



October 2005

# LDF

## WIGAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



# Landscape Design

Supplementary Planning Document



Planning and Regeneration Department



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To assist people with particular needs this SPD can be made available on request in larger print, braille and in a number of alternative languages.

## Arabic

"بالإمكان توفير هذه المعلومات في اللغة العربية."

## Cantonese

這些資料可提供中文譯本。

## Farsi

این اطلاعات به زبان فارسی هم میتواند در دسترس شما قرار گیرد.

## French

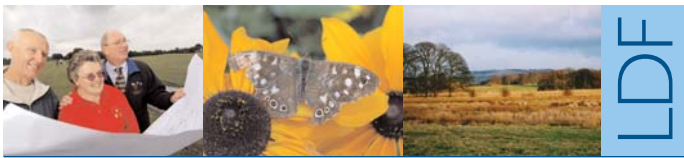
Disponible en francais sur  
demande

## Gujurati

આ માહિતી ગુજરાતીમાં મળી શકે છે.

## Urdu

یہ معلومات اُردو میں بھی دستیاب ہو سکتی ہیں۔



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## Adoption and Sustainability Appraisal

Wigan Council adopted the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Landscape Design on the 31st October 2005.

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the SPD was conducted to discover how it might influence the sustainability assessment made in 2003 of the relevant Unitary Development Plan policies and proposals. The conclusion was that the SPD was found to have no negative sustainability impact. A copy of the SA is available on request, and the impact of the SPD will be monitored in the future.

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## Introduction

A well-designed and well-maintained landscape setting is vitally important to ensure the success of any development. Ideally a site's landscape structure and its underpinning design philosophy should be considered at the initial planning stage and before any major design and layout decisions are made. Many well-designed developments do not reach their full potential because of the poor landscaping. Where landscape planning is not properly included in the development process, it can often lead to delays and difficult negotiations between the applicant and the council. So, this guidance note sets out the minimum landscape planning information needed to achieve an acceptable standard of development.

It is not a prescriptive landscape design guide. But, rather, seeks to highlight the various landscape elements and processes to be considered by developers in order to achieve quality landscape submissions. This helps to smooth the planning process and results in scheme success.

This document is aimed at developers, architects and all of those who have an influence on landscape planning and environmental design. Landscaping is an essential part of the planning process to help minimise the environmental impact of development. For the purposes of this guidance note, landscape planning combines both hard and soft landscaping together with all of the other elements of good design.

This document on landscape planning supplements the following specific policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan

- H2C The Design of New Residential Development and House Extensions**  
To create attractive living environments.
- EN1 Environmental Protection and Enhancement**  
To ensure the protection and improvement of the Borough's natural resources.
- EN5 Nature Conservation**  
To protect the Borough's natural history and to secure new areas of nature conservation interest.
- EN7 Design**  
To achieve high standards of design in new development.
- EN7A Design of New Development**  
To ensure quality in design.
- EN7D Landscaping of Development**  
To create quality landscape settings to help integrate a development into its surroundings.
- EN7H The Bridgewater and Leeds-Liverpool Canals, the River Douglas and Other Significant Water Features**  
To encourage developers to make better use of rivers, canals and other water features in their proposals.
- EN8 Conservation**  
To enhance and protect the landscape setting of the Borough's built heritage.



It also supplements the following specific policies in the draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan.

**RID The Design of New Residential Development and House Extensions**

To create attractive living environments and deliver sustainable development by making more efficient use of land.

**RIE Open Space in New Housing Developments**

To make sure that appropriate provision for open space is made in new development.

**EVI Environmental Protection and Enhancement**

To ensure the protection and improvement of the borough's natural resources.

**EV2 Nature Conservation**

To protect the borough's rich diversity of wildlife species and habitats and to develop new areas of nature conservation interest.

**EV3 Design**

To achieve high standards of design leading to the creation of places and spaces which are attractive, accessible and safe.

**EV3A Design of New Development**

To ensure quality in design.

**EV3D Landscaping of Development**

To create quality landscape settings to help integrate a development into its surroundings.

**EV3F The River Douglas, Canal Network and other Features**

To encourage developers to make better use of rivers, canals and other water features in their proposal.

**EV3H Public Art**

To help make open space more distinctive.

**EV4 Conservation**

To enhance and protect the landscape setting of the borough's built heritage.

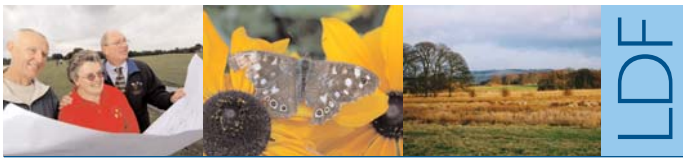
**AI Accessibility**

To make sure that consideration is given to people with disabilities, pedestrians, cyclists and others in the design and layout of landscaped areas.

**GIB Planning Obligations**

To enhance the quality of development and offset the loss of, or adverse impact on any amenity open space, place of historic or architectural interest or site of nature conservation importance.





## Key landscape design principles

The council will expect applicants who are seeking planning permission to demonstrate how they have taken account of the need for good quality design in their development proposals. All proposals must show how they have achieved the following key design principles, or objectives, which are based upon policy EV3A in the UDP:

- To create places with a sense of character and identity.
- To ensure that public and private places are clearly defined, providing **continuity and enclosure**.
- To create public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe and vibrant.
- To make places where there is ease of **movement and accessibility** for all.
- To establish places that are **'legible'**, i.e. have recognisable routes and are easy to visually navigate.
- To create places that are **adaptable**, responding to changing circumstances.
- To create places which cater for **diversity**, offering variety and choice.
- To ensure the scale of development, its **form and layout**, is appropriate to its setting.
- To implement the principles of **sustainability**, minimising resource use

and where possible reducing the impact of climate change.

It is necessary to consider all the design factors even when designing quite small schemes. However, the proportion of design effort spent on each factor tends to vary depending on the particular site and on the scale of the project concerned.

Developers will be expected to demonstrate that they have fully taken into account these landscape design objectives and principles when submitting planning applications.

## Scope of this guidance

The guidance will assist developers to prepare and submit attractive, robust and high quality landscape schemes and will help make sure that all landscape matters are fully considered in the site planning and design process. This guidance does not provide detailed design instructions and is not a substitute for professional advice. We recommend that developers use the services of an appropriately qualified landscape architect to prepare an acceptable scheme. Under certain circumstances the services of a qualified arborist, ecologist or other professional might be needed.

The guidance note aims to assist developers to provide accurate information in the right form allowing the planning application to be processed efficiently. It details the site surveys, landscape plans, design details, plant specification, full materials and workmanship details and any mitigation measures which may need to be included.

This will allow a proper evaluation of the proposal



and will avoid unnecessary delays. This note may also prove useful advice for anyone considering a new landscape scheme or upgrading existing landscaped areas.

This guidance note applies to all developments but its relevance and the range of any landscape requirements will depend on the scale and type of development proposal.

We are committed to working in partnership with developers towards the creation of a healthier, greener and more sustainable borough. This means encouraging:

- the use of natural materials from managed sustainable environments;
- the conservation of scarce resources;
- the reuse of brownfield, neglected and derelict land and materials;
- the minimisation of waste; and
- a reduction in environmental damage.

For example, the council is a signatory to the Peatlands Protection Charter and encourages developers to consider the use of peat alternatives in their planting schemes.

## The benefits of professional advice

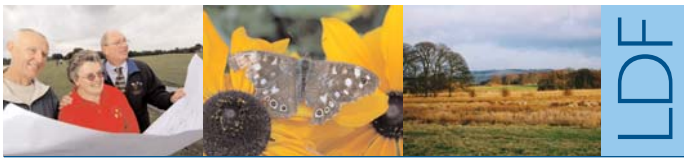
There are many reasons to get professional landscape planning and design advice, particularly for non-domestic development proposals. Consideration will need to be given to the

various elements of landscape design including:

- the overall setting of the development;
- topography and landform;
- site layout;
- wildlife and nature conservation issues;
- existing trees and vegetation;
- ponds and water features;
- play areas;
- planting details;
- use of materials; and
- establishment and future maintenance.

Using a professional at the outset should:

- Produce a cost-effective scheme to suit your project budget and timescale, saving you money and time.
- Help discharge your duties under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994.
- Undertake liaison with the appropriate bodies having regard to Protected Species and Protected Sites under the Countryside and Wildlife Act and the EU Habitats Directive.
- Ensure the services of other specialists and professionals are used as necessary, to undertake surveys and carry out mitigation work.
- Reduce delay at the planning application stage, by submitting the required survey(s) and drawings, including:
  - planting details
  - hard details
  - specifications for materials and workmanship



- plant and services
- boundary treatments
- mitigation for wildlife
- management plans
- planting establishment and future maintenance regimes

## Do I need to submit a landscape scheme?

You will be expected to submit a landscape scheme of high design quality with all planning applications where a development proposal is likely to have a significant impact on the surrounding environment. Policy EV3D of the Wigan Unitary Development Plan states:

“Development will be required to incorporate good quality hard and soft landscaping as an integral part of the proposals to enhance the environment and setting of a new building and help integrate the development into its surroundings”.

In general, landscape schemes will be required for most developments, including individual dwellings, especially on sites that occupy a prominent position along main road frontages, on redevelopment sites and in areas of high townscape or landscape quality such as Conservation Areas. Landscape proposals need to be considered in the context of existing townscape and landscape features and the layout and location of the development. The detail of any landscape design submission will depend on the type and location of the proposed development. Only in very exceptional circumstances will it be considered appropriate to waive the need to submit a landscaping scheme.

## Submitting your landscape scheme

Applications for full planning permission will need a detailed landscape scheme to be submitted with the application as an essential part of the development proposal. Only in exceptional circumstances, and where the developer has clearly demonstrated that sufficient consideration has been given the proposed development and its landscape setting, will the council grant planning permission and impose a condition requiring the submission of a detailed landscape scheme later.

We strongly recommend that you submit a detailed landscape scheme with the planning application, because usually such schemes will need to take account of new and existing landscape features, including:

- trees and shrubs
- ponds
- walls and hedgerows on the site
- any wildlife mitigation needed

Major applications may require the submission of a landscape masterplan to be agreed by the council prior to the submission of details later.

## What information is required? Site survey

A suitably scaled and contoured site plan or plans, showing the existing and proposed landform of the site is an essential pre-requisite to good site planning and the integration of your proposal into the surrounding landscape. Careful site planning and taking account of the site's existing levels and landscape features can help assimilate the proposed development into its surroundings, making it more attractive. Detailed survey information will



be required showing design considerations including:

- existing and proposed levels;
- landscape features;
- vegetation;
- water features;
- boundary features; and
- footpaths and bridleways.

## Tree survey

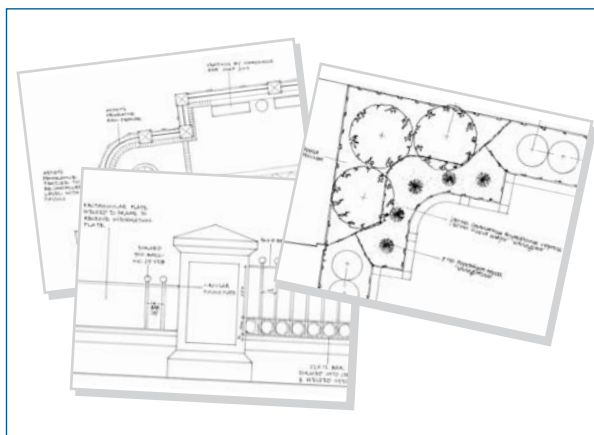
Where planning applications propose development on a site containing one or more semi-mature or mature trees or hedgerows, then a full tree survey with a minimum scale of 1:500 should be submitted. The council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 'Trees on Development Sites', based on BS 5837 'Trees in Relation to Construction', provides broad comprehensive guidelines for developers and householder applicants in respect of tree matters.

## Specialist surveys

In some cases the council will require the submission of specialist surveys to help address specific issues arising from your development proposal. These might include surveys, together with any proposed mitigation, for protected species, including Great Crested Newts, Bats, Water Voles and important or protected wildlife areas including Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR) or Sites of Biological Interest. **You should discuss the requirement for this with a Development Control Officer and the council's Ecologist before submitting a planning application.** Advice will be given on the scope of the survey work required. For example, if a building is to be demolished you will need to submit a bat survey.

## The detailed landscape plan

With applications for full planning permission you will need to submit appropriately scaled and detailed landscape drawings, which are accurate, clear and convey the designer's intentions. For most projects, component drawings, hard landscaping details and planting plans will be required at a scale between 1:200 and 1:10. Location, site and layout plans would normally be appropriate at scales in the range of 1:10,000 down to 1:200.



The landscape drawings should contain accurate and precise information on the following:

- existing and proposed finished levels - contoured or showing spot heights as deemed appropriate;
- location of existing vegetation to be retained or removed, including trees, shrubs and hedgerows;
- plant species, planting density, numbers, sizes and location;
- layout, type and extent of grassed areas and other open spaces;
- boundary treatments, hard landscape details and utilities and services;



- ponds and water features existing and proposed;
- other natural features to be retained or enhanced;
- location, type and extent of formal and equipped play facilities where required by Policy RIE in the Unitary Development Plan;
- location of Sites of Biological Importance and other protected natural heritage sites, indicating protective measures, enhancement works and required mitigation (see requirements for specialist surveys earlier);
- definitive rights of way, footpath network and access;
- existing mature trees, and hedgerows, including species, size, crown spread, location
- and general condition (see requirements for tree survey earlier);
- trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders or in a Conservation Area (see requirements for tree survey earlier);
- protective measures for both trees and shrubs to be retained and new landscaping during development (see requirements for tree survey earlier); and
- details of establishment works and the future management of the landscaping scheme.



## Community safety

The safety of people and the security of property can be enhanced by good design. Landscape Architects and other design professionals should liaise and consult with the Architectural Liaison Unit of the Greater Manchester Police at pre-application stage where there is a perceived risk management issue. The unit can advise on measures to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour through design.

Every design solution must take account of any community safety issues, and avoid creating potential opportunities for crime and vandalism such as areas that are unobserved, poorly lit or under-utilised, which can feel threatening to users and attract anti-social behaviour. All landscape design submissions should demonstrate how community safety and crime prevention measures have been considered.

In addition, consideration should be given in the design and layout of open space to ensure the provision and maintenance of access for emergency vehicles including Police, Ambulances and Fire Appliances.

## Access for disabled people

The Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 includes provisions that make it illegal to deny disabled people access. Since October 2004 any providers of goods and services to the public must have made reasonable physical adjustments to ensure access is not denied to disabled people. This includes landowners providing access in public open space areas. Although this is yet to be tested by case law, good working practice must assume that all areas should be accessible rather than inaccessible.



Designs should therefore also take account of access to and within the site and use of any facilities by disabled people. You can get advice from the 'BT Countryside for All - A Good Practice Guide to Disabled People's Access in the Countryside' available from the Fieldfare Trust (Telephone: 0114 270 1668 or Website: [www.fieldfare.org.uk](http://www.fieldfare.org.uk)) or from the Access Officers in the Planning and Regeneration Department.

## Landscape maintenance and management plans

We have adopted a generally functional design viewpoint based on appropriate designs for appropriate places. This is to help improve the visual image of Wigan, achieve uniformity and create a standard approach to the long-term maintenance and management of the Borough's landscaped areas. It is based on the principle of utilising the key landscape elements of amenity grassland and extra-heavy standard and semi-mature trees as the linking threads between well designed and cared for landscaped areas. In particular, this approach will be adopted along the main transport corridors and the key links into the borough's commercial, employment, residential and civic areas. The transformation of the travelling environment into neat and tidy, well-maintained landscape corridors is crucial to the overall image of borough. This improved image will provide a platform from which to attract new investment and job opportunities.

Through our 'Street Scene Strategy', we are committed to making our green spaces, the public realm, town centres and main transport corridors neater, cleaner, greener and safer. This guidance is intended to influence your contribution

to the creation of simple but robust landscape design solutions that are well designed, welcoming, attractive, safe and well maintained. A unifying landscape framework of amenity grassland and large trees is a cost effective solution that provides a consistent landscape quality and this approach is commended to developers in an effort to achieve an integrated landscape framework across the borough.



In certain specific settings, such as key civic spaces or focal points, we may need more elaborate schemes, for example, potentially including public art. These will be used exceptionally, in order to maximise their impact. In addition, on sites of historical or nature conservation value, it might be useful if you could provide information about the site's particular interest.

We will prepare further detailed advice, including a 'Residential Design Guide', to help clarify our landscape design philosophy.

No landscape scheme can look after itself, so you will need to consider the future long-term management objectives and maintenance implications for your scheme at an early stage in the design process. You will be required, as a condition of your planning permission, to replace plants that fail for a period of up to five years after planting.



In some cases you may need to submit a comprehensive management plan, setting out in detail how the proposed scheme will be maintained in the future to provide an attractive and functional landscape setting for your development. A comprehensive management plan could, for example, be required for development in sensitive landscape settings including:

- shelter belts;
- major woodlands;
- sites of biological importance; or
- other protected natural heritage sites.
- near watercourses

Such a plan would set out details for the preparation, establishment and maintenance of the scheme, for an agreed period of ten years or more.

When designing schemes near watercourses, consideration should be given to the use of appropriate native species, to provide an acceptable landscaping scheme whilst ensuring minimum maintenance. In addition, the use of chemicals for maintenance purposes should be kept to a minimum.

In general, simple, low maintenance, cost effective design solutions are often best, although the initial establishment costs of such schemes may be high. However, the longer term cost effective benefits often offset this. You should clearly identify in your planning application those areas you intend to request adoption by the council in the future. This will include the requirement for a commuted sum payment for future maintenance at the time of adoption. You can get further advice from the Environment Group of the Planning and Regeneration Department.

## Open space in new housing developments



Policy RIE 'Open Space in New Housing Developments' sets out the standard for open space adopted by the council where a development exceeds 99 dwellings. It also reminds developers that a scaled financial contribution will be required for developments of between 1-99 dwellings. This is towards the capital and commuted maintenance costs of off-site amenity open space and play provision in lieu of on-site provision. Such provision will come from within the township concerned and therefore, be accessible to the development. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be agreed as part of a Section 106 agreement under the Planning Acts.

You can get further information in the council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Provision of Open Space in New Housing Developments, Adoption and Financial Contributions from Developers'.



## Invasive weeds

Developers and landowners have a responsibility in law, and duty of care, in relation to controlling the spread of certain invasive weed species.

Under the Countryside and Wildlife Act 1981 and its subsequent amendments, listed plants such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed need to be controlled.

Japanese Knotweed in particular is a very invasive and damaging



plant that requires meticulous control, to strict guidelines, which if not followed can result in damage to structures, pavements, roads and walls, which is often costly to repair. In addition, under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Japanese Knotweed is classed as 'controlled waste' and as such cut Knotweed material and soil containing rhizomes must be disposed of to a licensed landfill site according to the EPA (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991, and must not be reused. The control of other weeds, including Yellow Ragwort, is governed by the Weeds Act 1949.

Developers should ensure that all invasive weed species are properly eradicated prior to development commencing. Where there are invasive weeds present, a detailed method statement should be provided to demonstrate how it is intended to deal with them. Care should be taken to ensure that these species are not reintroduced during landscaping works.

You are advised to refer to the council's guidance note 'Invasive weed species' for more detailed information.

## Further information

When considering applications for full planning permission for new developments we will need to be satisfied that, in addition to the design policies of the Unitary Development Plan, that you also take account of the following policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents:

- Nature Conservation in Wigan – A Strategy
- A Woodland Strategy for Wigan
- The Red Rose Forest Plan
- Trees on Development Sites (SPG)
- Fencing Design (SPG)
- Design Guide to Residential Developments (SPD)
- Provision of Open Space in New Housing Developments, Adoption and Financial Contributions from Developers (SPD)
- Invasive Weed Species
- Accessible Gates and Barriers

In addition, a number of other leaflets are available providing advice for applicants on 'Tree Management', 'Tree Preservation Orders and Trees in Conservation Areas' and 'Guidance Note and Checklist-Information required for Non-Householder Applications'. All of the above are continually updated and added to.



## Useful contacts

### **The Landscape Institute**

6-8 Barnard Mews

London

SW11 1QU

Telephone: 0207 350 5200

### **British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI)**

Landscape House

9 Henry Street

Keighley

West Yorkshire

BD21 3D2

Telephone: 01535 606139

### **Planning and Regeneration**

#### **Department:**

Trees and Landscape Officer

Telephone: 01942 404233

Senior Ecologist

Telephone: 01942 404232

### **Architectural Liaison Unit**

#### **Greater Manchester Police**

Divisional and Partnership Support Unit

Chester House

Boyer Street

Manchester

M16 0RE

Divisional Crime Reduction Advisors at GMP

Telephone: 0161 856 7320/7262