

HOW OUR PLACES LOOK AND ARE USED

11.1 The Government introduced a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2021. This places a stronger focus on the creation on beautiful buildings and places. The new NPPF:

- makes beauty and place-making a strategic theme in the Framework
- sets out the expectation that local authorities produce their own design codes and guides setting out design principles which new development in their areas should reflect
- sets an expectation that all new streets are tree-lined
- improves biodiversity and access to nature through design
- puts an emphasis on approving good design as well as refusing poor quality schemes.



Crediton Farmers Market

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11.2 Alongside the NPPF the Government has also published the National Model Design Code to form part the national planning practice guidance. This provides detailed guidance on the production of local design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design, and it expands on ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. The National Model Design Code sets a baseline standard of quality and practice which the Council will be expected to take into account, including the approach to landscape, green infrastructure, biodiversity and tree-lined streets, as well as addressing the orientation of buildings to ensure adequate internal levels of daylight, prevent overheating, and protect the public realm from wind funnels.

11.3 The current Local Plan includes policy DM1 on High Quality Design and the Council has recently adopted a new Mid Devon Design Guide. This is firmly rooted in an assessment of the design characteristic of buildings and places in Mid Devon and contains guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice.

11.4 The preparation of a new Local Plan now provides an opportunity for us to set a high bar for beauty and design quality. It can help us ensure that new homes are built to a much higher standard, and that developments are visually attractive, function well and add to the overall quality of the area. Development that is not well-designed can be refused, especially where it fails to reflect design policies, the Mid Devon Design Guide and Government guidance on design.

11.5 Mid Devon District Council is one of 14 councils in England chosen to take part in a fully-funded pilot programme to test the Government's new National Model Design Code (NMDC). It is a six-month testing programme to see how the design code could be applied in the area. The document provides guidance to Local Planning Authorities on how to produce the design codes, sets out methods to capture and reflect the views of the local community from the outset and provides a resource of good urban design principles that can be used to inform planning decisions.

11.6 Strategic allocations will need a comprehensive approach to delivering high quality development with coordinated infrastructure provisions. A key element of this is through masterplanning and parcel plans. Plan Mid Devon will have an opportunity to set out expectations for masterplanning, phasing and partnership working.

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Question 33

National Planning policy and guidance does not define what is meant by 'beauty' in design. What aspects of design, such as layout, architecture or landscape elements, do you think would contribute to create beautiful places and buildings?

