

CHAPTER 10: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

10.1. This Local Plan promotes development within the Borough but requires that development should positively contribute to making the Borough a better place. It requires that the highest quality design is embodied in all development that is sensitive to and contributes to enhancing the character of the area in which it is located in.

10.2. It is also imperative that new development is of a high quality that is designed to reduce energy consumption and achieves an efficient use of resources. Climate change is a major, global issue and Rugby Borough must take steps to reduce the causes and make plans to respond to the effects at the local level. New development in the Borough must also take into account the consequences of climate change and ensure development is adaptable to changing conditions over its lifetime.

10.3. The Sustainable Design and Sustainable Buildings policies seek to achieve high quality, inclusive design alongside the highest viable standards of environmental performance in all development. These policies will be supported by the Council's 'Sustainable Design and Construction' SPD.

Policy SDC1: Sustainable Design

All development will demonstrate high quality, inclusive and sustainable design and new development will only be supported where the proposals are of a scale, density and design that responds to the character of the areas in which they are situated. All developments should aim to add to the overall quality of the areas in which they are situated.

Factors including the massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access should also be a key consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Council will consider appropriate housing density on a site by site basis with decisions informed by local context of the area in terms of design considerations, historic or environmental integration, local character, identified local need and, where relevant, a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Proposals for new development will ensure that the living conditions of existing and future neighbouring occupiers are safeguarded.

Proposals for housing and other potentially sensitive uses will not be permitted near to or adjacent sites where there is potential for conflict between the uses, for example, an existing waste management site. Such proposals must be accompanied by supporting information demonstrating that the existing and proposed uses would be compatible and that the proposal has addressed any potential effects of the existing use on the amenity of the occupiers of the proposed development.

Developers should provide adequate off-street storage space for wheeled bins, including storing recycling, to serve all new residential properties, including conversions. This requirement is particularly important in designated Conservation Areas where the visual importance of the street scene has been acknowledged and there is a duty for the area's character and appearance to be

preserved or enhanced. Provision can be in the form of storage space integral to the design of the property, dedicated space externally, in a communal storage area, or in underground waste storage systems.

Proposals relating to the enhanced energy efficiency of existing buildings will be supported in accordance with the most up to date national regulations.

10.4. Rugby Borough Council offer applicants pre-application advice to provide assessment and support and to ensure high standards of design. Rugby Borough Council also refers major projects for a national design review (where appropriate). In general, early engagement on design produces the greatest benefits.

10.5. In determining applications, great weight will be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Permission will be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

10.6. Rugby Borough Council will not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits).

10.7. Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development will be looked on more favourably.

10.8. Policy relating to the design and layout of waste storage has been formed in conjunction with the Rugby Borough Works Services Department. Further detail may be found within the RBC 'Refuse and Recycling Policy and Design Guide for Developers'.

10.9. National policy requires that local planning authorities set their own approach to housing densities which reflect local character, and this Policy SDC1 does not prescribe densities which developments must adhere to. The purpose of Policy SDC1 is to ensure, through the consideration of residential development proposals, that the Council can influence what is appropriate on a site by site basis according to the contents of Policy SDC1. Bringing forward new development at the right density is important and new development will be expected to harmonise with or enhance the surrounding area. Where development sites are located in or close to Rugby town centre, densities are expected to be significantly higher than other parts of the Borough.

10.10. Developers should consider the impact of environmental factors such as high noise areas, areas of low air quality and contaminated land to ensure such sensitive sites achieve relevant statutory compliance/current best practice guidance and that a high level of sustainable design is achieved.