

## Appendix 1

### By Design – Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice (DETR 2000)

The guide is intended as a companion to the Planning Policy Framework and to stimulate design and to stimulate the planning 'toolkit'.

The guide states that understanding the local context should be the prelude to drawing up the planning 'toolkit'.

A range of techniques is available, but the guide states that carrying out an appraisal is more important than the specific technique used and a simple assessment is better than none. The guide provides pointers to understanding an area in terms of its urban design.

The guide sets out a series of checklists to act as a guide to the assessment of an area. They are not meant to be followed slavishly. Understanding the local context does not require every item on the checklists to be examined on every occasion and in every place or in the same depth. The checklists provide pointers to understanding an area in terms of its urban design and the following elements have been particularly relevant to the Loose Road area of Maidstone town:

#### Character

*A place with its own identity*

Appraisals can include assessments of:

- the origins and development of the topography of the area, including surviving elements of historic street patterns, plot subdivisions, boundary treatments and the relationships between buildings and spaces;
- the architecture and historic quality, character and coherence of buildings, both listed and unlisted, and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area;
- the character and hierarchy of spaces and their townscape quality;
- prevalent and historic building materials;
- the contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces, trees, hedges and other cultivated elements;
- the area's prevailing (or former) uses, plan forms and building types;
- the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside, including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas;
- features which have been lost, or which intrude on or detract from the character of the area.

## **Continuity of building frontages and enclosure of public spaces**

*A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished*

Techniques include identifying and mapping:

- gap sites and abnormal setbacks which interrupt the common building line of the street;
- instances where the backs of buildings are exposed to public view and access (as in the case of back gardens on to roads, alleys and public spaces);
- active and dead frontages at ground floor level: positive factors such as entrances, shopfronts and windows; and negative factors such as long blank facades and high boundary walls, and service entrances and yards;
- active and dead frontages at upper floors: positive factors such as windows of habitable rooms overlooking public space; and negative factors such as blank gable walls and unused space over shops;
- places where buildings meet the public realm: boundary treatments such as gates, railings, fences and boundary walls; front gardens and in-curtilage parking; and servicing;
- spatial enclosure: the relationship between the heights of buildings and the spaces they define;
- planting (such as trees and hedges), natural features, land form, and retaining walls which define and enclose blocks and spaces.

## **Quality of the public realm**

*A place with attractive and successful outdoor*

Public realm audits can include assessments of:

- hard landscaping (paving materials, kerbs, walls, steps and ramps);
- planting (trees, planters, grassed areas, flowers and borders);
- street furniture (seats, bins, bollards and railings);
- lighting (pavement, pedestrian, highway, security, building and feature);
- shopfronts (thresholds, glazing, stall risers, signs, banners and shutters).
- advertisements (hoardings, kiosks and banners);
- traffic and highways installations (including highway markings, traffic signals and control boxes);
- public space use and management (informal use as well as formal, events, markets, graffiti removal, litter collection and street cleansing).

## **Legibility**

*A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand*

Appraisals of:

- gateways and points of transition (at main entry points, between different areas and at transitions between different uses);
- nodes (important junctions and points of interaction);
- landmarks and features (important buildings, corners);
- views and vistas (seen from within the area and from the outside);
- edges, seams and barriers (including the boundaries between different zones and areas, and streets which integrate or sever).

## Appendix 2

### Participating Residents Associations and Groups

Acorns Residents Association

Bessels Green and Packhorse Road Residents Association

Bradbourne Vale Residents Association

Dunton Green Faithworks

Granville Road and Eardley Road Residents Association

Greatness Residents Association

Hopgarden Residents Association

Knole Paddock Residents Association

St. Botolphs Residents Association

St Johns Residents Association

The Drive Residents Association

Tubbs Hill Parade Residents Association

White Hart Residents Association

Wilderness Residents Association