

Section 3 – Design Considerations & Development Standards

Neighbourhood - Compact Settlement



Compact settlement and high quality public open space

3.1 General Guiding Principles

Place Making

This approach to place-making is based on basic human requirements and a desire to create strong vibrant communities, memorable places and sustainable architecture. Traditional housing developments have tended to ignore architectural quality confirming a lack of ambition and dignity towards its residents and the wider community.

A new approach is necessary to reverse this current malaise through an integrated approach of considered architecture and urban design principles.

With an ever increasing urban migration there is a need to foster more integrated neighbourhoods which offer opportunities for intensive human scale compositions through the grouping of dwellings and other essential facilities. We can identify with this approach through our experience of squares, crescents, avenues, terraces and diamonds which have evolved over generations and contributed to a sense of place.

The fundamental aspect of these urban components were the varying scales and complexity, interwoven with mixed uses. They remain in our memories through this basic evolution for human needs which is central to a unique sense of identity and place-making.



Places defined by its landscape amenity



Landscape and townscape



A sense of civic pride

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Permeability – Connecting Communities

This means the ease with which people can move about and get to their destinations. The physical structure of roads and buildings will determine where people can and can not go. The more choice there is the more permeable the area.

Variety - Design

It is very important that there is variety within our environment. It is essential that elements are introduced to this area to make it distinctive from other areas in the City and in the County. This diversity can be achieved in a number of ways, by incorporating natural and man-made landscape elements into the design and layout of future developments, by introducing focal points at key locations, through the quality of architecture and by introducing different housing types. This variety leads to a higher richer environmental quality.

3.1 General Guiding Principles cont'd

Place making

The design and layout of an area is an extremely important aspect of planning. It reflects both the quality of the environment and the perception of the environment amongst its users, i.e. the residents and visitors.

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Soft Edge Interface - Urban + Rural

3.2 Boundary Treatment



Careful consideration and sensitivity is needed for native planting, which provide 'green lungs' and contribute to the biodiversity for the overall development of the area and context.

Trees—provide an instant scale, visual screening and natural edge to any built environment and soften the impact of a man-made built environment.

The treatment of boundaries and edges is an important element that provides an attractive setting and a link to the surrounding local environment. It is a particularly important element within this Action Area Plan due to the different land uses adjoining each other.

- No scheme should be considered in isolation. Every developer should agree to the provision of connections to adjacent sites in order to increase permeability.
- High concrete or block walls which isolate individual developments shall be discouraged in favour of softer landscaped proposals which integrate with existing developments while providing a sense of privacy.

Native planting edge to allow a soft landscaped transition zone to new development



Avoid hard blockwork edge with landscape



Use of local stone and hedgerows



Hedgerows provide a soft edge

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3.3 Open Space & Landscaping Principles

Landscaping is an integral part of any development. The appearance, maintenance and presentation of public spaces, footpaths, streets and amenity areas are a vital aspect of civic design quality.

- High quality, safe pedestrian and cycle routes within the Action Area Plan boundary should be provided throughout.
- Paving, planting, lighting, signage and other street furniture should complement the character of the development and of the area.
- Provide a looped network of pedestrian / cycle links between all areas, where appropriate, to allow for sustainable movement, permeability and accessibility.
- Provide a network of attractive civic open spaces along key pedestrian routes to provide functional links within the pedestrian network.
- Encourage the provision of open space / small parks in all development parcels to allow for local amenity / recreational space for the community.
- When selecting plant species for landscaping, consideration should be taken of the proposed location and its attendant character such as soil conditions, pollution, safety, maintenance requirements, the possibility of vandalism and aesthetic potential. The planting of native species will be encouraged.
- Existing healthy trees should be protected and retained. Where the trees are to be located in rear gardens of new dwellings, the building should normally be sited at least 11.5 metres beyond the spread of the tree. This distance may be reduced to 6m for front gardens and 2m in the case of flank walls.
- Developments should include new trees within the site, the number to be agreed prior to development.
- The developer will be responsible for the grading, hard landscaping, planting and further development of any open space, including the provision of pedestrian paths and other facilities. The developer will be required to provide roadside trees, street planting and screen planting, where necessary.
- Public lighting should be appropriate for the area. Lighting levels must create a secure environment. Pedestrian areas, in particular, should be well illuminated, with care given to vehicle/pedestrian meeting points in order to create a safer environment.
- Innovative lighting can extend the use and enhance the overall character of public space.
- Public art can make a major contribution to giving a place character and identity. The incorporation of artwork with the Action Area Plan boundary, and in particular in the public open space is encouraged.

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3.4 Access & Car Parking

Access and car parking are important elements of an area. There will be a number of new access points within the Action Area Plan boundary. These are highlighted on **Map 5**.

- Car parking should not dominate the built environment. All parking facilities should be well lit, open to natural surveillance and have obvious pedestrian routes.
- Car parking should not form the front edge of any development, this would erode the urban form & its legibility.
- Sufficient space will be required within the curtilage of the site for all service vehicles involved in the operation of the business or building.
- Where there is a difficulty in providing surface car parking spaces, the Planning Authority shall require the developer make a financial contribution towards the provision of car parking facilities under the provisions of the Development Contribution Scheme.
- Parking and service spaces should be designed and located in such a manner as to ensure minimal injury to streetscape and the amenity of adjoining premises.
- Encourage grouped car parking which allows for a clear separation between the vehicular circulation areas and the circulation areas used by pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled.
- Parking and service spaces must be located so as to prevent street obstruction and should be located, where possible, in areas which are adequately supervised.
- Where parking is allowed in highly visible locations, adequate screening or landscaping must be provided to soften the impact of parked cars.
- When considering car park developments surrounded by buildings, the Planning Authority shall require front and rear facades to be treated with equal prominence and design aesthetics.
- Reasonable provision shall be made for parking facilities for the disabled. Special car parking bays for the disabled shall be provided as close as possible to the entrance of the premises to be served. Each disabled parking bay shall be clearly marked with the relevant international symbol.

3.5 Co-Ordination of Development

A key aim of this Action Area Plan is to ensure that development occurs in a co-ordinated manner. Therefore all planning applications should take cognisance of the design and layout of the adjoining sites, if available. Co-ordination between developments is encouraged to create strong street lines and good urban development. Pre-planning meetings are recommended.

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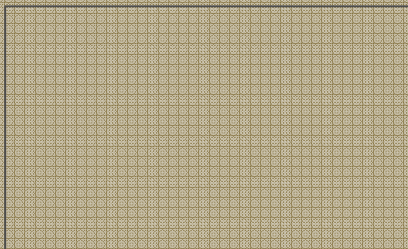


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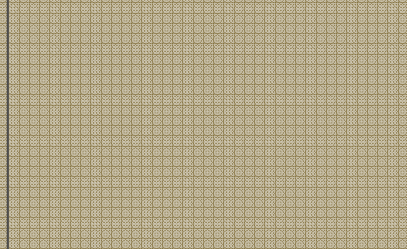


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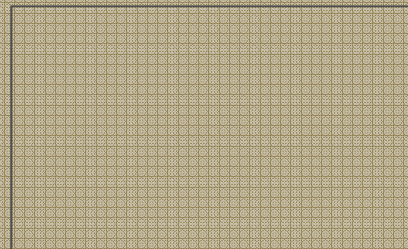


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Access & Car Parking , Cont'd

- Dedicated service parking areas will be required for vehicles involved in the operation of business in such activities as the delivery and collection of goods, the carrying out of repair and maintenance services. Each new premise proposed for office, commercial or industrial use must include within the curtilage of the building one or more loading bays of an adequate size to cater for its specific needs and the requirements of the type of vehicle serving the premises.
- Cycle facilities shall be provided in conjunction with new developments or change of use proposals. Stands should be in a secure location and conveniently located.

3.5 Infrastructural Services

- All new developments connecting to the existing watermains should consult with Galway City Council and include full details on the watermain layout of pipe sizes, location of all valves, hydrants, bulk water meter with any application for planning permission.
- All new developments connecting to the existing surface water network watermains should consult with Galway City Council and include full details of surface water sewer, pipe sizes, ground/invert levels, petrol/grit interceptors with any application for planning permission.
- All new developments unable to connect to the existing surface water network shall include full details of surface water collection and disposal in accordance with 'best practice' and details of surface water sewer layout, pipe sizes, ground/invert levels, attenuation design, petrol/grit interceptors with any application for planning permission.
- All new developments connecting to the existing foul sewer should consult with Galway City Council and include full details on the foul sewer network, effluent loading, longitudinal sections, pipe sizes, ground and invert levels, pipe gradient and discharge details with any application for planning permission.
- All new development proposals unable to connect to the existing public sewerage system wastewater will be dependent on 'on-site' private treatment systems, which must be designed and constructed in strict accordance with EPA Guidelines, in particular, EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals—Treatment Systems for Single Houses & Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels.

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