Whitburn
Design Guidelines

R.003

April 2019

Quality information - Rev 003

Project role	Name	Position	Action summary	Date
Qualifying body	Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum	Neighbourhood Forum	Review	26.02.19
Director / QA	Ben Castell	Technical Director	Approval of Report	07.03.19
Checked/QA	Ruth Mauritzen	Associate Director	Technical Review of Report	06.03.19
Checked/QA	Eleanor Van Der Klugt	Planner	Proof Read	06.03.19
Researcher	Chris Wiseman	Principal Landscape Architect and Urban Designer	Research, site visit, drawings, updates following WNF and Locality reviews	23.04.19
Locality Review	John Wilkinson	Neighbourhood Planning Officer	Rev 002 Review	22.03.19

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Introduction

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme, administered by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide Design support to Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum (WNF). The support is intended to provide design guidelines and a commentary on the character of Whitburn village.

The WNF is making good progress in the production of its Neighbourhood Plan and has requested technical advice in respect of design guidance for future developments within the village.

1.2. Objective

The main aim of this report is to provide design guidance in respect of future residential-led development in Whitburn. This design guidance should be considered as a point of reference for developers intending to deliver residential-led development. The aim is that this design guidance should support the delivery of high quality development that is appropriate in terms of scale, design and character in such a way as to preserve the existing quality of place in Whitburn.

1.3. Process

Following an inception meeting and a site visit, AECOM and WNF members carried out a high level assessment of the village in November 2018. WNF subsequently provided separate feedback of locally valued or distinctive qualities of the village that were used to inform this report.

The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:

• Initial meeting and site visit;

• Townscape and design appraisal;

• Design principles and guidelines to be used to assess future developments;

• Draft report with design guidelines; and

• Final report.

1.4. Background

It is important that these Design Guidelines work in tandem with other published information pertaining to the character and quality of the urban form, open space and the landscape of Whitburn.

For a full appreciation of the heritage and character of Whitburn, readers should also refer to the following documents:

Whitburn Conservation Area: Character Appraisal

The historic core of Whitburn is designated as a Conservation Area. In 2006, North of England Civic Trust, on behalf of South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council produced the 'Whitburn Conservation Area: Character Appraisal'. This comprehensive report examines the Conservation Area in some detail, including (amongst other things):

– Origins and development pattern;
– Form and characteristics;
– Details and materials;
– Land-uses; and
– Boundaries, settings and views.

The purpose of the Appraisal is stated as being two-fold: First, to improve an understanding of the value of the built heritage, and to provide clearer guidance on planning matters and the types of development within the Conservation Area that are likely to be encouraged; second, to enable the local planning authority to improve its strategies, policies and approach towards conservation and development opportunities and priorities within the Conservation Area.

Whitburn Heritage and Character Assessment

In 2017 AECOM was commissioned to produce a Heritage and Character Assessment (HCA) for Whitburn village as part of the Neighbourhood Planning Programme, administered by Locality.

The HCA presents a summary of the history and character of Whitburn. The 'study area' for the HCA is defined by the Neighbourhood Plan Area, and therefore looks both at the historic core / Conservation Area, and considers the urban and rural character of the wider settlement.

1.5. Area of Study

The 'Area of Study' used for the Whitburn Design Guidelines is shown on Figure 1, and is the same as that used for the Whitburn HCA.

Whitburn is located within the Metropolitan District Council of South Tyneside, on the North Sea coastline.

The northern edge of the conurbation of Sunderland is situated in close proximity to the south of the village, while South Shields is situated approximately 1.5km to the north of Whitburn. Inland of the village is a rural landscape that separates Whitburn from Cleadon.
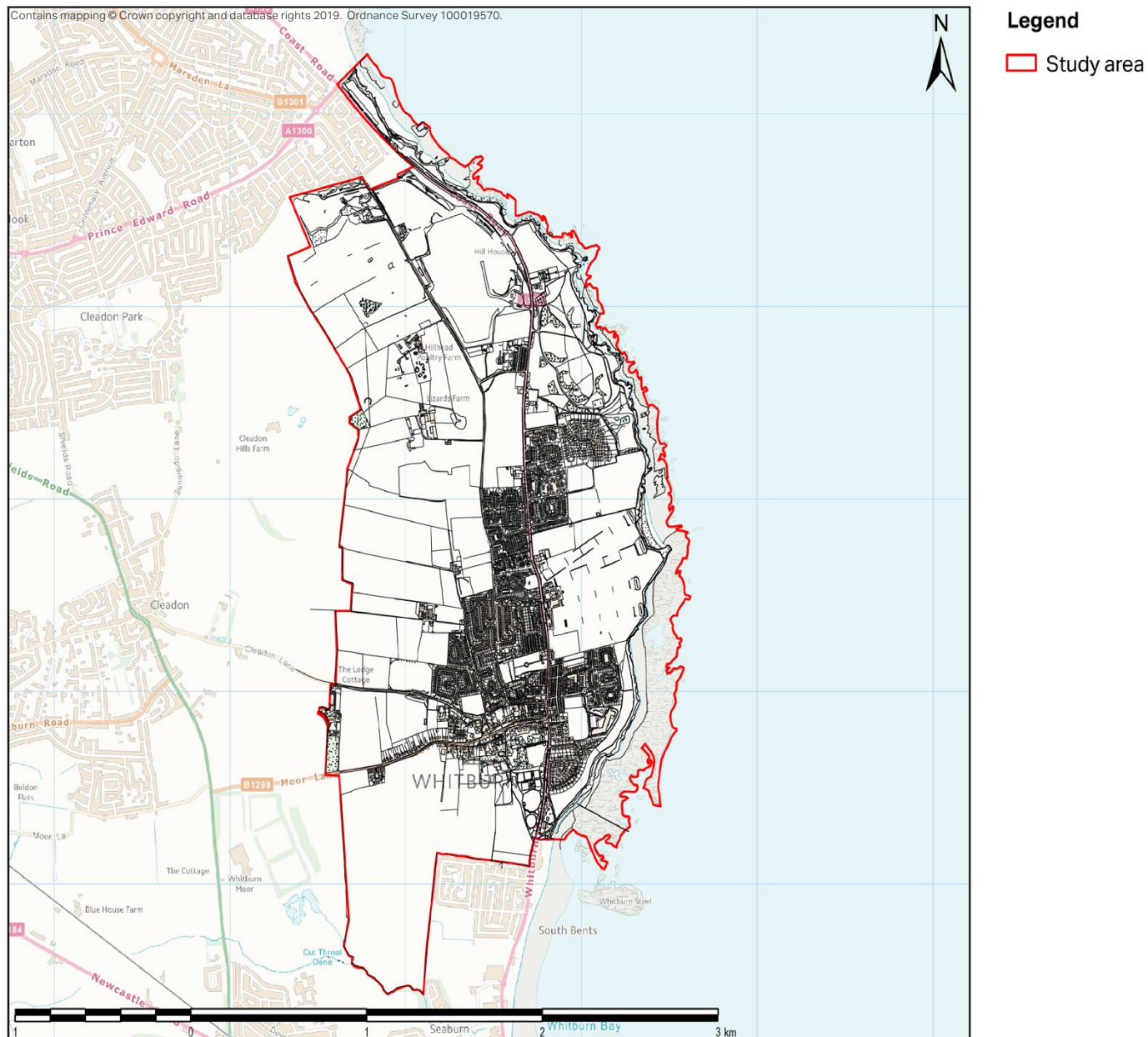

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Legend

☐ Study area

Figure 1: Area of Study

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AECOM

Local Character Area

02

2. Local Character

This section outlines the spatial and contextual characteristics of Whitburn. It analyses the pattern and layout of buildings, hierarchy of movement, topography, building heights and parking. The information is interpreted both at a descriptive level and represented through images from the village. The features outlined in this section are used as the basis for the design guidance.

2.1. Settlement Pattern and Urban Form

The historic core of Whitburn, a Conservation Area, is shown on Figure 2.

Historically, the east-west routes of Front Street / Moor Lane and North Guards have defined the urban form of this part of the village. The settlement pattern and village green layout are evident today, although the architecture of adjacent built form has changed organically over time and now comprises predominantly C18th / C19th buildings.

Beyond its historic core, Whitburn experienced relatively extensive residential development throughout the 20th century - focused mainly to the north and east of the historic core.

As is evident through its designation as a Conservation Area, the more historic parts of the village tend to exhibit a strong character and locally distinctive architecture; many of the more recent developments have been introduced as partial measures

over time, which has incrementally diluted some of the qualities of the historic village identity and 'sense of place'.

Some of the principle characteristics of the historic village core include:

- A 'village green' layout characterising the principal thoroughfare (Front Street) in a traditional manner; with frontages set back from the road, separated by wide verges and areas of green space, but with buildings sited to the front of plots and facing the street;

- Built form defines the streetscape; the historic core achieves this in part through unity of building line, with the built form often accommodating varied architectural styles / typologies;

- A comfortable variation in the size and scale of buildings - from single storey lodges to three storey villas - which enhances its character of variety and difference, as opposed to homogeneity. Massing is such that, in spite of scale differences, there are few instances of overly dominant built form;

- A mature landscape framework, comprising of sequential village greens enclosed by street trees and planting within the curtilage of properties. To the west of Front Street the effect is to coarsen the urban grain, in contrast to the more dense arrangement at the junction of Front Street / East Street and along North Guards;

- A range of setback space between the back of the footway and the building line along Front Street and relatively consistent boundary treatments, providing variation to

- privacy levels, yet generally maintaining a good relationship between buildings and street / public realm;

- The alignment of roads is characterised by a sequence of buildings, landmarks, open spaces, changes in topography and subtle variations of street alignment;

- Extending off Front Street, frequently at right angles, are narrow rural lanes, known locally as 'Chares'; providing options for both pedestrian only, and vehicular access to lanes and roads running parallel (e.g. to North Guards);

Outwith the historic core, development during the 20th century and early 21st century has departed from this traditional pattern towards more peripheral 'cell' housing estates.
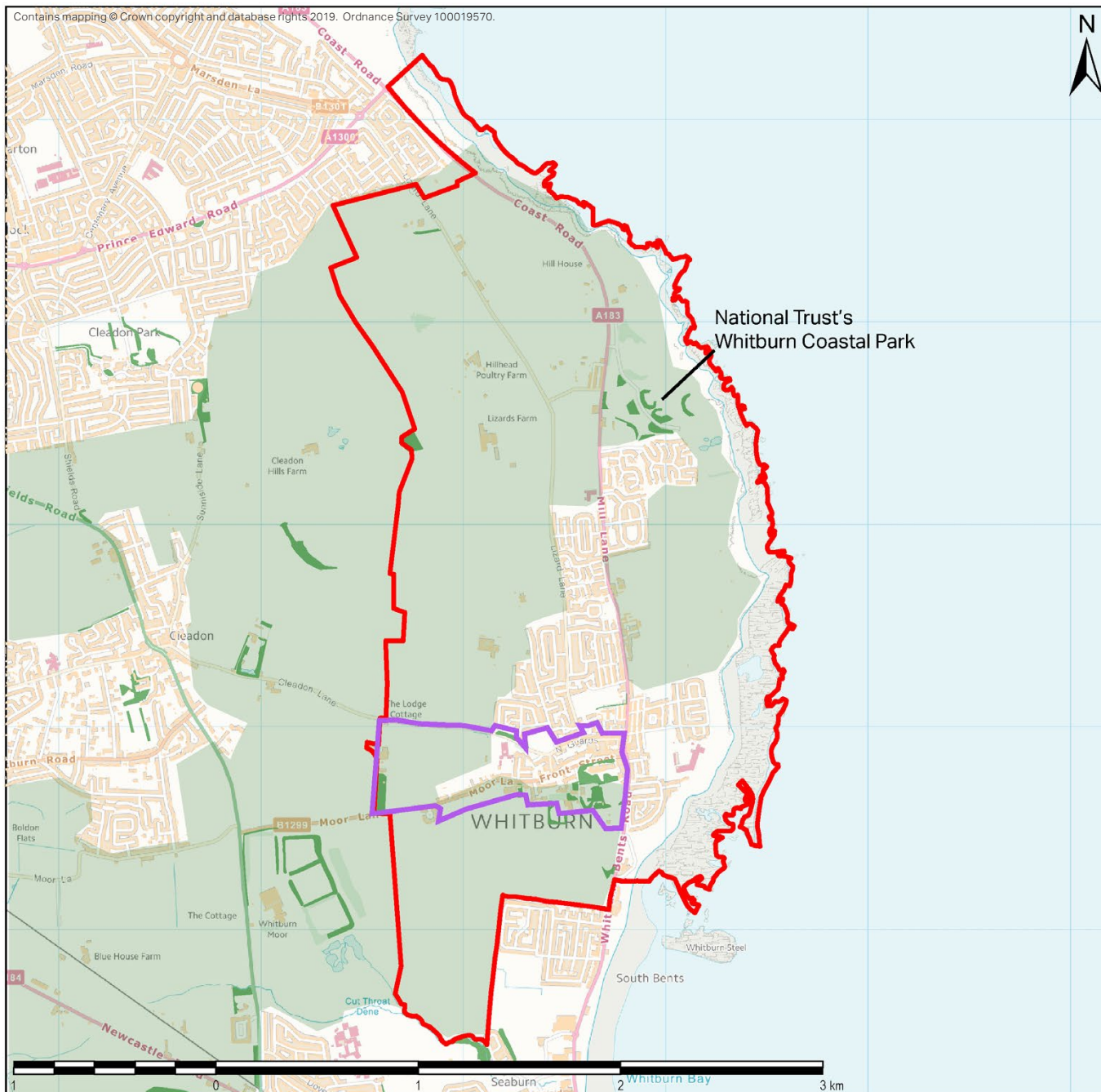
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Legend

Study area

Whitburn Conservation Area

Building

Woodland

Green Belt

National Trust's
Whitburn Coastal Park

Figure 2: Land Use

2.2. Building Typology

Figure 3 shows that the most frequent typologies include a typical mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses.

The historic core of Whitburn exhibits a greater variety of building typology, including several examples of this range of residential building, as well as flats, civic buildings and mixed use buildings.

Pockets of terraced housing have generally developed in close proximity to areas of employment or services, for example at the eastern end of Front Street, and to the east of East Street, Adolphus Street and Holly Avenue. To the north of the village is a small group of terraced properties that remain from the former Marsden village settlement, which was largely demolished following the closure of the Whitburn Colliery. Contemporary terraces, comprising approximately 3-4 units, can be found at Church Lane, east of Markham Avenue and in the 'East Croft' development at Beech Avenue.

Post-war and late 20th Century detached and semi-detached buildings are prevalent throughout much of the north and eastward expansion of Whitburn. As one would expect, the development layout and typology varies according to the planning approach and style of its time: from extensive post war to c.1960's semi-detached housing (often in pairs) and bungalows; to late 20th century self-contained housing estates terminating in cul-de-sacs, comprising mainly detached dwellings. More recent single-plot re-developments, particularly around Whitburn Bents Road and Nicholas Avenue,

have seen larger detached properties built within the relatively generous plot sizes found in this part of the village. 'Mill Lane' is a recent development to the east of the A183, comprising a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced building types.

Notable variations to the prevailing building typologies include the development of flats to the south of Front Street, on the former Whitburn Hall site and in a modern development of flats at Beech Avenue. Several large detached farm buildings within the settlement, most notably Wheathall Farm and Glebe Farm, are an indication of the village origins. To the north of Whitburn a contemporary mews courtyard development 'Thill Stone Mews' sits in close proximity to the south of the Marsden terraces.

Fairfield Road

Farrow Drive

Marsden Village

Front street

Beech Avenue

Former Whitburn Hall

Holly Ave / Adolphus Street

Nicholas Avenue (Detached villa)

Detached Villas

Semi-detached Villa

Terraced Housing

Flats

N

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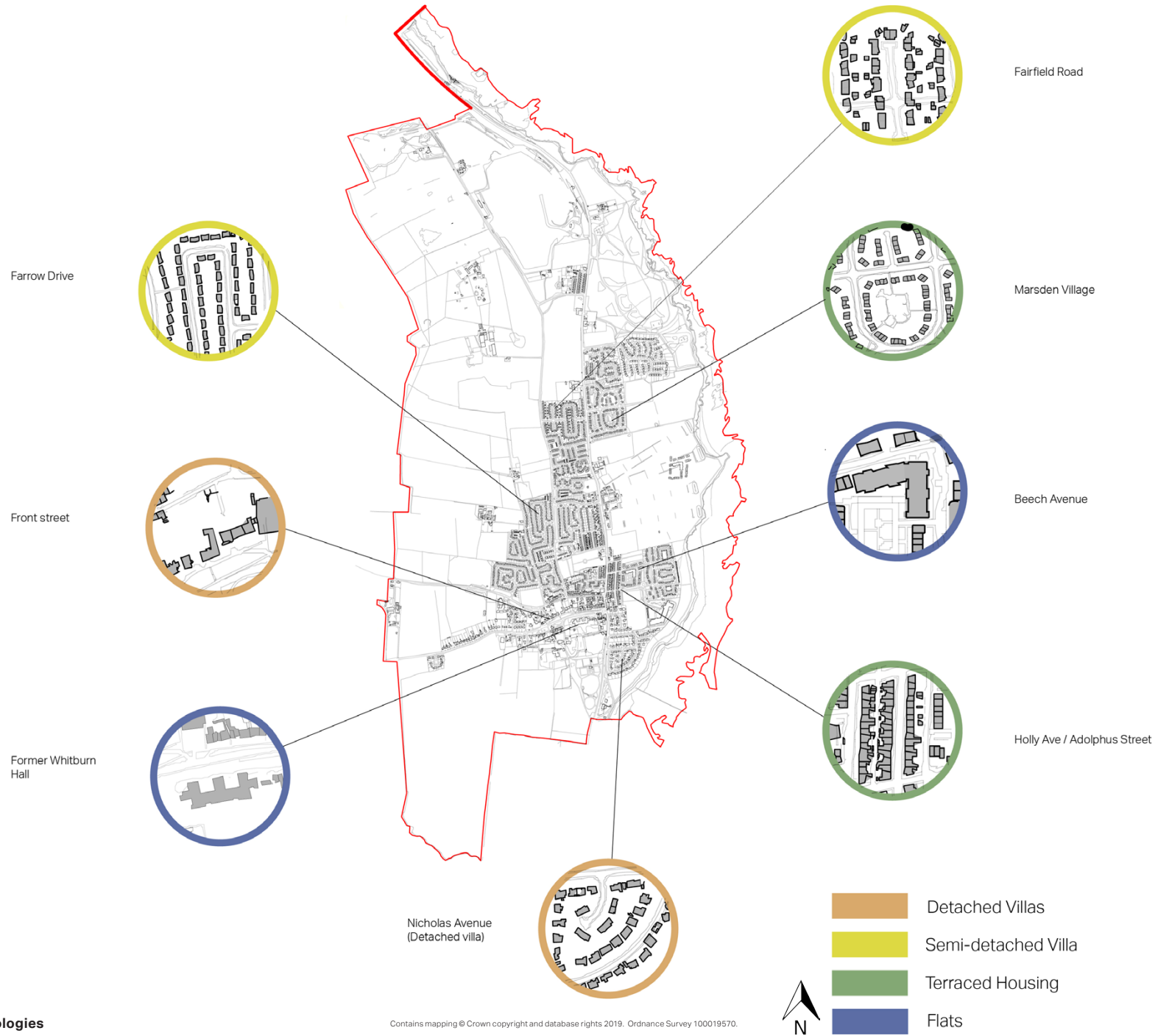
Figure 3: Building typologies

2.3. Streets

Readers should refer to the 2017 Whitburn HCA for a general overview of vehicular movement and connectivity.

This section of the Design Guidelines intends to describe the principle routes through Whitburn and how, in turn, this informs the urban form, and character.

Figure 4 illustrates the hierarchy of streets in Whitburn (the widest lines indicating more primary streets), and photos that describe their character.

The principal route through Whitburn is the A183. Within the historic centre of the village the A183 (Whitburn Bents Road and East Street) is well-defined by adjacent built form and natural stone walls. Terminating features, such as the Grey Horse pub, serve to create landmarks that aid legibility while also subtly controlling traffic speeds within the urban area. Where the road becomes Mill Lane, particularly to the north of Marina Terrace, the road corridor has a weaker character; the carriageway is considerably wider, has fewer subtle changes of alignment, and is less well defined by adjacent built form - which is occasionally set back from, or not overlooking the street. Occasional glimpsed sea views add to a sense of place.

The B1299 joins the A1018 to the village of Whitburn to the east. This approach is more rural in character, passing through an open agricultural landscape before elements of the urban form at Sea View Park, and large detached properties north of Moor Lane begin to enclose the carriageway. As the road

transitions into the village, and its historic core (Conservation Area), subtle variation of topography and alignment combine to create a sequence of views, complimented by a series of green spaces that provide interest and variation as well as a less vehicular-focussed streetscape.

Other routes to the settlement, including Cleadon Lane and Lizard Lane are also typically rural in their approach, often with low stone walls and / or linear tree belts enclosing the carriageway. Lizard Lane offers elevated views across Whitburn and out to the North Sea; by contrast, Cleadon Lane reveals the settlement edge only at the last minute.

Within the settlement the street layout is reflective of the historic development and expansion of Whitburn over time. Streets close to the historic core of the village tend to offer good permeability; the 'Chares' providing options for both pedestrian only, and vehicular access to lanes and roads running parallel (e.g. to North Guards). Other streets demonstrating good permeability are the fine-grain grid layouts often found around terraced houses e.g. particularly those running parallel to Mill Lane; Adolphus Street and Holly Avenue that stitch well into more recent development at Beech Avenue.

Cleadon Lane, looking west

Front Street, looking west

East of Front Street

Example of 'Chare' pedestrian path
looking south to Front Street

North Guards, looking east
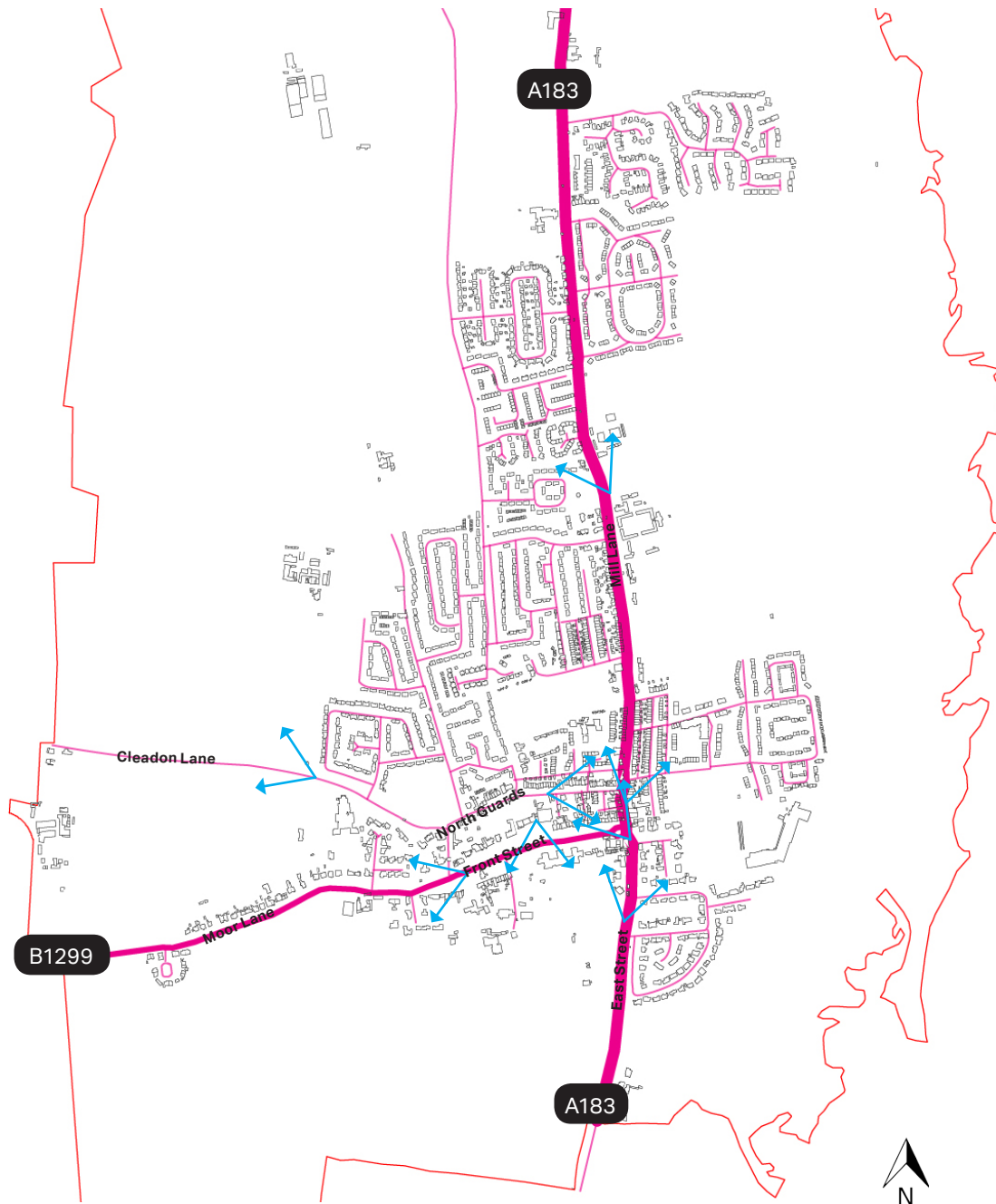
Mill Lane, looking north

Streetscape in new development at
Mill Lane

East Street, central Whitburn

East Street, looking north

A183

A183

B1299

Cleadon Lane

North Guards

Front Street

Moor Lane

East Street

Mill Lane

N

Figure 4: Streetscape Character and Hierarchy

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2.4. Density

Density is a measure by which the intensity of land use within a given area can be quantified. It is typically applied to residential contexts.

There are a number of means by which to measure density. A standard measure is simply the number of units (dwellings) per hectare (dph); this approximates a 'gross density' i.e. it includes built plots, roads and other hard landscape areas, open space and soft landscape. It does not account for multiple occupancies / building heights, nor does it consider population. This method is best used for simple comparison of housing layouts.

Figure 5 and the table opposite illustrate a range of densities found across Whitburn.

The areas with the highest density tend to be a variety of terraced and semi-detached properties with small and medium sized gardens clustered together in 'cells' that branch off the 'ribbon' development of the village. There tends to be less open space within these areas. Not all of these areas are central - which is more typical of modern urban design - e.g. Rupert Street and Souter View being quite distant from the 'core' of the village at Front Street. Often some areas of relative high density adjoin the rural edge e.g. Farrow Drive, when compared to a more gradual transition in other areas.

The lowest density is mainly found in the historic core of the village and in housing estates with larger detached

properties e.g. those north of Moor Lane, Shearwater and Nicholas Avenue. This is in part a result of the transition between the village and the countryside in these areas. These developments are characterised by larger plots, generous gardens or greater provision of open space.

Area	Approximate Dwellings / Hectare (dph)	Notes
North of Moor Lane	8	
Shearwater	20	
Nicholas Avenue	22	
Beech Avenue	25	Excludes multiple occupancy flats
Wellands Lane	34	
Fairfield Drive	35	
Souter View	40	
North Guards / Front Street	42	Includes mixed use / commercial ground floor buildings
Adolphus Street	43	
Farrow Drive	44	
Arthur Street	46	
Elm Drive	48	
Rupert Street	48	

Arthur Street

Fairfield Avenue

Souter View

Farrow Drive

Wellands Lane

North of Moor Lane

Shearwater

Rupert Street

Beech Avenue

Elm Drive

Adolphus Street

Nicholas Avenue

North Guards / Front Street

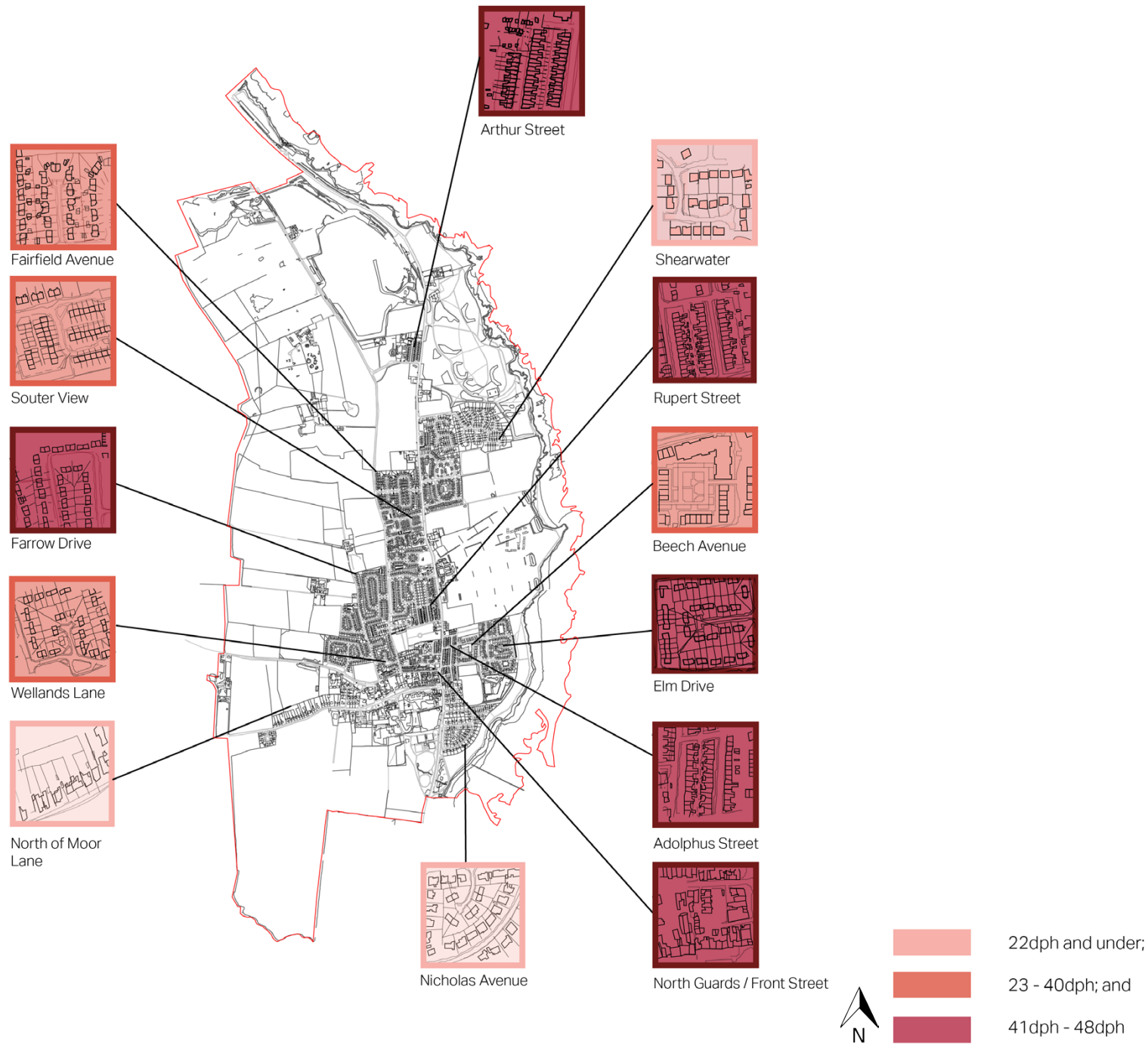N

22dph and under;

23 - 40dph; and

41dph - 48dph

Figure 5: Approximate Residential Density

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2.5. Building Heights

Across the majority of the settlement building heights vary between one and two storeys, especially within 20th-21st century housing estates. Isolated examples of three storey buildings can be found within the historic core of the village including 'Olde House', the post war flats at Whitburn Hall, and contemporary development off Church Lane.

Typically, the rooflines in Whitburn are gabled or hipped with most buildings having chimneys. Some variety of roof types is evident within the historic core of the village, albeit less common, such as cross-gabled and M-shaped gables.

Figure 6: Local examples of building heights

2.6. Car Parking

There are different approaches to car parking within the village. A characteristic of the village is parking on the street, a trend which may be increasingly problematic as car numbers increase.

Other parking modes include garage parking either on the plot or adjacent to the plot shared with other properties and parking in the front garden.

Figure 8: On-street parking

Figure 7: Garage parking on adjacent plot shared with other properties

Figure 9: Street parking restricted to designated bays

2.7. Proposed development

Figure 10 illustrates proposed residential planning applications that, at the time of writing (November 2018) are 'live' and awaiting a decision. There is no certainty that the applications will be approved, or even be developed; however, this figure provides context to the possible future growth of the settlement.

For information, the findings of the 2018 South Tyneside Council 'Strategic Land Review: Character Area Site Assessments: Whitburn' (SLR) are also illustrated here. The evidence in the SLR will inform policies in the emerging Local Plan.

- 1 dwelling at Shearwater

- 5 dwellings at Coast Road

- 36 dwellings (apartments) at Croftside Court

- 3 dwellings at North Guards

- 4 dwellings at East Street

The sites identified in the 2018 SLR are:

- WH9a (Site considered 'potentially suitable')

- WH17a / 17b (Sites considered 'potentially suitable')

- WH19 (Site considered 'potentially suitable')

- WH25 (Site considered 'potentially suitable')

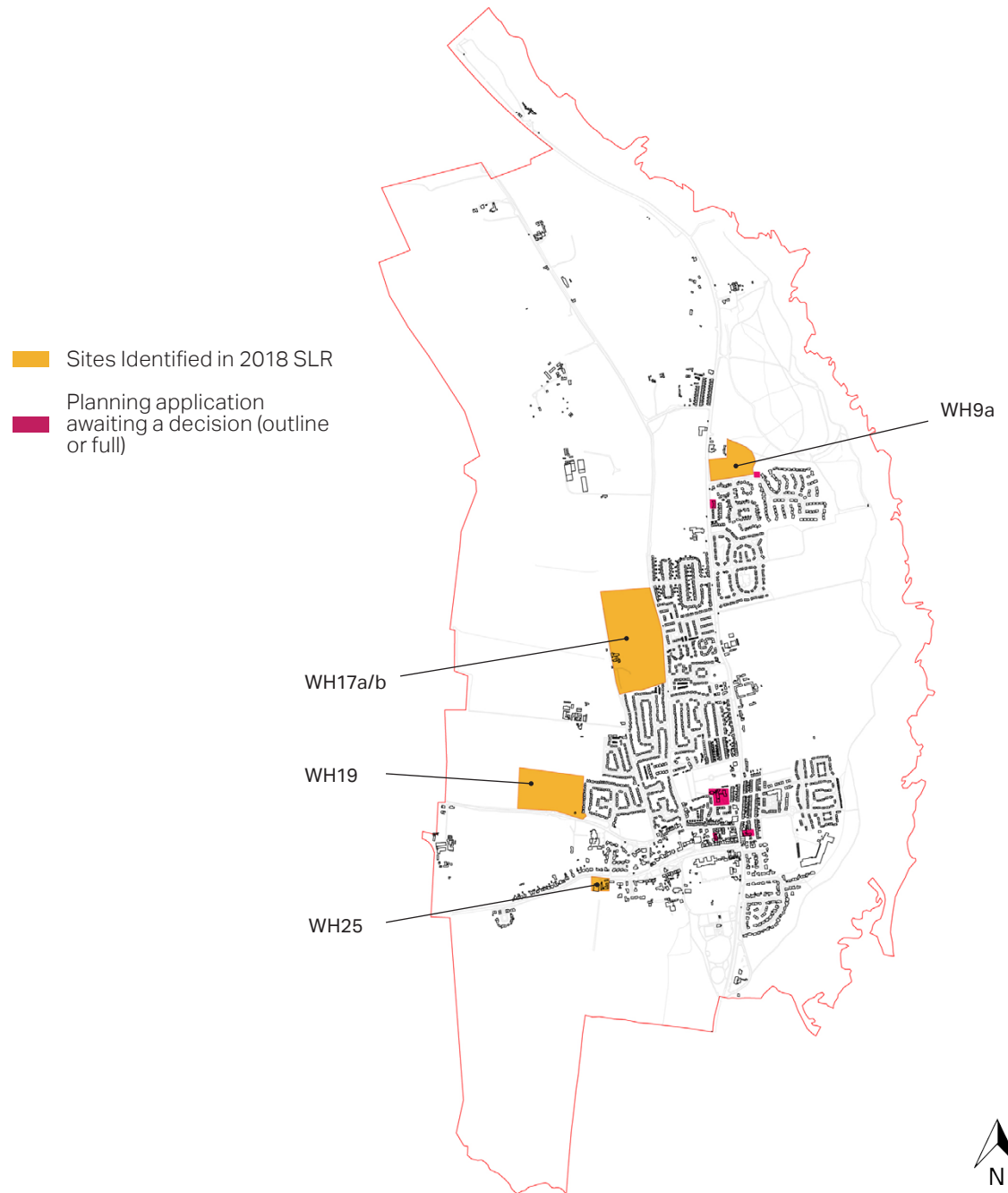Sites Identified in 2018 SLR

Planning application awaiting a decision (outline or full)

Figure 5: Proposed developments

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AECOM

Design Guidelines

03

3. Design Guidelines

This section is divided into two parts. The first is a set of key elements to consider when assessing a design proposal. These are presented as general questions which WNF should address to developers (and their design teams) for them to provide clarification and explanation, as necessary. The second part is design guidance setting out the aspirations of the WNF. The guidelines developed in this document focus on residential environments. However, new housing development should not be viewed in isolation. Considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context, considering not only the immediate neighbouring buildings but also the townscape and landscape of the wider locality. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of a development recognising that new building technologies are capable of delivering acceptable built forms and may sometimes be more efficient. It is important with any proposals that full account is taken of the local context and that the new design embodies the "sense of place" and also meets the aspirations of people already living in that area. The aim of this section is to produce design guidelines that help to assess design quality and appropriateness in residential development proposals. Images have been used to reflect good examples of local architecture.

3.1. General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

This section provides a number of questions against which the design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution. As a first step, there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in the proposals.

3.1.1. Design Proposals should:

– Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

– Reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, squares and other spaces;

– Maintain the rural character of views and gaps. This may include, but is not limited to, retaining glimpsed outward views, protecting 'slot' views to key landmarks, or preventing complete enclosure of outward views from within new development;

– Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;

– Protect local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long distance views;

– Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

– Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

– Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

– Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

– Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

– Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

– Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;

– Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management, including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation, where appropriate, without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenity of neighbours; and

– Positively integrate energy efficient technologies.

The following questions relate to achieving quality through design and can be used by WNF.

3.1.2. Street Grid and Layout

– Does it favour accessibility and permeability over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?

– Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?

- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?

- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

- Do the points of access conform to relevant design requirements and best practice principles contained in the CIHT 'Manual For Streets' and / or the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)?

3.1.3. Local Green Spaces, Rural Views and Character

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?

- Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?

- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?

- In rural locations has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?

- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

- Can any new views be created?

- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?

- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

- Does the new development present, or explore, opportunities to link together existing open spaces as part of an accessible local green network?

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

3.1.4. Gateway and Access Features

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between villages?

- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?

- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

3.1.5. Buildings Layout and Grouping

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?

- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?

- Does the proposal maintain the pattern of development emanating from the principal route through Whitburn?

- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

3.1.6. Building Line and Boundary Treatment

- What are the characteristics of the building line?

- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?

- Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the patterns and solutions that are typical of Whitburn?

3.1.7. Building Heights and Roofline

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?

- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?

- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

- Would a higher development improve the scale of the overall area?

– Is the choice of materials, unit size and colour tone appropriate to those considered distinctive to Whitburn?

3.1.8. Corner Buildings

– Are the buildings in block corners designed to have windows addressing both sides of the corner?

– Have blank walls been avoided?

– Are landscape and boundary treatments enhancing the corner of a block?

3.1.9. Building Materials and Surface treatment

– What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?

– Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?

– Does the proposal use high quality materials?

– Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

– Do the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

3.1.10. Car Parking solutions

– What parking solutions have been considered?

– Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

– Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

– Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

3.1.11. Architectural Details and Contemporary Design

– Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height, massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.

– If a proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing property so as not to compromise its character?

– Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?

– Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

– If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

3.1.12. Sustainability, Eco Design, waste and services

– What effect will services have on the scheme as a whole?

– Can the effect of services be integrated at the planning design stage, or mitigated if harmful?

– Has the lighting scheme been designed to avoid light pollution?

– Has adequate provision been made for bin storage, waste separation and relevant recycling facilities?

– Has the location of the bin storage facilities been considered relative to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?

– Has the impact of the design and location of the bin storage facilities been considered in the context of the whole development?

– Could additional measures, such as landscaping be used to help integrate the bin storage facilities into the development?

– Has any provision been made for the need to enlarge the bin storage in the future without adversely affecting the development in other ways?

– Have all aspects of security been fully considered and integrated into the design of the building and open spaces? For standalone elements (e.g. external bin areas, cycle storage, etc.) materials and treatment should be of equal quality, durability and appearance as for the main building.

– Use of energy saving/efficient technologies should be encouraged. If such technologies are used (e.g. solar, panels, green roofs, water harvesting, waste collection, etc.), these should be integrally designed to complement the building and not as bolt-ons after construction.

3.2. Design Guidelines

3.2.1. Street Layout

- Streets to be defined by adjacent built form, and the character of the buildings around them. Access to properties should be from the street, wherever possible.

- Streets must meet relevant design requirements and best practice principles (for example, local authority adoptable street standards (if available), the CIHT 'Manual For Streets' and / or the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)) as well as be considered as a 'space' to be used by all, not just vehicles. The design of new development should include streets that incorporate needs of pedestrian, cyclists and public transport users.

- Streets must be identified by a hierarchy of movements (primary, secondary and tertiary roads) and have a specific character linked to the scale of the development .

- Streets should be gently meandering - providing interest and evolving views. The length of streets is an important consideration; long straight sections of road tend to encourage higher speed and should be avoided.

- Routes should provide a permeable and connected pattern, creating different travel options, particularly for pedestrians. A number of residential developments in Whitburn do not have convenient pedestrian and cycle linkages and present cul-de-sacs which prevent permeability. If cul-de-sacs are proposed, it is recommend that they should be relatively short and include connection for onward pedestrian links.

- It is suggested that new developments provide attractive and direct walking and cycling connections to the existing neighbourhood and local facilities. Consider reflecting on how a contemporary use of Whitburn's 'Chares' may work in new development.

- Walking and cycling should be encouraged by wayfinding elements, such as built or natural elements that are distinctive and memorable in their nature. These elements, unique in their aspect, define clear routes and help people to orientate themselves.

- Pedestrian paths to be included in new developments and integrated with existing pedestrian routes to provide access to the wider footpath network (both urban and rural).

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Figure 6: Street layout of Whitburn

Figure 7: View of East Street, where built form has been used to define the street and subtly change the direction of travel

Figure 8: Front Street showing a gentle meander and a change of levels

3.2.2. Public Realm & Green / Open Space

- Development adjoining public open space should enhance the character of the space by arranging main building façades and entrances facing onto them. This helps create a sense of place, improves natural surveillance and fosters social interaction.

- Open spaces should offer a variety of uses related to the surrounding activities and buildings. Where play areas are required, ensure that they are not isolated, locate them within short walking distances of housing and promote natural surveillance with buildings overlooking them.

- Materials used in the public realm should be selected to complement the character of the building and street, keeping the number and type of materials to a minimum. Selected materials must be locally characteristic, durable and easy to maintain.

- Streetscapes should be free of unnecessary clutter to improve accessibility and enhance character.

- Loss of trees or woodland as a result of development, should first be avoided where feasible. If losses are unavoidable, trees or woodland must be replaced with new planting that meets or exceeds the spatial extent and quality that has been lost.

- Where relevant and feasible, new development should allow for views of the sea to reinforce a sense of place. A similar approach should be taken for views of open countryside.

- Landscape schemes, promoting native species and the principle of 'right tree, right place' should be designed and integrated with the open fields. This can help to reinforce rural character and transition between urban / rural areas.

- Ensure that tree and landscape planting have sufficient space to grow and adequate provision is made for future maintenance. Use green features as focal points in the wider townscape as within Whitburn's historic core.

- Preserve the rural character of the roads where possible by retaining grass verges, hedgerows and trees.

Figure 9: Typical layout of buildings enclosing green space

Figure 10: Public realm 'placemaking' through design of details

Figure 11: Typical public realm in Whitburn

3.2.3. Gateway & Access Features

– Gateway features, such as built elements and high quality landscape features, that reflect the local rural character should be used to highlight access to and 'arrival' at Whitburn.

– Gateways should act as visual guides and make the place unique and recognisable.

– Proposed buildings should be designed to respond to view corridors and reinforce existing views.

– Access to new development sites should be improved creating a barrier free environment considering change of levels, openings and boundaries.

Figure 12: Local examples of traditional buildings acting as gateways

3.2.4. Pattern & Building Layout

–   Whilst contemporary design is encouraged local heritage and setting must be considered.

–   The layout of new development should follow the arrangement of adjacent buildings where possible and relevant.

–   New development should encourage a variety of housing typologies that reflect the existing fabric of the village, and provide for a mix of tenures.

–   Building type, layout and density should reinforce the character and hierarchy of the street. Densities should be used to transition sensitively between more central areas / primary streets to settlement edge / tertiary streets.

–   Variety of built form is characteristic of the historic core of Whitburn. There should be no use of a repeating architectural style along the entirety of the street.
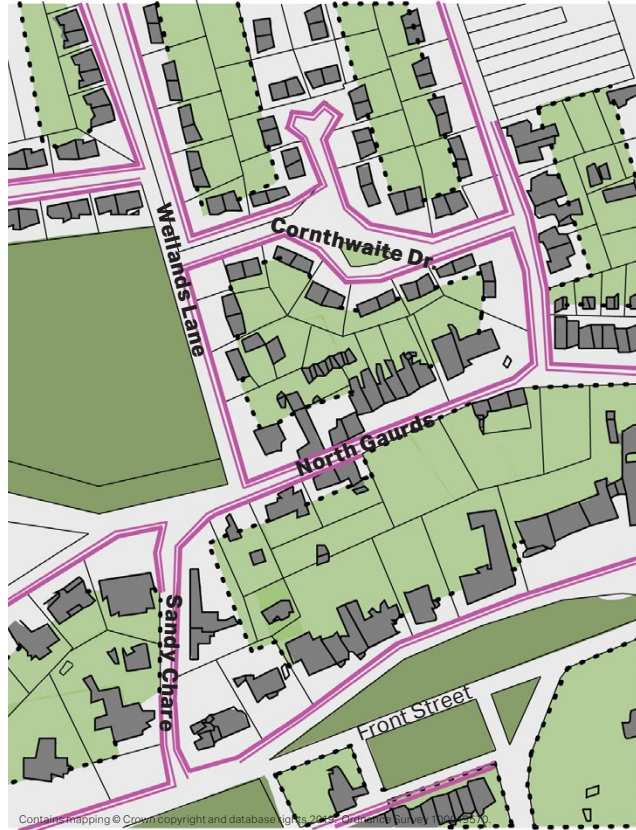

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Figure 13: Illustration of the change in urban form and layout from the historic core (Front Street) to post 19th century development

Back Gardens
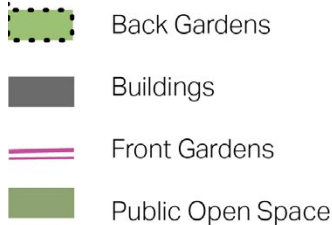
Buildings

Front Gardens

Public Open Space

N

Figure 14: Local examples of good boundary treatment and front garden

3.2.5. Building Line & Boundary Treatment

– Buildings should be aligned along the street with their main facade and entrance facing it, where this is in keeping with local character. The building line should have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions but form a unified whole.

– Boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the rural character of the area. For example, they could be low walls made of brick and stone, which is typical of Whitburn, hedgerows or iron railing details.

– Front gardens or small 'pocket parks' should be included where this is characteristic of the area.

– If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the property. Landscape areas could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers. Such containers are to be visible only when required for collection.

– Boundaries such as walls or hedgerows, whichever is appropriate to the street, should enclose and define each street along the back edge of the pavement, adhering to a consistent building line for each development group.

– Properties should have rear gardens and in most cases a front garden - although this may vary depending on the street hierarchy and streetscape character - and be sympathetic with surrounding properties.

Figure 15: Traditional boundary treatments

Figure 16: Examples of traditional building lines, using boundaries and built form to define the street

3.2.6. Building Heights & Massing

– Heights of new buildings should generally not exceed three storeys, which is generally the maximum for residential property within the settlement.

– The heights and roof forms should allow for glimpses of long distance views where appropriate.

– The existing roofline of adjoining properties should be respected to create a consistent roofline and rhythm along the street. Roof pitches should match existing/adjacent roof pitches (taking into account variation as a result of the materials used).

– New development should be designed with balanced composition; this does not necessarily mean a symmetrical design.

– The scale, massing and heights of new development should relate to the width of the street or open space. A well balanced ratio should be achieved that works with the road hierarchy to create a positive environment that balances place and movement.

Figure 17: Local example showing rooflines with variety

Figure 18: Residential roofline with variety and interesting change in topography

3.2.7. Corner Buildings

− Corner buildings should have a facade with high quality design that positively addresses each street edge.

− Corner buildings should achieve this by placing windows and entrances facing the street and/or public open spaces.

− It is not considered good practice to leave blank façades on one side of a corner building.

Façades enhancing elements, such as brick chimney details

Gable dormer

High quality boundary treatment

Windows facing both street edges at street level

Variety in facade materials

Figure 19: Example of a corner building with positive treatment and animated facade

Decorative stone lintels

Three storeys and varied gables

Brick chimney with detailing

Active façades with windows and entrances on both sides

Figure 20: Local example showing a traditional treatment of a corner building

3.2.8. Car Parking Solutions

– High quality street design should be the focus of proposals.

– Parking can be accommodated on plot and on street according to the location and typology of buildings.

– Car parking solutions on plot should be designed to minimise visual impact using landscape and planting elements to keep a sense of enclosure.

– Good practice guidance e.g. Manual for Streets, advocates a combination of solutions that complement each other and enhance design quality of development overall.

Figure 22: Car parking on the street

Figure 21: Local example of car park arrangement, treatment and detail

Figure 23: Local example of on-street parking restricted to bays

3.2.9. Traditional Architecture

The vernacular architecture of the historic core of Whitburn is one of the key elements in defining the sense of place of the village. The materials used are varied and are considered in more detail in section 3.2.11 below. Notable construction materials and traditional building features recorded by AECOM and in the South Tyneside Council (2006) Whitburn Conservation Area Character Appraisal includes, but is not limited to:

–   A variety of architectural style, ranging from: Georgian; Regency; Victorian classical; Gothic revivalism; Arts and Crafts movement; and Edwardian interpretations and amalgamations of earlier styles.

–   Sash and casement, bay and bow windows;

–   Boundary walls formed of red brick with decorative pattern-work, or from natural stone. Iron work is often used for ornamentation;

–   Pre-19th century timber frame covered in render and painted;

–   Red brick façades; some brick buildings are rendered or painted;

–   Flint stone used for the Parish churches and the majority of boundary treatments;

–   Traditional small bay windows; and

–   Traditional use of red bricks with cobbles for boundary treatment and building façades.

Figure 24: 'The Lodge', Front Street

Figure 25: Deep eaves and carved bargeboards on Whitburn House and Lodge

Figure 26: Brick facade and traditional windows with stone lintels, with decorative entrance and boundaries using brick and ironwork details

Figure 28: Typical architectural building with white painted stone, timber frame, and high quality details on rooflines, gutters and boundaries

Figure 30: Local example of typical architectural detailing with timber structure

Figure 27: Local example of traditional architecture with buff stone work, stone lintels, and casement windows.

Figure 29: Building presenting local character buff stone and bay windows. Boundaries are softened through the use of planting

AECOM

3.2.10. Architectural Details

It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a comprehensive set of architectural detail solutions. Yet it is expected that future development will make reference to historic building and the traditional materials and details.

Proposed building facade should indicate the importance of each storey using composition of materials and architectural details.

It is recommended that contemporary architectural solutions should be considered, but they must be well considered, high-quality designs which use local materials, forms, massing and detailing to reflect the existing built fabric of Whitburn.

These are examples of building materials and details that contribute to the local vernacular architecture of Whitburn and could be used to inform future development.

It should be noted that these materials are not prescriptive and there is opportunity for innovative and creative material suggestions in new buildings, restorations and extensions that may complement what already exists. However, when buildings are designed, local heritage of building materials should be taken into consideration.

Figure 31: Typical ornamental porches

Figure 32: Typical door detail

Figure 33: Varied Dormer windows

Figure 34: Skylights

Figure 35: Brick chimney on hipped and gable roofs

Figure 36: Typical gable

Figure 37: Hipped roof

Figure 38: Typical sash windows with masonry details

Figure 39: Casement window

Figure 40: Typical bay windows

3.2.11. Materials & Colour Palette

The materials and colour palette used throughout Whitburn contributes to the rural character of the area and the local vernacular.

It is essential that the proposed developments are of a high quality and reinforce the local distinctiveness of the area. The palette of materials should be selected based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment.

Example Roof Materials

Pantiles
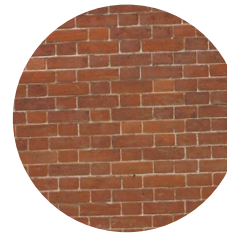

Clay Pantiles

Slate

Clay Details

Example Facade Materials & Colour Palette

Red bricks

Red brick and buff stone

Natural Stone

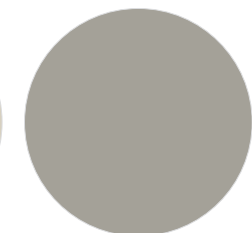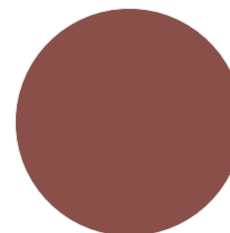
Patterned Brickwork

Painted roughcast

Pained render

Painted stone

Example colour ranges

3.2.12. Contemporary Architecture

Contemporary interpretations of local traditional architectural forms should be explored. Achieving local distinctiveness is important, but proposals that demonstrate creativity or design flair, that are appropriate and sensitive to their context, should be encouraged.

Example of contemporary architecture in Whitburn. A mix of facade treatments includes buff brick and white render. The deep eaves are made of contemporary materials, but echo the architecture found in the Conservation Area.

Next Steps and
Recommendations

04

4. Next Steps and Recommendations

4.1. Next Steps

The recommended next steps for how to use the outcomes of this design guidelines are to:

– Embed the guidelines in the draft Neighbourhood Plan;

– Engage with South Tyneside Council to develop policies supporting the guidelines; and

– Engage with potential developers/applicants to seek support for ensuring the implementation of the guidelines in upcoming applications.

4.1.1. Embed the guidelines in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The objective of this report is to develop a series of design guidelines for development possibilities in Whitburn. The neighbourhood plan can only include land use policies that guide applications that constitute 'development'[1]. Where public realm improvements require planning permission the neighbourhood plan can include criteria-based policy and principles that guide future change within the neighbourhood area. The design guidelines can form part of such criteria.

The report can be used as evidence to support the forthcoming neighbourhood plan (and its draft policies) where the analysis highlights relevant issues and opportunities that can be influenced by land use planning interventions.

The focus of this report has primarily been on important local character assets and urban design guidelines to be considered in future development proposals. These suggestions should

be considered alongside other non-design interventions, such as exploring opportunities for supporting or restricting certain types of development/land uses and allocating the key sites identified for development. Any policies put forward must be capable of meeting the basic conditions[2] (e.g. having regard to national policies and general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan).

Specific proposals could include:

Built environment design guidelines - The neighbourhood plan can include urban design policy where specific local circumstances demand a more nuanced design approach. The plan could transpose many of the urban design guidelines within this document into statutory land use planning policy where the Local Plan or National Planning Policy Framework does not provide a similar or sufficiently detailed steer on design matters.

Land uses - The plan could specify what uses would be preferred in particular locations or set out design-based policies such as a general residential design guidelines, which could provide a hook to a more detailed residential design guide that sits within the plan as an appendix. The appendix could detail the basic principles and criteria that would be expected within the neighbourhood area.

Community use buildings - The neighbourhood plan could potentially use site allocations (or a separate Neighbourhood Development Order) to de-risk and incentivise the delivery of new social infrastructure. The plan may also detail what use classes would be acceptable and the most conducive to local needs locally e.g. community café, sports facilities, meeting/leisure spaces etc. Flexibility and a mixed use approach is likely

to be required but this will need to be considered in the context of complementary Local Plan policies that address strategic matters such as the retail hierarchy and treatment of existing commercial floorspace.

Open spaces/local green space designations policy - This document provides an indication of how green space and open space might be arranged to provide benefit for new development and the wider village. Existing green space should also be considered for the Local Green Space Designation where they are locally valued and can be incorporated into future redevelopment of the area thus ensuring sufficient green infrastructure is retained.

4.1.2. Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals

The inputs from the Council's policy and development management specialists would be invaluable in advance of formal consultation and submission. The Steering Group should consider how our recommendations can be transposed into policy through discussions with the Council and use of the best practice guidance from Locality to prepare draft policies for consultation. Locality's 'Writing Planning Policies'[3] guidance sets guidance on how different planning policies are designed to achieve different things. The guide describes the three most common policies as:

Generic - a simple policy which applies universally to development across the entire neighbourhood area;

Criteria based - a policy with a series of requirements that should be met by development proposals. These can be set out as separate bullet points; and

Site specific - this is where a policy applies to particular areas of land. One of the most powerful tools for a neighbourhood plan is to allocate land for a particular type of development. As well as allocating land you can use your plan to set out the principles which need to be followed in developing a particular site. This might include specifying what needs to be covered in a design brief to accompany any planning application. If you have site specific policies then you need to include a clear map showing the location and boundaries.

Site specific allocations include associated policy related to land uses, quantum of development, configuration and design. The Steering Group should request a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion from the District Council as soon as the objectives and nature of the plan are firmed up. SEA is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental effects of a plan before it is made. Masterplanning and allocating sites will typically trigger a requirement for SEA. An SEA will provide objective information for local residents and businesses on the positive and negative environmental effects of your plan and wider policy proposals.

In addition, the Steering Group should check with the Local Planning Authority that their emerging preferred options are planning matters (i.e. suitable for inclusion as land use planning policy). Those that are not can be considered as community projects or neighbourhood infrastructure to be included within a delivery and implementation section of the neighbourhood plan (see Section 5 of the Writing Planning Policies guidance).

4.1.3. Engage with developers to seek support for the proposals

In order for the neighbourhood plan to be effective, any design and character-focused policies will require close liaison and co-operation with the Local Authority, landowners, and developers. Co-operation between and among these bodies can be used initially to ensure the proposed policies and strategy are robust and future proofed. At a later date, these discussions will help refine proposals leading to future planning applications.

Consulting with these key stakeholders in advance of formal consultation will help to establish buy-in to the broad objectives.

Footnotes.

1. Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

2. Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 065 Reference ID: 41-065-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014). Accessed at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum.

3. Writing planning policies: A guide to writing planning policies which will address the issues that matter to your neighbourhood plan (Locality, 2014) Accessed at: https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/write-planning-policies-neighbourhood-plan/

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