



Supplementary Planning Guidance Note

No. 3 Landscaping

Adopted by Flintshire
County Council on 17th
January 2017



Purpose

It is Flintshire County Council's intention to prepare and keep up to date a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Notes which will provide detailed guidance on a range of development issues and topics. The purposes of these Notes are:

- To assist the public and their agents in preparing planning proposals and to guide them in discussions with officers prior to the submission of planning applications,
- To guide officers in handling, and officers and councillors in deciding, planning applications, and
- To assist Inspectors in the determination of appeals

The overall aim is to improve the quality of new development and facilitate a consistent and transparent approach to decision making.

Planning policies: the Flintshire context

The Development Plan

Under planning legislation, the planning policies for each area should be set out formally in the Development Plan. Flintshire County Council, as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), has a legal duty to prepare and keep up to date a development plan for the County, and the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 2011. The UDP provides broad policies together with allocations of land for all the main uses such as housing, employment and retailing, and will help to shape the future of Flintshire in a physical and environmental sense as well as influencing it in economic and social terms. The Plan therefore seeks:

- To help the Council make rational and consistent decisions on planning applications by providing a policy framework consistent with national policy and
- To guide development to appropriate locations over the period up to 2015.

The need for Supplementary Planning Guidance

Despite the Plan containing policies with which the Council can make consistent and transparent decisions on development proposals, it cannot in itself give all the detailed advice needed by officers and prospective applicants to guide proposals at the local level, such as house extensions or conversions of agricultural buildings. The Council's intention is to prepare a range of Supplementary Planning Guidance notes (SPG) to support the UDP by providing more detailed guidance on a range of topics and issues to help the interpretation and implementation of the policies and proposals in the UDP. The review of the Local Planning Guidance Notes will be undertaken on a phased basis and details of the available SPG's can be found on the Council's website. Where there is a need to refer to another SPG this will be clearly referenced. These SPG Notes are freely available from Planning Services, Directorate of Environment, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire CH7 6NF (telephone 01352 703228), at the Planning Services reception at County Hall and can be downloaded from the Planning Web pages www.flintshire.gov.uk/planning

The status of Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary planning guidance can be taken into account as a material consideration in the decision making process. The National Assembly will give substantial weight to SPG which derives out of and is consistent with the development plan. In accordance with National Assembly advice the Council's suite of SPG's has been the subject of public consultation and Council resolution. The draft of this SPG was approved for public consultation on 13.06.13 (Council Minute no.6). The SPG was the subject of a public consultation exercise between 18.12.15 and 12.02.16. The 6 comments submitted to the Council have been taken into account and where appropriate amendments have been incorporated into this final draft which was approved by the Council on 17.01.17 (Council Minute no.8) for use as a material consideration in determining planning applications and appeals. A summary of the representations and the Council's response is set out in Appendix 4.

This document should therefore be afforded considerable weight as a material planning consideration.

No. 3 Landscaping

This guidance note builds upon the guidance in policy D3 Landscaping, of the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan, and clarifies the Council's landscape expectations when assessing development proposals in order to help applicants to have a better understanding of landscape issues when formulating a planning application.

1 - Background

1.1 - Flintshire has a diverse and valuable landscape including part of the nationally recognised and protected landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. which is an asset that should be preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of future generations. Therefore new developments should be designed to integrate into the landscape whilst respecting the history, special character and natural features Flintshire has to offer.

1.2 - Landscape treatment is a vital element of new development which can enhance the quality and value of developments and help shape communities. The retention of worthwhile features and the addition of new landscaping should be considered from the outset of the design stage. A well designed and well maintained landscape setting is important in any development proposals.

1.3 - It is hoped that this guidance will assist developers to prepare high quality landscape schemes to build upon the quality landscape already found in Flintshire. This guidance aims to ensure that all landscape matters are considered fully in the site planning and design process and assist developers to provide accurate information in the right form, allowing the planning application to be processed efficiently.

2 - Policy

2.1 - Planning Policy Wales (2016 paragraph 4.11.8) states that landscape considerations are an integral part of the design process and can make a positive contribution to environmental protection and improvement, for example to biodiversity, climate protection, air quality and the protection of water resources. It is important that biodiversity and landscape considerations are taken into account at an early stage in both development plan preparation and development control. The consequences of climate change on the natural heritage and measures to conserve the landscape and biodiversity should be a central part of this.

2.2 - Landscape considerations run through a range of policies in the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan, in particular policy D3, in order to ensure that new developments integrate into the landscape, respecting the history and natural features of the County, and preserving its special character for the future. Not all forms or types of development will be required to incorporate landscaping proposals, as recognised in policy D3, and the SPG is intended to apply to development proposals where landscaping measures are required.

3 - The Design Process

3.1 - The full landscape potential of a development site should be identified at the formative design stage. Understanding and appraising a site and its immediate and wider context is the basis for a meaningful and sustainable design response and is the responsibility of all those involved in the design process. In many cases an appraisal of the local context will highlight distinctive patterns of development or landscape where the intention will be to sustain character or create local distinctiveness. The expertise of a landscape architect may be required at the formative design stage to achieve an acceptable scheme particularly where the development would have a large visual impact, is within a sensitive area, or on a difficult site such as reclaimed land.

3.2 - The Council will expect applicants to demonstrate how they have taken account of the need for good quality design in their proposals. As a guide, proposals should show how they have achieved the following key design objectives:

- Create places with a sense of character and identity.
- Ensure that public and private places are clearly defined, providing continuity and enclosure.
- Create public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe and vibrant.
- Make places where there is ease of movement and accessibility for all.
- Establish places that have recognisable routes and are easy to visually navigate.
- Create places that are adaptable, responding to changing circumstances.
- Create places which cater for diversity offering variety and choice.
- Ensure the scale of development, its form and layout, is appropriate to its setting.
- Implement the principles of sustainability, minimising resource use and where possible reducing the impact of climate change.

3.3 - The landscape should be treated as an integral part of any development which requires planning permission and the key stages where consideration should be given to the landscape include pre-application discussions, assessment of the site, design of the development, and followed by construction, aftercare and maintenance details. Early consultation with the planning authority is recommended to discuss appropriate landscape treatment particularly of large sites, sites in open countryside or sites such as parks and gardens of historic interest, sites within conservation areas or which form the setting of listed buildings.

4 - Appraising Context

Site Survey

4.1 - A survey of the site should be undertaken at the concept stage and should form the basis for the layout of the proposed development. The survey will allow the proposals to make the most of the existing vegetation, forms of enclosure and views, take into account ground levels and site conditions, relate the development to the site by preserving trees and hedges for visual effect, and avoiding the destruction of natural features and habitats. In addition to any existing buildings the survey should include details on:

- **Topography** - ground levels, slopes. Changes in ground levels should be treated with caution. Whilst there may be advantage in elevating slab levels to enable gravity drainage, it does not follow that raising garden levels accordingly will be acceptable.
- **Drainage** - ponds, ditches, wet areas; natural or artificial.
- **Soil analysis** - clay, sand or loam; acid or calcareous.
- **Vegetation** - the height, species, crown spread and condition of trees, shrubs and hedges on or adjacent to the site. These should be accurately plotted, including overhanging trees from an adjacent site.
- **Wildlife interest** - the presence of protected species and species of note.
- **Boundary analysis** - walls and fences indicating materials and building styles.
- **Existing underground and overhead services** - public sewers, electricity, gas, water supply (N.B. poplars and willows should be kept well clear of water pipes and sewers).
- **Site features** - buildings, steps and paths (particularly public footpaths and other rights of way).
- **Views** - good and poor views within the site, views from the site outwards and from outside viewpoints such as from roads and properties into the site.
- **Climatic conditions** - prevailing winds, sheltered, sunny or shaded areas.

Strategic Landscape Assessment

4.2 - For larger scale development proposals a strategic landscape assessment is required. In order to undertake a strategic landscape assessment a sound understanding of the character of a site and its wider setting or context is essential. It is important to assess the character of the site and its setting and to note opportunities for integrating development into the surrounding landscape/townscape. This invariably leads to a scheme that is much more in scale and in keeping with the locality, and that reinforces or enhances the local sense of place, rather than detracting from the qualities of the surroundings. In very broad terms, this is achieved by assessing existing national and local landscape character assessments and undertaking site specific character assessment.

4.3 - Having established the broad pattern of the landscape and the key characteristics of the wider countryside, a more detailed study of the character of the application site should be carried out. This should be carried out with reference to LANDMAP, which is a unique system, allowing information about landscape to be gathered, organised and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set. LANDMAP information is collected in a structured and rigorous way that aims to be as objective as possible. Its database contains both relatively objective information – such as rock type and historical information – and more subjective information, such as sensory responses and cultural interpretation. LANDMAP information can also be combined with contextual socio-economic information.

4.4 - Applicants should again assess the site and its setting by verifying the presence or absence of key characteristics of the landscape that may need to be considered in the development of the scheme. It is the framework of this study that should also inform the basis for more detailed site specific character assessment. A site specific landscape and townscape character assessment will build upon information already established through the analysis of existing character assessments, but will also provide a picture of the character of the application site and its surrounding context in more detail. It should establish the essence of the place and the underlying character. As a minimum, site specific assessment should consider detailed landscape and visual assessments maybe required for particularly prominent development proposals. Major proposals may be subject to formal Environmental Impact Assessment procedures – Planning Officers can advise on when these are needed and at what stage.

5 - Achieving Design Solutions

5.1 - A well designed development will relate to the site and local topography and be in harmony with its surroundings in form, colour, materials and planting. A more contemporary, innovative approach to the design is generally more appropriate within modern developments in towns or in industrial estates where characteristic features are limited or absent.

5.2 - In rural areas local materials and traditional building methods should generally be used to help integrate the new development into the existing landscape and perpetuate local distinctiveness, particularly in the Clwydian Range AONB. Materials for walls, fences and surfacing should be kept simple within a controlled colour range and in keeping with the existing or proposed buildings. The planting of native trees and shrubs typical of the locality is encouraged.

Design Statement

5.3 - A Design Statement is required for many forms of development and should include a site analysis, the design principles, justify the design solution, and show how it responds to the wider context as well as the characteristics of the site. The format and level of detail required will depend on the scale and likely impact of the development. Plans and diagrams can be included, where considered helpful. The design solution, following landscape and visual assessment, should clearly reflect the findings of the assessment and show how the proposals relate to the surroundings and the future management required for the development to achieve its full potential.

Layout

5.4 - The quality of the landscape is strongly influenced by the spatial relationship of the buildings and the open spaces between them and any new development should reflect the local pattern. Closely juxtaposed buildings, for example, within a high street, village centre or courtyard create total enclosure and may only require decorative treatment by paving and minimal planting. Disparate industrial units or rows of houses will require strong planting to fill the spaces and unify the development. Picture a mature residential area where the individual houses and bungalows have no particular architectural merit but the whole setting hangs together because it is softened and unified by mature trees and shrubs. Regard must also be paid to the need to devise layouts which are conducive to public safety.

Treatments

5.5 - The initial stage of a landscape design involves looking at the existing landscape and planting features of a site, and where possible using these as a base for the design. There are two main elements that can be included in the design and these are referred to as 'hard' and 'soft' landscaping.

Hard landscaping

5.6 - The hard landscape should be properly located and designed with the use of appropriate materials which relate to the surroundings and intended function of the development. The landscape scheme should indicate proposed roads, parking and paved areas, paths, steps and ramps, showing materials and levels.

The materials chosen for surfacing should be in keeping with the character of the area and with existing or proposed buildings, utilising traditional local materials where appropriate. Surfacing should be kept simple and the colour range be controlled as over-elaborate schemes are unlikely to be aesthetically pleasing.

5.7 - Consideration should always be given to the future repair and maintenance of surfaces to ensure the use of materials which can be replaced if damaged or if access to underground services is required.

5.8 - The landscape scheme should show the position, materials and construction of any new walls, fences, structures, lighting and street furniture, all of which should be in character with the area, be it urban or rural. In rural situations such as farm building conversions, simple surfacing materials such as crushed aggregate or tarmac with an exposed aggregate is generally preferable to more modern elaborate concrete paving. In town centres traditional materials using traditional techniques for laying should be used in most instances.

Hard landscaping should:

- Where possible incorporate the use of local materials;
- Take into consideration the visual and physical impact of the proposals on the existing landscape;
- Reflect the function and character of the site; and
- Produce a safe, practical, usable landscape.

Soft Landscaping

5.10 - Tree and shrub planting can enhance a development by providing shelter, screening and enclosure and help to define spaces as well as adding to the visual quality and wildlife interest. A wide variety of trees and shrubs are available and plant species should be selected which are appropriate for the soil and drainage conditions and sufficiently hardy for the location. Planting can take many forms, for instance tall growing shrubs or climbers may be useful to soften the view of a gable end or garage whilst low spreading ground cover shrubs can be used on steep banks or close to windows. Appendix 2 gives advice on suitable species, with the emphasis on native varieties suited to the locality which are likely to be favoured by the Council. All year interest can be created by planting a mixture of evergreen and deciduous shrubs providing seasonal interest of flowers, fruit and winter colour. The ultimate size and form of trees and shrubs should be appropriate for the space and damage to property or nuisance to neighbours by the shading of large trees should be avoided. Selecting unsuitably can prove unnecessarily expensive, either through costly replacements or through the need for early felling or costly pruning.

Soft landscaping should:

- Represent the character of the local landscape, and where possible link with existing vegetation;
- Take into consideration the visual and physical impact of the proposals on the existing landscape.
- Reflect the function and character of the site;
- Relate to the buildings, either to soften or screen them, or to act as a good background;
- Produce a safe, practical, usable landscape;
- Be appropriate for the growing conditions;
- Take into account the resources available for the long-term management and maintenance of the site.

5.12 - Choices in both hard and soft landscaping will be influenced by physical and technical restrictions on the site. Therefore there are a number of things to consider, such as the site setting and existing features.

The setting

General considerations

5.13 - The spaces between buildings should be used creatively to provide pleasant places for the public. Paving, walling, planting and lighting can be constructively used to create attractive and safe areas for sitting and informal recreation. Emphasis should be given to the creation of pedestrian and cycle routes, for example at the approach to large public buildings or shopping centres where vehicles are too often given precedence. Wide pedestrian and cycle routes following desire lines, supplemented by planting at focal points, can increase the legibility of the landscape. The provision of appropriate surfacing, gentle gradients, and clearly contrasting colours to improve visibility within pedestrian schemes is now a legal requirement for the greater inclusion of the elderly and disabled, and also provides an opportunity for improved design. The composition of all the elements within public spaces including street furniture, railings, signs and lighting should form an integral and creative part of the design and in some sites provision should be made for specially commissioned art work. Open spaces, car parks and roadsides provide valuable opportunities for planting large trees which are an essential element in almost all high quality landscapes. In some instances a formal approach to the planting design may be appropriate.

Residential

5.14 - Residential developments may comprise a solitary building or a number of buildings on one site. Landscape design solutions for each site will depend upon the scale and type of development in relation to its landscape context and therefore the design of the development must be considered in terms of the landscape. This is achieved through assessment and appraisal of the existing landscape features, identifying constraints and solutions and the potential use of mitigation measures to ensure that the development is compatible with the local landscape character. Applicants should not only consider how the site will function within itself but also how it relates to the surrounding landscape or townscape.

5.15 - Interlinked, usable open spaces in residential areas with existing or newly planted trees and shrubs can provide areas for walking, cycling and recreation, which are essential in residential developments where private gardens are small and formal open space limited. Footpaths and cycleways should be suitably designed in terms of width and alignment, and to enable natural surveillance for local residents to feel safe and link facilities such as shops, schools and open spaces. The latter should be sufficiently large and accessible to attract all residents including children and be planned at the outset of a development. A well designed area of open space, incorporating an equipped play area, mounding, coloured surfacing, sculptured features or public art can provide a stimulating focus for play and recreation. In such areas there is a real need to ensure soft landscaping treatment which will provide a buffer to protect residential amenity.

5.16 - Space for tree planting in gardens should be provided to help soften the appearance of new properties and enhance the surroundings. Trees can help screen neighbouring properties and unattractive views from within the gardens and also screen views of a development from the surrounding area (which can be particularly important on the edge of a village to avoid raw edges with urban characteristics intruding into rural areas), as well as creating an attractive village or settlement boundary.

Commercial and Industrial

5.17 - The landscape design issues affecting these types of development are distinct from those of residential developments and will require different design solutions to integrate the development with its surroundings. Buildings on these developments tend to be large with associated extensive areas of car parking. The external layout together with boundary treatment plays a significant part in the successful design of these sites.

5.18 - Trees retained or strategically planted in car parks and in open areas on the perimeter of industrial areas help break up the outline of large buildings viewed from outside the site. A typical approach is to screen the development from view but this is often impractical since certain commercial sites will want maximum exposure to attract passing trade. There is therefore potential conflict with landscape design solutions and under these circumstances high quality building can make a positive contribution in the absence of boundary landscaping. In such instances, landscape design should enhance the setting of the built form rather than screening the development from view.

5.19 - Structure planting on industrial estates and business parks should be achieved wherever possible to reduce the scale of the built form and to help merge the development with its surroundings. Where the surroundings lack landscape merit, a new development can make a significant contribution to the area and stimulate environmental improvements in the vicinity.

Town centre

5.20 - If the quality of the landscape design is to make a positive contribution to the streetscene in town centres, applicants should endeavour to strike a balance between hard and soft elements, creating an environment which is both attractive and functional. Particular attention should be paid to the design of public spaces adjacent to new buildings. All too often the appearance of a well designed open space is detracted from by the presence of extensive car parking. Minimising the visual impact of a car park can be achieved by designing it within the overall landscape proposals for the development to ensure that it is well integrated with its surroundings.

The Features

Retention of existing trees

5.21 - Trees which are in good condition and a feature of the site, the street scene or the surrounding landscape should be retained. Specimens of poor shape but in good condition may also be valuable for retention in an urban infill and redevelopment sites with few trees.

5.22 - Where trees are retained their setting should also be respected and space left around them free from disturbance. To ensure their survival, ground levels below the spread of the branches should not be altered and tree roots should not be cut, for instance, to improve visibility splays, widen lanes or to install underground services. The characteristics of retained trees should always be taken into account by leaving sufficient space for future growth and allowance made for inevitable leaf fall and shading. The shading effect of trees should be considered in relation to energy efficiency in the orientation of dwellings and conservatories.

5.23 - Trees to be retained must be protected throughout all building operations by fencing extending to outside the spread of the branches. The removal of any trees should be justified, usually with a report by an Arboriculturist, so that the long term implications can be assessed. The LPA should be consulted to see whether any trees on the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order or by other controls such as a Conservation Area designation.

Retention of hedges and walls

5.24 - The site boundaries are an important aspect of a development. Existing hedges and walls which are typical of an area should be retained wherever possible in order to maintain the local landscape character and help the interaction between the development and the landscape. It is important to decide the principal function of the boundary: is it to screen, to provide security, to provide privacy, or to create a landscaping feature? Clearly, whichever it is in a particular case, the design should be capable of fulfilling this function when implemented.

5.25 - Hedgerows provide useful corridors for the movement of wildlife, especially continuous lengths of hedgerow, older mixed species hedgerows, and hedges along water courses or joining areas of woodland. Established hedges can be incorporated effectively into a site layout, along footpaths and within public open spaces and can also provide valuable privacy along property boundaries or screening for car parks. Security fences along boundaries should be located within sites, behind existing hedges rather than replacing them.

5.26 - Missing sections of walls and hedges should be replaced with similar building materials or species and where removed to provide new access points, footways or visibility splays these should be replaced or replanted behind the line of sight. Wild flower species of interest in the hedge to be removed should be transplanted onto the new hedge line in order to preserve the local flora. Removal of most hedgerows in the countryside without permission is against the law under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, however garden hedges are excluded.

Wildlife features

5.27 - Site features such as ponds, ditches and other valuable wildlife areas should be incorporated into the development layout, especially on larger sites, where they can be beneficially maintained and managed in the long term. Areas of unimproved grassland or newly seeded wildflower meadows may form attractive features within developments requiring a low level of maintenance. Where any proposal has an effect on a wildlife habitat of national or local importance the Council will resist any development either within or in the vicinity of a site where the proposal will have a significant adverse effect on the nature conservation interest of the site. Policies WB2, WB3, WB4 and WB5 of the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan provide guidance.

5.28 - In some instances sustainable drainage schemes which can help reduce the potential for flooding by keeping free from development those areas which can take excess water at times of flood risk could be used to extend or retain wetland areas of wildlife value.

Public Art

5.29 - The Council will require the incorporation of public art in the design of all major civic spaces, and large new employment, retail or community developments which are publicly accessible, under Policy D7 Public Art. Appropriately designed features such as statues, fountains, sculptures, patterned walls, brickwork and floor spaces, creative landscaping and street furniture can improve the area's image, enhancing local distinctiveness, reinforcing civic pride and reducing the amount of vandalism. As part of the consideration of public art proposals, provision must be made for the ongoing maintenance of any public art work to ensure it remains in a good state of repair during its lifetime. To discuss suitable schemes, please contact the Planning Services, County Hall, Mold.

The Other Considerations

Designing Out Crime

5.30 - The Council has a duty to consider the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 when determining planning applications. UDP policy D5 Crime Prevention provides the local basis. The design and layout of new development offers an opportunity to help reduce the risk and fear of crime against individuals or property. The layout of sites should maximise the potential for natural surveillance by avoiding hidden areas and ensuring that parking and other public spaces are well lit and visible from nearby properties. Footpaths should be designed to assist the safety of pedestrians. Introducing bollards, planters and benches into shopping and employment areas can act as a deterrent to "ram-raiding" and, if carefully designed, can improve the general environment of town centres.

5.31 - But this desire for crime prevention must be balanced against the need to protect and enhance visual quality and minimise clutter, so security measures should be as unobtrusive as possible. The incorporation of shrub and tree planting can in itself act as a barrier to potential intruders.

- High growing shrubs should be set back at least 1.5 metres from the edge of paths.
- Dense or tall growing shrub planting should be kept away from doorways and windows.
- Use thorny species of shrub to protect vulnerable areas.
- Incorporate escape routes into larger areas of landscaping.

5.32 - Areas of dense landscaping may be used as hiding places by would-be attackers. Planting which is set back from a path allows a victim more time to see an attacker, reducing the element of surprise. Planting should be set back approximately 2-3m from the edge of footpaths to allow views along the path. Different species grow at different rates, and care should be taken to ensure that they will not obscure lighting, block escape routes or provide hiding places for an attacker when fully mature. The use of shrubs within the curtilage of a dwelling should be carefully thought out. Schemes should be designed so as to ensure that windows and doors are not obscured and that shrubs cannot be used as a hiding place adjacent to doors and windows. The use of thorny shrubs, however, can be a positive crime prevention feature as they can protect vulnerable areas, such as a site boundary, from intruders, - see appendix 2 for suggested species. As with other open areas, developers should ensure that escape routes are incorporated where there is pedestrian access through large landscaped areas.

6 - Implementing a landscape scheme

Landscape Proposal Plan

6.1 - The 'landscape proposal plan' which can be submitted with a planning application for a development should give details of existing and finished levels, hard surfacing materials, tree and shrub planting, structures such as play equipment, seats, signs, lighting and proposed services both above and below ground. Retained historic features with proposals for restoration, where relevant, should also be included. Appendix 3 provides a checklist of the contents of landscaping schemes. Other matters for consideration as part of the landscape proposal plan are:

Ground Preparation

6.2 - It is essential that sufficient depth of good quality topsoil is provided in planting areas. On building sites all rubble and compacted materials should be removed to a minimum depth of 600mm and the drainage improved by cultivation at depth. Top soil for shrub planting should be provided to a minimum depth of 450mm and the soil should be clean, well cultivated and weed free before planting. The incorporation of a small quantity of organic matter such as peat free compost (not peat, because the use of it is leading to the loss of important habitats and damage to landscapes where the peat is extracted) will help water retention and is particularly valuable when planting on dry or infertile soils.

Implementation

6.3 - The landscape scheme must be carried out following British Standard BS 4428:1989 Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces), BS 3936:1992 Nursery stock part 1: Specification for trees and shrubs and other relevant British Standards for planting large trees. Recognised guidelines should also be followed for the protection of existing features, such as fencing around trees, and the handling of soil. Planting and seeding should only be carried out at the correct seasons and in appropriate weather conditions.

Planting Time

6.4 - Planting should be carried out in winter when the plants are dormant, generally between November and March. This is essential for the planting of bare rooted stock but container grown stock can be planted at any time of year providing watering is carried out until the plants have established.

Plant Materials

6.5 - Trees and shrubs are available in various sizes. Standard trees, approximately 3 metres high, are usually planted in industrial or housing developments, although where rapid screening or an appearance of early maturity is required larger 'selected standard' or 'heavy standard' trees are planted. Large trees require support by staking or guying. Trees and shrubs planted to create dense screening or woodland should utilise 'transplants' of 40 - 80 cm spaced 1 - 2 metres apart. Most trees are planted bare rooted but container grown trees are sometimes planted where trees are difficult to establish or where large specimens are required, although these are more expensive. Native shrubs (e.g. for hedgerows) are supplied bare rooted but most ornamental shrubs are usually container grown. The plant size (e.g. 30 - 40 cm) as well as the container size (e.g. 3 litre), and form of the plant may be selected.

Plant Protection

6.6 - Planting may require protection from trampling or damage by vehicles during the establishment period. Long term protection from grazing animals can be provided by wooden post and wire fencing. Tree shelters or rabbit guards may also be required in rural areas. A layer of bark or other mulch 75mm deep, applied when the soil is moist, will help reduce water loss and weed growth, and provide nutrients, during the establishment period. It should be maintained beneath the shrub planting until the shrubs have grown together and around young trees for 2 years.

A Landscape Scheme

6.7 - The final consideration in the design process is a landscape scheme to aid the delivery of the proposal. The success of a planting scheme will depend on follow up maintenance and long term management. Therefore when you are planning any soft landscaping you will need to take into consideration what will be necessary, in terms of future management. Be aware of the possible long-term implications such as plant replacements, thinning, pollarding, and trimming. With any tree planting and landscaping works it is important that the trees and plants are maintained. Under the planning controls, applicants are responsible for the health and condition of plants for at least 5 years after they are planted, and this means that any which die during this period must be replaced. For further information on the cultivation and protection of hedgerows or newly planted trees, please see the 'useful publications' section at the end of this document. Maintenance for new planting should include thorough, regular weeding and watering as necessary during the establishment period, grass cutting, replacement of poor quality or dead plants and the replacement of failures for the 5 years following planting.

6.8 - Developments where the landscape would require maintenance by the Council should be discussed with Grounds Maintenance and Play Unit staff prior to submission. If public open space within new housing development is intended for adoption purposes, the developer must state which areas are required for adoption and submit details of landscaping measures as part of the planning application. Then a legal agreement (a Section 106 Agreement) can be drawn up under which a private company would have the option of either maintaining the grounds in question for a specified period or paying fees in lieu of ongoing maintenance.

Appendix 1

Policy D3 Landscaping

New development will be required, where appropriate, to include a hard and soft landscaping scheme which considers:-

- a. landscape or townscape character of the locality;
- b. the topography of the site;
- c. aspect, microclimate and soil type;
- d. existing man-made and natural features;
- e. existing trees and vegetation;
- f. use of indigenous species and materials;
- g. appropriate boundary treatment; and
- h. nature conservation interests.

Appendix 2

Native tree and shrub species for locally distinctive schemes by ground conditions.

Trees:

Acid soils: oak, birch, rowan, hawthorn, hazel, holly, gorse

Calcareous soils: ash, field maple, wild cherry, yew, blackthorn, dogwood, wayfaring tree, small leaved lime

Wet areas: alder, crack willow, white willow, goat willow, grey willow, aspen, guelder rose, black poplar

Coastal areas: whitebeam, sycamore, hawthorn

Hedgerow and shrub:

Hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, dog rose, field rose, wild crabapple, wild plum

By height:

Trees:

Tall – 20m or more

These require considerable room if they are to develop naturally. Examples: oak, ash, beech.

Medium – 10 to 20m

These are more easily accommodated within the urban landscape, growing to the same height as houses.

Examples: sorbus, silver birch.

Small – 5 to 10m

These have a decorative role within small spaces such as gardens and courtyards. Examples: lilac, holly, laburnum, malus.

Shrubs:

Large – over 1.5m

These will eventually provide shrub cover above eye level, and will screen sizeable objects. Examples: buddleia, common laurel, privet.

Medium – 0.5 to 1.5m

These will provide cover above knee level. Examples: cornus, broom, gorse, pyracantha.

Low – under 0.5m

These provide ground cover planting; useful adjoining pathways and within areas to remain open for safety reasons. Examples: lavender, potentilla, euonymus.

Appendix 3

Checklist of information required by the Council regarding landscaping schemes

Principles

Density, size and species of new planting

Location of trees/shrubs/hedges to be retained or removed

Surface treatment of the site

Street furniture details (where appropriate)

Boundary treatment – materials, height and position

Details

Detailed landscaping schemes drawn at a scale of 1:100 or 1:50

Inclusion of access for disabled people

Size of new planting *

Shrub sizes described by container size and density

The sizes are usually described as :

- Selected standards - over 3.0 m high
- Standards - up to 3.0 m high
- Half standards - up to 2.5 m high
- Multistemmed Tree - various heights
- Feathered Tree - various heights

APPENDIX 4

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPGN) Public Consultation, (Dec 18th 2015 and Feb 12th 2016) comments and responses to SPGN No 3 Landscaping

Commenting Body / Individual	Comment	Response	Recommendation
No. 3 Landscaping			
Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB JAC	<p>– The SPG contains sound advice and guidance which is endorsed by the committee. However, it is recommended that para 1.1 be amended to ‘Flintshire has a diverse and valuable landscape including part of the nationally recognised and protected landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB which is an asset....’ Reference to early consultation on particular types of development in para 3.3 should include development in the AONB or within its setting. The particular reference to the AONB in para 5.2 is welcomed, but it is recommended that ‘or within its setting’ be added.</p>	<p>It is accepted that reference to the AONB should be made in para 1.1.</p>	<p>That para 1.1 be amended to read ‘Flintshire has a diverse and valuable landscape including part of the nationally recognised and protected landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB which is an asset that should be preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of future generations.’</p>
Bourne Leisure	<p>Landscaping Design Bourne Leisure supports in principle the need for new development to incorporate landscaping features in order to preserve and enhance the valuable landscape of Flintshire. Indeed, Bourne Leisure has significant</p>	<p>Policy D3 states that ‘New development will be required, where appropriate, to include a hard and soft landscaping scheme’.</p>	<p>Add a new sentence at the end of para 2.2 ‘Not all forms or types of development will be required to</p>

	<p>experience of delivering appropriate landscaping as part of development proposals throughout the UK.</p> <p>However, Bourne Leisure comments that any landscaping element of a proposal should be proportionate to the scale and format of the development scheme. There may even be occasions where no landscaping is necessary and the development can integrate fully with the local surroundings without the need for any landscaping work. The Revised Draft Landscaping SPGN fails to acknowledge this situation, and should also be amended to reflect the principle of proportionality.</p> <p>Landscape Assessment</p> <p>In terms of assessing the existing landscape for the purpose of a planning application, Bourne Leisure again comments that the scale and format of any assessment should be proportionate to the scale and impact of the development proposal. By way of example, Bourne Leisure regularly submits planning applications for new caravan bases at its sites. It would not be appropriate for a full landscape assessment to have to be submitted with every application, particularly where the scale and/or location of the proposal is not likely to give rise to impacts upon the landscape. NLP considers that – for example – it would be sufficient for the landscaping justification for a small scale development to be set out in a Design and Access Statement or Planning Statement. Where appropriate, a landscaping plan could be provided as part of the</p>	<p>In order to reflect this it is proposed to provide text at the end of para 2.2 of the SPG.</p> <p>Section 4 of the SPG seeks to provide guidance on assessing the site and appraising site features. If, in the example given it is not considered that a detailed assessment is appropriate or necessary then this can be clearly set out in the planning application documentation. The SPG is seeking to provide advice as to how to go about devising landscaping proposals rather than seeking to provide ad hoc advice as to when such considerations might not be applicable to certain types of development.</p>	<p>incorporate landscaping proposals, as recognised in policy D3, and the guidance in the SPG is intended to apply to development proposals where landscaping measures are required.'</p> <p>No change</p>
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	<p>application, or referred to in a condition attached to the planning permission. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) at paragraph 4.11.14 explains that Design and Access Statements should be proportionate to the scale and type of the development proposal. Bourne Leisure considers that a similar statement should be included in the Landscaping SPGN with regard to landscaping proposals and assessments. Bourne Leisure, therefore, strongly considers that the Landscaping SPGN should include a statement that confirms that the detailed process of assessing a site's landscape credentials set out in section 4 (Appraising Context) is not mandatory for all developments. The Company considers that the SPGN should clearly state that the level of detail required in, or in support of a planning application should be proportionate to the scale and function of the proposed development.</p> <p>The Design Process Paragraph 3.3 of the Revised Draft Landscaping SPGN explains that there are key stages where consideration should be given to the landscape. These include pre-application discussions, assessment of the site and design of the development. Bourne Leisure considers that a reference should be included to explain that not all of these stages will need to be undertaken for all types of development. For example it would be unreasonable for the local planning authority (LPA) to require applicants to seek pre-</p>	<p>The text to which the objector refers to (set out below) already sets out the proviso 'where consideration should be given to the landscape'. As written the text already recognizes that it is not applicable in all circumstances.</p> <p>'The landscape should be treated as an integral part of any development which requires planning permission and the key stages where consideration should be given to the landscape include pre-application</p>	<p>No change</p>
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	<p>application advice for small-scale schemes that do not have a significant impact on the landscape.</p> <p>Bourne Leisure considers that the first sentence of paragraph 3.3 should therefore be amended as follows:</p> <p>“The landscape should be treated as an integral part of any development which requires planning permission and the key stages where consideration should be given to the landscape can include, where appropriate, pre-application discussions, assessment of the site, design of the development, and followed by construction, aftercare and maintenance details.” (proposed amendments underlined)</p> <p>Achieving Design Solutions</p> <p>Paragraph 5.2 of the Revised Draft Landscaping SPGN explain that in rural areas, local materials and traditional building methods should be used to help integrate the new development into the existing landscape. In paragraph 5.1 it states that a more contemporary, innovative approach is generally more appropriate in towns and industrial estates.</p> <p>Bourne Leisure objects to the above statement as contemporary and innovative developments can also be appropriate in more rural areas, including for caravan parks, providing that the development is well-designed and sensitive to its location. There are numerous examples of where Bourne Leisure has successfully utilised modern design and materials in rural areas to the benefit of the local surroundings.</p>	<p>discussions, assessment of the site, design of the development, and followed by construction, aftercare and maintenance details’.</p> <p>Para 5.1 explains that more contemporary approaches are ‘generally’ more appropriate in towns. However, the advice in para 5.2 which suggests local building materials and methods does not similarly use the term ‘generally’. The use of the term ‘generally’ would be less prescriptive and allow for innovation where this can be justified.</p>	<p>Amend the wording of para 5.2 to read ‘In rural areas local materials and traditional building methods should generally be used..’</p>
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	<p>Therefore Bourne Leisure considers that the following sentence is deleted from paragraph 5.1: “A more contemporary, innovative approach to the design is generally more appropriate within modern developments in towns or in industrial estates where characteristic features are limited or absent.”</p>		
CPRW	<p>The penultimate bullet point in para 4.1 should be amended by adding ‘into the site such as from roads, properties, designated landscapes, designated parks and gardens of special historic interest and conservation areas’. This would include locations of importance that would have the potential to be detrimentally affected by new development.</p>	<p>The bullet point uses the wording ‘...viewpoints such as from roads...’ and is therefore clear that this does not preclude views from other locations / areas. It is not necessary for a full range of locations / areas to be specified within the SPG. The Plan policies should be read as a whole and there are SPG’s on the examples raised by the objector.</p>	No change