



Supplementary Planning Guidance in Sefton

Design Part 4: Sustainability and EcoHomes

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1 What is sustainability?

a) 'Sustainable development' simply means providing a better quality of life for everyone, now and in the future, by:

- Promoting urban regeneration,
- using natural resources carefully;
- caring for the environment; and
- reducing disadvantage.

b) In practical terms this means that you must make sure your development:

- uses fewer natural resources when being built and used;
- meets the financial and economic needs of those who want to use it;
- meets the needs of everyone who has to use or visit the site and building (including people who visit on foot, and disabled people); and
- improves its surroundings.

2 Sustainability in Sefton

a) The Sefton Unitary Development Plan (the Plan) sets out guidance for all development in Sefton. It aims to 'make a positive contribution to the prosperity and quality of life of all Sefton's communities by promoting sustainable development'.

b) Draft policy CS3, 'Development Principles', deals with how to make a development sustainable. The policy explains that you must pay particular attention to the design and layout of your development, especially if it will be prominent because of its size or location. The design of your development must take account of:

- the needs of people who are disabled;
- the need to use water, land and non-renewable resources (including natural resources and fuel) efficiently; and
- the need to make your proposal as sustainable as reasonably possible.

c) Draft policies in the 'Design and Environmental Quality' chapter of the UD Plan and part 2 and part 3 of the Design SPG set out more detailed guidance on design. They are also important when you are thinking about how to make your development sustainable. You should make sure that your planning application takes note of what these guidance notes say.

3 The purpose of this guidance note

a) The purpose of this guidance note, and particularly the checklist in appendix A, is to help you make sure that your development is as sustainable as possible. We want to encourage you to consider the design of your site, buildings and structures as early as possible in the design process as this may be cheaper than trying to improve your design at a later stage or after work has started on the development.

b) The checklist in appendix A includes

- things you will have to consider when applying for planning permission, otherwise your application may be refused (shown in normal type);
- other things we want to encourage you to do (shown in italics).

4 Why make development sustainable?

a) Sustainable development helps the environment. If your development is sustainable it will use fewer of the earth's resources, reduce the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) released in the atmosphere, and reduce the rate of global warming.

b) Sustainable development could save you money. For example, putting in extra-thick roof insulation or even insulated walls can reduce heating bills. Even if the design and building costs are higher, the running and maintenance costs of development are likely to be quite a lot lower. Even fitting low-energy light bulbs can help!

c) Sustainable development could improve your image. For businesses in particular, sustainability can improve your image and provide a unique selling point.

d) Sustainable development does not need to be very difficult. Many of these measures are things you have to do anyway (sometimes to meet the Building Regulations). For small-scale proposals, such as extensions and new shopfronts, the number of measures you must meet is quite small.

e) If your development site is a listed building, affects the setting of a listed building, or is in a conservation area, you may not be able to incorporate all elements of sustainable design. For example, if double glazing is acceptable it would need to be in the style of the existing or original windows



and UPVC is not acceptable. Also, solar panels may not be acceptable. However, in these circumstances it will be far more important for you to use natural materials or re-use existing bricks, tiles or slates to protect the character of the listed building or conservation area. If you want more information, contact our Conservation Officer on 0151 934 3584.

5 Accessible public toilets

a) Public toilets should be provided in large development schemes which are likely to have a lot of visitors, for example large new shops, public offices and leisure developments. By 'large development' we normally mean with a floor area (floorspace) of 1,000m² or more. We would encourage them to be put in smaller premises which have quite a lot of visitors, for example doctors' and dentists surgeries.

b) By 'public toilets' we mean that they must have entrances in public areas (or from the street), must be available for the public to use at all times when the building is open, and everyone must be able to use them (including those with limited mobility and parents with babies or young children). They should be free of charge to use. They do not have to be owned or managed by the Council.

c) Providing public toilets in this way helps to achieve sustainable development as it increases everyone's opportunities to use the new building(s) or site and makes them easy and safe to use. If people know that there are public toilets, they may be more likely to visit.

6 The EcoHomes standard

a) The Building Research Establishment (BRE) runs the EcoHomes Environmental Ratings for Homes scheme, which is a widely-accepted national standard for the design of sustainable housing. EcoHomes assesses development proposals against issues relating to:

- energy;
- water;
- pollution;
- materials;
- transport;
- ecology and land use; and
- health and wellbeing.

b) Within the scheme you can focus on particular issues and areas. We encourage all housing developments to achieve a rating of 'Good', but ideally 'Very Good' or 'Excellent', when assessed in line with the EcoHomes scheme. We see energy-efficiency and saving water as very important in Sefton.

c) The Eco-Homes information note at appendix B gives a simple introduction to the EcoHomes scheme. You can get more details from the BRE (see 'Useful contacts' on pages 5 and 6 of this guidance note).

6 'Lifetime Homes'

a) The idea of 'lifetime homes' was developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Lifetime Homes Group in 1991. Lifetime homes have 16 design features that mean that a new house or flat will meet the needs of most households.

b) The conditions for a new house or flat being a lifetime home focus on it being accessible and having design features that make it flexible enough to meet whatever comes along in life (for example, a teenager with a broken leg, a family member with a serious illness, or a growing family struggling through doors with heavy shopping and a pushchair). This means that people do not have to move or adapt their home if their life changes in these ways.

c) So lifetime homes are flexible and adaptable, so they are also sustainable. We would like to encourage you to include features of lifetime homes within your design. The table in appendix C is copied from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation website of August 2004. It sets out all the standards for lifetime homes.

7 Where can I get help?

a) We can give you copies of all the relevant plans, policies and guidance notes and other documents referred to in this guidance note. Other organisations that can help you by providing more information or advice, a lot of which will be free, are listed in the 'Useful contacts' section starting on pages 5 and 6 of this guidance note.



Further advice and guidance

National design guidance:

'Better Places to Live - A Companion Guide to PPG3', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'Building In Context', available from English Heritage and the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System - Towards Better Practice', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'Design Review', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'PPG1: General Policy and Principles', available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

'The Urban Design Compendium', available from English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation.

'The Value of Urban Design', available from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment.

'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention', available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or the Home Office.

Other relevant supplementary planning guidance we have produced:

- Archaeology
- Providing a choice of travel
- House extensions
- Landscape character
- New housing development
- Sustainable drainage systems
- Trees and development

Sefton MBC information notes:

- Renewable Energy information note
- Landscape design guidance sheets

Useful contacts

Planning & Economic Regeneration Department

(For Bootle, Waterloo, Crosby, Hightown, Maghull and Melling)

Planning Department,
Development Control South,
Balliol House,
Balliol Rd,
Bootle,
L20 3RY

Tel: (0151) 934 3572

Fax: (0151) 934 3587

E-mail: planning.department@planning.sefton.gov.uk

(For Southport, Formby, and Ince Blundell)

Planning Department,
Development Control North,
9/11 Eastbank Street,
Southport,
PR8 1DL

Tel: (0151) 934 2206

Fax: (0151) 934 2212

E-mail: planning.dcnorth@planning.sefton.gov.uk

Community Safety Section

Chief Executives Department,
Connolly House
47, Balliol Road,
Bootle
L20 3AA
Tel: (0151) 934 4466
Email: David.Fenney@chief-executives.sefton.gov.uk

Environmental Advisory Service

Bryant House,
Liverpool Rd North,
Maghull,
Merseyside,
L31 2PA
Tel: (0151) 934 4950
Fax: (0151) 934 4955
E-mail: Alan.Jemmett@eas.sefton.gov.uk



ACPO Crime Prevention Initiatives Ltd

7th Floor
25 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EX
Phone: 0207 227 3423
Fax: 0207 227 3400/01
E-mail: acpocpi@acpo.pnn.police.uk
Website: www.securedbydesign.com

Building Research Establishment

Garston
Watford
WD25 9XX
Phone: 01923 664462
Fax: 01923 664103
E-mail: ecohomes@bre.co.uk
Website: www.bre.co.uk

Commission for Architecture and The Built Environment (CABE)

Tower Building
11 York Road
London
SE1 7NX
Phone: 020 7960 2400
Website: www.cabe.org.uk

English Heritage (North West)

Suites 3.3 and 3.4
Canada House
3 Chepstow Street
Manchester
M1 5FW
Phone: 0161 242 1400
Fax: 0161 242 1401
Website: www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Partnerships (North West)

Arpley House
110 Birchwood Boulevard
Birchwood
Warrington
WA3 7QH
Phone: 01925 651144
Fax: 01925 411493
Website: www.englishpartnerships.co.uk

Housing Corporation

Maple House
149 Tottenham Court Road
London

W1T 7BN
Phone: 020 7393 2000
Fax: 020 7393 2111
Email: enquiries@housingcorp.gsx.gov.uk
Website: www.housingcorp.gov.uk

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Website: www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes/

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Phone: 020 7944 3000
Website: www.odpm.gov.uk

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

RoSPA House
Edgebaston Park
353 Bristol Road
Birmingham
B5 7ST
Phone: 0870 777 2171 or 0121 248 2000
Fax: 0870 777 2199 or 0121 248 2001
Website: www.rospace.com



Appendix A - Sustainability checklist

Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Suitability of site	Re-using brownfield land (that is, land that has been built on before) and having mixed-use, high-density developments can all help to concentrate developments in towns, reducing the need to develop greenfield sites. This also reduces the need for people to travel for services and facilities, and so also reduces the amount of carbon dioxide (CO ₂) released into the atmosphere as a result of car travel.	Ensuring a Choice of Travel New Residential Development	www.odpm.gov.uk www.defra.gov.uk
Transport	Your development should be planned so it reduces the need for people to travel by car, so reducing the amount of CO₂ and other harmful gases released into the atmosphere.	Ensuring a Choice of Travel	www.odpm.gov.uk www.sustrans.org.uk
Range of transport	Your development should be accessible by different methods of transport. For example, it should be near public-transport routes, be accessible to people walking and cycling, have clear footpaths, and be accessible to those who have difficulty getting around (such as people in wheelchairs).		
Parking	Car parking should be kept to a minimum to put people off using a car, and you should provide parking for bikes	Ensuring a Choice of Travel New Residential Development	
Parking	Parking next to the home should be 3330 mm (3.33m) wide, or be able to be made this wide, to help those using wheelchairs, or a baby's or child's car seats, get into and out of a car. The car parking space should be close to your home and should be level with your home or be on a gentle slope.		www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes
Travel plans	Employers can introduce travel plans to encourage employees to travel in more environmentally-friendly ways (for example, offering free bus and train passes, showers for cyclists, and car-sharing schemes and so on).	Ensuring a Choice of Travel	



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Crime and community safety	Your development should be designed to reduce crime through 'built-in' security methods instead of added features such as barbed wire and railings.		www.odpm.gov.uk www.securedbydesign.com
Natural surveillance	Your developments should be designed so that windows overlook open areas such as paths, car parks and cycle stands, making them more secure. Hiding places should be avoided by making sure that plants remain at a low level and do not block views of public areas from windows.	Design part 2 Design part 3	
Door and window locks	Door locks and window locks should all reach a high British standard.		
Lighting	See 'Using natural light and heat' below		
Adaptability and flexibility	Buildings should be designed so they can be adapted for future needs (for example, by splitting rooms or adding extensions).	Design part 2	www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes
Accessibility within the home	Doorways, hallways and rooms should be wide enough for wheelchairs to move easily, and living rooms should have room for a wheelchair to turn around. There should be space for adaptations such as stair lifts, hoists and adapted toilets and showers. Double handrails on stairs, handrails for baths, showers and toilets, and handrails by any steps can be helpful.		www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes www.rosipa.com www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes
Door locks and windows	Door handles and locks, window locks, and switches and sockets, should be at a suitable height for all, including people in wheelchairs, to reach. However, higher electricity circuits, switches and sockets are less likely to be affected by flooding. Covered, and lit, main entrances may also be helpful.		
Energy-efficiency	The aim is to reduce the amount of energy used in heating and cooling a building. This helps the environment and will result in cheaper fuel bills.	Design part 2 Design part 3	www.defra.gov.uk www.actionenergy.org.uk www.est.org.uk



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Insulation	<p>During the building of developments, good insulation can be achieved by using certain types of bricks, thicker walls and other more specialist materials such as straw bale 'bricks', sheep-wool insulation, wood- or paper-based insulation, or turf roofs. Suitable cladding on the outside of your house can also help.</p> <p>'Cavity wall' insulation and loft insulation and insulating your hot-water tank will all help you to save money.</p>		
Windows and doors	<p>Under Building Regulations, you must put in double glazing every time you replace a pane of glass.</p> <p>Lobbies at outside doors can reduce heat loss.</p>		www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes
Building form	Terraces, flats and semi-detached houses (in part) can reduce heat loss as there are fewer exposed walls.	Design part 2	
Conservatories, garages and greenhouses	These should have no heating and be attached to the outside wall of heated rooms, with a properly insulated wall between them and the rest of the building. If it is warm outside, the heat from the conservatory will spread to the rest of the house, and if it is cold, the heat lost from the house will be reduced	House extensions	
Appliances	Appliances such as washing machines and fridges can be chosen for their energy- and water-efficiency, on a scale of A-G (where A is the most efficient). Some central heating units are also sold as 'eco' models and have thermostats so you can control the heat in your home.		
Ventilation	Despite the need for energy-efficiency, buildings should also have adequate ventilation.		
Mechanical ventilators	Mechanical heat-exchange systems can use the heat from extracted air to warm the cold air. These systems can even be powered by solar panels or wind.		
Using natural light and heat	The aim is to use the minimum artificial lighting and heating for safety and comfort.	Design part 2 Design part 3	



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Habitable rooms (rooms people spend a lot of time in, such as living rooms, lounges, kitchens and conservatories)	These rooms are most important and should have larger windows on the south side of the building to collect light and heat from the sun. Stairs, storage areas, halls, utility rooms and bathrooms should be on the north side, as these will generally need fewer or smaller windows, which reduce heat loss.	Design part 2 Design, part 3 House Extensions	
Roads	Roads should run east to west, so that the main windows of buildings face south or within 30 degrees of south if possible. Avoid having roads running north to south as this means that the rooms facing north will get most shade and the least sunlight.	Design part 2	
External lights	Outside lights should be kept to a minimum, especially in the green belt, to reduce light pollution to neighbours and confusion of wildlife. Lights which have sensors so they come on only when needed are best for the environment. The design of the light fixture should direct light to the areas you need to be lit, by pointing, shielding and so on.		
Light bulbs	Low-energy light bulbs can be used in every room and can reduce the amount of electricity used		
Renewable energy	The aim is to reduce the use of fossil fuels by getting energy from natural sources. (We will produce a guide to set out more information about the requirements in draft policy DQ1A for non-residential developments of 1,000m² or more to get 10% of their energy from on-site sources.)	Design	www.defra.gov.uk www.actionenergy.org.uk www.est.org.uk
Solar panels	These use the sun's rays to heat water, and work best when attached to a south-facing roof. They are relatively cheap to install and run.		http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_033489.pdf
Photo-voltaic or 'PV' cells	These convert the sun's rays into electricity, but are much more expensive to run than solar panels.		http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_033489.pdf



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Wind turbines	These produce energy from the wind and work best in high areas or on the coast.		http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_033489.pdf
Other	Other forms of renewable energy include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • geothermal heat (this make’s use of the earth’s natural heat- heat in the ground); • biomass (‘waste’ from plants, including wood chips and wood off-cuts); and • water or wave power. 		http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_033489.pdf
Materials	The materials you choose and how you use them can affect the environment.	Design part 2 Design part 3	www.ebuild.co.uk
Re-use	<p>Re-use brick, stone, slate and timber to reduce the amount of waste produced by a development, and reduce the cost of buying new materials.</p> <p>Re-using materials from the site is most efficient. (For example, materials from demolished buildings on the site.)</p> <p>Re-using materials from off the site is of benefit only if the environmental risks of transporting the materials to the site is less than the benefit of re-using the materials.</p> <p>Recycled plastic can be used for products such as outdoor furniture and fencing, and recycled tyres can be used for surfacing.</p>	Design part 2, Design part 3	
Use of natural or renewable materials	<p>Instead of using UPVC, plastic pipes, and cement-based products, you may be able to use natural materials that do not use as many fossil fuels and chemicals in their production</p> <p>Natural paints can also be used.</p> <p>Materials such as timber should be from renewable sources –for example a wood managed so that a tree is planted for each one cut down.</p>	Design part 3	



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Water-efficiency	Development causes flooding and pollution, and disrupts water resources. So water running off surfaces needs to be managed in a sustainable way. Use of tap water should also be kept to a minimum as it is a valuable resource and costs money to treat, purify and transport.		www.defra.gov.uk www.eca-water.gov.uk
Sustainable drainage systems	These include a number of methods of controlling run-off, such as soakaways, paving that is porous (lets rain soak through), swales and basins (like ditches), ponds and wetlands and filter drains. All of these are set out in a Merseyside-wide guidance note and the draft Design guidance notes (Landscape).	Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guidance Notes (Landscape)	
Rainwater recycling	To recycle rainwater, catch water from your roof in a water-butt. This water can be used for washing the car and watering the garden. For a new house or extension, make sure drain pipes are in places which allow you to have a water butt. The same principle applies to other buildings, which may need special storage tanks for the water.	House extensions	
Greywater recycling	'Grey water' (water from baths, bathroom sinks, washing machines and so on) is usually clean enough to use for things like watering the garden, flushing the toilets or washing the car. Systems to recycle grey water can be installed during the building work.	Design part 3 House extensions	
Use of controlled intermittent ('petrol pump') types of supply	Using controlled intermittent supplies ('petrol-pump' types of supply) can cut the amount of mains water used for certain industrial processes, including cooling, cleaning or washing finished articles, workspaces or vehicles. Where a tap or hose would have been left running all the time, a petrol-pump type supply does the same job at much less cost.		
Toilets	'Low-flush' or 'dual-flush' toilets can save a lot of water. Some water companies provide bags to go in the cistern to reduce water use.	House extensions	



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Making your property resilient to flooding	Installing non-return valves in plumbing and use of treated wood or wall boarding may help reduce flood damage. Raised floor or door levels may help too. In some cases we may make it a condition of your planning permission that you make your property resilient to floods.		www.defra.gov.uk
Landscape	Developments should keep to the Landscape Character Supplementary planning guidance note.	Landscape Character	www.countryside.gov.uk
Keeping the landscape's character	Any landscaping should respect the character of the area by keeping existing features on the site such as trees, ponds and gateposts. Any new plants introduced should be of the type that grow naturally in the area.	Design part 2 Archaeology	
Providing open space	Developments should provide enough open space, with individual homes having enough private garden and space, particularly for bins and drying clothes. You should consider the long-term maintenance of these public open-spaces.	Design part 2 New Residential Development House Extensions	
Trees	Proposals for developments within Sefton must include planting trees.	Trees and Development	
Nature	Caring for the environment means protecting and enhancing nature - species and habitats	Design Pt 2 Design Pt 3 Public Greenspace and Development Trees and development	www.defra.gov.uk www.ciria.org
Protecting and enhancing nature	You should protect and enhance nature already on your site, and take the opportunity to create new habitats.	Design Pt 2 Design Pt3 Public Greenspace and Development Trees and development	www.defra.gov.uk www.ciria.org



Measure of sustainability	What to do	Relevant Supplementary planning guidance note	Some useful websites
Protecting and enhancing nature	<p>We encourage you to do wildlife surveys, for example, red squirrel drey surveys for all proposed developments which affect existing trees. Many areas with trees in Sefton are important for red squirrels.</p> <p>For plants, especially trees and shrubs, priority should be given to plants grown from locally-sourced plants or seeds, native species or plants/seeds of known origin. The way you look after sites can affect nature, for example by leaving grass to grow longer, or changing drainage conditions, or by changing the amount or type of fertiliser.</p> <p>You may wish to try to encourage wildlife</p> <p>Planting of wildflower seeds amongst grass, and mowing it less often, may be an alternative to grass alone, specially for large sites.</p> <p>Making sure wildlife can use buildings or sites can be through provision of nest boxes outside or 'bat bricks'.</p>	Design Pt 2 Design Pt 3	
Keeping waste to a minimum	The aim is to reduce the amount of waste sent for burning or to landfill sites, as both of these can harm the environment.		www.defra.gov.uk www.environment-agency.gov.uk
Compressors	If you use a compressor to squash your waste you will need fewer skips resulting in reduced hire, transport and waste disposal costs.		
Recycling points	Make sure that new houses or flats have adequate room for separate storage of bins for recycling cardboard, plastics, glass and cans.		
Composting	Allow space in garden areas for compost bins.		www.greenenergy.org.uk

Sustainable development: Development that helps to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. A sustainable development:

- means everyone has the opportunity to use it
- is easy and safe to use
- looks nice/attractive
- encourages investment in the area

(means jobs are gained not lost)

- reduces the need to use up natural resources (including petrol, stone and energy)
- protects trees, other plants, animals & where they live
- improves the environment
- generally makes things better!



Appendix B - EcoHomes Information Note

We are keen to promote sustainable development throughout Sefton, and the EcoHomes scheme, run by the Building Research Establishment (BRE), helps us achieve this. This information note gives a simple introduction to the EcoHomes assessment process and examples of the standard developments must meet to gain EcoHomes accreditation.

What is the EcoHomes scheme?

The EcoHomes scheme is a straightforward, flexible and independent scheme for assessing how environmentally-friendly developments are. Developments that meet the necessary standard are given a rating of 'Pass', 'Good', 'Very good' or 'Excellent'. It provides a credible label for new and renovated homes.

EcoHomes consider wide-ranging environmental concerns and balances these against the need for high-quality, safe and healthy homes. All the issues are optional and so allow you to adopt the most appropriate to your development. The issues assessed are:

- water use;
- pollution;
- energy-efficiency;
- materials;
- transport
- ecology and land use; and
- health and wellbeing

How to get an assessment?

You must enter information about your proposed development into a workbook provided by the BRE. A licensed assessor, who is trained and monitored by the BRE, then checks that you have provided the relevant information, considers that information and gives you a rating. The workbook is then passed back to the BRE to be checked.

An EcoHomes assessment can be carried out in three stages.

Stage 1: assessment of general building specification (for example, types of materials provided in the development).

Stage 2: assessment of standard house types (for example, are they energy efficient)

Stage 3: assessment of the development as a whole (for example, its ecological value and transport issues)

Stages 1 and 2 can be carried out at the design stage without you referring to a specific site. This avoids the cost of going through the assessment process for different development sites. You should begin using the EcoHomes scheme as soon as possible to get the most benefit. The BRE provide formal accreditation when **all** three stages are complete.

Typical fees

Licensed assessors can provide a quote which will depend on the development site. For a typical 40-unit housing development, with four different house types, the cost of an assessment would usually be around £1,100+VAT. For an extra fee you can also get advice on how to achieve the best EcoHomes rating.

BRE contact details

Building Research Establishment
Garston
Watford
WD25 9XX
Phone: 01923 664462
Fax: 01923 664103
E-mail: ecohomes@bre.co.uk
Website: www.bre.co.uk



Issue		Points
Land use and ecology		
1	Developments should be built on land which is of low ecological value.	3
2	The ecological value of the site should be improved by consulting an approved expert.	3
3	Any existing ecological features on the site must be protected.	3
4	The number of plant and animal species on the site must be protected.	3 to 12
5	The number of cases with a particular difference (ratio) between the floor area (inside the external walls) and the building footprint (the area that all buildings, including the house/flat and garages, sheds and so on).	3 to 6
Health and wellbeing		
1	Buildings should let in adequate daylight in line with part 2 of BS8206.	4 to 12
2	Buildings should meet, or improve, the sound insulation standards set out in the Building Regulations approved document E (2003 Edition).	4 to 16
3	Private and almost-private space outside the home should be provided.	4



APPENDIX C

The Lifetime Homes standards

(from www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes, August 2004)

The table below sets out the full Lifetime Homes standards for reference. Homes that meet all the standards are entitled to be designated 'Lifetime Homes'. They will also meet the Part M Building Regulations, the relevant parts of the Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards as indicated in the table, and the requirements of most local authorities for accessible housing.

Lifetime Homes standards	Specifications and dimensions which meet Lifetime Homes standards	Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards compliance (3rd Edition) E=essential, R=recommended
1 Where there is car parking adjacent to the home, it should be capable of enlargement to attain 3300mm width	The general provision for a car parking space is 2400mm width. If an additional 900mm width is not provided at the outset, there must be provision (e. g. a grass verge) for enlarging the overall width to 3300mm at a later date	1.1.3.4 E (requires actual provision at the outset rather than provision for later enlargement)
2 The distance from the car parking space to the home should be kept to a minimum and should be level or gently sloping.	It is preferable to have a level approach. However, where the topography prevents this, a maximum gradient of 1: 12 is permissible on an individual slope of less than 5 metres or 1: 15 if it is between 5 and 10m, and 1: 20 where it is more than 10m.* Paths should be a minimum of 900mm width.	1.1.3.2 E (but covers natural surveillance, not distance)
3 The approach to all entrances should be level or gently sloping	See standard 2 above for the definition of gently sloping	relevant parts of 1.3.1.1 E
4 All entrances should: a) be illuminated relevant parts of 1.3.1.2 E b) have level access over the threshold and c) have a covered main entrance	The threshold upstand should not exceed 15mm	1.1.1.12 E
5 a) Communal stairs should provide easy access and b) where homes are reached by a lift, it should be fully wheelchair accessible	<p><i>Minimum dimensions for communal stairs</i> Uniform rise not more than 170mm Uniform going not less than 250mm Handrails extend 300mm beyond top and bottom step Handrail height 900mm from each nosing</p> <p><i>Minimum dimensions for lifts</i> Clear landing entrances 1500x1500mm Min. internal dimensions 1100x1400mm Lift controls between 900 and 1200mm from the floor and 400mm from the lift's internal front wall</p>	1.4.1.5 E



Lifetime Homes standards	Specifications and dimensions which meet Lifetime Homes standards		Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards compliance (3rd Edition) E=essential, R=recommended
6 The width of the doorways and hallways should conform to the specifications in the next column.	<p><i>Doorway clear opening width (mm)</i></p> <p>750 or wider</p> <p>750</p> <p>775</p> <p>900</p> <p>The clear opening width of the front door should be 800mm. There should be 300mm to the side of the leading edge of doors on the entrance level</p>	<p><i>Corridor/ passageway width (mm)</i></p> <p>900 (when approach is head- on)</p> <p>1200 (when approach is not head- on)</p> <p>1050 (when approach is not head- on)</p> <p>900 (when approach is not head- on)</p>	<p>1.3.1.2 E</p> <p>1.3.1.3 E</p> <p>1.3.1.4 E</p>
7 There should be space for turning a wheelchair in dining areas and living rooms and adequate circulation space for wheelchair users elsewhere	A turning circle of 1500mm diameter or a 1700x1400mm ellipse is required		1.3.1.12 R
8 The living room should be at entrance level			1.3.1.10 R
9 In houses of two or more storeys, there should be space on the entrance level that could be used as a convenient bed-space			1.6.3.6 R 1.3.1.11 R



Lifetime Homes standards	Specifications and dimensions which meet Lifetime Homes standards	Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards compliance (3rd Edition) E=essential, R=recommended
10 There should be: a) a wheelchair accessible entrance level WC, with b) drainage provision enabling a shower to be fitted in the future	<p>The drainage provision for a future shower should be provided in all dwellings</p> <p>Dwellings of three or more bedrooms. For dwellings with three or more bedrooms, or on one level, the WC must be fully accessible. A wheelchair user should be able to close the door from within the closet and achieve side transfer from a wheelchair to at least one side of the WC. There must be at least 1100mm clear space from the front of the WC bowl. The shower provision must be within the closet or adjacent to the closet (the WC could be an integral part of the bathroom in a flat or bungalow)**</p> <p>Dwellings of two or fewer bedrooms In small two-bedroom dwellings where the design has failed to achieve this fully accessible WC, the Part M standard WC will meet this standard</p>	1.3.1.5 E 1.3.1.9 R 1.6.3.6 R
11 Walls in bathrooms and toilets should be capable of taking adaptations such as handrails	Wall reinforcements should be located between 300 and 1500mm from the floor	1.6.3.1 E
12 The design should incorporate: a) provision for a future stair lift b) a suitably identified space for a through- the- floor lift from the ground to the first floor, for example to a bedroom next to a bathroom	There must be a minimum of 900mm clear distance between the stair wall (on which the lift would normally be located) and the edge of the opposite handrail/ balustrade. Unobstructed 'landings' are needed at top and bottom of stairs	1.3.1. 6 E 1.6.3.6 R
13 The design should provide for a reasonable route for a potential hoist from a main bedroom to the bathroom	Most timber trusses today are capable of taking a hoist and tracking. Technological advances in hoist design mean that a straight run is no longer a requirement	1.6.3.2 E 1.2.1.31 R
14 The bathroom should be designed to incorporate ease of access to the bath, WC and wash basin	Although there is not a requirement for a turning circle in bathrooms, sufficient space should be provided so that a wheelchair user could use the bathroom	



Lifetime Homes standards	Specifications and dimensions which meet Lifetime Homes standards	Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards compliance (3rd Edition) E=essential, R=recommended
15 Living room window glazing should begin at 800mm or lower and windows should be easy to open/ operate	People should be able to see out of the window whilst seated. Wheelchair users should be able to operate at least one window in each room	1.4.1.1 E 1.2.1.32 R
16 Switches, sockets, ventilation and service controls should be at a height usable by all (i. e. between 450 and 1200mm from the floor)	This applies to all rooms including the kitchen and bathroom	1.3.1.14 R (switches, door handles and thermostats at 900-1200mm) 1.3.1.15 R (sockets at 450-600mm)

* Providing there are top, bottom and intermediate landings of not less than 1.2m excluding the swing of doors and gates.

** But please note that it is important to meet the Part M dimensions specified to each side of the WC bowl in entrance level WCs (diagrams 10a and 10b). The Lifetime Homes standards for houses of three bedrooms or more require full side transfer from at least one side of the WC.



APPENDIX D

Statement of public consultation

a The Planning Committee approved a draft 'Design' planning guidance note (which at that time did not include this Part 4) for feedback and to help it make decisions about planning applications on 5 June 2002. We explain about the public consultation for this in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the 'Design' planning guidance note.

b We reported the results of this consultation process to the Planning Committee on 17 December 2003. The 'Design' guidance note, including a new Sustainability checklist in Part 4, was adopted on 17 December 2003.

c On 25 August 2004 the Planning Committee approved draft revisions to Part 4 of the 'Design' planning guidance note, the 'Sustainability and EcoHomes checklist', for feedback and to help it make decisions about planning applications. The draft revisions were mostly about safety and security issues and sustainable development issues.

d We consulted the general public and interested organisations in August and September 2004. In total, we sent 600 letters to local agents, housebuilders and registered social landlords and other interested groups (such as parish councils). We placed adverts in the local press and the guidance was available in the two planning offices and on our website.

e We received comments about the guidance from Mr Cowell, the Building Research Establishment and from Government Office North West. The table over the page summarises the comments we received, and our responses.

f We revised the guidance note to take account of the comments received during the consultation process, and made some other changes.

g We reported the results of the consultation process to the Planning Committee on 22 September 2004. The revised Part 4 of the 'Design' guidance note was adopted on 22 September 2004.



Table – summarising comments received and our responses

Person or Organisation commenting	Summary of comment	Summary of our response
Part 4 of the Design Supplementary planning guidance note: Sustainability and EcoHomes checklist		
Building Research Establishment	Suggest minor editorial changes to the main document, mostly to correct grammar.	We made these changes.
Building Research Establishment	Changes suggested to Appendix C, the EcoHomes Information Note. These changes would make clear who the assessments are carried out by, what the assessment process is, and it costs. The up-to-date web-site address is given.	We made these changes.
Mr Cowell	This is a very good SPG.	We made a note of this support.
Mr Cowell	The question of sites at risk of flood or coastal erosion is not catered for. See DEFRA's "Making Space for Water" consultation document, page 7, which states under Planning and Building that "The Government is committed to ensuring that its land-use policy seeks where possible to reduce, and certainly not to add to, the overall level of flood risk."	We made a note of this support. The appropriate place to deal with the principle of whether development is acceptable in terms of flood risk or coastal erosion is in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) rather than in the Design Supplementary planning guidance note. Draft UDP Policies CP22 'Coast Protection' and EP7 'Flood risk' deal with this. The Sustainability checklist in Appendix B of this guidance note already says under 'Adaptability and flexibility' that higher electrical circuits etc may be less likely to be affected by flooding. We have added an additional point on 'flood resilience' under the re-titled 'Water, water use and efficiency'.
Government Office North West	Welcome the changes to cover more crime and sustainability aspects.	We made a note of this support.
Government Office North West	Note that the SPGs encourage rather than require EcoHomes / Lifetime Homes standards, and consider that this approach is acceptable.	We made a note of this support.

