

DESIGN QUALITY FRAMEWORK

This is an extract of the New Streets Design Guide containing only the design criteria.

It aims to assist technicians, developers, authorities and stakeholders involved in the design, planning, review, delivery, approval and maintenance of new streets in the City of Nottingham.

NEW STREETS
design criteria
summary



Nottingham
City Council

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How to beginning the design

Nottingham City Council strongly recommends that applicants engage in the pre-application process, this has shown make the design process much smoother and faster, also reducing the number of planning conditions. To see what pre-application fees apply to your scheme go to the website below*. The City Council works with a staged design process. Once proposals are agreed/signed off by the highways management officer, applicants can submit information to progress to the next stage. But, before you begin to consider your designs, please remember the City Council has a people-first approach to street design. If you need technical/design support please look at the services we can provide**.

* www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/1536403/pre-application-advice-charges-for-planning.pdf

** www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/support-services

What information you need to submit

Pages 14-15 show a summary of the information Nottingham City Council requires as a minimum to be able to conduct a design review at different stages in the process. Please note this information is required for both pre-app and planning submissions.

At pre-app stage, diagrams and concept sketches can be hand-drawn and draft. The authority understands the design process is flexible and does not expect high quality CGIs or 3D renders until a design approach has been agreed.

The authority might ask for additional information depending on the site conditions, its context or the impact of the proposals.

Please remember that lack of information inevitably causes delays.

How we will review proposals

Nottingham City Council will review designs following a staged approach:

1. Concept Design
2. Developed Design
3. Detailed Design

If issues are found with the Concept stage of the proposals, the technical team will not review further stages until the core design issues are discussed and a suitable solution is agreed.

More information: www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/support-services

Typical causes of planning delays:

Street hierarchy:

A clear street hierarchy is fundamental. Schemes that do not demonstrate clearly how criteria 2.2.1 of the New Streets Design Guide is achieved will suffer delays at planning stage.

Innovation:

Designers are welcomed to suggest alternative innovative solutions as long as these comply with Manual for Streets but should be aware that the planning process might take longer, as different departments need to be consulted to ensure proposals are practical and viable in the long term.

Incorporating trees:

Nottingham City expects to see tree-lined avenues and a substantial amount of new trees in medium and large residential schemes. However, good, significant specimens that reach their full growing potential, located in strategic point to aid placemaking, are always a better option than many insignificant, small trees scattered randomly across the site (also see 3 below).

Parking balance:

Parking distribution is a crucial consideration and the City

Council will expect a good, balanced distribution of parking modalities as per criteria 2.5.1 of the New Streets Design Guide.

Car dominance:

Curtilage parking with more than six cars in a row is non-compliant with criteria 2.6.1 of the Housing Design Guide. Non compliance is very likely to result in delays at planning stage.

Gaps:

Wide spaces between properties to accommodate more than one parking space on-plot is non compliant with criteria 2.1.2 of the Housing Design Guide and will not be considered acceptable.

Boundary treatment:

Proposals are expected to eliminate all undefined strips of land, for example around dwellings/adjacent to footpaths. Land should be either fully allocated to private ownership or under adoption by an authority (Highways or Parks and Open Spaces). Land falling onto management company must be clearly demarcated and in single large zones forming recreation or green assets, rather than in small strips.

1. Concept Design

1.1 Placemaking

1.1.1 The overall street structure and hierarchy contribute to achieving a sense of place.

1.1.2 The design contemplates how communities will make use of the street for playing, gathering and other neighbouring activities.

1.1.3 The design and delivery process takes into account, and works within the guidelines of the Community Engagement Guide: www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/community-engagement-guide

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-place-making

1.2 Good Structure

1.2.1 The site is connected with main routes, public pathways and public transport facilities.

1.2.2 The street pattern forms the basis for perimeter blocks¹ which ensure that buildings contribute positively to the public realm, and give opportunities for creating significant places where routes meet.

1.2.3 Layout track testing demonstrates how family vehicles and large refuse vehicles² will move and manoeuvre on the streets of the development.

1.2.4 Streets are not designed for the worse case scenario, oversized and over engineered.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-good-structure

¹ www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/hdg-technical-quality-3

² www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-refuse-dims

3.3 Good Connections

1.3.1 The scheme integrates well with its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones.

1.3.2 A connected network of protected cycle tracks is provided to serve all parts of the development and this leads directly to off-site routes.

1.3.3 The development provides (or is it close to and connected to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafés.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-good-connections

1.4 Walkable

1.4.1 The scheme has good access to public transport and good walking and cycling routes connecting the development to help reduce car dependency.

1.4.2 Crossings are positioned to make walking routes shorter, easier and more amenable.

1.4.3 The radii, curvature, width and materials of roads and streets have been designed to make the environment more walkable.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-walkable

1.5 Inclusive, safe & healthy

1.5.1 Latest research and specialist guidance regarding creating inclusive environments have informed the design.

1.5.2 Proposals have considered how to mitigate crime and antisocial behaviours.

1.5.3 Walking routes consider the needs of all, including children on bikes and scooters and people with mobility aid equipment.

1.5.4 The street design concept was conceived with nature in mind, including water management and tree planting.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-inclusive-safe-healthy

2. Developed Design

1.6 Legible

1.6.1 Streets, landscape and buildings were designed in coordination to achieve a coherent scheme.

1.6.2 The proposals follow the guidance of the Ten tips for healthy, legible places.

1.6.3 Street names have been considered to help people understand the place and create a mental map of the area.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-legible-1

2.1 Well defined streets & spaces

2.1.1 Accurate adoption plans are produced to show the boundaries of what is to be adopted.

2.1.2 Sections that include the proposed buildings, illustrate the different street types in the development.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-legible

2.2 Distinctive streets & spaces

2.2.1 The street design, structure, hierarchy, composition and naming was informed by the local area.

2.2.2 The street design proposals incorporate relevant assets from the context, such as views, existing landscape, topography or infrastructure.

2.2.3 Materiality and details have been selected to reflect or draw upon the local distinctiveness of the area.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-distinctive-streets-spaces

2.3 Materials & details

2.3.1 Streets are designed with level surfaces in residential environments unless otherwise agreed with City Council officers.

2.3.2 Conventional streets (with footways) are designed for roads where traffic is 40mph or more.

2.3.3 Streets provide direct frontage access to homes for pedestrians and cyclists.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-materials-details

2.4 Designed Speed

2.4.1 Streets are pedestrian and cycle friendly and are they designed to encourage cars to be driven slower and more carefully.

2.4.2 Engineered traffic calming measures have been avoided and are only used if agreed with all the departments of the City Council.

2.4.3 Streets have not been curved and curled to reduce speed. Instead, straight, naturally calmed streets are proposed.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-designed-speed

2.5 Well Designed Car Parking

2.5.1 A car parking strategy shows the modality distribution in coordination with housing/land use typologies.

2.5.2 Court yard parking has been avoided and when necessary, it has been kept to a minimum, is well overlooked, directly connected to homes and secured.

2.5.3 Garages are well positioned so that they do not dominate the street scene (also see the Housing Design Guide).

2.5.4 A Traffic Regulation Order can be put in place to create 'residents only' parking areas.

2.5.4 Parking spaces dimensions follow the guidelines on page 9.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-well-designed-car-parking

Parking space dimensions

- On street parking: 2m x 6m
- Curtilage parking (front drive): 3.6m (inc. path) x 5.5m
- Parking space (perpendicular off a street): 2.4m x 4.8m (if street is min 6m wide)
- Parking space (perpendicular off a street): 23.6m x 4.8m (if street is between 4.8m and 6m wide)
- Garage minimum internal dimensions: 3m x 6m
- Parking space in front of garage: 3.6m (inc. path) x 6m

2.6 Drainage, trees & services

2.6.1 Services and street furniture have been designed in coordination with the concept for streets hierarchy and distinctiveness.

2.6.2 Water management was thought as an integral part of the design and is incorporated in the street detailing.

2.6.3 The street network was designed with circuits for waste collection with 'in' and 'out' points. Tracking must be done using the specifications on the link below¹. More details on waste collection strategies and design can be found in the Housing Design Guide².

2.6.4 Service runs were located in dedicated zones, easy to access for repairs.

2.6.5 All new trees have adequate root space and root protection.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-drain-trees-serv

¹ www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-refuse-dims

² www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/hdg-technical-quality

3. Detailed Design

3.1 A Good Design Process

When appraising schemes in pre-application and planning stages, Nottingham City Council needs to understand how designers thought about placemaking. Here is a step by step guide of how we think best designs are achieved:

3.1.1 Identify key assets existing trees, views, level changes, links, access points, etc.

3.1.2 Maximise key assets shown in a diagram what you are retaining/ incorporating and how you are integrating these to the design.

3.1.3 Set the street structure define main access points and the street pattern and hierarchy and how this will work with water management systems, avoiding dead ends as much as possible. Decide what will be adopted by the Highways authority and what will be private. Nottingham City prefers to adopt as much as possible.

3.1.4 Locate green/recreation spaces preferably in a central zone so that these are accessible to all and form the heart of the community.

3.1.5 Group dwellings in parcels: achieving a density that is adequate for the context and making sure the grouping method results in an efficient use of land to achieve larger useful and productive green/recreation spaces.

3.1.6 Consider services: Illustrate waste collection routes and points, communal bin storage etc. Nottingham City prefers bin collection from the front of the property (in dedicated storage) rather than bins located in rear gardens, especially for terrace housing.

3.1.7 Create character: combine landscape and architecture to create diversity within the development; create end views positioning key buildings at the end of streets; 'walk' the site in your mind imagining what it would feel like being there and amend the design if necessary.

3.1.8 Think about placemaking: defining the key details that will make places work for people such as traffic calming, making green-blue features accessible and enjoyable, places to meet, places to play, bringing nature and wildlife into the site, foraging opportunities and so on.

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3.2 Getting The Basics Right

Nottingham City Council has worked across departments to co-create six core types of streets that capture the feel and character of the historic city whilst being functional and safe for modern times:

- Avenues and Boulevards: www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/bpg-avenues
- Main Streets or Roads: www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/bpg-main-street
- Residential Streets: www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/bpg-residential-street
- Lanes: www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/bpg-lanes
- Mews: <https://www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/bpg-mews>

Developers are welcomed to adopt these types with the assurance that Highways Management will accept these as viable during the pre-application and planning application stages.

More information:

www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/residential-schemes

3.3 Parking

Nottingham requires no more than 1 to 1 1/2 parking spaces per dwelling due to the exceptional public transport system in the city, but we recognise that developers often prefer offering two spaces for 3-5 bedroom homes and we would accept this requirement driven by market preferences. However, the DQF makes it clear that car-dominated streets are not acceptable and when necessary, applicants will be strongly advised to change their designs or face significant delays and very possibly planning refusal.

COURT YARDS: Parking in court yards is strongly discouraged and will only be considered acceptable to serve flats (one car per dwelling) and when the parking area is not adjacent or visible from the street scene.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES: Nottingham City Council requires at least one electric vehicle charging point for every parking on plot or curtilage.

3.4 Boundaries

A clear definition of private and public land is one of the areas a huge concern to Nottingham City Council because poor design has proven to have a significant impact on long-term maintenance, cleanliness and overall appearance. Boundary treatment must be solid and well defined.

3.5 Trees in the highway

Nottingham City Council will not accept trees planted in private land as part of the tree requirements for development sites. This is because there is no simple way to secure the perpetuity of trees in the long term if they are in private land.

COMMUTED SUMS: The standard commuted sum for new trees planted in public land is £1,500 per tree. This means that the developer will make a payment contribution to Nottingham City Council for the long-term maintenance of new trees. How many trees the planning department will consider adequate for a scheme will depend on the nature of the site and its setting. The number of new trees required will be agreed following a technical site assessment during the pre-application process.

TREES ADOPTION: The highways authority will not adopt trees in the highways unless they are in a dedicated tree pit as part of a traffic calming solution or to demarcate on-street parking. Foot-ways must be adopted, and these must be adjacent to other highway land and without different ownership strips in the middle. To deliver tree-lined avenues, it is the Parks and Open Spaces department that will adopt trees, but they request that these are planted in 5m wide verges to achieve a decent amount of growth and healthy canopy cover. Also see the AVENUE webpage to find out the design solution.

3.6 Street Materials

Nottingham City Council will not accept block paving in curves or junctions; this is due to the long-term maintenance costs they incur. The discrete use of block paving in short, straight sections of road as a way to reduce traffic speed or to demarcate character zones is acceptable if the colour palette is kept to a minimum.

The use of Tarmac is preferred in Nottingham, used in combination with granite sets when defining boundaries or to aid placemaking, place character and/or zone demarcation.

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3.7 Traffic Calming

Nottingham City Council advocates natural traffic calming measures. Although the use of speed cushions (or bumps) might be necessary in specific locations, the authority prefers softer measures like adding chicanes, raising whole sections of the street, using trees and planting or locating demarcated street parking to indicate drivers they need to slow down.

3.7 Crossings and junctions

Crossings and junctions should always prioritise pedestrians in residential areas. Although it is preferable to design raised pedestrian priority crossings, there are times when this arrangement is not possible and a more formal approach such as zebra or traffic light crossing is necessary, particularly when there are high volumes of traffic to consider. If a raised crossing is not feasible, the Highways Management team will advise the best approach on crossings and how to consider parking on/off busy roads or main streets after they had chance to evaluate the technical site assessment during the pre-application or planning process.

3.8 Services

The inclusion of services must be an early consideration during the design stages to avoid impact on placemaking features like street trees and the quality of the movement network. Nottingham City Council will not accept dedicated service strips, especially if these are raised or designed in ways that confuse pedestrians.

Consider the location of lampposts and trees in tandem to avoid clashes, for example, canopies that might need to be trimmed or reduced to avoid poor illumination in the future.

3.9 Water management

Nottingham City Council advocates SuDS systems that create quality, natural environments in residential areas. Water management must be considered from the outset and any strategy/feature incorporated must be an integral part of the design, contributing to placemaking and the overall amenity of the place. Some critical information can be found in our Drainage Guidance; the Flood Risk Management team will advise on the design details during the pre-application stage.

Review Process

Nottingham City Council will review designs following a staged approach:

1. Concept Design

2. Developed Design

3. Detailed Design

If issues are found with the Concept stage of the proposals, the technical team will not review further stages until the core design issues are discussed and a suitable solution is agreed.

1. Concept Design

- Location plan and concept in context
- Points of access
- Proposed street structure
- Proposed street hierarchy
- Proposed street functions
- Walking & cycling network and public transport access
- Key nodes and spaces
- Key site assets like existing landscape, views, topography, etc.

HIGHWAYS ADOPTION CRITERIA

An adopted highway is a highway that was privately-owned road/land, but has become a public road, managed and maintained by the highway authority. Nottingham City Council is a unitary local authority, therefore responsible for the provision of all local government services within the city. This means that the highway authority and the planning department work very closely together.

Nottingham follows best practice broadly adopting the Department for Transport Advice Notice on Highway Adoption (2017). However, the highway adoption criteria on this guide are Nottingham-specific.

1. WE WILL ADOPT

1a) Comply with the design criteria of this guide, the Technical Design Sheets and all other relevant documents of the Nottingham Design Quality Framework.

1b) Streets with shared surface treatment (see relevant Technical Design Sheets for material specifications).

1c) Highways that comply with the Equality Act (2010).

2. WE WILL NOT ADOPT

2a) Do not comply with the design criteria of this guide.

2b) Residential access serving car parks, individual properties or forecourts.

2c) Residential access roads supported by structures.

2d) Cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets serving less than six dwellings.

2. Developed Design

- Site access proposals
- Adoption plan
- Vehicle tracking using family car and large refuse vehicle¹
- Walking and cycling routes
- Links to public transport routes and stops
- Street hierarchy and typologies
- Typical junction details reflecting Manual for Streets
- Car and cycling parking standards and typical arrangements
- Drainage and utilities principles
- Planting, landscape and drainage
- Materials

More information:

¹www.dqfnottingham.org.uk/sdg-refuse-dims

3. Detailed Design

- The Detailed Design is worked out alongside a highways management officer during the pre-app/planning process.

HIGHWAYS ADOPTION PLANS

Submission of adoption plans are a requirement at developed design stage for Nottingham City Council. Nottingham City Council will favour road adoption but would consider private roads in residential neighbourhoods in specific cases with robust justification. As indicated in the design criteria of this document, Nottingham City Council will not favour cul-de-sacs and roads with dead ends. When developers agree with Nottingham City Council to provide private roads, these must be designed and built to adoptable standards and a management plan must be put in place for the long-term maintenance of the road and associated public spaces.

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EDITION: September 2022

PRODUCED BY: Nottingham City Council

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