

- 10.11. In addition to Policy SDC1, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Appraisal will be a tool to help inform appropriate densities. The monitoring of previous developments and the overall deliverability of sites will also assist in determining acceptable densities to ensure these densities will not be of a level that will be detrimental to sites coming forward.

Policy SDC2: Landscaping

The landscape aspects of a development proposal will be required to form an integral part of the overall design. A high standard of appropriate hard and soft landscaping will be required. All proposals should ensure that:

- Important site features have been identified for retention through a detailed site survey;
- Features of ecological, geological and archaeological significance are retained and protected and opportunities for enhancing these features are utilised (consideration will also be given to the requirements of policies NE1 and SDC3 where relevant);
- Opportunities for utilising sustainable drainage methods are incorporated;
- New planting comprises native species which are of ecological value appropriate to the area;
- In appropriate cases, there is sufficient provision for planting within and around the perimeter of the site to minimise visual intrusion on neighbouring uses or the countryside; and
- Detailed arrangements are incorporated for the long-term management and maintenance of landscape features.

- 10.12. New development should maintain and, where possible, extend the landscape network of a settlement by taking advantage of existing features and creating new features which are appropriate to the location.

- 10.13. Provision should be made for hard and soft landscaping, ideally of a low maintenance nature, including the planting of indigenous trees and other vegetation, ground contouring and the creation of wildlife habitats and other ecological features. Such provision should have regard to the character of the site, its setting and the end users of the development. It can enhance the appearance and environmental quality of the development and help assimilate development into its surroundings and conserve the environment. Existing planting and structures such as walls, as well as topographical, ecological and archaeological features are frequently reflective of local character and distinctiveness and are important for the local environment and as such they should be safeguarded. They can often be satisfactorily and sympathetically incorporated into the landscaping of a development without unduly compromising its design. Depending on the type of development and its location, landscaping may need to be dense and extensive, particularly block structure planting, which will often be needed on the periphery of development where it may be exposed to view and detrimental to the countryside. It can also separate potentially incompatible land uses. The submission of landscape information as part of the development proposal helps to avoid the difficulty of incorporating these features into the scheme at a later stage.