

EAST LINDSEY DESIGN GUIDANCE

GUIDANCE ON THE PLACE MAKING CHECK LIST



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GUIDANCE ON THE PLACE-MAKING CHECK LIST

INTRODUCTION

Good design goes with good planning, the two are interlinked and both lead to making places better for people. Good design is not just about buildings, it is also about pleasant, safe, usable, public and private spaces.

The East Lindsey place-making checklist has been developed as a tool kit to be used by parties involved in both the planning application process and decision making to ensure that there is a consistent approach to design principles across the District. It aims to support improvement in the quality and design of the built environment.



The Council believes that potato stamping or cookie-cutting design is unacceptable. Development needs to reflect the sense of place that is East Lindsey.

The place-making checklist is based on six key design principles. Those principles are explained more fully below.

There will be occasions when the Council consider a site very important in terms of its location within a settlement. The sites potential impact and influence on the wider visual or historic environment of that town or village are such that the Council needs to ensure that any development on it conforms to an agreed set of principles, unique to that site. On those occasions, developers will be provided by the Council at the earliest stage possible in the planning process with a short, simple design brief. The Council will support on design grounds development that complies with that brief and the place-making list.

SIX KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. A SENSE OF CHARACTER

All too often development does not relate well to its setting. Therefore the best place to start for the design of a development should be an assessment of the character and appearance of the area.

To create a sense of character is not necessarily about copying what is already there; badly designed pastiche of historical development can be just as damaging to an areas character as poorly thought out contemporary design.

There are two ways to create character and identity in a settlement.

- (i) **Reinforce what is already there, where it is of good quality, or**
- (ii) **Create a new identity.**

There are visual cues in any settlement that should be drawn on in order to create a sense of that place. It could be an over-arching style, the form of the buildings, skyline, the landscape, materials, colours, textures or shapes, landmark buildings, the layout of the streets and spaces.

The scale and density of an area also contributes to its sense of character. The Council has not set within its policies a standard number of houses per hectare that all development sites must conform to. This is because, to have a simple calculation of "so many houses per hectare" can be misleading and could lead to poor design.

To determine the appropriate density for a site the following factors should be considered;

- The local environment
- Integration into the surrounding landscape;
- space around buildings;
- highways and parking;
- existing features within the site that should be retained such as trees and hedges.



Some places with a sense of Character in East Lindsey –



Still in East Lindsey but it could be anywhere?

2. STREETS AND SPACES SHAPED BY BUILDINGS

Streets are crucial to the success of a place. A healthy settlement should have a network of interconnected streets and spaces that allows people to move around easily, these streets have active edges with buildings facing the street, not turning their back on it. Developments should be designed to maximise available sunlight, and minimise overshadowing and domination of adjacent properties

Buildings along streets in areas where shoppers move around should have active frontages, afforded by shops, cafes, restaurants and even supermarkets. Rather than buildings being sited in a sea of car parking and tarmac with no relationship to the street, being able to see into buildings makes the street feel more involved and vibrant. Shops need to spill out onto the street; people should be able to window shop and walk safely between shops and businesses.

Development should not obstruct focal points within a town or village, and respect views out to the surrounding countryside.

The demand for car parking can be a contributing factor to poor design. Roads in historic areas have a very different appearance and character to roads in new estates. Examine carefully the existing road pattern of the area, new development if possible should reflect the form and pattern of historic roads in towns and villages.



**No relationship
between
the street and the
buildings.**

**Car dominated
development**



Streets shaped by buildings in East Lindsey



3. ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY

Buildings should be well proportioned, robust, practical, fit for purpose and adaptable. They should be constructed in good quality materials that reflect the character and appearance of the area.

Whether you are building in historic areas or in an area which has many newer buildings the materials you use should always reflect the colour and character of the area. Ask yourself "how do the materials weather? Are they suitable for their purpose? Do they enhance the surrounding buildings?

The detailing on buildings is equally important. Articulation of building facades with projections or recessions in the elevations, or by using fenestration, balconies etc. will soften larger building forms, break down the appearance of building mass and provide visual interest.

The incorporation of art or sculptural elements can create a unique image for the building or its context.

The nighttime appearance of a building should be considered. Appropriate lighting can assist the building to continue its function after dark (for example, landmark structures or sites which maintain their visual prominence through lighting) and can be used to create striking night time compositions.

Many parts of the District are architecturally interesting because of their historical context and the traditional materials used. The development of today is potentially the heritage of the future.

Contemporary buildings, can be striking in their appearance and detail. The approach to the design will depend on the streetscape context and the function of the building.

Modern materials include stainless steel, glass, polished concrete, coloured panels. However, ranges of materials are seen in contemporary architecture, both new and traditional, it is the way these materials are used and their composition, which will create a contemporary appearance.

Traditional materials can be shaped into contemporary forms if they are used in new and innovative ways. Stone, for example, can take on a different appearance if it is used for cladding rather than in load bearing walls; structural steel frames can be exposed rather than concealed.

The most important aspect of material selection is to ensure that the materials used will require minimal maintenance and weather well. Preference should always be given to high quality materials, which will last well throughout the building's lifetime.



High quality design in East Lindsey, using good quality materials, both modern and traditional.

Where is this - anywhere?



No relationship to the street, the car appears to dominate.

4. EASY FOR EVERYONE TO GET AROUND

The routes into and through development must be direct, safe, attractive and easy for every one of all abilities to use. Having dead end cul de sacs, confusing road junctions and dwellings that all look identical can lead to a place that is not only unattractive but a place that does not have any sense of community. Good design needs to think about encouraging people to come out of their houses and be easily able to walk around. Is there a way to create a direct access to any nearby facilities such as shops or recreation facilities? This can help to make a place more sustainable. It is essential that developments are designed to minimise the conflict between vehicles, cyclist and pedestrians.

Public spaces need to be overlooked for them to be and feel safe. Having buildings overlooking public space is also more likely to result in places where residents take a greater sense of ownership and interest in what's happening outside their front door. It's also not a good idea to have fences backing onto public spaces as it makes them vulnerable to theft.



Well designed public space in Louth and Mablethorpe



Public places and spaces should be able to pass the “sandwich test” in that they should be places you want to go and sit, feel safe, relaxed and have your sandwich. Development should be assessed

for what is like after dark with accessibility not being compromised by the time of day or night.



Public access an afterthought.



Would you eat your sandwiches here?

5. INTERESTING PLACES

It is important that developments are interesting. Mixed uses, which create activity on a site, are preferable. Using landscaping, materials and detailing on buildings, colour and roofscapes all add to create interest to a site. Key developments in a place give it a sense of identity and also help people navigate around. "Go left at the large white building on the corner" "Go past the war memorial and market place" Corner sites are particularly important, they can create interest in a streetscape and good quality design on a corner site can very quickly become iconic in the minds of local residents.



**Are you interested in these places?
Do you want to go and visit?**



Are you still interested?

6. BUILT TO LAST GENERATIONS

It is important both on sustainability grounds and with regard to visual amenity to create buildings that will adapt to different uses. "Throw away" buildings are unacceptable. Think about the use you are going to initially make of a development. What would happen if that use became redundant?

Buildings that are flexible and adaptable are key to sustainable architectural design.

Building facades should be orientated to maximise solar gain. The potential for natural light and passive solar gain can be maximised by trying to design buildings on an east-west alignment with a glazed south facing elevation wherever possible. It is also important to ensure that any taller buildings are located on the north side of a building to reduce overshadowing. Additional insulation should be used to control gains and losses.

The production of construction materials has direct impacts on the environment in terms of natural resources, pollution and energy. It is important therefore try and use locally sourced materials from a sustainably managed resource (i.e. timber plantations) and which have low energy consumption during manufacturing.

Where there is demolition of existing buildings consideration should be given to the reuse of construction materials. This will contribute to the reduction of pollution caused by land infill disposal of materials.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (Suds) must be considered as part of any development proposal to reduce and delay water runoff from hard surfaces to the public sewers and watercourses, thus reducing the risk of localised flooding, pollution and other environmental damage. This could be achieved through the incorporation of porous paving, local soak-aways or by the use of green roofs. Lincolnshire County Council are the approving body for SUDs in East Lindsey.

Where appropriate, mechanisms for harnessing alternative power supplies such as photovoltaic cells, ground source heat pumps and Combined Heating Power Systems (CHP) should be considered as part of the design for all new development to ensure that they are more energy efficient. This will have long-term economic benefits,

help to reduce fuel poverty and make a positive contribution the reduction of the country's carbon emissions.

A good reuse of buildings in East Lindsey



A church to a retail unit



Pub to social housing



Railway building to housing

7. UNIQUE STRATEGIC SITES

There will be occasions when the Council consider a site so important in terms of its location within a town or village, that it will warrant special attention with regards to design.

These are sites that will have a wide reaching impact and influence on the wider visual or historic environment of a town or village. The Council will wish to ensure that any development on such a site conforms to an agreed set of principles, unique to that site.

On those occasions, you will be provided at the earliest stage possible in the planning process with a short design brief. It is hoped that this brief can be agreed with both yourselves and the Council and built into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). It is therefore important to contact the Planning Department if you believe you have a Unique Strategic Site.

The Council has a standard Planning Performance Agreement Proforma available on its website at www.e-lindsey.....

The Council will support on design grounds development that complies with that brief and the place-making checklist.

The sites this section refers to would include;

- Gateway sites into a settlement
- All supermarket applications
- Applications over 0.5ha within a designated town centre.
- Applications on sites over 4ha

Keeping to the design brief and taking into account the place making check list will help you secure planning permission on your site.

HOW THE COUNCIL WILL USE THE PLACE MAKING CHECK LIST

All development excluding minor household developmentⁱ in the District should be able to satisfy the Councils place-making checklist. It is hoped that this simple traffic-light tool kit, which will help achieve consistent high quality outcomes across the District irrespective of architectural styles or tastes.

With regard to design, you should refer to the Councils Core Strategy Policy X – Raising the Quality of Our Built Environment.

You could use the checklist in a number of ways;

- You could complete the checklist, explaining how your development meets the standards the Councils expects with regard to design and submit it with your Design and Access Statement.
- You could use the checklist as aid memoir to supplement the details in your Design and Access Statement.

The Planning Officer who is assigned to your planning application will be working to the checklist and should refer back to it if they need to make comments about your development.

ⁱ Minor Development within the context of this policy is that which falls within classes C, D, F, G, and H of Part A of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 and Part 2 of that order and any subsequent Order which may supersede it.