

## DOWN AMPNEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN APPENDIX 1 – DOWN AMPNEY DESIGN GUIDE





## DOWN AMPNEY DESIGN Guide 2021

**The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.**

**NPPF PARAGRAPH 126**

# Down Ampney Design Guide

## 1 Introduction

In Appendix D to the Design Code of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031<sup>1</sup> the principles of design within the district are laid out. Paragraph D.4 allows for the production of site specific design guides. This guide is intended to be such a site specific guide for Down Ampney village.

Successful village design demands a harmony between traditional and new building. This enhances both the appearance of the environment and community life. Future design should therefore consider the patterns and details which give Down Ampney its special character.

This Guide encourages, demands even, good design by analysing the characteristic style of Down Ampney, and suggesting ways in which it might be applied to all future landscape and building activity in the village.

This Guide should be used in conjunction with the Cotswold District Council (CDC) Design which in turn references The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>2</sup>. This sets out in Section 12 the principles of well-designed places. Because this is so important it has been reproduced at the end.

The background to this Guide has its origins in Design in Down Ampney<sup>3</sup>.

## 2 Background to Design in Down Ampney

### 2.1 Historical Context

Down Ampney has been primarily an agricultural village up to the 1960s. From then fewer people worked on the land and more and more worked outside the village and travelled to work.

In the 1930s Leslie Tucker in his book<sup>4</sup> described the inhabitants as either the “Dependents” or the “Independents”. The former were the employees of the land owner and the latter serviced the needs of the village; businesses such as the Rickett’s blacksmith or the Herbert’s bakery, or such people as the vicar or school teachers. Almost nobody worked outside the village.

Now few villagers work for the land owner; most work for enterprises outside the village or are self-employed. The number of retired people almost equals those in work.

### 2.2 The Pattern of Building

Down Ampney historically was a long, narrow village, with most development located alongside the road for some three-quarters of a mile. This elongated pattern of building has slightly changed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup>. This is illustrated in the maps on the next page.

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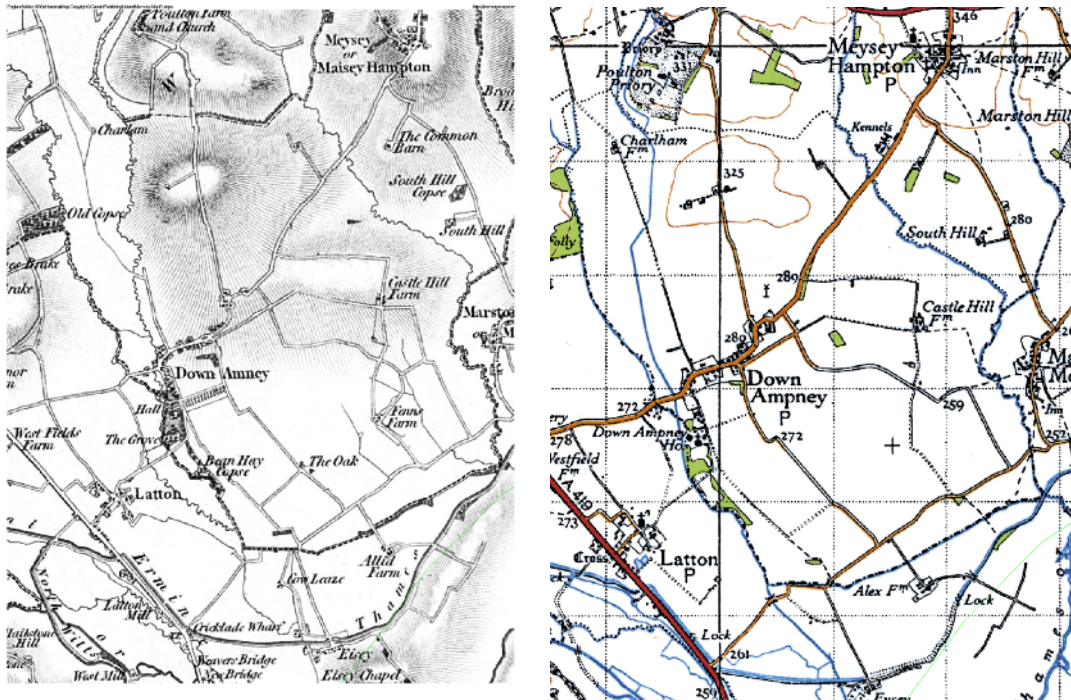
<sup>1</sup> Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 3 August 2018), Appendix D

<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, 2021, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

<sup>3</sup> Design in Down Ampney, Cotswold District Council, 1995

<sup>4</sup> Down Ampney 1930 - 1975 A Personal View, Leslie Tucker, 1994

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Comparison of a 19<sup>th</sup> century map of Down Ampney and one dated 1940 – little changed during that period.



Map of Down Ampney as it was in May 2021.

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The village buildings may be considered in three groups. The western end of the village principally comprises the conservation area, including the Church of All Saints and Down Ampney House.

The centre of the village is a mixture of historic buildings – mostly estate cottages – and modern houses. The nineteenth-century estate cottages are set well apart in spacious gardens. The primary school is also built in this harmonious ‘estate’ architectural style. Recent buildings between the old cottages follow the original building line, which is set back from the road. This has helped to reduce the visual impact of the new housing. Within this middle area are Suffolk Place, Chestnut Close and The Pheasantry all built within the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and Duke’s Field and The Old Estate Yard dating from the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The north-eastern part of Down Ampney is dominated by Broadleaze, a red brick Council-built housing estate, and Linden Lea a modern estate built in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 2.3 Housing Density

Down Ampney is a rural village and its inhabitants want it to remain as one. Densities are relatively low. Over-intensive housing development should be avoided and plot size should reflect the prevailing context. Visual gaps that reflect the general character of the immediate area should be retained between buildings on adjacent plots. The current average density in the settlement area is about 12.5 dwellings per hectare. Densities in rural areas should remain considerably lower than in town or urban settings. Building at densities approaching town or urban values will degrade the very attribute that villages have. If more houses are required for the village, inevitably outside the present settlement boundary, there is plenty of space to keep the housing density to little more than the current average level of 12.5 dwellings per hectare. This is not to disallow a few small developments of terraced houses of the type shown to below.



*An existing row of terraced houses*

## 3 Architectural Style

### 3.1 CDC Reference

Paragraphs D.21 to D.26 of Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 describes the general Cotswold Vernacular. This section describes the specific Down Ampney vernacular.

### 3.2 General

Fortunately the nineteenth-century estate architecture and the earlier parkland of Down Ampney remain largely intact. Modern development has diluted, but not destroyed, the visual character of the village. The Down Ampney style should be reinforced by well-designed and carefully located new buildings, landscaping, and other improvements.



*An example of a modern dwelling that has followed the style of the traditional building shown above. Note also the coped gable to the left.*



*An example of the typical estate workers' cottages. Note the porch and varied dormers; the roof and gables at 50°; the tall and robust chimney stacks; and the mullioned windows.*

*Right: A pair of simple eighteenth – or early nineteenth – century cottages, since converted to one dwelling. Slender brick chimney stacks are set on the end of coped gables and a 50° 'graded' stone slate roof. Windows are simple iron casements in pegged oak frames, between oak lintels and stone cills. Strong porches of dressed stone with rubble infill have 'sprocket' eaves, mortared verges and plank doors.*



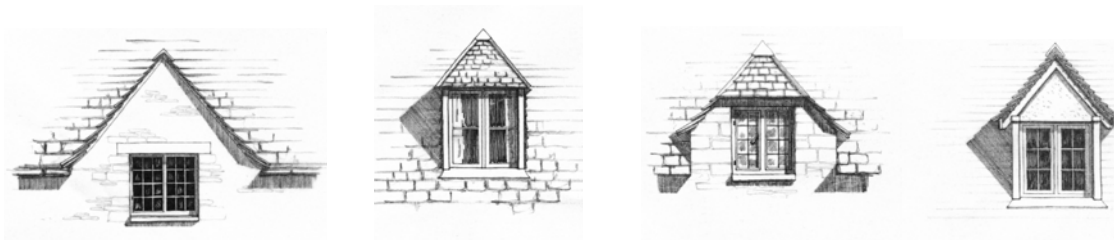
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## 3.3 Roofs

The roof lines of modern buildings are often not steep enough to blend into the traditional village setting. Roof pitches of approximately 50° are required in most locations and always in the centre of the village. Narrow gables increase the vertical emphasis of the house design and avoid the modern predominantly horizontal look.

Traditionally the main roof lines of buildings in the village are modified by outbuildings and extensions at the rear. New development should reflect this variety, although the extensions must be well designed and not all of the same pitch and size.

Hipped main roofs are not characteristic of Down Ampney and should not therefore be a feature of new buildings, but hipped dormers may be considered within an appropriate context. On the other hand, coped gables and exposed gable rafters are a distinctive feature of the traditional estate buildings in the village, and these details should be continued in new development.

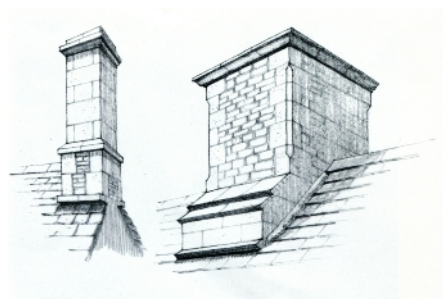


*Variations on the theme of dormer windows in Down Ampney are all vigorous and pleasing to the eye. Different styles may be used on a single building provided the result is balanced and harmonious.*

## 3.4 Chimneys

Tall, prominent chimneys, sometimes set diagonally, are notable in the village and should be widely used in new building. Although they are not always required by modern house heating systems, chimneys provide the potential for flexibility and future variation.

The position of the chimney is significant. At Down Ampney, chimneys are usually placed on the ridge in gable and party wall partitions.



Chimneys are not only visually important for the individual buildings, but also to punctuate the roofscape of the village as a whole.

## 3.5 Porches

Porches are a notable feature of the estate cottages and some older buildings in Down Ampney. This feature that has been repeated on many newer buildings and which should be encouraged. They are distinctively solid, designed as part of the structure of the house, rather than just a canopy which looks as if it had been tacked on.



Most porches in Down Ampney have steep gables, matching the roof pitch of the house. This effect should be perpetuated in new development wherever possible.

### 3.6 Windows and Doors

Many modern houses have windows that are wider than the traditional double casement. It would strengthen the character of Down Ampney if typically narrow, vertical window proportions were used on new buildings. Stone mullions are common in the village and this traditional style should be continued where possible. Alternatively timber cottage casements could be used. Wooden window frames should be painted rather than stained.



*As with dormers, stone mullioned windows are characteristic of the village, but there is still scope for a considerable range of design. Typical windows include those with diamond panes, small rectangular leaded lights and simple timber casements.*

## 4 Materials and Craftsmanship

### 4.1 CDC Reference

Paragraphs D.35 to D.58 of Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 describes the general types of material in the district. This section describes specific Down Ampney materials.

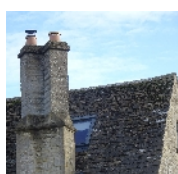
### 4.2 Stonework and Walling

In the conservation area and in the heart of the village, new buildings in prominent locations should use natural Cotswold stone for walls. These should not be painted, but treatment with traditional colourless lime water is well worth considering to help preserve the stone.

The pinkish-red brick which constitutes Broadleaze is not characteristic of Down Ampney or its south Cotswold setting and should not be repeated. New development should, ideally, use natural stone, but good quality reconstituted Cotswold stone is acceptable.

### 4.3 Roofing

Roof materials in the existing village include a variety of genuine stone tiles, high-quality reconstituted stone roof tiles, and clay roof tiles. Clay roof tiles should be of muted brown-red colour, not bright red or pink. Welsh slate is appropriate only on converted single-storey agricultural buildings such as the Byre on Church Lane or outhouses and garages. This balance and diversity should be maintained in new developments. There are examples which do not follow this but should not be used as precedence.



*Acceptable roof materials*



*Unacceptable roof materials*

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### 4.4 Windows and Doors

Solid wooden doors of simple, traditional design are generally appropriate. Again, ginger or 'mahogany' wood stains should be avoided. Paint colours should ideally be white, estate livery, or muted tones.

### 4.5 Boundary Treatment

The majority of the village has dwarf dry-stone walls fronting the road. This feature should be maintained for all new developments. Side boundaries may be fencing, but any boundary at the edge of green spaces or fields should not be close-boarded fencing; hedges and post and rail are acceptable, and hedging should be of native species.

NOTED TREE SPECIES IN DOWN AMPNEY	
Wellingtonia (Sequoiadendron Giganteum)	Apple/Plum/Damson/Crab Apple (Malus)
Larch (Larix)	Pear (Pyrus)
Cedrus (Cedrus libani)	Rowan (Sorbus)
Scots Pine (Pinus sylvestris)	Hornbeam
Walnut (Juglans)	Whitebeam
Beech (Fagus)	Yew (Taxus baccata)
Oak (Quercus)	Hazel
Lime (Tilia)	Elm (Ulmus)
Alder	Holly (Ilex)
Silver Birch	Hawthorn (Crataegus)
Ash	Blackthorn
Horse Chestnut (Aesculus)	Cornus
Poplar	Spindle
Sycamore	Viburnum
Willow	Elder (Sambucus)
Cherry (Prunus)	

## 5 Sustainable Design

### 5.1 CDC Reference

Paragraphs D.59 to D.62 of Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 describes the general Cotswold approach to Sustainability and recommends that owners and developers exceed the current requirements of the Building Regulations.

### 5.2 Water Features and SuDS<sup>5</sup>

Where practically possible surface water features should be retained, enhanced and/or reestablished as positive features contributing to the character, ecological value and biodiversity of new development.

Developments should incorporate the use of sustainable drainage as an integral part of the landscape structure. SuDS should be designed into the development from the outset as features such as ponds, retention planters/basins, green back lanes, wetlands, and rainwater harvesting. These combined with good biodiversity and landscape features will make a positive contribution to the biodiversity, character and appearance of a development. Infiltration methods should be used wherever soil conditions permit.

The amount of porous hard surfacing, including driveways and patios, should be maximised to enable infiltration.

Consideration must also be given to the future management and maintenance of the SuDS.

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<sup>5</sup> Sustainable Drainage Systems

### 5.3 Environmental Improvement

Climate change is high on the agenda and it is expected that the Buildings Regulations will be substantially updated to incorporate increased energy efficiency, heightened sustainability, and water efficiency to meet the coming challenges. Down Ampney is keen to see such items coming forward but also to see compliance and enforcement of the regulations. Down Ampney also strongly agrees with the sentiments of paragraph D.61 of Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 that owners and developers exceed the requirements of the current Building Regulations.

For now and into the future, development and dwelling design should comply with the recommendations of Building for Life 12<sup>6</sup>.

### 5.4 Climate Change

The requirements to achieve the changes to meet the climate emergency will have an impact on site and house layout, and construction.

- Space per house for rain water harvesting
- Space per house (and garden) for heat pump equipment
- Orientation of house to be more south facing for solar panels
- Consideration of space for home offices to limit unnecessary travel to and from work
- SuDS (as described in Paragraph 5.2)
- Enhanced insulation levels
- Sustainable construction materials and methods

These and probably many more aspects will need consideration and change not only physically in the environment but also in the attitude of everyone.

In July 2021 the CDC together with neighbouring district councils issued a 90 page document entitled “Net Zero Carbon Toolkit”<sup>7</sup> which covers a wide range of topics including new housing, retrofitting, and products to be used.

Until the changes to the Building Regulations noted in 5.1 take place, and due weight is given to such documents as “the toolkit”, planning applications incorporating the environmental aspects noted will be favoured in place of those that do not.

## 6 Effective Green Infrastructure and High Quality Landscape

### 6.1 CDC Reference

Paragraph D.66 of Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 describes the general Cotswold approach to Green Infrastructure. This section outlines the consideration of green infrastructure (GI) for future developments within Down Ampney.

### 6.2 The Present Situation

The landscape setting of the village consists of two distinct types. To the south-west, surrounding Down Ampney House, are remnants of eighteenth-century private parkland where sycamores and Scots pines dominate the skyline. Peaceful meadows lie alongside

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<sup>6</sup> Building for Life 12 (Third Edition), Design Council (CABE), 2015

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/05couqdd/netzero-carbon-toolkit.pdf>

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Ampney Brook, across which there is a pleasing view of the slender spire of the Church of All Saints. The parkland trees are scattered, except for the formal avenue of Sycamore Walk.

In contrast, to the north and east of the village there is a modern arable agricultural landscape with extensive views of large, flat, open fields with few hedges and trees, but still very rural in aspect

Some of the newer buildings on the edge of the village do not blend well into the surrounding countryside, insufficient attention having been paid to boundaries in the past. However, some open fields extend into the village, breaking up the lines of development. Examples are the fields around Stoney Stile (near Rooktree Farm) and the field situated between The Old Estate Yard and Church Lane. Similarly, opposite the school, a meadow used for grazing livestock is a key local feature and especially important to the character of the village. It is fronted by a low stone wall and several trees.



*A good example of the countryside in the middle of the village. The picture shows the field opposite the school between the main road and Duke's Field. Such open green spaces should be protected and, where there is more development, new open spaces created.*

### 6.3 Future Development

Looking beyond 2031 and the scope of the CDC Local Plan 2011-2031, further development is likely. The pattern of fields extending into the village should be enhanced with green infrastructure and wildlife corridors to ensure that the rural ambience and quality is protected and maintained. The plan on the following page should be used as a guide to this pattern although more open space is always welcome.

## 7 Key Design Considerations for Specific Development Proposals

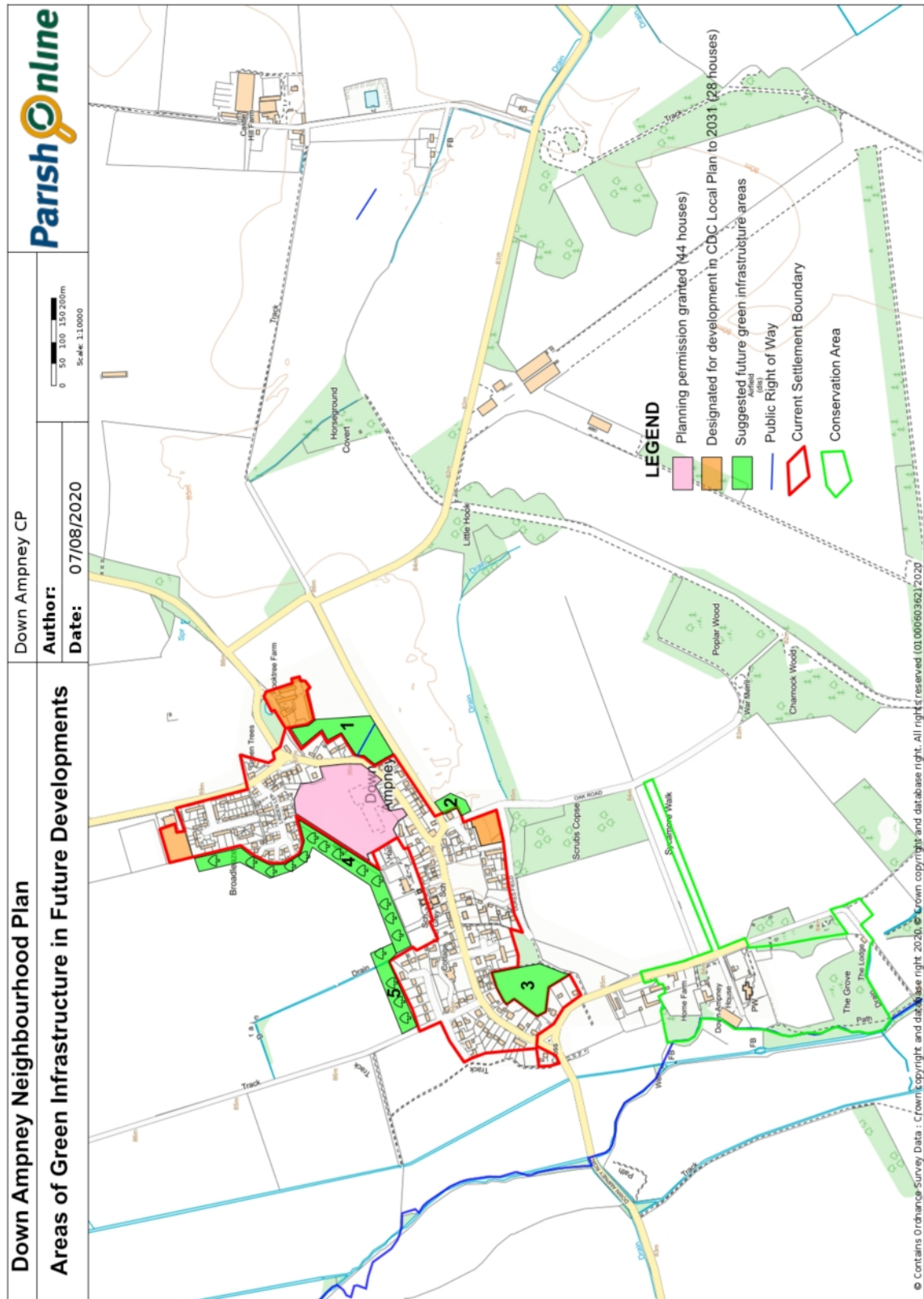
### 7.1 CDC Reference

Paragraph D.67 of Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 describes the Key considerations for design. This section outlines the consideration of particular importance for residents in future developments within Down Ampney.

### 7.2 Parking

Down Ampney has no real public transport and therefore car ownership for residents is inevitable and many households, including affordable housing, will have more than one car.

Minimum parking standards on residential sites are covered in Appendix F of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031. However, for a rural village like Down Ampney with virtually no public transport and narrow roads these minimum requirements should be enhanced. At least three parking spaces per dwelling are required. Recent developments (for example Linden Lea) have inadequate spaces leading to an excess of on-road parking.



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Points for electric vehicle (EV) charging should be incorporated and therefore parking places must be within the property curtilage.

A single garage should be able to accommodate a car, storage and sufficient space for bicycles, and have a minimum internal floor area of 3 metres x 6 metres.

### **7.3 Lighting**

Because of the rural nature of the village, street lighting should be as little as possible commensurate with safety. Lighting should be low level and positioned to avoid undue glare and upward light pollution. Consideration should be given to timed or motion-activated operation.

### Extract from the National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

## 12. Achieving well-designed places

124. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

125. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.

126. To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.

127. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

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f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users<sup>i</sup>; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

128. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

129. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life<sup>ii</sup>. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

130. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).

131. In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

132. The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

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<sup>i</sup> Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties. Policies may also make use of the nationally described space standard, where the need for an internal space standard can be justified.

<sup>ii</sup> Birkbeck D and Kruczkowski S (2015) *Building for Life 12: The sign of a good place to live*.