

Part 04 Design codes



Artist's illustration of Rowan Park, Merton - now completed

Design code requirements

Introduction

4.1 This part of the Plan requires the applicant to submit their own design codes for any development proposals. It gives detailed guidance to applicants on aspects of design that they will be expected to focus on in more detail to demonstrate that the Vision, Principles and Site-Specific Policies of the Plan are met.

4.2 At the planning application stage, the applicant, will be expected to include as part of their application, a set of design codes that guides the development of each phase of the redevelopment. This should include, but not necessarily be limited to, a number of specific subject areas outlined below. The following guidance lists the subject areas that must be covered and gives guidance on how these subjects will be expected to be addressed.

4.3 Notwithstanding the requirements of the council's validation checklist the applicant will be required to provide information to address the following:

Design Codes

Architecture and elevations

4.4 *A design code is required in order to set out the approach intended to guide architectural style and the design of building elevations.* A general approach to architectural style should be defined in the code that creates a palette of common characteristics in basic architectural features, such as materials, height and proportions, yet allows scope for individual creativity for each building and phase. This code should also contain specific guidance on the appearance of elevations, notably to ensure they contain sufficient three-dimensional depth, human scale detail, visual interest and that sufficient attention to detail is given to the design of windows, their materials, proportions and depth of reveals.

Materials

4.5 *A design code is required in order to define a general palette of materials and where they should be used on the estate and on buildings.* This should build on the code for architecture and elevations and support the visions for each estate that are complementary to their context.

Landscape and biodiversity

4.6 *A design code is required to set out the landscaping principles and strategy for each estate.* This should build on the existing landscape characteristics of each site and detailed policy guidance indicatively, specifying planting types and species and locations. It should make reference to tree surveys of the sites and provide guidance and reasoning on their protection and integration into the new estate layout.

Flooding and drainage

4.7 *A design code is required to set out a strategy and plans for flood mitigation and drainage measures for all estates.* Based upon the findings of any required flood risk assessments, methods of mitigation should be detailed along with their location and extent where relevant.

Internal space standards

4.8 *A design code is required to set out principles for adhering to National Planning Policy, London Plan and the Mayor's Housing SPG requirements on residential internal space standards.* The philosophy should be to design beyond the minimum space standards, not to them.

Building and dwelling layouts

4.9 *A design code is required that sets out principles for building layouts.* This should include defining guidelines for the design and location of entrances, stair cores, refuse storage and in-building cycle storage. This should also address issues such as dual aspect and flexibility of living spaces. Example dwelling layouts should be shown that demonstrate how rooms use space efficiently by using regular plan forms and allow for different arrangements of furniture. Awkward shaped rooms and wasted space due to poorly positioned doors for example, should be avoided.

Building to street interface

4.10 *A design code is required to set principles of how buildings meet streets to manage the transition from the private to the public realm.* This code should give clear guidance on how to create a transition zone between public and private space by the creation of 'defensible space', how natural surveillance will be created by maximising front doors and habitable rooms at ground floor level. This should also include reference to the design, size and content of defensible space, such as its use for bin and cycle stores, planting and personalisation. The code should also include how digital services will be provided, identifying locations for communal TV aerials and satellite dishes. Individual dishes will not be permitted on elevations facing the street as they have a negative visual impact on the street scene.

Street design characteristics

4.11 *A design code is required to set out principles for the design of streets.* This should define different street types and set out how space will be used. This should include all space between building elevations and be based on the creation of traditional, recognised street forms as linear public spaces. The code should show how it promotes the provision of on-street parking as a first-choice means of provision and how it will integrate with street trees, street furniture and avoid on-kerb parking. A palette of surface materials and street furniture should form part of the code, as well as landscaping guidance. The code must contain guidance that creates liveable, attractive streets by having street width to building height ratios that ensure taller buildings do not create oppressive environments at ground level.

Building proportions as well as height need careful consideration. Traffic management measures must be in-built into the overall street design and not appear retrofit or distort or undermine the overall character of the street as a linear space with a movement function.

Amenity space

4.12 *A design code is required that sets out how all amenity space is to be provided.* This must include adherence to existing relevant standards. This should cover front and rear gardens to houses, communal and private space for flats, frontage landscaping or front gardens for blocks of flats and public open space. The code should also include qualitative guidance relating to issues such as shape, useability, microclimate, sunlight/daylight, general outlook and issues of privacy and security.

Refuse storage and collection

4.13 *A design code is required to detail a strategy for the design and operation of refuse storage and collection.* Refuse stores must be convenient for residents and for collection, be robust and well integrated into buildings and accord with the Council's guidelines on this. Flats should have communal bin stores. Houses must have bin-stores within the property boundary of each dwelling that are well designed and integrated into the front defensible space. Bin stores for houses should not form part of a communal system.

General requirements

4.14 All codes should provide an appropriate level of technical and graphic detail which is easy to understand and use by non-technical people. The document should include detailed drawings, elevations, cross-sections and plans to clearly demonstrate the codes. Design codes should develop the design vision for each estate and provide a clear set of codes informed by context to deliver this vision.

4.15 The next and final chapter gives general guidance on how it is envisaged the Plan will be delivered and implemented.