



Supplementary planning guidance note

Settlement Character Plan

Maghull-Aintree

December 2003

Sefton Council 



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1. Introduction

- a. We have produced Settlement Plans to describe the main features that make up the character of each of the five urban districts in Sefton. The districts are based on the existing settlements of Bootle, Crosby, Maghull, Formby and Southport. The Settlement Plans consist of these guidance notes and the accompanying map, available from the planning department.
- b. The Settlement Plans identifies the distinct character areas within each district, and are based on patterns of land use, building type and period of development. Physical features such as key routes, landmarks, junctions and boundaries are shown. The plans also indicate the locations where Design Statements must be prepared and submitted with a planning application.
- c. The plans should be used to develop a scheme that responds positively to its context^G. Each plan also includes area-based design guidance that addresses specific issues relevant to that settlement area and must be taken into account when developing a scheme.
- d. This guidance note and the settlement plans are based on an Urban Design Study of Sefton. The tables below refer to information gathered by the study.
- e. Some of the technical terms in this guidance are explained in a glossary at the back of the Design SPG. These terms are indicated by a ‘^G’, the first time they appear in each section of the SPG.

2. Assessment of the Local Character of Maghull/Aintree

- a. Prior to the mid 19th Century the area was essentially rural with a series of

small hamlets dispersed along a network of historic routes. Lydiate and particularly Sefton retain evidence of this rural character. This network of historic routes provided a framework for later developments and still remains in place.

- b. Compared to other settlements in Sefton the development of the railways brought only limited growth. This growth occurred mainly to the west of Maghull station and formed a distinct pocket of Victorian detached and semi-detached houses set in large plots.
- c. The major period of growth occurred during the inter and post-war periods with the construction of large scale speculative^G suburban housing in both Aintree and Maghull. Such development means there is little variation in the urban form^G. The early suburban housing used linear^G and curvilinear^G grid layouts that linked into the existing route network with some evidence of field boundaries influencing plot layout. However the later housing developments are planned around a network of distributor roads and cul-de-sacs that ignores the historic structure of the area.

3. Broad Character Zones (Residential)

Residential Character Area	Key Components of Character	ASL Study Ref.
Small pre-war semi-detached housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight curvilinear^G road layout that links into the historic route network. • Brick and rendered elevations. • Small front gardens with parking to side. • limited tree coverage. 	MBCZ 1
Large pre-war semi-detached housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spacious curvilinear road layout. • Brick and render elevations with curved bay windows & tiled roofs. • Above average plot sizes. 	MBCZ 2
Victorian villas & semi-detached housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Villas & detached properties set in spacious plots. • Development along historic routes. • Evidence of historic plot 	MBCZ 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> boundaries influencing layout. Use of red brick & slate roofs with stonework. Dense, mature tree coverage. 	
Post-war semi-detached housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing use of cul-de-sacs with little integration into historic route network. Range of architectural styles from 1950's to 1970's. 	MBCZ 4
Small Victorian semi-detached housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribbon development⁶ along historic routes. Short front gardens, larger rear plots. Red brick elevations and slate roofs. Clusters of mature trees. 	MBCZ 5

4. Broad Character Zones (Commercial & Industrial)

Maghull District Centre ASL Study Ref. MNRD1	
Description & Location	Key Elements of Character
<p>Mixed commercial area containing 'high street' multiples, local businesses, supermarket and civic/community facilities.</p> <p>Centred on triangular area bounded by Liverpool Road North to west, A59 Northway to east and Westway to the north.</p> <p>Leeds/Liverpool Canal forms part of western boundary of town centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2/3 storey pavement fronted ribbon development along Liverpool Road North. Purpose built 2 storey 'U' shaped shopping parade; upper floors a mix of residential & storage. Single storey supermarket with forecourt parking. Community uses in low rise, detached buildings set in parking/landscape. Weak sense of entry into district centre. Poor linkages between community facilities. Westway isolates shopping parade from community uses and secondary retail. Limited landscaping within retail core.

Sefton Lane Industrial Estate ASL Study Ref. MNRD2	
Description & Location	Key Elements of Character
<p>Industrial estate with some 'trade' retail uses.</p> <p>Access off Sefton Lane.</p> <p>Adjacent to greenbelt and Cheshire Lines path.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assortment of single storey brick and prefabricated industrial units dating from 1950's to present. Limited landscaping. Functional layout & signage reduces legibility⁶ of estate.

Old Roan Local Centre ASL Study Ref. ANRD1	
Description & Location	Key Elements of Character
<p>Local convenience shopping & small supermarket.</p> <p>Junction of Ormskirk Road & Altway.</p> <p>Old Roan Station opposite.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose built 2 storey shopping parades; upper floors a mix of residential & storage. Development creates sense of entry and enclosure from Ormskirk Road.

Ormskirk Road Retail Park ASL Study Ref. ANRD2	
Description & Location	Key Elements of Character
<p>Mix of retail, leisure and industrial uses.</p> <p>Adjacent to A59 Ormskirk Road.</p> <p>Aintree and Old Roan Stations provide access via public transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single storey retail sheds set in large areas of car parking with fast food restaurants fronting highway. A59 Ormskirk Road forms barrier between leisure and retail elements. Poor quality landscaping to highway.

5. Areas of Local Distinctiveness

- Areas of Local Distinctiveness are more closely defined areas within the district that have either retained their original character or illustrate a distinct or important period of growth within a particular settlement. Achieving a high standard of design will be particularly important in these areas in order to preserve or enhance their established character.
- The following have been defined as **Areas of Local Distinctiveness** within the area covered by the Maghull-Aintree Settlement Plan:

- ❖ **Lydiate.**
- ❖ **Station Road.**
- ❖ **Liverpool Road South.**

Lydiate ASL Study Ref. MALD1	
General character & form ⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre 19th Century settlement with clusters of development along historic route. Retains village character with strong

	<p>relationship with surrounding landscape.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variations in built form reflect organic growth of settlement. Settlement bounded by Leeds-Liverpool to south & east.
Architectural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of building styles from Victorian to present day whose scale⁶, form and detail are appropriate to a village setting. Generally 2 storeys in height. Use of red brick and render
Tree coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scattered clusters of mature trees within surrounding open farmland. Mature trees within front plots on Southport Road.
Threats to character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of boundary walls & poor quality infill development⁶ could undermine sense and quality of enclosure & character of village. Loss of original detailing to properties. Loss of mature trees through age or felling.

Station Road ASL Study Ref. MALD2	
General character & form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example of Victorian suburban development of villas & semi-detached properties set in large grounds. Railway provided focus for development. Plots set out along historic route network with evidence of historic field boundaries influencing layout . Retention of original features including windows, roofs & boundary walls. Distinct character of area creates strong sense of entry/exit to it. Leeds – Liverpool canal forms strong boundary to south of area.
Architectural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive use of red, smooth faced brick with decorative brickwork detailing to upper floors/eaves & slate roofs. Painted stone detailing to main elevations including window surrounds and string courses. Retention of original features such as sash windows and boundary wall treatments.
Tree coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dense clusters of mature trees within front & rear gardens.
Threats to character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of original detailing to properties including boundary walls & gateposts. Loss of mature trees through felling or age.

Liverpool Road South ASL Study Ref. MALD1	
General character & form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fine example of 1930's suburban development that characterises initial period of major growth of Maghull. Medium sized semi-detached houses with large rear gardens.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plot layout influenced by historic field boundaries and lanes. Strong linear form that links into historic route network.
Architectural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typical examples of 1930's suburban. Part brick, part rendered front elevations with Curved bay windows to ground and first floors. Hipped tiled roofs. Front gardens enclosed by low brick walls.
Tree coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mature trees located in front and rear gardens.
Threats to character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of boundary walls to front of properties. Loss of original detailing to properties. Loss of mature trees through age or felling.

6. Design Guidance

- a. We have developed the following guidance from an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the area as set out in the above tables. The guidance gives more detailed advice to support the policies set out in the **UDP** and the Borough-wide guidance in Part 1 of the Design SPG.
- b. The guidance is in two parts, firstly there is district-wide advice relating to the Broad Character Areas; secondly there is more detailed guidance relating to the Areas of Local Distinctiveness. Here a high standard of design is required to preserve or enhance their established character.

District-wide Guidance

- c. Within the Maghull – Aintree Plan Area development proposals will need to:
 - ❖ **Enhance and strengthen pedestrian linkages between the individual elements of Maghull District Centre.**
 - ❖ **Create appropriate landmark or gateway features to reinforce the sense of entry into Maghull District Centre from Liverpool Road North and Northway and the Sefton Lane Industrial Estate from Sefton Lane.**

- ❖ **Contribute to the creation of a coherent design theme, including hard and soft landscaping, for Maghull District and Old Roan Local Centres.**
- ❖ **Maintain, or reinstate where missing, back of pavement activity along Liverpool Road.**
- ❖ **Establish a positive relationship with Ormskirk Road and Northway by improving the quality of enclosure, landscaping and the creation of a strong public face to the highway.**

Local Distinctiveness Guidance

- d. In addition to the above guidance the following guidance is applicable to proposals within the following Areas of Local Distinctiveness.

Lydiate:

- e. Development proposals, including conversions and changes of use, will need to:
- ❖ **Retain sense of enclosure to Southport Road through the retention or reinstatement of boundary treatments and avoiding the introduction of forecourt uses.**
 - ❖ **Ensure new development retains its relationship with the village setting by reinforcing its existing form and retaining its visual and physical relationship with the surrounding countryside.**
 - ❖ **Retain or reinstate period detailing/features or original materials including the retention of boundary walls, gateposts or other external features.**
 - ❖ **Maintain level of tree coverage within settlement.**
 - ❖ **Reinforce and protect the setting of the Leeds- Liverpool canal.**

- ❖ **Contribute to the creation of a coherent design theme, including hard and soft landscaping for the Southport Road corridor.**

Station Road:

- f. Development proposals, including conversions and changes of use, will need to:
- ❖ **Reinforce the character of the area through the retention or reinstatement of original detailing or materials to properties.**
 - ❖ **Protect and strengthen the urban green edge adjacent to the Leeds – Liverpool Canal.**
 - ❖ **Maintain the level of tree coverage within area.**
 - ❖ **Improve screening of suburban housing area to the north of Brook Road.**

Housing to west of Liverpool Road South:

- g. Development proposals, including conversions and changes of use, will need to:
- ❖ **Reinforce the character of the area through the retention or reinstatement of period detailing/features or original materials including the retention of boundary walls, gateposts or other external features.**
 - ❖ **Ensure that car parking is designed to have a minimal visual impact on the street frontage.**
 - ❖ **Maintain permeability^g and legibility^g of existing layout.**
 - ❖ **Maintain the level of tree coverage within area.**

Glossary

Character: See Local Character.

Context: The wider setting of a site or area, including factors such as traffic, activities and land uses as well as landscape and built form.

Curvilinear development: Development along, curved roads or boundaries. This is often typical of more modern housing estates, built since the end of World War II.

Form: The layout (urban grain), scale (height and massing), appearance (materials and detail) and landscape of the development, its individual parts and their relationship with neighbouring buildings, adjacent open areas and the local context.

Grid-iron development: (see Layout below) Development where the road and housing layout looks like a grid, (or squared paper like school maths books!) with regular proportions and spaces. This is the commonest and the most traditional pattern for terraced houses built before 1919.

Hard and soft materials: This includes both 'hard' building materials such as bricks, tiles, slates and fencing and 'soft' landscaping such as trees, shrubs and grass.

Infill development: Development that uses up smaller vacant sites or spaces within the original settlement, that is, it fills in the gaps between existing buildings.

Irregular Grid Layout: (See Layout below and Grid-iron development above) A grid-iron layout where the spaces or blocks in the grid are different sizes and shapes, and roads are different not regular lengths.

Layout: How a development or area is set out, as seen from above. There are many different ways development can be laid out (just as there are many ways of laying a table!). So 'road layout' is the way roads look, as seen from above, 'building layout' is the way buildings are set out within a site or along roads, and 'site layout' is where things like buildings, parking area and paths

are within a site, for example.

Legibility: The extent to which people know what a place or area is for, what it does, and where they can and cannot (or should not) go – through clues from the way it has been designed. Development that is legible i.e. easily understood, is to be encouraged.

Linear development: See Ribbon development and Rectilinear development below.

Local Character: The overall atmosphere and 'feel' of a place or area, the things which give it an identity, make it different from (or similar to) anywhere else and make it what it is.

Permeability: The degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.

Rectilinear development: Development that consists of, or is contained by, straight roads or boundaries. This is often typical of traditional terraced housing, built before 1919.

Ribbon development: Development concentrated in a long, narrow strip along a road, railway line or even a river or canal.

Scale: The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, including its height and massing, or the size of parts of a building or its details. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale: at other times it is the size of the elements and the way they are combined. The concept is a difficult and ambiguous one: often the word is simply used instead of size.

Speculative development: Development which is built before the builder or developer knows who will use it

Urban grain: The pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement; and the degree to which an area's pattern of street-blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent, or large and infrequent.

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
- Landscape design guidance sheets
- New housing residential 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@plannng.sefton.gov.uk

(For Southport, Formby, and Ince Blundell)

Planning Department,
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Community Safety Section

Chief Executives Department,
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Tel: (0151) 934 4466
Email: David.Fenney@chief-executives.sefton.gov.uk

Environmental Advisory Service

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

ACPO Crime Prevention Initiatives Ltd

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Fax: 0207 227 3400/01
E-mail: acpocpi@acpo.pnn.police.uk
Website: www.securedbydesign.com

Building Research Establishment

Garston
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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

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

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

APPENDIX 1

Statement of public consultation

- a The Planning Committee approved a draft 'Design' planning guidance note for feedback and to help it make decisions about planning applications on 5 June 2002. It was placed on our website later that year.
- b The guidance was discussed at the meeting of the Sefton Agents' Forum which was held in April 2003. Few comments or questions were raised during the meeting.
- c We consulted interested organisations in July 2003. In total, we sent over 600 letters to local agents, developers, housebuilders and other interested groups (such as parish councils). We then consulted with the general public in September and October 2003. We placed adverts in the local press and the guidance was available in the two planning offices and at four main public libraries (the main library at Bootle was closed for repair in 2003).
- d Our consultation procedure is in line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 'Development Plans' (PPG12) which stresses the importance of consulting widely if we and the Secretary of State are to rely on Supplementary planning guidance notes to help make decisions about planning applications.
- e We received a number of comments about the guidance from Formby Civic Society, Merseyside Civic Society, Government Office North West, Hitchcock and Wright and United Utilities. The table over the page summarises the comments we received, and our responses.
- f We consulted Plain English Campaign on the guidance to help make its wording clearer.
- g We revised the guidance to take account of the comments received during the consultation process, changes proposed to the draft plan, to correct mistakes in the guidance and to make the wording clearer in line with Plain English Campaign's suggestions.
- h We reported the results of the 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.

Table – summarising comments received about the Design Supplementary planning guidance note and our responses

Person or Organisation commenting	Summary of comment	Summary of our response
General comments about all Supplementary planning guidance notes		
Garden History Society	No comments	Response is noted.
Formby Civic Society	Write to support all of the SPGs.	Support is noted.
Design Supplementary planning guidance note		
Merseyside Civic Society	Supportive of comprehensive assessment of character	Support is noted
Formby Civic Society	The section that identified Freshfield Road and Ryeground Lane as characteristic areas is excellent.	Support is noted
Government Office North West	Expand introduction to document to include overall vision for Sefton's urban environment.	Wording will be added to do this.
Government Office North West	Document could make useful links to Community Strategy and the major plans for neighbourhood renewal in the Borough	It is more appropriate for these documents to refer to other Supplementary planning guidance notes.
Government Office North West	Suggest highlighting design relating to public realm and inclusion of public art/ street furniture as Borough has some good examples to promote as good practice e.g. improvements at Southport	Southport Seafront Supplementary planning guidance note includes appropriate references. The Design Supplementary planning guidance note is aimed at developers and we considered that it is not the appropriate place to refer to street furniture. There is no policy in the draft Plan on public art and so it would not be appropriate to make reference to this in guidance note.
Government Office North West	<p>Specific points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - useful to mention need for buildings to face streets, squares or parks and avoid inward-facing development - welcome emphasis placed on sustainable drainage systems - section on access could be expanded to take into account public transport considerations - Settlement Character Plans – useful to have the conservation areas marked on the plans as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This first point will be included. - The second point is noted. - Access issues are dealt with in the 'Providing a Choice of Travel' guidance note but cross reference will be added. - Conservation areas will be added.
Hitchcock and	Revision of urban edge to include	This is premature until, firstly, the

Person or Organisation commenting	Summary of comment	Summary of our response
Wright	proposed Switch Island/ Thornton Bypass	road scheme is approved and, secondly, any consequent change to the Green Belt boundary is made.
United Utilities	Deep rooted shrubs and trees should not be planted in the vicinity of underground /overhead electricity cables, water mains, public sewers and overflow systems.	Amendment to be made to say that utilities need to be consulted before planting in the vicinity of their apparatus.