

Plumpton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Design Statement

DS 1 Introduction

This design statement has been prepared to guide the appearance of new development in Plumpton Parish in the lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan. The aim is to ensure that housing and other development is sympathetic to and enhances the rural character of the Parish. This includes restrictions on the speed of traffic to help ensure safety of pedestrians and cyclists, low rise buildings so views are not obstructed, encouraging wildlife-friendly features, and encouraging and preserving open green spaces (see the evidence report of the Landscape and Biodiversity Topic Group). These guidelines will also apply to developments and changes to existing housing and environs, open spaces, walls, hedges and fences where planning permission is required.

DS 2 The settings of new developments

New developments will be in clusters of no more than 20 houses in one area. This reflects strong opinion of the village (see Policy 3 in the Neighbourhood Plan). Designs will be high quality, in keeping with the local landscape character and blend with the existing early 20th century and traditional Sussex buildings. The importance of dark night skies must be respected. Development proposals should not adversely impact on listed buildings and their settings.

DS 3 Types of residential development

Developments should have a high proportion of 2-3 bed houses suitable for small families. They should include some 1-2 bed starter homes and smaller homes built to Lifetime Homes standards for older people and those with disabilities. Proposals for sheltered housing, self-build schemes, flats or large houses will be considered on their merits.

DS 4 Ecological impact

Preference will be given to developments which incorporate a high level of ecological understanding, such as low embodied energy, low energy consumption, living roofs, etc. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be used to enhance the local biodiversity and for aesthetic enhancement. Solar water collectors and/or solar photovoltaic panels or tiles would be desirable unless there is a living roof.

DS 5 Energy efficiency

Rigorous standards for energy efficiency must be applied, reducing the ongoing ecological footprint of the building, mitigating climate change and ensuring low energy bills for residents. This is especially important in rural communities where fuel poverty can be an issue, and in Plumpton in particular where there is no mains gas. Passive housing design will be supported, whereby the house is insulated to the extent that heating is not required. This has been achieved in an affordable housing development in Burwash, East Sussex.

DS 6 Wildlife

The design of all development and housing should be as compact as possible, of a size and density to minimize impact on the existing local countryside.

Developments should seek to avoid damage to wildlife and its habitats, where damage will occur adequate mitigation or compensation will be expected.

Developments should preserve and create new corridors for wildlife. To this end the use of open fencing, such as post and rail or hedging, is to be encouraged, along with features such as open spaces, ponds and trees. Planting should incorporate a significant proportion of native species of local provenance.

Housing should incorporate bird, bat and other wildlife-friendly features into the structure of the new build as appropriate.

Where new access routes are planned, planting should include wildflower verges and native trees.

Where drainage and/or water retention is required, developers are required to use SuDS practices that provide increased benefit to wildlife and improve the aesthetic enhancement of the built area.

Incorporating green roofs to housing can enhance wildlife and should be incorporated into development proposals where appropriate.

Mini wind turbines on buildings should be avoided as a hazard to wildlife. For further details see the Landscape and Biodiversity evidence report.

DS 7 Roofs

Living roofs would be supported (see above). Roof materials should be in keeping with the surrounding buildings; tiles may be slate or local clay tile of a colour that blends. Solar roof tiles would be supported as part of a slate roof. Designs with soffits to accommodate bird and bat boxes, or bat tiles would be supported. Roofscapes should blend with the surrounding properties. Buildings should be maximum of two storeys, and positioned with consideration given to views to and from the Downs.



Traditional dwellings usually have chimneys which break up the roof line. Although it is recognised that the sources of home heating have changed, the construction of chimneys as a feature for new dwellings in the countryside is favoured. Chimneys would be preferred over flues. If there is no chimney, other features would be desirable to break up the roofline.

DS 8 Materials

Bricks should be Chailey stock or Chailey mixed stock and in keeping with the surroundings. Many houses in the Parish are tile hung and this feature will be considered. Flint is rarely used in Plumpton Green but since it is a local material it will be considered.

DS 9 Innovative designs

Innovative designs will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the design of the building is sympathetic to the landscape setting of the area in which it is to be built

DS 10 Layout and Landscaping

Buildings should be sited in a position to avoid damage to any tree. The overall aesthetics should be considered for unity while avoiding the use of straight lines. Buildings should be positioned with consideration given to the views from surrounding properties.



Provision for parking, garages, recycling and rubbish facilities and ancillary buildings to be unobtrusive. Provision should be made for adequate off-street parking.

Gardens to be of adequate size appropriate to the size of the dwelling, with provision made for rainwater harvesting. Porous material should be used for external surfacing such as driveways and parking areas.

Planting in common areas (such as access roads and open spaces) should show preference for native species of local provenance (e.g. public grassland, shrubs and trees), including development of wildflower verges. Where SuDS are required these should contribute to the aesthetics and to wildlife conservation and enhancement.

Consideration should be given to the safety of pedestrian access, areas for children to play around the site, and areas for social contact with neighbours while also maintaining privacy for residents. Ownership and funding for maintenance of the site must be addressed through conditions or legal agreements.

Adequate space to be provided between buildings to avoid a sense of overcrowding. Twittens and footpaths linking with existing footpaths will be welcomed, to encourage wildlife and for the convenience of residents.

Where possible all new cabling should run underground and consideration should be given to the siting of communication masts, television aerials and satellite dishes which should be unobtrusive.

Design features such as water gardens, ponds and swales should be incorporated where appropriate giving full consideration to wildlife and sustainable drainage (see SuDS requirements). Consideration to be given to play for children around water (shallow edged, densely reeded, safety notices, life belts, etc).

DS 11 Boundaries

Every effort should be made to ensure that existing hedges and trees are preserved and incorporated in the design and layout of developments. New boundaries and screening from existing buildings should preferably be of native hedges, or open fencing (such as post and rail fences) for aesthetics and for free movement of wildlife including, for example, hedgehogs. Boundaries to be owner-identified on deeds.

