



The

Ilminster

Neighbourhood

Plan

2020
2040

Appendix B
The Ilminster Design Guide



Appendix B
The Ilminster Design Guide
January 2023 (Updated March 2025)



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Introduction

Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this Design Guide is to ensure that all development within Ilminster is well designed and relates to the character of this unique market town. This guide has been prepared by Ilminster Town Council, in consultation with the community. It applies to all sites in the Town Council boundary area, be they small or large scale developments, greenfield, brownfield, conversions or extensions.

1.2 To ensure that this Design Guide is given maximum weight in the determination of planning applications, it is directly referred to in the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan (INP) planning policies and forms an appendix to the INP. But this is also a stand alone Design Guide for Ilminster.

1.3 This document should be read in conjunction with relevant national, regional and local planning policy and supplementary documents and guidance.

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) describes a design code as follows:

‘Design code: A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a master plan or other design and development framework for a site or area’.

1.5 Section 12 of the NPPF Paragraph 126 states:

‘The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.’

1.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG, 2019) states:

‘Communities can effectively shape both design policies and development through a collaborative process of meaningful participation. Early engagement and linking engagement activities to key stages of design decision-making and plan-making can empower people to inform the vision, design policies and the design of schemes.’

1.7 The NPPF requires Local Plans to develop robust and comprehensive policies setting out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Local planning authorities will need to evaluate and understand the defining characteristics of the area as part of its evidence base, in order to identify appropriate design opportunities and policies.

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Introduction

Introduction (continued)

1.8 These design policies will help in developing the vision for an area. They will assist in selecting sites and assessing their capacity for development. They will be useful in working up town centre strategies and in developing sustainable transport solutions; all aimed at securing high quality design for places, buildings and spaces.

1.9 The National Design Guide (2019) defines the difference between a design guide and a design code as follows:

‘A design guide: A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.’

‘A design code: A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.’

1.10 Based on these definitions Ilminster is providing a design guide.

1.11 The evidence base for this Design Guide comprises the following documents:

The Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal (2016)

The Ilminster by Design (2001)

The Character of Ilminster – INP Appendix A

Consultation Statement – comprising:

1 The Character of Ilminster – A public walkabout and workshop (16 March 2019)

2 Workshops with Schools (June 2019)

3 Online survey (September 2019)

4 Site selection workshop (26 September 2019)

5 Design Workshop 1 (17 October 2019)

6 Design Workshop 2 (21 November 2019).

The Character of Ilminster

The Character of Ilminster

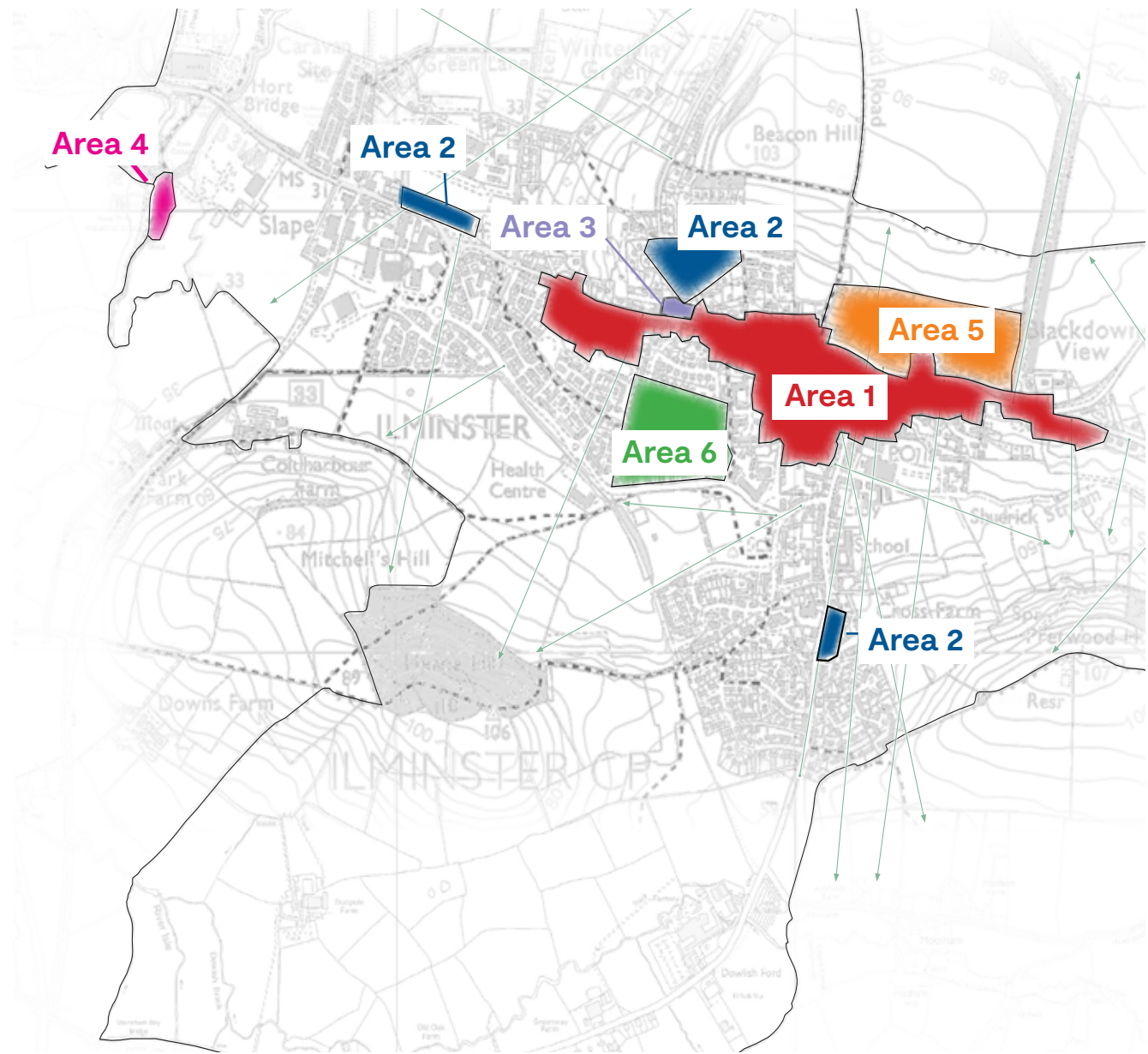
2.1 The general characteristics of Ilminster are summarised below. These have been identified through workshops with the local community (Spring and Autumn 2019) and a review of the existing evidence base, namely, The Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal (2016) and The Ilminster – By Design (2001).

- 1** Tight urban grain in the centre with a more spacious character in the twentieth Century housing estates on the periphery
- 2** Development generally follows a north/south and east/west four-point star, which enables easy access to the open countryside from wherever one lives
- 3** Sloping topography of the core town and views out to adjacent hills and open countryside are an essential part of the towns character. Flat topography and lack of views in the western side of town only
- 4** Distinctive widespread use of local Moolham stone
- 5** High quality historic town centre architecture and Market House, although the quality of the public realm is being eroded by the needs of the car
- 6** The church tower rising over the town providing a sense of place

- 7** Predominantly small-medium scale buildings, with irregular footprints and two storey with some three storey buildings
- 8** Fine door cases and shop fronts
- 9** Varied roof-scape, with predominantly pitched roofed buildings
- 10** A variety of treatments to building frontages, from edge of pavement development and enclosed front gardens
- 11** Harsh urban environment sometimes provides a harsh contrast with the green setting and edge of Ilminster
- 12** Open Spaces and recreation facilities of exceptional visual appearance
- 13** Poor quality appearance to key road junctions into town.

2.2 One of the unique characteristics of Ilminster is its historic core which represents a cohesive architectural form, although built over a four hundred year period. Beyond this housing and commercial development is interspersed randomly and organically across the town from different architectural periods.

Figure 1:
Character of Iminster Areas



Please note that the information shown in this map is indicative/illustrative.

The Character of Iminster (continued)

- 3 In the Design Guide workshops in October and November 2019, six different types of built form character areas were identified as good examples which should be referenced in development proposals in Iminster.
 - 4 These character areas are as follows:
 - 1 **Historic pre-19th Century centre:** Dating from the 15th Century with mixed use buildings, including The Minster and Market House, laid out on a north-south, east-west axis with medieval street patterns.
 - 2 **Terraces:** Victorian and Edwardian residential terraces are interspersed across the town outside the historic core (located to the north, south and west).
 - 3 **Villas:** Of varying ages, mainly in the northern part of the town, set within spacious plots with a larger scale.
 - 4 **19th Century Industrial:** In the western side of Iminster, including historic former train station and mills.
 - 5 **Late 20th Century - Blackdown View:** A complete housing estate with generous plots to the north.
 - 6 **Late 20th Century - Summerlands:** To the west of the town centre has small good family housing.
- More analysis of the character of Iminster has been carried out and is included in Appendix A.

B₃

The Design Guide

The Design Guide

3.1 Layout and density

The layout of streets and buildings varies enormously across Ilminster.

Most streets are curved, sometimes following contours enabling views and vistas. New developments should avoid formal street grid patterns.

Site coverage is an important factor, described here as a percentage of the amount of building covering a plot. Plot coverage should be around 30% and not exceed 60%.

The depth of front gardens has a significant effect on how well an area functions. While central Ilminster functions well without front gardens, front gardens of at least three metres is recommended.

Densities can be a useful way of determining the impact of development on the immediate area. However, they are a fairly crude method and only one factor when considering layout. All the character areas have a fairly low density, even the Historic pre-19th Century centre. Low densities are appropriate for most of Ilminster given various constraints and should generally not exceed 36 Dwellings Per Hectare (DPH).*

Ilminster Design Principle 1

Development should reflect the predominant building line, plot layout and rhythm of development in the vicinity of the site, whilst maximising passive solar gain. The fronts of buildings must relate to the adjacent public realm. Backs of dwellings should relate to other backs, to create private amenity spaces. Forms of development must respect their location, the size of the site and the character of the area.

The layout and density of new large greenfield developments should be varied and reflect the layout and density of one of more identified character areas in Ilminster.

* This is an estimate based on total residential occupation of the upstairs units in this area. We calculate densities by measuring the number of units/dwellings on a site and dividing it by the site area.

Historic Pre-19th Century Centre

Density: 36 DPH
Footprint to plot ratio: 18%–5%
Typical depth front garden: 0 metres
Typical depth rear garden: 13–85 metres



The historic centre of Ilminster, is clearly defined by prominent mixed use buildings of various scales with organic layouts. Plot coverage varies but generally these properties abut the street to the front. There are some deep and narrow medieval plot widths and narrow footways. Formal public and private open spaces are defined by the tight urban grain. The densities are relatively high which provides for a high level of social interaction. The streets and plots are not designed for cars or parking.

Terraces

Density: 21 DPH
Footprint to plot ratio: 31%
Typical depth front garden: 3 metres
Typical depth rear garden: 20 metres



Edwardian and Victorian terraces are found in clusters in the North and South of Ilminster. Shorter terraces dating from the 17th and 18th Century can be found nearer the centre. Some comprise extensive linear groups of built form, containing up to 20 dwellings. Some are generous homes with L-shaped plan form. Most have small front gardens providing defensible space and room for bin and bike storage. There are long narrow gardens providing valuable amenity space. Parking is mainly on-street at the front however some have rear service roads with more contemporary garages and vehicular access at the rear. Approximately 33% of the plots are built on.

Villas

Density: 23 DPH
Footprint to plot ratio: 21%
Typical depth front garden: 6 metres
Typical depth rear garden: 16 metres



Villas are located predominantly to the North of the town centre and some have undergone considerable change into flats or B&Bs, probably all having originally been built as single dwellings. They are set within spacious grounds with front and back gardens. Detached and semi-detached, generally in small groups under 10 dwellings, set on hillsides and prominent positions. Front and rear gardens are slightly larger than terraces providing space for bin and bike storage and generous gardens. Parking is mainly on-street.

19th Century Industrial

Density: N/A DPH
Footprint to plot ratio: 62%
Typical depth front garden: 14 metres
Typical depth rear garden: 24 metres



The western employment area contains Rose Mills and the former station, both good examples of 19th Century industrial layouts. The layouts are informal/organic, set around large courtyards similar to farm and rural buildings.

Today there is a clear divide between the built environment and green rural landscapes. Some high densities can be achieved on layouts such as these as they lend themselves to larger buildings set within larger areas of public realm/open space, which can be used for parking and gardens.

Please note that the information shown in these maps is indicative/illustrative.

Late 20th Century - Blackdown View

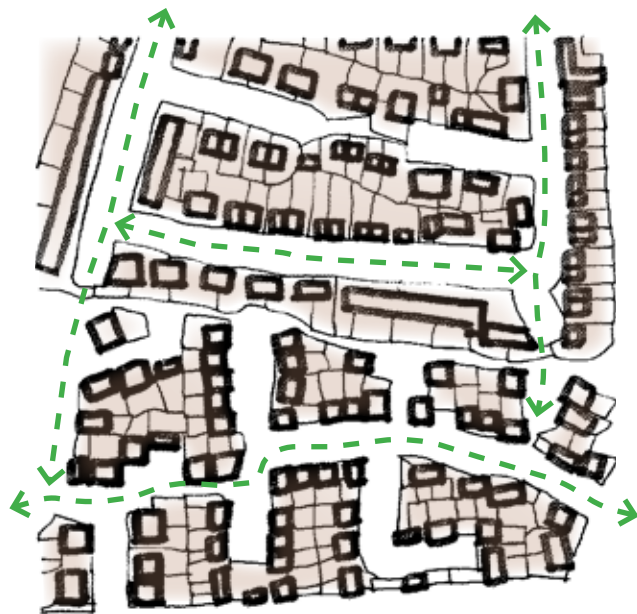
Density: 21.2 DPH
Footprint to plot ratio: 18%-31%
Typical depth, front garden: 9 metres
Typical depth, rear garden: 17 metres



Blackdown View has large plots in relation to building footprint and is very land hungry but appropriate to this area which has a steep topography. Dwellings are modest in size and set in groups of two to five homes. A fairly consistent open street frontage with generous front gardens, providing for bin and bike storage. There is a mixture of on and off street parking and garages, with wide roads and landscaped verges. Large back gardens and frequent side gardens, create a desirable layout and density appropriate to smaller sites on the edge of the built up area visible from wider views. No communal open space.

Late 20th Century - Summerlands

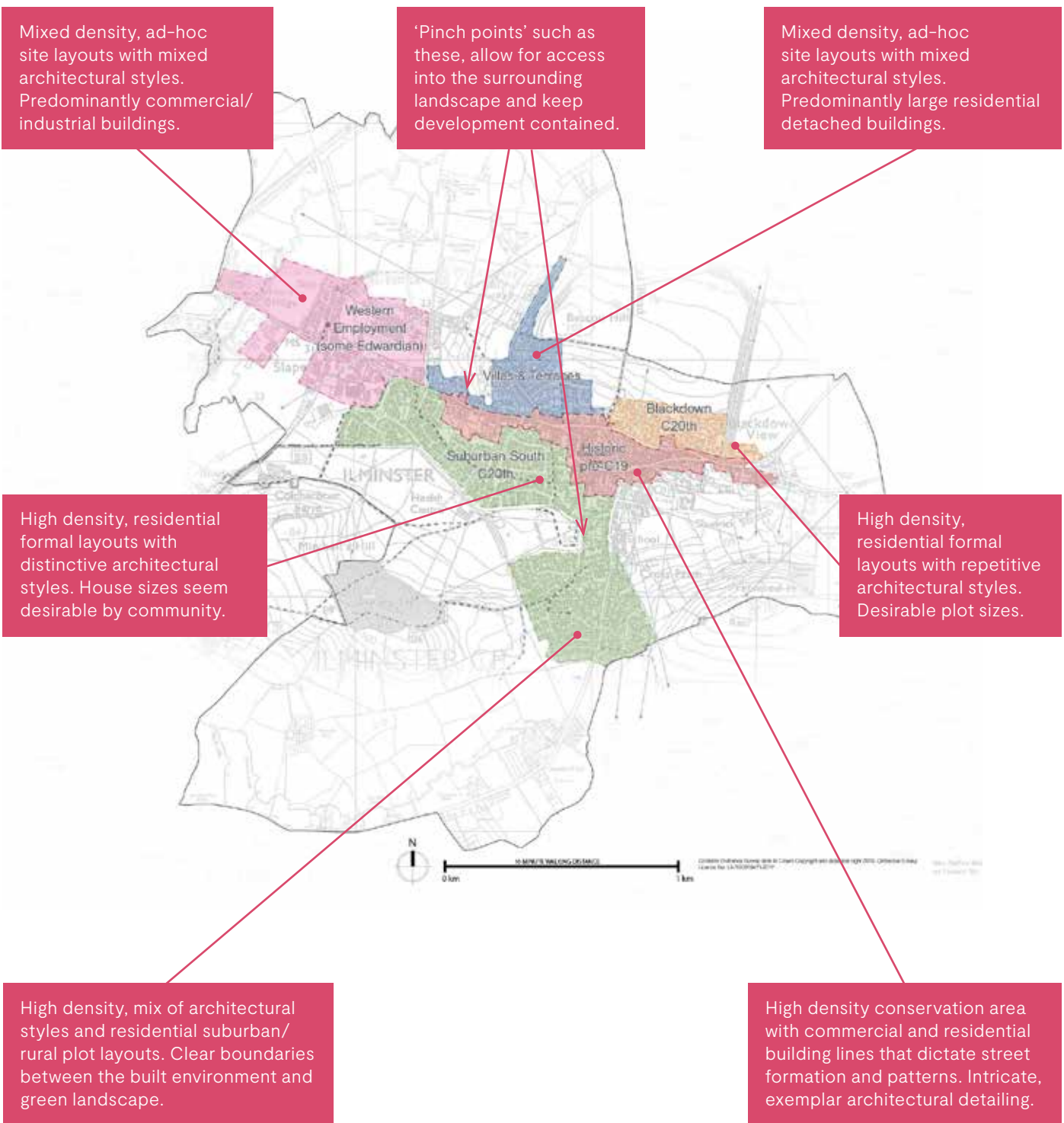
Density: 27.2 DPH
Footprint to plot ratio: 23%-27%
Typical depth front garden: 4-7 metres
Typical depth rear garden: 8 metres



The Summerlands Park residential area which lies just west of the centre, is considered by the community as a good example of suitable family home sizes and layouts. This has a suburban character with open front gardens, with a low density perhaps more appropriate to sites on the edge of the town.

Whilst the street scape is bland in places, this has a reasonably tight urban grain but the layout creates a good sense of community and 'ticks all the boxes' in terms of parking and garden space, whilst providing for views out of Ilminster.

Figure 2:
Density and layout in Ilminster
The Character of Ilminster
Architectural Characteristics



Please note that the information shown in this map is indicative/illustrative.

3.2 Street scene

The street scene can be described as the general character of a street when viewed from the public realm, made up of all the features that will not move. This includes boundary treatments, pavements and roads with buildings and landscaping providing the backdrop. In Iminster, gardens and boundary treatments generally form the street lines, leading to open public green space and/or the rural landscape.

Development should maintain this hierarchy with more formal denser built form in or nearer the centre and more organic landscape led street scenes on the edge of the settlement, which relate to the rural setting. Development in the western part of town could relate to Iminster’s industrial heritage.

It is important for existing heritage features, trees, hedgerows and water features to be maintained as these assist with way finding and maintain the verdant setting. Hard landscaping must be minimised on the edge of the settlement and be offset by tree and shrub planting and Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions.

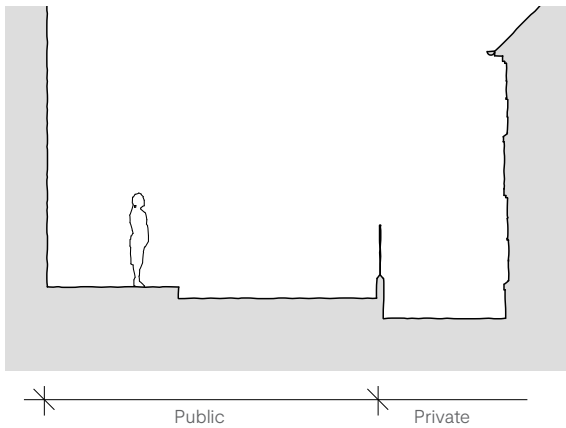
Iminster Design Principle 2

Fronts of development, should be bound by railings, low walls or hedges and buildings should be set back behind planted front gardens. Existing trees, hedgerows and shrubs should be retained along road edges where possible and new trees included which are well spaced and of an appropriate species.

Parking should be designed to integrate into the development and be visually unimposing. Development proposals should consider the character of the road they are fronting and relate to it in terms of boundary treatment, proposed highway works and nature of pedestrian and vehicular access.

Historic Pre-19th Century Centre

Predominant boundary treatments: Buildings or low railings
Typical road width: 5.5 metres
Typical pavement width: 1.7 metres
Typical property set back: 0 metres
Level of hard landscaping: High

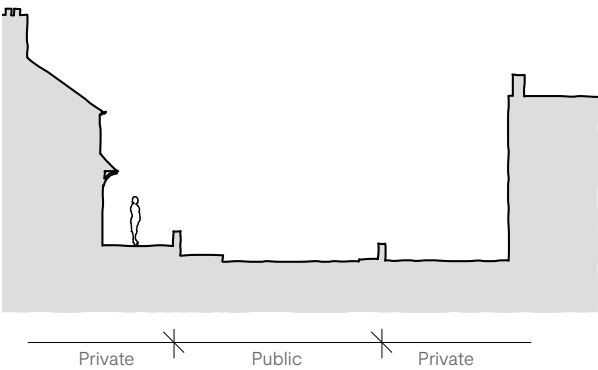


The street scene is hugely varied, but roads and pavements are generally narrow, not designed for the car. Some parking exists but it is pepper potted or hidden from public view. There is lots of hard surfacing, with trees and landscaping generally confined to private front gardens. Street lines are formed by either heritage buildings with no front gardens or low sets of painted railings, stone walls and/or hedgerows.

There is range of street furniture, from heritage features to poorly placed benches. The organically laid out public realm includes alleyways, steps and The Market House creating exciting short and long views of heritage buildings and open countryside. The backdrop of namely heritage buildings have variety and rich character creating a strong sense of place. The densities and heights create a well overlooked public realm.

Terraces

Predominant boundary treatments: Low brick walls and gates
Typical road width: 4.9 metres
Typical pavement width: 2.12 metres
Typical property set back: 3.1 metres
Level of hard landscaping: High

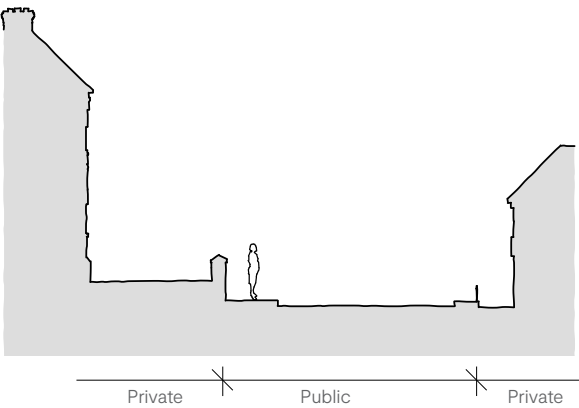


The terraces have pavements and carriageways which are fairly uniform and devoid of features such as furniture, although road signs provide unnecessary clutter. Steps and walkways are used on the public realm adjacent to some terraces. The public realm has wider pavements and roads allowing sufficient space is provided for on-street parking and two cars to pass in most places.

The public realm is generally devoid of trees, or street furniture. Regular low front boundary walls provide strong formal boundary treatments and front gardens are good defensible space. As a result of these features, the character of the street scene is largely of the buildings which comprise a strong urban backdrop. The varied topography allows for a variety of building heights.

Villas

Predominant boundary treatments: Low brick walls and gates
Typical road width: 5.75 metres
Typical pavement width: 2.66 metres
Typical property set back: 5.85 metres
Level of hard landscaping: Medium

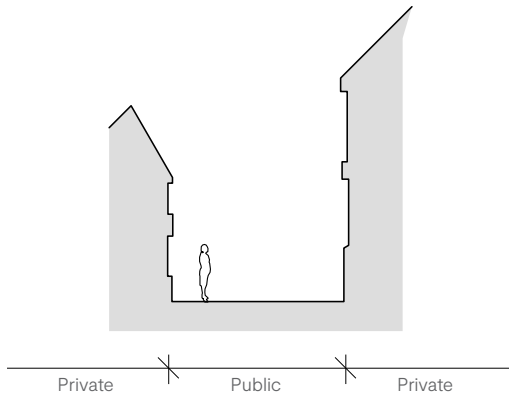


Villas in Iminster are located predominantly on wider main roads where the pavements are narrower and the road widths are largely designed to accommodate moderately fast cars (30 mph). These roads would have been the main thoroughfare for carriages when they were built.

The public realm is bounded by low walls usually topped with railings and landscaping which makes a significant contribution to the pleasant and green aesthetics of the street scene. Gaps between these larger scale buildings are important features and allow for off road parking and trees to be accommodated. This means that the buildings have retained their front gardens as they are not required for parking.

19th Century Industrial

Predominant boundary treatments: Buildings
Typical road width: 7.13 metres
Typical pavement width: 0 metres
Typical property set back: 0 metres
Level of hardstanding: High

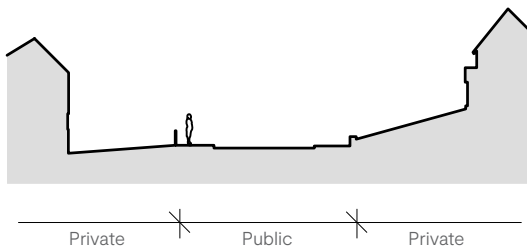


The 19th Century industrial buildings are set within semi-private courtyards of an organic shape. No formal pavements or carriageways exist as these were not designed for the car. With the exception of the old station, these areas were designed for workers and may have originally had large gates away from the building groups. No boundary treatments are found here, instead buildings are set directly against the courtyard. Street furniture has evolved and includes bins and merchandise spilling out.

There is generally no soft landscaping although views of the open countryside create a strong sense of place and context for these heritage buildings with connections to agriculture, the river, former railway and Iminster’s industrial past.

Late 20th Century – Blackdown View

Predominant boundary treatments: None or fences
Typical road width: 5.4 metres
Typical pavement width: 1.6 metres
Typical property set back: 5.24 metres
Level of hard landscaping: Low

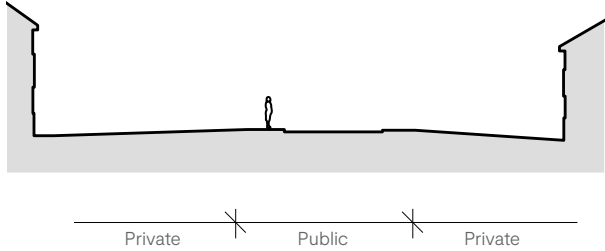


Blackdown has wide carriageways providing on-street parking on both sides as well as pavements and front gardens. Boundary treatment is defined by gardens and there are few front boundary walls or high fences, which provides for an open ‘garden-city’ character, a high level of interaction and well overlooked street. Trees are planted in the public realm. The steep topographical nature is a strong feature in the street scene creating views along roads and between buildings.

The street-scene is dominated by large areas of tarmac and parked cars and groups of dwellings are obviously an important feature but not overly dominant.

Late 20th Century – Summerlands

Predominant boundary treatments: None or hedges
Typical road width: 5.8 metres
Typical pavement width: 1.74 metres
Typical property set back: 5.53 metres
Level of hard landscaping: Low



The Street scene in and around Summerlands Park is suburban and does not relate to the architectural heritage of central Iminster.

However, it provides a street scene dominated by soft landscaping and views of the open countryside beyond. Pavements are narrower and roads are considered wide in relation to the volume of cars that utilise them. Generally they are large front boundary treatments, formed by lawns and shrubs and some tree belts with no or low walls. Most houses have driveways which create a level of clutter in front of houses but also opens up the carriageway allowing for expansive views and less clutter. The backdrop here is provided by low density bungalows, two storey semi-detached and detached dwellings and soft landscaping affording longer views which are often green and pleasant.

Street scene features in Iminster



Boundary wall is low to offer views out to the rolling hills and natural environment.



A mix of boundary wall and materiality of the buildings promote an appearance that is unique to every house.



Pathways lined with trees provide separate spaces, refuge and shade for birds and residents.



Decorative railings offer a distinct separation between private and public space on narrow pathways.



Low walls to a corner building encompass the junction and overlooking windows enhance visual appeal.



There could be softer landscaping at junctions such as this, to encourage walking/cycling.



The low wall and railings defines a clear boundary whilst offering views to The Minster and green space behind.



Pathways to both sides of the road are not provided again reflecting the towns rural heritage. Soft verges are valued.



Shops over-spill onto the pathways, creating a more interactive route, promoting goods for shop keepers.

3.3 Building form

‘Building form’ is the general scale, height, mass and bulk of a building. In Iminster, there are a variety of building forms which include long terraces, groups of detached and semi-detached buildings and individual unique buildings, such as The Minster and Market House.

In the conservation area different building forms exist side by side, providing an interesting and eclectic mix and a unique character, but in the newer areas more homogenised building forms are more common and fail to provide such a strong sense of place. All new developments should provide a mix of building forms in terms of plot widths and building forms. For example, long terraces should be inter-dispersed with detached buildings.

Most buildings are two-storey and contain pitched roofs. Footprint is often broken up with irregular extensions, forms, outbuildings and garages. This form should be replicated in new developments.

New development in Iminster must relate to the scale of adjacent buildings or the predominant form in the area. On larger development sites, building form should be organic.

Iminster Design Principle 3

Building form should be appropriate and take inspiration from the existing surrounding development character. Given the heritage and rural location of many parts of Iminster, building form should generally be organic with varied roofs, building depths and widths.

Historic Pre-19th Century Centre

Predominant building types: Ground floor shops with residential or office above
Typical building height: 2.5 storeys
Typical building width: 8.1 metres
Typical building depth: 14.8 metres



Typical historic centre building

Street scene is hugely varied forming an eclectic and mixed character. Street lines are formed by either heritage building with no front gardens or low sets of painted railings, stone walls and/or hedgerow. The area consists namely of heritage buildings of two or three storeys which have rich and imposing characters. The variety creates a strong sense of place and well overlooked public realm. It is a very active area of the town due to the commercial nature of the ground floors.

Terraces

Predominant building types: Residential terraces
Typical building height: 2 storeys
Typical building width: 5.8 metres
Typical building depth: 15.2 metres



Typical terraced houses

Terraces are characterised by their continuous form parallel to the street. Nearly all are two storey, some with third floor elements on the ends of rows or within roofs. They all have pitched roofs, mostly with gable ends. The depth varies depending on the age of buildings, the Edwardian Terraces project to the rear whilst the earlier 17th/18th Century terraces have flat frontages. The terraces are of a human scale, common to workers cottages. The width of terrace homes vary but generally allow for one main room on the front of each floor and a hall/stairwell.

Villas

Predominant building types: Detached or semi-detached residential
Typical building height: 2.5 storeys
Typical building width: 8.26 metres
Typical building depth: 12 metres



Typical villa

The villas are fairly large in scale, predominantly three storeys, with a mixture of pitched and gable ended roofs and varied vertical planes/set backs. This has a rather imposing effect on the street scape. There are of course exceptions. Single villas can be found set back from the street within larger gardens. More contemporary villas can be found in the north of Ilminster on hill sides with very generous front gardens.

These are large detached and semi-detached properties and many have been successfully sub-divided into commercial properties/flats and B&Bs.

19th Century Industrial

Predominant building types: Commercial units
Typical building height: 1-3 storey
Typical building width: 15.5 metres
Typical building depth: 8.9 metres



Typical industrial building

The 19th and 20th Century industrial buildings, including the station, have a larger scale than most domestic buildings in Ilminster. These are individually designed buildings and do not form part of a symmetrical group, but they are commonly in clusters of similar scaled buildings set within more spacious grounds.

These are one to three storeys, with relatively high internal floor to ceiling heights. These are built as individual blocks, mainly with flat elevation planes.

Late 20th Century – Blackdown View

Predominant building types: Terraced or semi-detached dwellings
Typical building height: 2 storeys
Typical building width: 8.16 metres
Typical building depth: 11.32 metres



Typical Blackdown property

The terraces and semi-detached homes in Blackdown are larger in scale than terraces in and near the centre of town, with pitched roofs with gables commonly used at the ends of larger terraces. The roofs are a particularly dominant feature. There are few details or differential planes to break up the relative bulk of these buildings. With generous front gardens and medium scale roads these larger scale buildings do sit comfortably in the street scape.

Late Twentieth Century – Summerlands

Predominant building types: Bungalows, detached or semi-detached dwellings
Typical building height: 1 or 2 storeys
Typical building width: 7.1 metres
Typical building depth: 10.3 metres



Typical Summerlands property

Detached and semi-detached homes in The Summerlands Park residential area are modest when compared with the generous front and rear gardens and road widths, which makes them appear smaller in scale. These have simple pitch roofs, flat elevations to the front side and some of the rears, with few features to break up the bulk, which is acceptable at this scale. They are generally about 8–12 metres wide with one room on the front ground floor and one to two rooms deep, therefore fairly shallow.

Building form in Ilminster



Large imposing Georgian villa with a marginal set back. Respectful relationship with topography.



Large detached Victorian villa with potential to be converted into multiple units but appear as a single unit.



Attractive historic cottage style terrace with interesting roof lines and varying widths.



Traditional two-storey cottages with gable ends and attractive relationships with the street. Roof changes to remove bulk of semi-detached with the rise in the road.



Attractive three-storey terraces nestled up to the pavement although maintaining a defensible space.



Mixed property types, up to three storeys in height with varying widths and shapes that create interest.

3.4 Views and topography

Ilminster is set within a valley with steep sides which form a key part of the towns unique character. Ilminster is surrounded by three hills: Beacon Hill to the North, Herne Hill to the South West and Pretwood Hill to the South East. All rise to a little over 100 metres and broadly contain the spread of the town and its immediate rural edge. To the west, the setting is less defined, with the town extending toward the open land of the River Isle valley, and an edge that is reinforced by the A303 road corridor.

The steep sided valley topography restricts long distance views however it does mean that there are extensive views seen of countryside set above and between roof tops due to the taller hillside topography within the valley and from the town. The topography also influences the relationship between buildings and the relationship of buildings to road.

Ilminster Design Principle 4

Given the topographical nature of Ilminster, views should be well considered in all development proposals, even if they are not included as one of the identified protected views of Ilminster. Development should be well composed around public view points, to particularly maintain existing views of open countryside and historic buildings. Views should be framed by new development where relevant. Development should maintain views from the public roads to the countryside, especially wide and extensive views. Development proposals must be integrated into the existing topography and take advantage of the sites unique characteristics, for example, steep sites should contain stepped building forms. Extensive ground excavations should be avoided.

Views of the landscape and the steep sided topography create a strong sense of place and is important for the community of Ilminster. Each of the character areas has distinctive views, shown on pages 32 – 35.

Historic Pre-19th Century Centre



Wayfinding view and development guiding visitor north towards historic estate and grounds.



Views to Pretwood Hill from Ditton Street over Shudrick Lane.



View from High Street looking down towards town centre and ridge line beyond. Terrace follows topography and frames the view.



View of the High Street and Pretwood beyond. Terraces framing the view and following the topography.

Terraces



Terraces following the topography and framing the view of Pretwood beyond.



View from Ilminster Cemetery looking south-west over the west of Ilminster.



Long views from The Beacon footpaths looking north-west to the River Isle. Dwelling has limited relationship with the street scene.

Villas



5. Open view from villas towards Summerlands and Herne Hill beyond.



View from apex of Station Road looking over the valley to the southern ridge line from the terraces.



Villas set above the street with a positive relationship of surveying the street but maintaining privacy.

19th Century Industrial



View from one of the core spinal routes in Ilminster to the south and Herne Hill.



Far-reaching views beyond Rose Mill industrial estate.



View of Herne Hill beyond industrial estate.

Late 20th Century – Blackdown (Northern views)



View looking over town centre to the southern landscaped ridge beyond.



Development framing views over rolling patchwork landscape to south.



Topography falling at Blackdown View retaining a positive relationship with the street and privacy without boundary treatment needed.



Topography rising at Blackdown View with landscaping retaining a positive relationship with the street.

Late 20th Century – Summerlands (Southern views)



Topography of Summerlands has steep and far reaching views beyond and above the buildings.



Prominent views along Orchard Vale dominate, looking towards Herne Hill.



Far-reaching open views of recreation land and Herne Hill beyond.

Views in and around Iminster:



The Beacon
View over Iminster Cemetery to the south-west and west of Iminster.



The Beacon
Long views from The Beacon footpaths looking west.



Riec-Sur-Belon Way
View from one of the core spinal routes in Iminster to the south and Herne Hill.



Canal Way
View from Canal Way cycle junction looking to south-west ridge.



Station Road
View from apex of Station Road looking over the valley to the southern ridge line.



High Street
View from High Street looking down towards town centre and ridge line beyond.



Butts
View looking over town centre to the southern landscaped ridge beyond.



Bay Hill
Development framing views over rolling patchwork landscape to south.



Bay Hill
Wayfinding view looking north towards historic estate and grounds.



Townsend
View from north-east Townsend road to Pretwood Hill to the south.



Townsend
Glimpses between existing buildings into the valley and ridges beyond.



Townsend
Long distance view from the east of Iminster over the valley to Pretwood Hill.

Views in and around Iminster:



Townsend
View highlighting openness between eastern edge of Iminster and land beyond.



Long Orchard Hill
View from east looking south back into Iminster and the visible ridge line.



Kingstone Hill
Long distance view from south entrance into Iminster to historic park.



Orchard Vale
Prominent views along Canal Way dominate, looking towards Herne Hill.



Listers Hill
View from very southern edge of Iminster to the very northern ridge line.



Shrudrick Lane
Glimpses to Pretwood Hill from Ditton Street over Shudrick Lane.



Canal Way
Far-reaching open views of recreation land and Herne Hill beyond.



Beacon Hill Footpath
View looking south across the town.

Figure 3:
Landscape Character and Designations

Legend INP Identifications

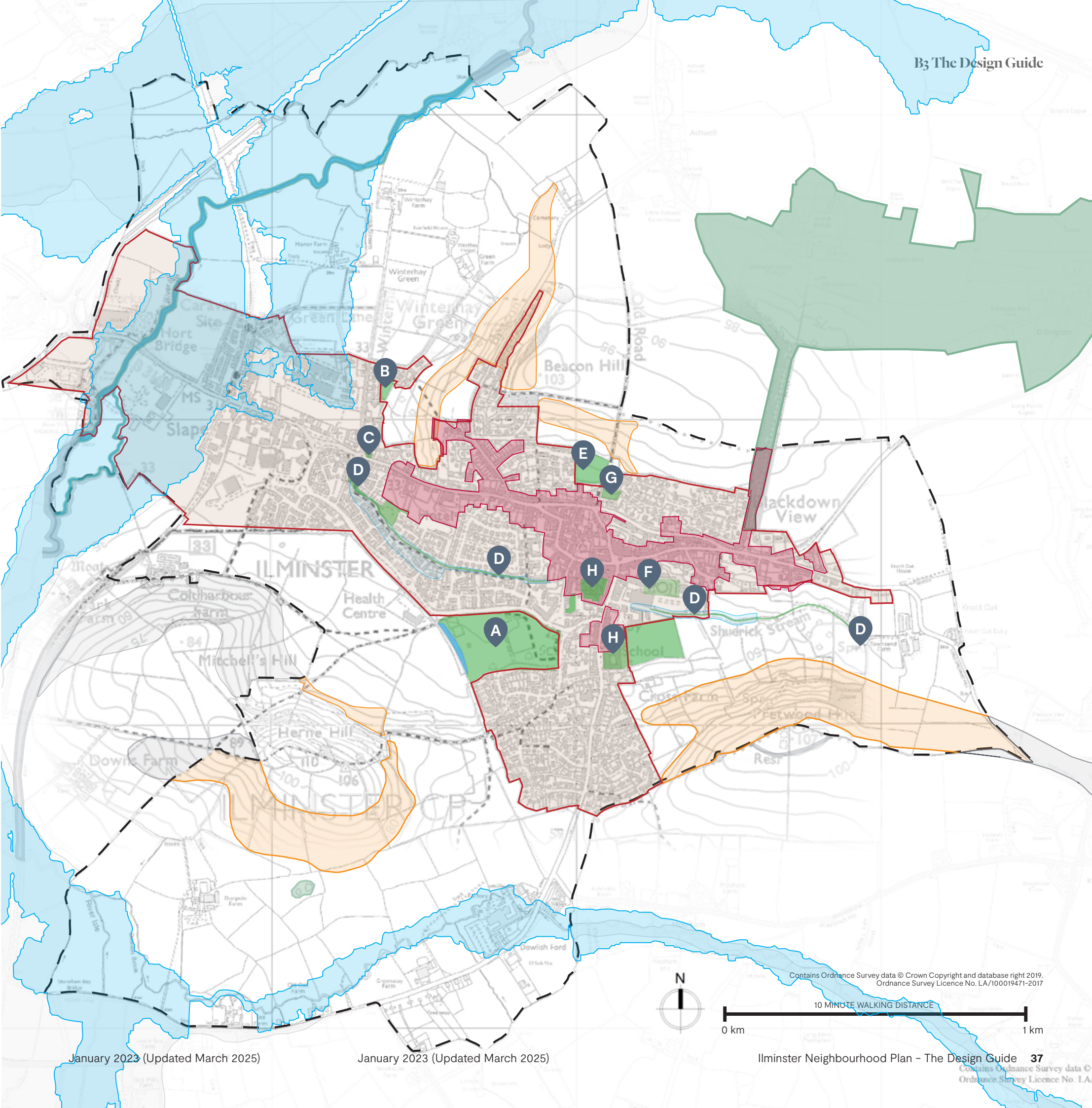
- INP Boundary
- Designated Local Green Space
- Blue Space
- SSDC Conservation Area
- SSDC Ilminster Development Area
- SSDC Steep Ground Constraining Development
- SSDC Flood Zone 2/3
- SSDC Historic Parks and Gardens

A

Local Green Space

- A** Wharf Lane Recreation Ground
- B** Winterhay Play Park
- C** Burma Star Garden
- D** Shudrick Stream and Environs
- E** Allotments off Hillview Terrace
- F** Ilminster Bowling and Tennis Club
- G** Blackdown View Play Area
- H** Herne View Primary School

Please note that the information shown in this map is indicative/illustrative.



3.5 Landscaping and roofscape

Ilminster has a substantial natural offering of landscaping surrounding the town. However within the town centre there is little landscaping in the public realm. Residents place importance on being able to access the open countryside easily and large developments on the edge of town could erode connections to the open countryside. Any new footpaths and streets should include verges planted with trees, shrubs and grass, as appropriate, to create a sense of open access to the countryside. This would go some way to ensure that the town remains immediately connected to nature.

The steep sided valley topography allows for extensive views of the countryside set above and between roof tops. This forms the roof-scape of the town which is a scene or view of roofs (comprising features such as chimneys, towers, gables, pitched roof forms, butterfly roofs and dormer windows) especially when considered in terms of its aesthetic appeal. The consideration and the design of roofs and their features is particularly important within Ilminster, due to the prominence and extensive views afforded to the town by the topography.

Ilminster Design Principle 5

Development must retain and enhance the existing landscaping of the area and not result in the loss of tree cover. Any proposal should include a planting strategy with the aim to enhance existing vegetation and biodiversity. The proposal should include a variety of landscape features including trees, with a clear plan for both the private and public realms, and a supporting management and maintenance strategy for any larger developments.

Regard must be given to the design of roofs, including design features and their potential positive contribution to the roofscape.

Historic Pre-19th Century Centre

Level of landscaping: Low
Level of hard standing: High
Potential for further landscaping: High as there are a lot of under planted walkways



Attractive small private front gardens to store bins with attractive stone walls and metal railings



Attractively landscaped communal space and The Minster in the roofscape

Terraces

Level of landscaping: Low
Level of hard standing: High
Potential for further landscaping: Moderate on paths



Chimneys forming part of the roofscape and small defensible front gardens for privacy and storage



Small defensible front gardens for privacy and storage

Villas

Level of landscaping: Moderate
Level of hard standing: Moderate
Potential for further: Low due to the need for paths and roads as it is the main thoroughfare through Ilminster



Large defensible front gardens for privacy and storage

19th Century Industrial

Level of landscaping: Low
Level of hard standing: High
Potential for further landscaping: Moderate due to the requirement for lorries turning and deliveries



Large expanse of tarmac and concrete for parking

Late 20th Century - Blackdown View

Level of landscaping: High
Level of hard standing: Moderate
Potential for further landscaping: High



Accessible communal parking and green space

Late 20th Century - Summerlands

Level of landscaping: Moderate
Level of hard standing: Moderate
Potential for further landscaping: Moderate



Large front gardens for privacy, parking and storage and chimneys that add to the roofscape



Chimneys forming part of the roofscape and large defensible front gardens



Dilapidated and unkempt frontages



Large front gardens for privacy, parking and storage and chimneys that add to the roofscape



Large front gardens for privacy, parking and storage and chimneys that add to the roofscape

Ilminster roofscape



Interesting roof lines form part of the horizon.



Historic thatch and slate roofs with chimneys fall away with the street topography, making the buildings nestle within the undulations.



The Minster forms a large part of the roofscape and the identity of Ilminster.



Far reaching roofscape seen from public footpaths add to the character of Ilminster.



Attractive pattern of terrace roofs following the topography and chimneys creating interest in form and features.



The topography allows close up and direct views of roof tops, features and chimneys.

3.6 Materials and detailing

The materials and detailing of Ilminster are generally considered to be traditional and locally sourced. In Ilminster, there is a variety of building materials. However, the majority use natural stone or red brick with slate or tiled roofs. If these materials were to be used in new developments this would be in keeping with the location in which Ilminster is found and strengthen the identity of the town and its heritage. Fake stones detract from the aesthetics as opposed to other natural products used.

Detailing and aesthetically pleasing buildings have detailing to the window, reveals, cills, lintels, sides and door surrounds. This is even on plain façades. In some modern areas of development this detailing is lacking and detracts from the aesthetics and richness that can be found in other street scenes. The use of chimneys adds to the richness of the building roofscapes which are particularly visible due to the topography affording extensive roof top views.

Ilminster Design Principle 6

Building materials must be selected for their appropriateness to local character, performance ability, environmental and aesthetic value.

Consideration should be given to the level of detail and suitable materials for texture and depth.

Buildings must be designed with a coherent design approach that influences the whole building, from its form, to the elevations, materials and including the detailing. Streets can benefit from a consistency of some of these elements to create a strong identity.

The contemporary and more traditional architecture should take inspiration from the existing surrounding development and+ reference local character in some form.

Buildings should be of high quality and individually designed.

Roof design and features should have regard to the contribution that they make to the roofscape.

Historic Pre-19th Century Centre

Typical walls: Ham Hill Stone, Moolham Stone, painted render or warm red brick
Typical roof: Slate, thatch or tile with chimneys
Typical window style: Georgian Sash
Typical detailing: Framed windows and detailing on plain frontages.



Typical dwelling in Historic centre constructed of stone with a slate roof

Terraces

Typical roof: Clay tiles or slate roof with chimneys
Typical window style: Half Georgian Sash or Coupled Sash
Typical detailing: Ornate painted or stone window and door surrounds.



Typical terrace with ornate window details

Villas

Typical walls: Painted render and/or brick
Typical roof: Slate
Typical window: Style
Typical detailing: bay windows and projecting gables above



Typical villas with bays and gables

19th Century Industrial

Typical walls: Painted or exposed red brick and/or rubble stone
Typical roof: Tiles, slate or corrugated iron
Typical window style: Georgian or sash
Typical detailing: Contrasting window lintels



Industrial building with contrasting lintels

Late 20th Century - Blackdown View

Typical walls: Red brick
Typical roof: Marley tiles
Typical window style: White uPVC
Typical detailing: Gable ends and ground floor bay window



Typical gable end and red brick with chimneys

Late 20th Century - Summerlands

Typical walls: Faux stone and painted render
Typical roof: Marley tile
Typical window style: White uPVC
Typical detailing: gables and plain lintels



Painted render buildings in a modern design with edging details

Suitable materials and design features



Wooden door surrounds and traditional stone details and Georgian window divides.



Traditional stone detailing to the garage door.



Bay windows with traditional sash.



Slate roof and gable feature above the windows. Windows have traditional painted detail surrounds.



Stone detailing to the corners and soffit with a brick chimney.



Painted cobb and thatch roof.



Brick built building with stone detailing to the corners and sash windows.



Traditional natural stone building with brick detailing, stone sill and sash windows.



Painted wooden shop front with painted render to the walls and stone detailing.

Suitable roof forms and materials



The linear roof is broken up through a mix of gable ends and is stepped due to the topography.



Clay tile roof with brick chimney, hipped away from the street but at varying heights within the terrace.



Thatched roofs with brick chimneys.



Slate roof with brick chimney with coping stone, stone soffit and fascia features.



Industrial gable ended roof forms creating interest.



Rendered gable ends, coping stones and rendered chimneys.

3.7 Sustainable features

Well-designed places and buildings should reduce the need for energy, be energy efficient, use fossil fuels efficiently and maximise the potential for low carbon energy supplies. Sustainable development and resource efficiency, waste minimisation and recycling is supported. New development should be carbon neutral in the future. They should conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials whilst responding to the impacts of climate change through their design.

A compact and walkable neighbourhood with a mix of uses and facilities reduces demand for energy and supports health and well-being. It uses land efficiently so helps adaptation by increasing the ability for carbon dioxide absorption, minimising flood risk and the potential impact of flooding, and reducing overheating and air pollution.

Buildings should be fit for purpose and adaptable over time, reducing the need for redevelopment and unnecessary waste. Materials and technologies used should minimise their environmental impact by reducing running costs and use of fossil fuels. This can be by sourcing locally or by using energy efficient products.

Developments must be able to demonstrate in their design and access statement how a development has been designed to be sustainable under each of the following categories:

Walkable neighbourhoods: In larger housing developments schemes should be permeable to pedestrians and cyclists to minimise the use of the car. The provision for more sustainable forms of transport should be encourages. Infrastructure for electric cars should be considered for use in the future.



Poundbury, Dorset – Permeable streets designed for pedestrian as well as the car.

Biodiversity: Proposals should seek enhancements, retention of existing habitats and the creation of new ones. Boundary treatments and domestic planting should allow movement for wildlife and provide new habitat e.g. through the provision of hedgerows. Varieties and species chosen should be native and/or provide improvement to wildlife habitats. Also through the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain through the Environment Act 2021

Water efficiency: Rain water harvesting should be included in development schemes, to take the pressure off existing water supplies. Developers should include technologies that recycle grey water for watering gardens/use in toilets. Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) for surface water should be included wherever possible.

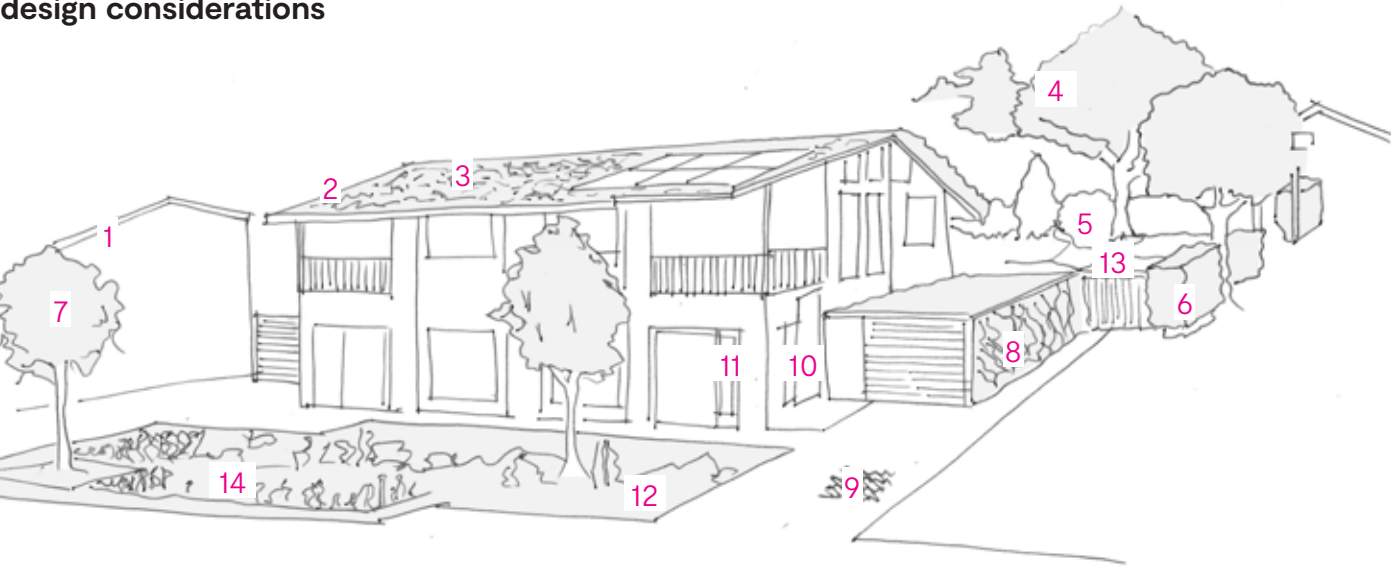
Ilminster Design Principle 7

Buildings and development schemes should be adaptable, built to last and minimise their environmental impact. Throughout both the outline and detailed design stages developments must demonstrate how homes are energy efficient, flood resilient and minimise their use of natural resources through:

- Walkable neighbourhoods and reducing car reliance
- Rainwater harvesting and efficient use of water resources
- Flood resilience by integrating sustainable drainage systems into the early stages of design to reduce flood risk and improve water quality, biodiversity and amenity
- Passive solar gain
- Energy efficient building fabric
- Renewable technologies
- Reduce waste in building through reuse and recycling.

Water efficiency and biodiversity

Figure 4:
Water efficiency and biodiversity
design considerations



Legend

- 1

Bird Boxes
- 2

Green Roof
- 3

Integrated Bat box (in Green roof)
- 4

Tree clusters
- 5

Hedgehog Passages
- 6

Hedgerows
- 7

Standard Trees
- 8

Climbing Plants
- 9

Permeable Paving
- 10

Habitat walls
- 11

Planters and Baskets
- 12

Rain Garden
- 13

Wildlife pond
- 14

Unmown edges and verges

Sustainable drainage systems or SuDS mimic natural drainage in delivering effective surface water management, controlling surface water close to where it falls.

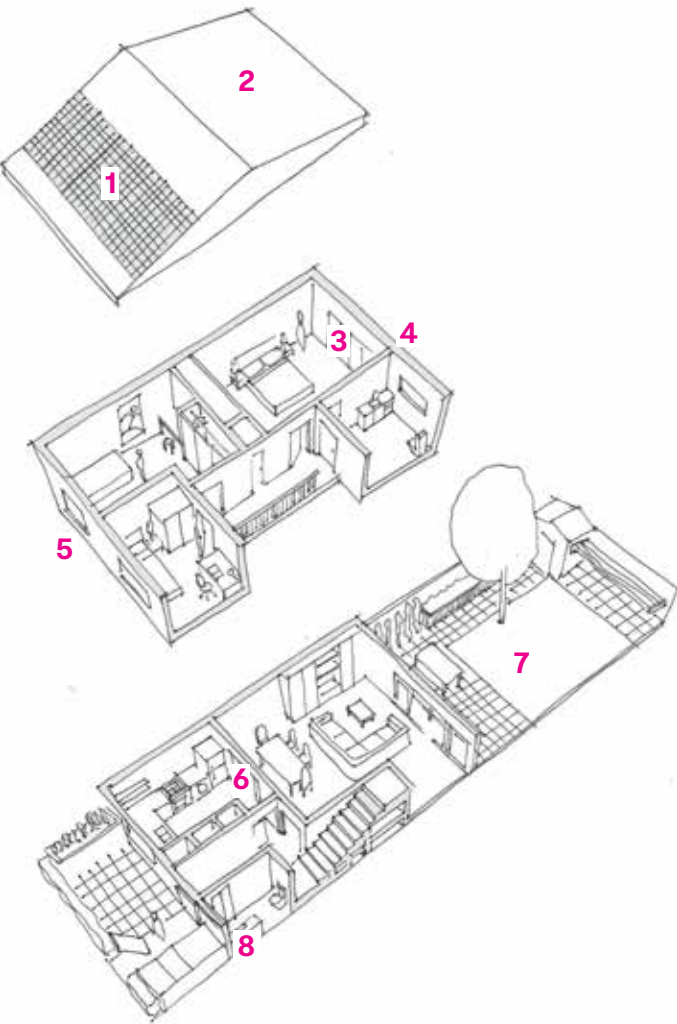
SuDS need to be considered early in the design process to ensure ease of access for maintenance and efficient use of land by integrating them with other aspects of design.

SuDS include measures such as public open space, biodiversity, provision and highways.

Multi-functional SuDS need to be prioritised allowing for attenuation features which can also be used for biodiversity and recreation. These include green roofs and walls, Permeable surfacing, swales, rain capture, soakaways and filter drains, retention tanks, street tree planting, rain gardens, basins and ponds, and reedbeds and wetlands.

Solar gain, renewables, waste and lifetime homes

Figure 5:
Solar gain, renewables, waste and
lifetime home design considerations



Legend

- 1

Photovoltaic panels
- 2

Simple built form (minimise heat loss)
- 3

Large north windows (maximum natural light)
- 4

High levels of Insulation
- 5

South windows (avoid too much solar gain)
- 6

Cavity doors (flexible heating of spaces)
- 7

Rain water storage
- 8

Water efficient features (dual flush, spray taps)
- 9

Appliances with high efficiency ratings.

Adaptation to climate change: Designs should avoid excess solar gain in summer through solar shading. Developments should avoid too much hard standing and maximise landscaped areas where possible to increase the cooling effects it has.

Passive solar gain should be maximised through site layout utilising passive solar energy whilst avoiding overheating in summer.

Energy efficiency of the building fabric should be thought about in the first instance to reduce the energy demanded from new homes.

Renewable technologies should be encouraged, especially for new build houses. Technologies should be chosen because they are the most appropriate for the site both in terms of efficiency as well as the aesthetics. Roof forms should be designed to allow for solar photovoltaic, preferably in the form of solar tiles and solar water heating without being too prominent or highly visible in key views. Less visible technologies such as ground source heat pumps should be considered.

Waste: Thought should be given to the reuse and recycling of building materials, particularly if demolition is occurring.

Lifetime Homes: Housing must meet the needs of the population of Ilminster over time. Housing should have the ability to meet the needs of the population over time and as such people can stay in their homes longer without the need to new build residential development for specific users.



Goldsmith Street, Norwich

A social housing development that sits well in the local urban context and meets high environmental standards. To be certified Passivhaus, the windows had to be smaller than the proportion in a Georgian or Victorian terrace, a set-back panel around the windows to give an enlarged feel were used, and panels of textured brick have been introduced into the main elevations. Parking has been pushed to the perimeter, so the streets feel safe and ‘owned’ by pedestrians rather than cars. Bin stores have been placed in the front gardens to create buffer zones between the public footpath and the front doors, giving a private space.



New Ground Co-housing, Barnet, London

A co-housing scheme for older women, built around a large communal courtyard. It provides an alternative, community-focused housing option, where residents were involved in the design process throughout. There are 25 flats at New Ground, eight socially rented and managed by Housing for Women, and 17 owner occupied, with a few shared facilities and a very large shared garden. The building’s form and materiality blend into the terraced street.



Brambleside, St Teath

Brambleside was completed in December 2010. The properties feature ground source heat pumps which provide heating and hot water. All the properties have private rear gardens and a parking space. The homes were part of a joint development between Cornwall Rural Housing Association and Cornwall Community Land Trust providing six homes for rent and 10 homes for sale to qualifying local people.

3.8 Biodiversity, trees and green infrastructure

Ilminster has a vast and wide support for green credentials. In line with this biodiversity improvements are encouraged in a wide variety of ways. Having set backs in development would create recreation and access for maintenance benefits any lighting should be suitably designed with wildlife in mind. New green/blue infrastructure and maintenance of habitats, through creating wildlife corridors or green space, tree planting etc. and advocating the use of green roofs is encouraged.

Green/blue infrastructure has a real opportunity to link with and deliver against carbon net zero targets. The opportunity for carbon sequestration for example through wetlands, improved floodplain connection, wet woodlands, should be considered within the approach for carbon net zero development.

Large-scale tree planting is vital for carbon capture flood control and for wellbeing of the community and will soften the impact of any developments. It will enhance community spaces and goes hand-in-hand with the green corridor.

Development adjacent to existing water features such as rivers has an important role to play in enhancing the value of blue infrastructure as public realm, habitat, ecological corridor and natural capital asset and should be encouraged. Buildings may face the water and leave a sufficient buffer zone to allow for watercourses and banks to be maintained and for current and potential future flood defences. Opportunities to create walking and cycling routes along watercourses where appropriate are to be encouraged.

Ilminster Design Principle 8

Biodiversity: Development should be designed with wildlife in mind seeking to conserve and enhance biodiversity and identify and incorporate opportunities for net gains in biodiversity, particularly on sites adjacent to existing wildlife or enhance the green corridors. The baseline biodiversity of an area should be assessed and proposals should seek to retain, protect and enhance features of biodiversity, including supporting habitat, commuting routes, linkages and any use by migratory species, and ensure appropriate and long-term management of those features (e.g. through green roofs and tree planting).

Developments should incorporate features for native wildlife species (e.g. dormice and hedgehogs) to connect through wildlife corridors and provide sheltering, habitats, such as native hedgerows, grassy margins, hedgehog highways to roads, paths and gaps in walls and fencing. Development should seek to remove any invasive non-native species and ensure potentially harmful features such as lighting are designed with wildlife in mind.

Trees: Development should conserve and enhance trees, hedgerows and woodlands. The removal of protected trees should be avoided and any trees that are damaged or removed must be replaced with an appropriate number, species and size in an appropriate location. Opportunities should be identified and incorporated for planting of new trees, woodlands and hedgerows.

All new streets should include street trees to improve streets’ popularity and walkability, reduce air pollution and mitigate noise. New planting should be suitable for the site conditions, use native species and be informed by and contribute to local character, and enhance or create new habitat linkages.

Green infrastructure: New development should contribute towards the creation of a network of green spaces and facilitate access to natural green space where possible. Sites should make the most of their waterside location, facing onto the water and retaining public access to the water’s edge.



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