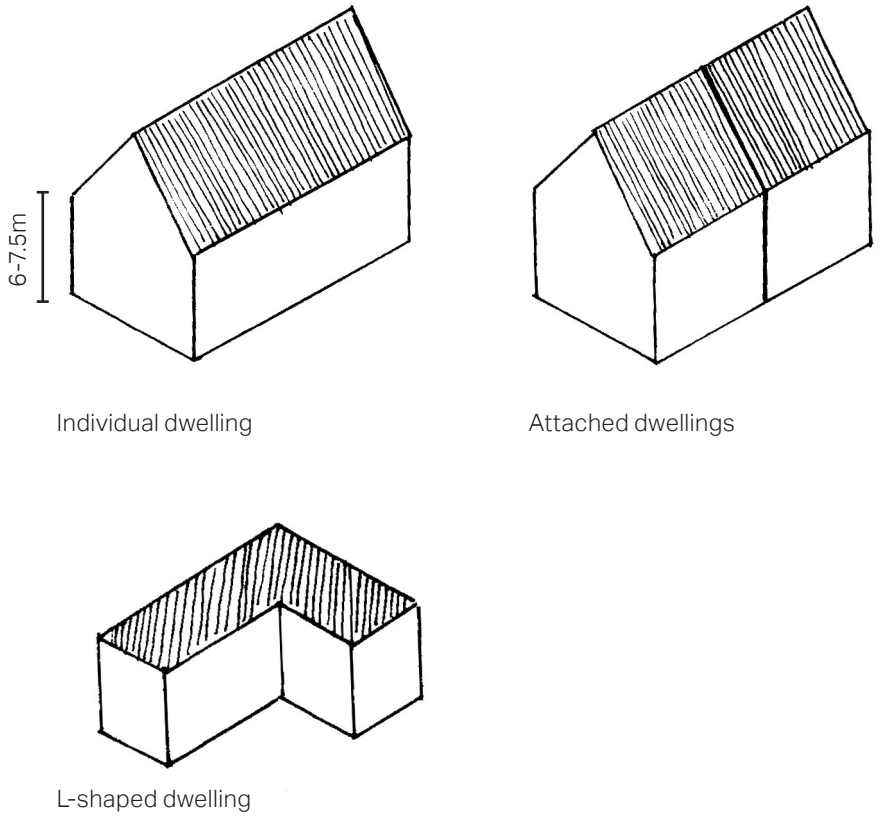


Figure 45: Diagram showing building form and heights.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 46: Victorian domestic architecture, characterised by symmetrical facades and sash windows.

Figure 47: Late 19th Century Model Cottages.

Figure 48: Varied roofline along the main road.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 49: Contemporary detached house.

Figure 50: Bungalow on the outskirts of the village.

Figure 51: L shaped detached house.

4.07 VIEWS

Views can provide framed moments within the built environment which emphasise the appearance of an area and allows us to appreciate its character. Both built and natural landmarks can be used as the focal point of an important view contributing to the character of a place as well as creating legibility, allowing people to easily orientate themselves and navigate around a place. New development should respect the existing views within the village and where appropriate create new focal points or landmarks to improve legibility.

- The winding nature of Swanley Village Road through the **Conservation Area** creates unfolding, short range views to landmark buildings, as shown in Figure 54.
- From certain viewpoints various roofscapes from both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** can be seen from across open green space, as demonstrated in Figure 55.
- In both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** along the streets there are limited views to the countryside due to boundary treatments and woodland lining the streets.
- Within the **Conservation Area** and some of **New Swanley Village** the tree lined streets provide a linear view to a focal point at the end of the street, as shown in Figures 54 and 56.

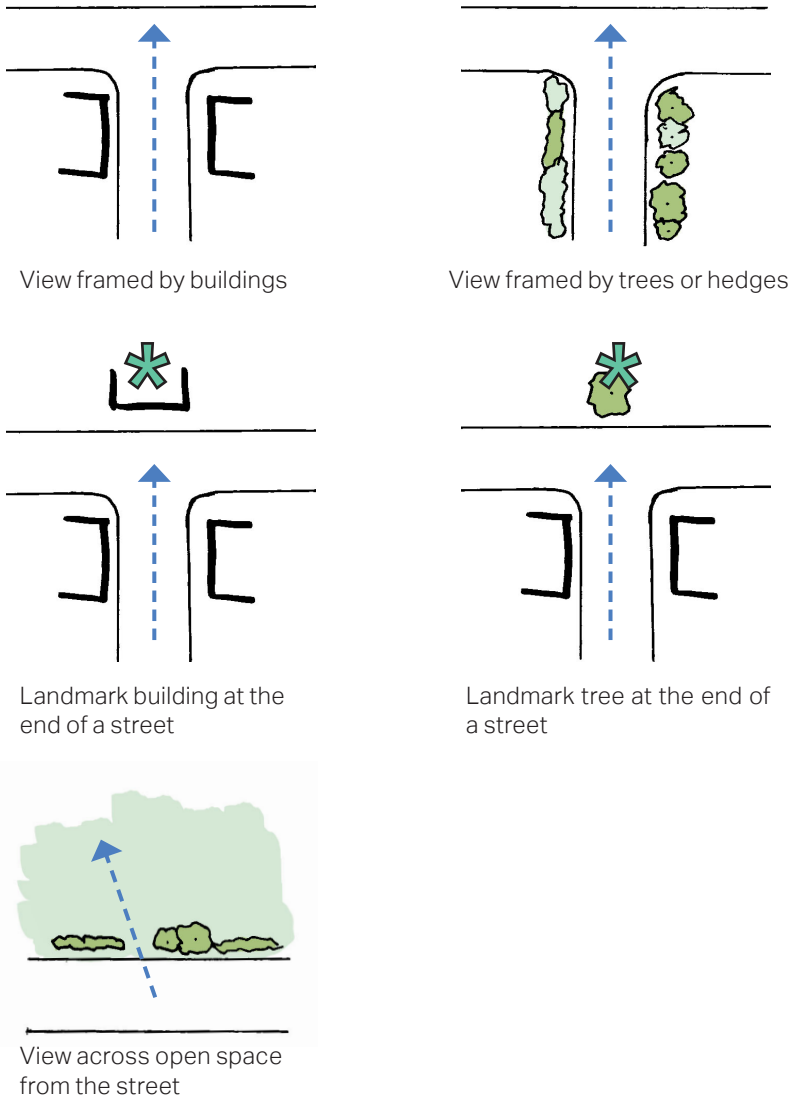


Figure 52: Diagrams showing how framed views and landmarks can be applied.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 53: View along Swanley Village Road with Village signage and distinctive planting.

Figure 54: View along Beechenlea Lane towards Swanley Village Road.

Figure 55: View of roofscape from the village allotments.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 56: View to The Staples housing development from Swanley Village Road.

Figure 57: Mature trees offering a limited view to the countryside along School Lane.

Figure 58: View of contemporary housing along Hotham Close.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

05

5. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

5.01 ROOFSCAPE

The type, scale and materials used for roofs should be in keeping with the existing buildings. The scale of a roof should be designed in proportion to the height of the elevation, with subtle changes in angle of the roof pitch provides variety. Figure 59 indicates some of the most common roof types in Swanley Village and new development should consider the following:

- The **Conservation Area** predominantly consists of steep pitched roofs and M-shaped roofs, shown in Figures 60 and 61. Therefore, shallow pitched and flat roofs should be avoided within this area.
- The roofs within the **Conservation Area** have a simple form which should be respected.
- **New Swanley Village** has a greater variety of roof types, with multiple pitched roofs and hipped roofs more prominent, as shown in Figures 63 and 64.
- New development in both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** should use the architectural detailing and materials from the historical buildings as reference.

5.02 CHIMNEYS

Chimneys can be seen across Swanley Village in all housing types. A modern approach should be taken to chimney design and should only be incorporated where they serve a function.

- Within both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** chimneys should be placed symmetrically to the ridge line and rise above the roof.
- The chimney should match the primary elevation material, which is commonly brick, as shown in Figures 60 and 65. Alternatively, a brick chimney can be used to contrast with the main building material, as shown in Figure 62.

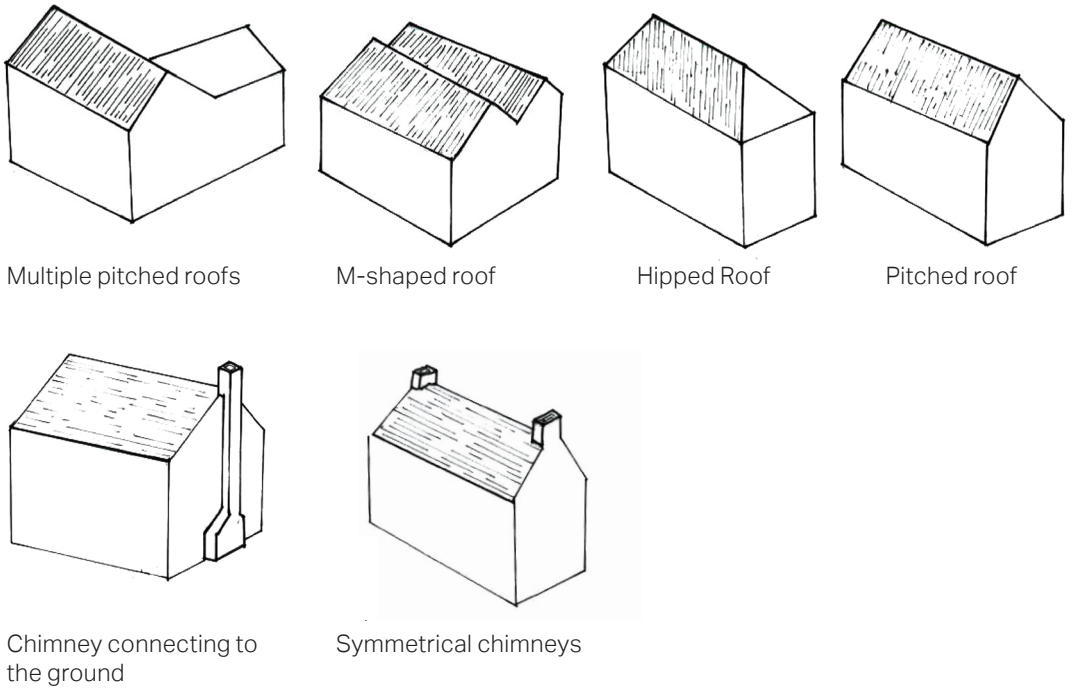


Figure 59: Diagram showing different roof and chimney types.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 60: Pitched roof with symmetrical chimneys.

Figure 61: M-shaped roof.

Figure 62: Brick chimney connected to the ground.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 63: Multiple pitched roofs.

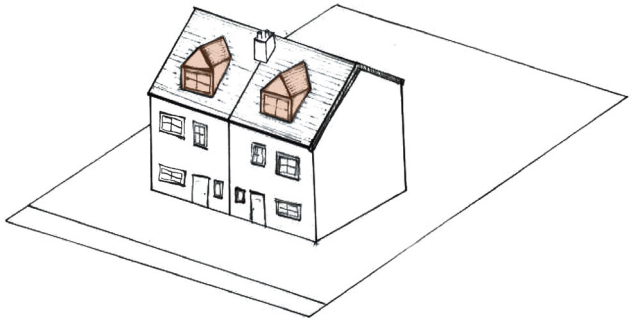
Figure 64: Building with a hipped roof.

Figure 65: Contemporary building with a brick chimney connected to the ground.

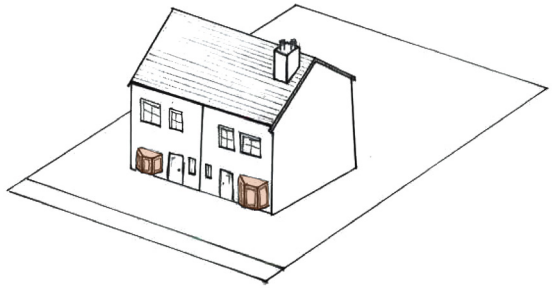
5.04 DORMERS AND BAY WINDOWS

Dormers and bay windows can be used to articulate the elevation of a street and create visual interest. Within Swanley Village dormers are a common feature as older buildings have had them added over time and more recent developments have been designed with them. Bay windows are less common within the village, however where they have been used they provide a unique character to those buildings.

- Within the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** dormer windows should not dominate the roof and should be kept at an appropriate scale. They should also be aligned with the windows below or centred in the middle.
- Bay Windows in the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** should be considered as part of the whole elevation and should be carefully designed to avoid a bulky or flimsy look.



Dormer windows within the roof



Bay windows at the ground floor

5.03 FACADE AND ELEVATION

The front elevation of the buildings within the village should be arranged in an orderly way and should avoid creating cluttered façades. Having ordered buildings elements creates a rhythm along the street which can contribute to the attractiveness of a place.

- Windows within **Conservation area** should adopt a traditional building style, in keeping with the existing buildings. Traditional styles typically use a limited range of patterns allowing uniform window design.
- Windows within **New Swanley Village** can adopt a contemporary or traditional style. Contemporary building styles can use a wider variety of window designs.

Evenly spaced out opening creating a rhythm.

Figure 66: Diagram showing door and window elements.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 67: Dormer window within the Conservation Area.

Figure 68: Symmetrical bay windows.

Figure 69: Windows evenly spaced out and in line with eachother.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 70: Dormer windows.

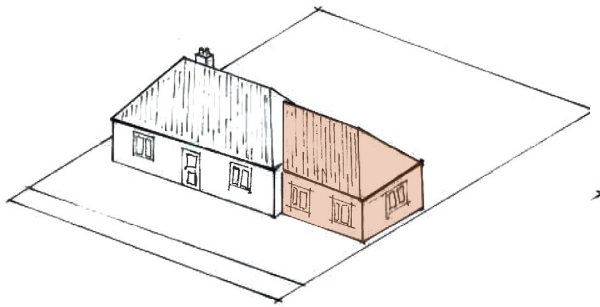
Figure 71: Bay window under a pitched porch.

Figure 72: Windows and doors evenly spaced creating a rhythm.

5.05 EXTENSIONS

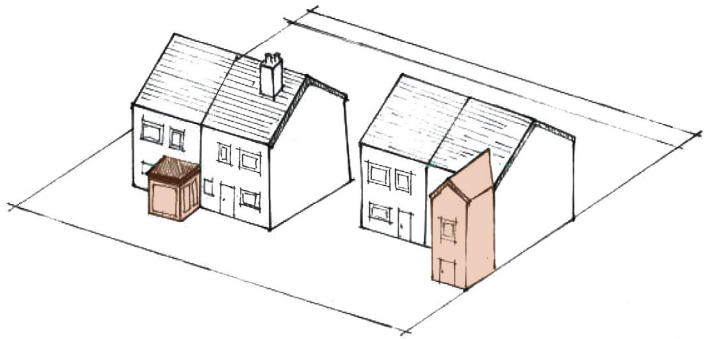
Extending an existing building can be an easy way to create extra space. Within Swanley Village extensions should not negatively impact the character of the village, therefore they must enhance the existing character. Figure 73 shows the most common forms of extensions, to the side or to the rear of a dwelling. Below are some considerations for extensions:

- Within both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** extensions must be designed to an appropriate scale and be secondary to the original building, as shown in Figure 75.
- All extensions should consider the original building's roof, materials and architectural features and be designed to complement these existing elements.
- Side extensions, both single and double storeys should be set back from the main building and flat roofs should be avoided.
- Single-storey rear extensions should be set below any first-floor windows and designed to minimise the effects of neighbouring properties. A flat roof is generally acceptable for a single storey rear extension.
- Double-storey rear extensions are less common but where they are acceptable the roof form and pitch should reflect that of the original building and sit slightly lower than the main ridge of the building.
- Outside the Conservation Area permitted development rights may apply, meaning planning permission is not needed for some development.



Single-storey side extension

Double-storey side extension



Single and double storey rear extension

Figure 73: Diagram showing different types of side and rear extensions.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 74: Double-storey side extension.

Figure 75: Double-storey side extension.

Figure 76: Single-storey side extension.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 77: Single-storey rear conservatory extension.

Figure 78: Double-storey side extension.

Figure 79: Plan indicating location of rear extensions.

5.06 MATERIALS

The common materials and colour palette used throughout a place can create a strong identity for an area, particularly when local materials associated with that region are used. Having a variety of materials can create contrast and interest within the built environment, however they should still complement each other. Some of the most common materials and colours found in Swanley Village can be seen in Figure 80 and below is some guidance for new development regarding materials and colour palette:

- In the **Conservation Area** the use of white weatherboarding is a distinctive characteristic of the area and has been used to clad entire buildings as well as specific sections of a building. Therefore, the use of white weatherboarding, in conjunction with other materials would be acceptable.
- **New Swanley Village** uses building materials that are sympathetic to the Conservation Area and in many cases uses the same materials and colour tones, such as the white weatherboarding can be found on many of the buildings in this area as well.
- In both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village** the materials and colours used on buildings and within the streetscape should be kept to a limited number to allow some regularity and strength the village's identity.

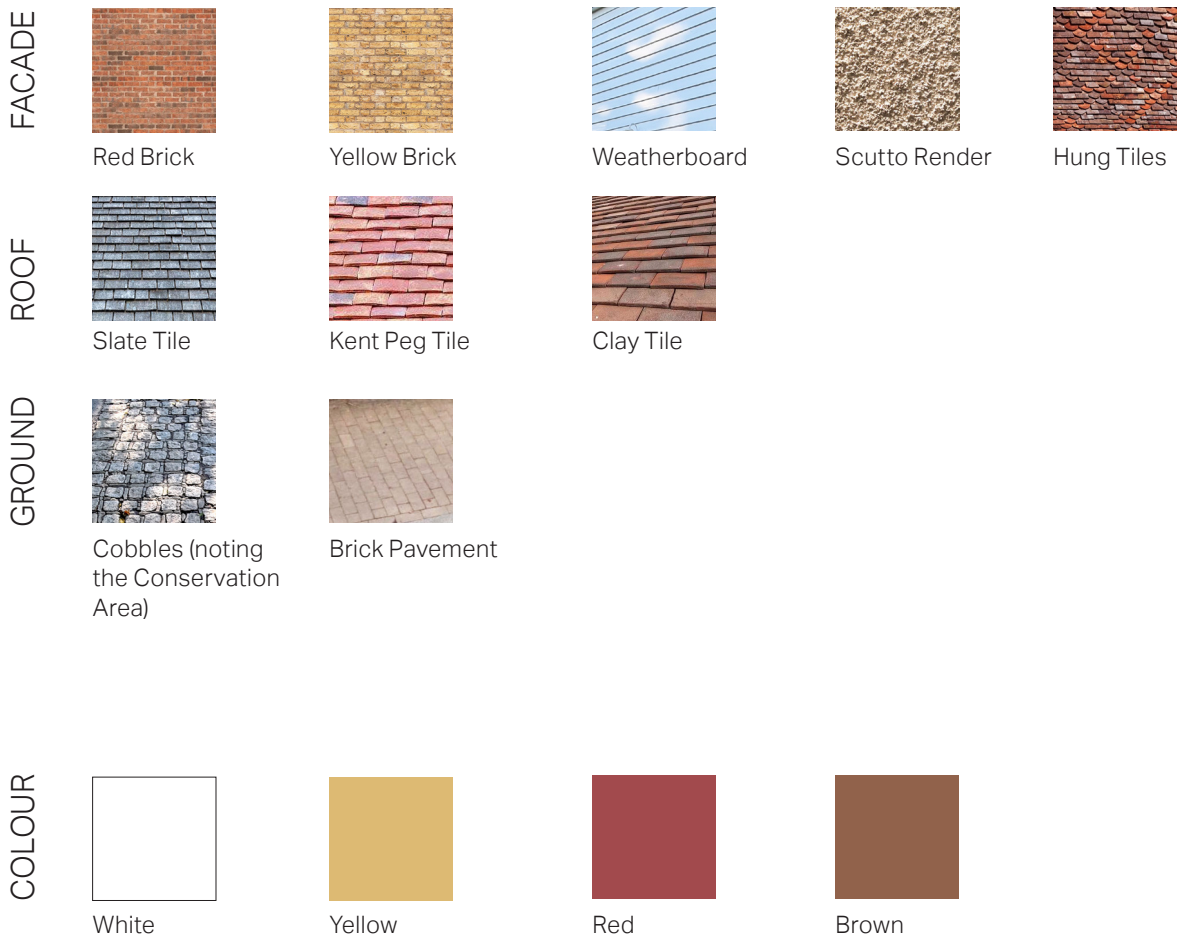


Figure 80: Materials and colour palette for Swanley Village.

CONSERVATION AREA

Figure 81: Traditional white weatherboarding used to create a contemporary finish.

Figure 82: Victorian building with red brick.

Figure 83: Dwelling with white render and contrasting red brick.

NEW SWANLEY VILLAGE

Figure 84: Characteristic white weatherboard and yellow bricks.

Figure 85: Roof detailing influenced from details within the Conservation Area.

Figure 86: Vertical hung tiles used on facade of the building.

ECO-DESIGN & BUILDING SERVICES

05

6. ECO-DESIGN & BUILDING SERVICES

6.01 INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is a key design driver for new development. This section introduces energy efficient technologies and strategies that could be incorporated into buildings.

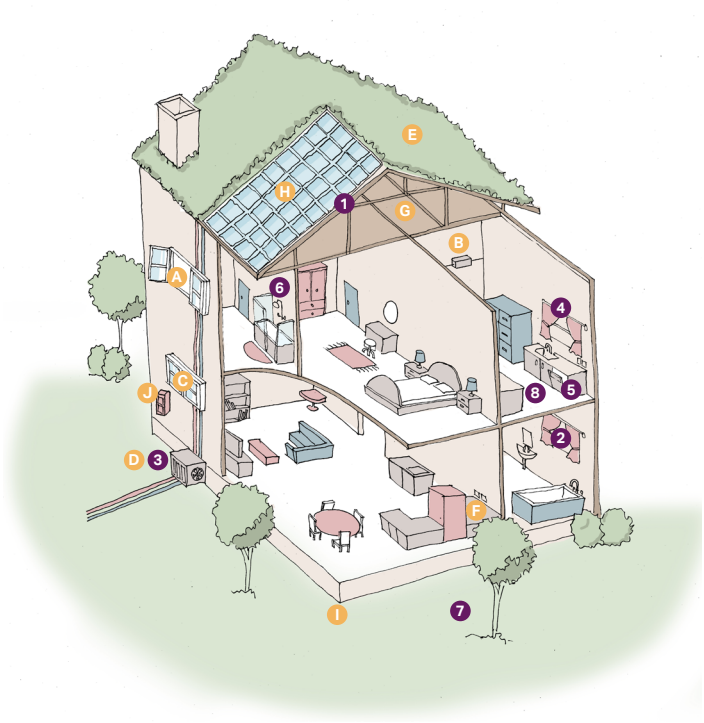
Energy efficient or ecological design combines all round energy efficient construction, appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar water heating and solar electricity.

Strategies should be in place from the design stage to incorporate passive solar heating and cooling as well as producing energy efficient landscaping which should be determined by local climate and site conditions.

The aim of these interventions is to reduce overall domestic energy use in a cost effective manner.

Building services are integral to ensuring buildings are efficient and meet the needs of the user. Consideration for the design of these building services should be incorporated early in the design process in order to achieve the best solutions.

The solutions described on the following pages can be applied to both the **Conservation Area** and **New Swanley Village**.



EXISTING HOMES

1. **Insulation** in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)
2. **Double or triple glazing with shading** (e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)
3. **Low- carbon heating** with heat pumps or connections to district heat network
4. **Draught proofing** of floors, windows and doors
5. **Highly energy- efficient appliances** (e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)
6. **Highly waste- efficient devices** with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats
7. **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)** to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating
8. **Flood resilience and resistance** with removable air back covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors

NEW BUILD HOMES

- A **High levels of airtightness**
- B **More fresh air** with the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling
- C **Triple glazed windows and external shading** especially on south and west faces
- D **Low-carbon heating** and no new homes on the gas grid by 2025 at the latest
- E **Water management and cooling** more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs and reflective walls
- F **Flood resilience and resistance** e.g. raised electrical, concrete floors and greening your garden
- G **Construction and site planning** timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)
- H **Solar panel**
- I **Building orientation** to maximise solar gain - where practical, the main orientation of the building should be within 30° of south, with trees to shade the building in the summer
- J **Electric vehicle charging point** also known as EV charging point

Figure 87: Low-carbon measures for existing and new build homes (adapted from the Committee on Climate Change).

6.02 SOLAR ROOF PANELS

Solar panels on roofs should be designed to reduce their visual impact. On new buildings, they should be incorporated 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.

For retrofits the proportions of the existing building and roof surface should be considered to identify the best location and sizing of the panels. Any wiring and other necessary installations should be concealed. In order to integrate the solar panels, tiles or slates of different colours could be added to the roof.

6.03 GREEN ROOFS

Green roofs can be used to improve drainage and add to biodiversity, as well as adding attractiveness. Whether the roof is partially or completely covered with vegetation, their design should follow some design principles, such as:

- Planned for from the start and integrated into the design.
- Easy to reach in order for maintenance.
- It should complement the surrounding landscape.
- When in a sensitive location, should help to integrate the building with the countryside.
- Should be designed comprehensively with other eco-design solutions.

Figure 88: Solar panels integrated sympathetically with a traditional building.

Figure 89: Solar panels integrated with a contemporary design in New Swanley Village.

Figure 90: Modern building design with a green roof.

Figure 91: Green roof used to integrate the building with the countryside.

6.04 RAINWATER HARVESTING

Rainwater harvesting is a system for capturing and storing rainwater as well as enabling the reuse of in-situ grey water. These systems should be integral to the design vision to avoid unsightly pipes and storage systems being visible. Some design considerations include:

- Concealing tanks with complementary cladding.
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes.
- Combine landscape or planters with water capture systems.
- Use underground tanks.

Figure 92: Water tank cladded with a complementary material.

Figure 93: Concealed tanks integrated with the design.

6.05 WATER STORAGE AND SERVICING

Modern requirements for waste separation and recycling has meant an increasing number of bins are needed for each household, however if not stored properly bins can clutter the appearance of the public realm. Waste storage should be considered throughout the design process with the following recommendations:

- Create a specific enclosure of a sufficient size for all the necessary bins.
- Unattractive and unsafe rear alleyways between back garden fences must be avoided.

Figure 94: Modern bin storage.

Figure 95: Waste storage being used as a boundary treatment.

IMPLEMENTATION

08

7. IMPLEMENTATION

DELIVERY

This Design Guide will be a valuable tool when securing context-driven, high-quality development within Swanley Village. The design guidelines will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table.

Stakeholders	How to use this guideline
Applicants, developers, landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty- they will be expected to follow the guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with and for use in developing Neighbourhood Plan policies.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

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