

# LAMBETH

## Design Guide Part 1

### Introducing Lambeth

August 2023

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# About this Document

## Introduction

1.1 Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) provide guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. This SPD provides guidance on the implementation of policies in the Lambeth Local Plan. All references in this SPD to “Local Plan” refer to the Lambeth Local Plan 2021. All references to “London Plan” refer to the London Plan 2021. This document has been prepared to assist residents, architects, developers, builders and planning agents when designing their development proposals. The guidance adopted on the 8th of August 2023 is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application and will inform the Council’s pre-application advice. Applicants are therefore strongly encouraged to give the fullest consideration of this guidance when preparing schemes and to refer to it, where relevant, in their planning statements and design and access statements.

1.2 The complete document is in five parts:

**Part 1 – Introducing Lambeth (this document)**

**Part 2 – Advice for all Development**

**Part 3 – New Buildings**

**Part 4 – Building Alterations, Extensions And Retrofit**

**Part 5 – Basement Development**

1.3 The objective of this SPD is supporting the delivery of Lambeth’s Strategic Objectives as set out in the Lambeth Local Plan. These strategic objectives are:

- a). Accommodating population growth
- b). Achieving economic prosperity and opportunity for all
- c). Tackling and adapting to climate change
- d). Providing essential infrastructure
- e). Promoting community cohesion and safe, liveable and inclusive neighbourhoods
- f). Creating and maintaining attractive, distinctive places

1.4 The Council also has separate advice notes including those on:

- Advertising and Signage
- Parking Survey
- Refuse & Recycling Storage – design and technical specification
- Air Quality

## LAMBETH Design Guide Part 1

### Introducing Lambeth

July 2023

Lambeth

## LAMBETH Design Guide Part 2

### Advice for All Development

July 2023

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## LAMBETH Design Guide Part 3

### New Buildings

July 2023

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## LAMBETH Design Guide Part 4

### Building Alterations, Extensions and Retrofit

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## LAMBETH Design Guide Part 5

### Basements

July 2023

Lambeth

1.5 The preparation of the SPD included two stages of 8-week public consultations providing an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to respond. The accompanying consultation statement is on the Council's SPD webpage, it sets out a summary of the issues raised and the Council's response to comments received.

### Challenges

1.6 Tackling the climate emergency by reducing emissions from buildings and transport, and making the built environment resilient to future climate change is a major challenge. Air pollution remains at dangerous levels across the borough, with legal limits regularly exceeded with significant impacts on public health. In response to the significant threat posed by climate change, Lambeth Council declared a climate emergency in January 2019. Adopting circular economy approaches will play a significant role in addressing the challenge of the climate emergency.

1.7 Addressing climate change is one of the core planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin decision-taking. Planning decision-making can make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions (mitigation), through its influence over the energy performance and design of new development, transport and green infrastructure. It can also play a key role in preparing people and places for the consequences of climate change (adaptation).

The main impacts of climate change in Lambeth are likely to be:

- warmer, wetter winters
- hotter, drier summers (which may be especially hot in dense urban areas)
- more frequent extreme rainfall events, leading to greater risks of flooding
- possible intensification of the urban heat island effect
- increased greenhouse gas concentrations, leading to greater air pollution.

1.8 The London Heat Island Effect affects the whole of Lambeth to a high degree—affecting night time temperatures in particular; global warming is also making heat-waves more common generally. Heat places great stress on the wellbeing of all, especially the vulnerable. Noise pollution from roads, railways and noisy uses is another city-wide challenge. Public health in Lambeth is significantly behind the England average on a significant number of indicators. Key local priorities include well-being and mental health issues and inclusivity of the built environment. New development should seek to address these issues to make Lambeth better for everyone.

### Comply or Justify

1.9 The guidance in this SPD has been produced on the 'comply or justify' principle. Applications which comply with the principles and practice set out in the five parts of this SPD are much more likely to be successful than those that do not. That said, where a proposal departs from any of the principles and practice outlined in the guidance, the onus will lie with the applicant to provide a convincing justification on why deviation is acceptable in that instance. The case should be made within supporting documents such as the Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement or Planning Statement submitted with the application and supported by any evidence necessary to make a persuasive case. It should be noted that:

1. Arguments based solely on the fact that similar development has been approved elsewhere will not in themselves be sufficient justification.
2. The 'comply or justify' will have limited weight where it relates to impacts on designated heritage assets because there is an automatic statutory presumption in favour of their preservation.



# Policy Context

Design Guide SPD Part 1: Introducing Lambeth



# National Policy

## National Policy Framework

1.10 The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF), and the London Plan (2021) provide the broader planning context within which planning decisions must be made. The NPPF sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The London Plan sets out the strategic vision for London, laying out an economic, environmental, transport and social framework for development.

1.11 One of the key messages from those documents is that design is an integral part of the planning process and good design is essential to creating safe, attractive and sustainable places. Also evident is the significance of climate change as a cross-cutting issue both in the need to ensure resilience to growing threats like flooding and extreme heat, and the need to limit further emissions. This SPD has been written in accordance with the NPPF which states:

*"To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety." (Para 128, NPPF)*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

Policy Area	NPPF	London Plan (2021)	London Plan SPG and LPG	Lambeth Local Plan 2021
Built Heritage	Section 16	Ch. 7	London World Heritage sites (2012)	Q18 Q19 Q20 Q21 Q22 Q23 Q24 Q25
Housing Standards	n/a	Ch. 4	Housing Design Standards LPG (2023)	H5 H6 Q2 Q12 Q13
Views	n/a	Ch. 7	London View Management Framework (2012)	Q25 Q26
Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment		Ch. 8	Urban Greening Factor LPG (2023)	H5 Q9 Q10 Q14 EN1 EN2
Sustainability	Section 2, 9, 14,15	Ch.9	Be Seen Energy Monitoring LPG (2021)	EN3
			Circular Economy Statements LPG (2023)	EN7
			Energy Planning Guidance	EN3
			The control of dust and emissions in construction SPG (2014)	EN4
			Whole life Carbon LPG (2022)	EN4
			Air quality neutral LPG (2023)	EN4
			Air quality positive LPG (2023)	EN4
Quality of the Built Environment	Section 12	Ch.6	Accessible London (2014)	Q1 Q3 Q6
			Public London Charter LPG (2021)	
			Character and Context (2014)	Q5 Q6 Q7 Q15 Q16 Q20 Q21 Q22 Q25
			Characterisation and Growth Strategy LPG (2023)	
			Optimising site capacity: A design-led approach LPG (2023)	Q26
			Play and Informal Recreation (2012)	EN1 H5

Figure 1: Planning Policy Areas and related national and local policies



# National Design Guidance

## The National Design Guide 2021

1.12 This defines ten characteristics which define an area's character. Good design involves positively addressing the ten characteristics with the goal being the creation of a strong sense of community and places which make a positive contribution to the environment and minimise their contribution to climate change.

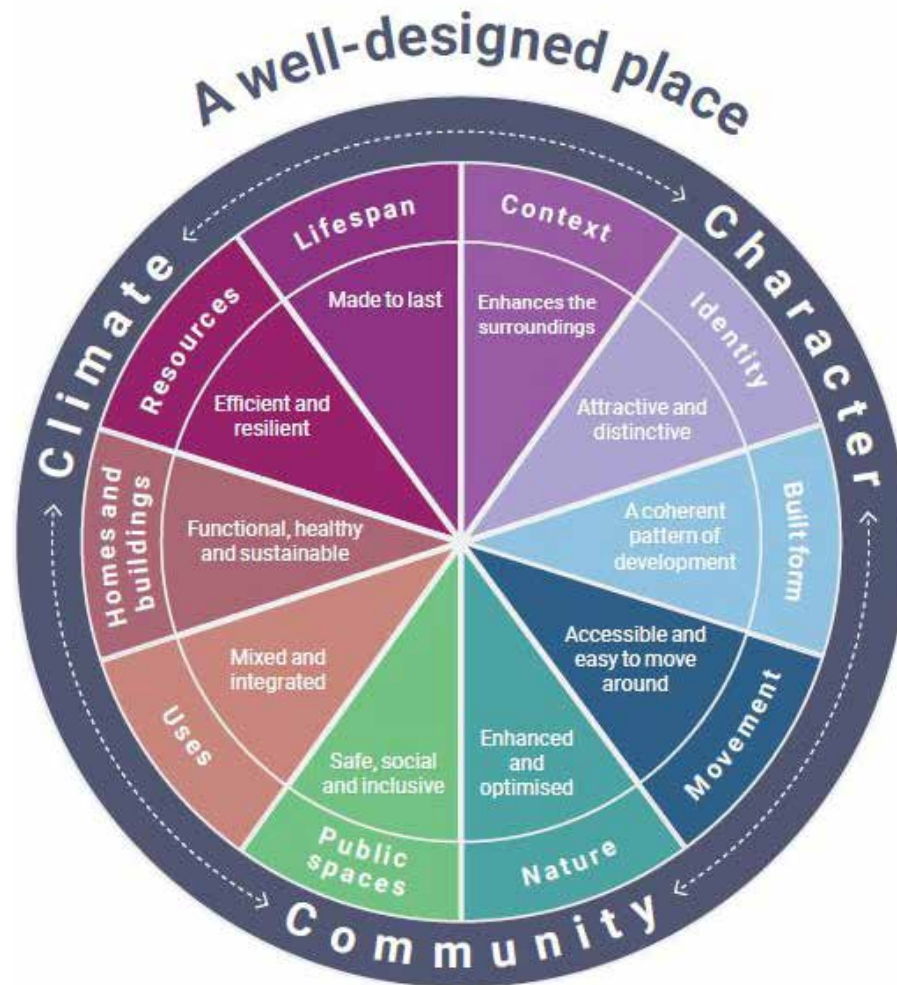


Figure 2: The elements that make up a well-designed place, from the National Design Guide (2021)

- Context** - A well-designed development responds positively to its context in terms of heritage, geography, landscape, movement, environment, patterns of activity, views, how it functions, the social and economic context and the aspirations and perceptions of local people.
- Identity** - A well designed place has a positive and coherent identity that everyone can identify with contributing to health, well-being and community cohesion. It is planned for how we live today and will live in the future and it is visually attractive, to delight occupants.
- Built Form** - Well designed places have compact forms which are walkable, contributing positively to placemaking and well-being.
- Movement** - Successful developments depend on a movement network that makes connections to destinations, places and communities, both within the site and beyond its boundaries.
- Nature** - A well designed place prioritises nature so that ecosystems can flourish to ensure a healthy natural environment supports and enhances biodiversity. Nature should be incorporated into a multifunctional network that supports quality of place and addresses climate change mitigation.
- Public Spaces** - Well designed places include public spaces which support a range of activities to encourage social inclusion, interaction, health and well-being.
- Uses** - Well designed neighbourhoods include a mix of tenures and housing types, and have a mix of uses including services.
- Homes and Buildings** - Well designed homes and buildings provide good quality of internal and external environments for users, promoting health and well-being. They relate positively to the spaces around them, and they are also well-integrated into their neighbourhoods.
- Resources** - Well designed places reduce their resource requirement , including for land, energy and water. They are adaptable over time and use materials and technology to minimise waste.
- Lifespan** - Well designed places are designed for long term stewardship by landowners, communities, and local authorities. Buildings age gracefully and are adaptable to occupants changing needs over time.



# Other National Standards and Regulations

## Other Standards and Regulations

1.13 A range of technical standards and regulations play an important role in shaping the built environment. Designers should be mindful of the need to comply with their requirements when developing proposals. The documents referred to below list some of the key standards and regulations which may be relevant to development proposals.

1. **Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice (BRE209 2022)** gives advice on site layout planning to achieve good sun lighting and daylighting, both within buildings and in the open spaces between them and can be used to support right to light planning. <https://www.brebookshop.com/details.jsp?id=328056>
2. **Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015)** and the **London Plan (March 2021)** Gives minimum spatial qualities for new homes. The standards should be applied to most new homes, although Lambeth would expect the minimums to be exceeded. Exceptions can be made to bring small sites into use as individual houses, or when the site has heritage constraint. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>
3. **Building Regulations 2021 Part L: Conservation of fuel and power** sets out standards for the energy performance of new and existing buildings. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conservation-of-fuel-and-power-approved-document-l>
4. **Building Regulations 2015 Part M: Access to and use of buildings** sets out building regulations for access to and use of buildings, in dwellings and buildings other than dwellings and provides a baseline for accessibility in the built environment. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>
5. **British Standards BS8300-1:2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment External Environment / Buildings** provides good practice design principles to ensure the built environment including streets and spaces around buildings are inclusive. [http://www.towardsvision.org/uploads/4/0/3/7/40379829/bs\\_8300-1-2018\\_built\\_environment.pdf](http://www.towardsvision.org/uploads/4/0/3/7/40379829/bs_8300-1-2018_built_environment.pdf)
6. **Secured by Design Homes (2019)** provides police guidance for the design and build of new homes, and those undertaking major or minor property refurbishment, to adopt crime prevention measures. [https://www.securedbydesign.com/images/downloads/HOMES\\_BROCHURE\\_2019\\_NEW\\_version\\_2.pdf](https://www.securedbydesign.com/images/downloads/HOMES_BROCHURE_2019_NEW_version_2.pdf)
7. **Counter Terrorism Alliance** gives counter terrorism advice for the design and management of crowded places. <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/guidance>
8. **Net Zero Carbon Buildings: A Framework Definition** <https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-carbon-buildings-a-framework-definition/>
9. **LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide** <https://www.leti.london/cedg>
10. **National Model Design Code (2021)** provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

# London Plan Policy

## The London Plan

1.14 The 2021 London Plan and accompanying supplementary guidance define the standards which development in all boroughs must achieve. One key message from the London Plan is that “...all development must make the best use of land by following a design-led approach that optimises the capacity of sites...” (Policy D3 London Plan 2021)

*1.14.1 For London to accommodate the growth identified in this Plan in an inclusive and responsible way every new development needs to make the most efficient use of land by optimising site capacity. This means ensuring the development's form is the most appropriate for the site and land uses meet identified needs. The optimum capacity for a site does not mean the maximum capacity; it may be that a lower density development – such as gypsy and traveller pitches – is the optimum development for the site. (para 3.3.1 London Plan 2021)*

*1.14.2 A design-led approach to optimising site capacity should be based on an evaluation of the site's attributes, its surrounding context and its capacity for growth to determine the appropriate form of development for that site. (Policy D3 London Plan 2020)*

*1.14.3 “Good design and good planning are intrinsically linked. The form and character of London's buildings and spaces must be appropriate for their location, fit for purpose, respond to changing needs of Londoners, be inclusive, and make the best use the city's finite supply of land. The efficient use of land requires optimisation of density. This means coordinating the layout of the development with the form and scale of the buildings and the location of the different land uses, and services” (para 3.3.6 London Plan 2021)*

1.15 The London Plan 2021 sets out six Good Growth objectives for London's growth. Applicant teams should consider how their proposals are helping to deliver the objectives below:

- Building strong and inclusive communities
- Making the best use of land
- Creating a healthy city
- Delivering the homes Londoners need
- Growing a good economy
- Increasing efficiency and resilience

1.16 London Plan Guidance (LPG) has been prepared to support implementation of the London Plan and its Good Growth objectives. Below are references to guidance relating to the quality and design of the built environment.

### Housing Design Standards LPG (2023)

1.17 The Housing Design Standards guidance provides a set of standards and checklist of London Plan policy requirements for housing (D6 Housing quality and standards). <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance/housing-design-standards-lpg>

1.18 The Housing Design Standards guidance standards are grouped under 3 broad headings which reflect the scale they operate at:

- Placemaking and the public realm – the area around the site
- Shared spaces and ancillary spaces – communal spaces within the site
- Homes and private outside space – private homes and spaces within the site.

### Characterisation and Growth Strategy LPG (2023)

1.19 The guidance provides information on how to carry out a borough or neighbourhood-wide characterisation assessment (or study). This assessment should be used to inform a borough or neighbourhood's capacity for change and growth. <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance/characterisation-and-growth-strategy-lpg>

### Optimising site capacity: A design-led approach LPG (2023)

1.20 The guidance sets out how the design-led approach, set out in Policy D3 of the London Plan, should be applied. This approach is the process of setting site-specific design parameters and codes for development sites to provide clarity over the future design. It should be used to determine the most appropriate form of development on a site. [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Optimising%20site%20capacity%20-%20A%20design-led%20approach%20LPG\\_0.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Optimising%20site%20capacity%20-%20A%20design-led%20approach%20LPG_0.pdf)

### Accessible London SPG (2014)

1.21 The guidance provides advice on implementing inclusive design principles effectively, and on creating an accessible environment in London. <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance-and-spgs/creating-london-accessible-all>

# Lambeth Policy

Figure 4: Key relevant policies of the Lambeth Local Plan 2021:

H5	Housing Standards	Q7	Urban Design: new development	Q17	Advertisements and signage
H6	Residential Conversions	Q8	Design Quality: construction detailing	Q18	Historic Environment Strategy
EN4	Sustainable Design and Construction	Q9	Landscaping	Q19	Westminster World Heritage Site
EN5	Flood Risk	Q10	Trees	Q20	Statutory Listed Buildings
EN6	SUDS	Q11	Building Alterations and Extensions	Q21	Registered Park and Gardens
Q1	Inclusive Environments	Q12	Refuse/recycling storage	Q22	Conservation Areas
Q2	Amenity	Q13	Cycle storage	Q23	Non-designated Heritage Assets
Q3	Community Safety	Q14	Development in Gardens	Q24	River Thames
Q5	Local Distinctiveness	Q15	Boundary Treatments	Q25	Views
Q6	Urban Design: public realm	Q16	Shopfronts	Q26	Tall and Large Buildings
				Q27	Basement Development

Context	Identity	Built Form	Movement	Nature	Public Spaces	Uses	Homes and Buildings	Resources	Lifespan
Q5	Q5 Q18	Q7	Q1	Q9	Q3	Q5	H5	EN4	Q7
Q7	Q6 Q19	Q14	Q6	Q10	Q6	Q14	H6	EN5	Q8
Q18	Q7 Q20	Q22		Q14	Q21		Q2	EN6	Q11
Q19	Q9 Q21	Q26			Q24		Q11	Q7	
Q20	Q15 Q22	Q27					Q13	Q12	
Q22	Q16 Q23						Q26		
Q25	Q17 Q24								

**Figure 5:** The Table above shows which of Lambeth’s Policies reflect the aspects of well-designed places as set out in the National Design Guide. Throughout these 5 documents the Lambeth Policy symbol is shown next to the section which is relevant to it.

**Figure 6 below:** The Child Friendly Lambeth priorities ‘Safe and Secure’ and ‘Place’, which directly relate to the built environment are outlined in Part 2 of the SPD. Throughout the SPD images of the priority badges are next to guidance which is particularly relevant to delivering these priorities.



Safe and Secure

Place



## Lambeth Area Specific Policies



Q5

Q6

Q19

Q24

1.22 In this section the relevant Local Plan Design Policies are identified in the Policy symbol. A key is provided in figure 4.

### **Westminster World Heritage Site (WWHS) (Policy Q19)**

1.23 Officially known as the 'Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including St Margaret's Church' the WWHS is sensitive to development in Lambeth. The visibility of part of Waterloo and Vauxhall in the backdrop (wider setting) of the Westminster World Heritage Site (WWHS) means that particular care must be taken with building design to ensure no harm results to its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

1.24 In some cases the only way to preserve OUV may be to restrict building height to ensure that the new development is not visible. Where visible development is acceptable particular care should be taken with the detailed design and appearance to ensure it is subdued and does not visually compete with the World Heritage Site (WHS).

The 'Statement of Outstanding Universal Value', sets out the qualities and characteristics of the WWHS which make it internationally important. See link:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/426/>

Detailed information on management of the site can be found in the World Heritage Site Management Plan. See link: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/planning-building-control-and-environmental-regulations/design-and-heritage/world-heritage-site>

1.25 The immediate setting is defined as the space between the viewer and the WHS and the wider setting is the backdrop and wider environs. In order to respect settings designers should:

1. Avoid heights or masses which draw the eye from or dominate.
2. Use uncomplicated built forms.
3. Select material palettes which are locally distinct and blend the development into its context.
4. Not block views of WHS in the immediate setting or clutter its approaches



See also Historic England's 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' link below:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>

Mayor of London's 'London's World Heritage Sites - Guidance on settings SPG March 2012:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance-and-spgs/london-world-heritage>

### River Thames (Policy Q24)

1.26 The significance of high concentration of heritage assets along the River Thames, and the contribution it makes to their settings and to the character of the city as a whole, should not be underestimated. In this regard designers should be able to demonstrate that new developments take a contextual response in terms of their form and materials. New development should respect context so that landmark riverside buildings and heritage assets retain their established presence within the cityscape.

1.27 The entire length of the River Thames frontage in Lambeth is accessible as a pedestrian route which is an important amenity for the city. Much of the Albert Embankment and Queen's Walk and the River Thames fall within the immediate setting of the Westminster World Heritage Site. These locations are some of the best in London from which to appreciate the Palace of Westminster. In these locations designers should:

1. Ensure that the public realm is of the highest quality.
2. Optimise visitors' ability to appreciate the OUV of the World Heritage site.
3. Seek improvements upon the current situation when designing in these locations.
4. Avoid harm to setting.

### River Thames North of Westminster Bridge

1.28 The character of the city on either side of the River Thames between the borough boundary with Southwark and Westminster Bridge is characterised by fairly large scale development – Civic, arts and culture, commercial and residential – which is unified by a pale palette of Portland stone or similar materials (pale concrete and cream tile). This prevailing character should be reinforced and respected by new development.



Westminster World Heritage Site



St Paul's Cathedral Views



Portland Stone buildings



Cream tiles at St Thomas' Hospital

Q5

Q6

Q19

Q24

### River Thames between Westminster Bridge and Vauxhall Bridge

1.29 Between Westminster Bridge and Vauxhall the character is more varied. To the north the post-war buildings of St Thomas' Hospital respond to the Waterloo context of pale stone. The Victorian hospital is in red brick whilst Lambeth Palace is in red brick and stone. This natural palette of stone and red brick is considered the most appropriate for development.

1.30 South of Lambeth Bridge the character of development on either side of the river is quite varied. Some buildings, like the fire brigade headquarters, have broad, linear forms. In the composition of the new developments along Albert Embankment a building form of 'organ pipes' has developed which has allowed for a modulation of heights within developments, opened up gaps between buildings and allowed the creation of new public realm. This approach unifies the buildings and should be perpetuated in new development. A palette of pale grey and white coloured cladding gives a degree of harmony whilst allowing the buildings to express their own individual character. Surviving Victorian buildings on Albert Embankment are important survivors of the area's industrial past and protected by conservation area designation.



- Q5
- Q6
- Q19
- Q24



### River Thames between Vauxhall Bridge and Nine Elms

1.31 From Vauxhall Bridge to the borough boundary with Wandsworth the character is contemporary and varied. The St George Wharf development forms the fringe of the Vauxhall tall building cluster which rises up behind. Here the layering of different development heights within the cluster is particularly sensitive in views from the Westminster World Heritage Site and requires careful consideration.

1.32 The concentration of tall buildings risks losing the human scale and scale of street experience which is so valuable in London and Lambeth. New development in this area should carefully utilise massing to create composed human scale streets and framed open spaces, and limit the impacts of height on the public realm. Locally distinctive materials are essential to integrate development with wider context.



Riverside walk



Mansion block typology



Red brick



ceramic in locally distinct shades

Q5

Q6

Q19

Q24

# Lambeth - an Evolving Place

1.33 Lambeth's character today is the product of long-term evolution. Most of that change has been gradual and has gone relatively unnoticed; and development that was once bright and new soon becomes established. There remain some parts of Lambeth with fragmented, discordant built environments and instances where buildings detract. New development provides an opportunity to mend the urban fabric. Successful context driven change has enhanced neighbourhoods and enriched or reinforced local character. Applicants should show in their Planning or Design and Access Statements how their proposals optimise development potential in a manner that responds positively to local character / distinctiveness.

1.34 Making the best use of land will allow Lambeth to evolve further in a way that works for everyone. We must accommodate growth to deliver much needed homes and workspaces, while supporting local communities and preserving, enhancing and, where possible, expanding open space and greenery. The optimisation of available land can be achieved sustainably by prioritising the development of brownfield land, opportunity areas, sites which are well-connected by transport infrastructure, sites appropriate for tall buildings, sites within and on the edge of town centres, and small sites.

1.35 Different parts of the borough lend themselves to different types of new development especially small site development (London Plan policy H2), and Local Plan (Policy H6 and H7). The table opposite shows in very general terms the locations where the different types of small site development might come forward.

	South Lambeth	North and Middle Lambeth	Conservation Areas	Town Centres
Residential conversions	Extensive Opportunity	Extensive Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity
Residential extensions	Extensive Opportunity	Extensive Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity
Demolition and redevelopment of existing buildings	Moderate Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity	Limited Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity
Infill development within domestic curtilages	Extensive Opportunity	Extensive Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity	Moderate Opportunity

Figure 7: Small Site Development Potential



Q5

H6

H7

1.36 The particular types of small site development identified by Policy H2.A of the London Plan are:

- 1) Infill of vacant or underused brownfield sites.
- 2) Residential conversions, redevelopment, extensions of houses and / or ancillary residential buildings or infill development within the curtilage of a house where it is within PTALs 3-6 or within 800m of a station or town centre boundary

1.37 Development that meets the relevant policy requirements for each type will be supported.



Lyham Road



Caldwell Street



Brixton Road



Centaur Street



# Lambeth's Character

Design Guide SPD Part 1: Introducing Lambeth



# Lambeth's Character

## Overview

1.38 The map on this page is taken from Historic England's 'London's Local Character and Density' and shows general character areas across Lambeth.

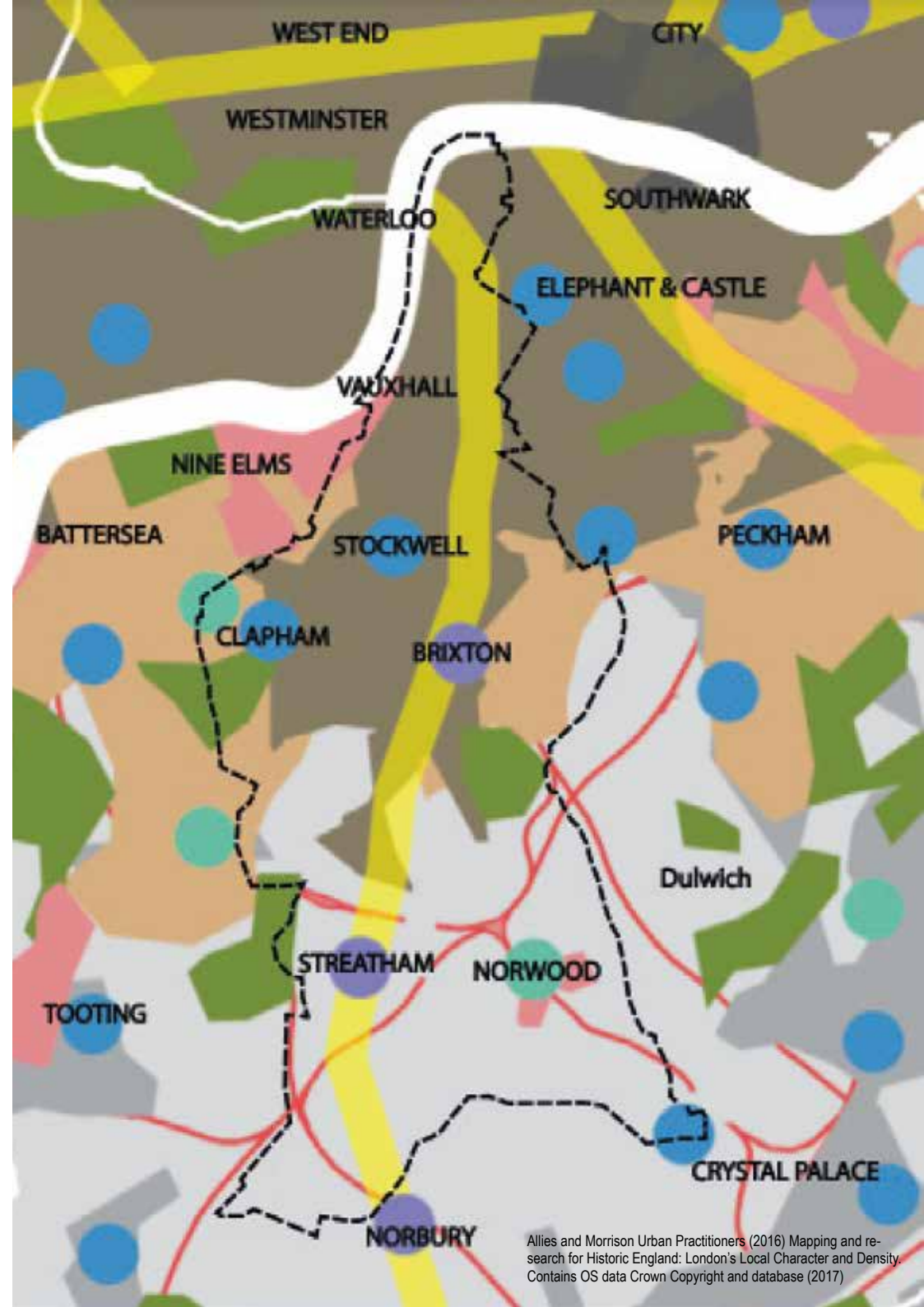
1.39 Lambeth's built environment is a product of London's outward expansion over the course of the 19th Century when the rural hinterland of the historic city was subsumed by successive waves of new development.

1.40 Classically inspired Georgian planning and architecture characterises the north of the borough from Kennington to northern Brixton. The 19th Century rail and tram connections allowed suburban development for the burgeoning middle classes.

1.41 The first decades of the 20th Century saw the completion of Lambeth's urbanisation with the construction of suburban housing in the south of the borough. The process of slum clearance and urban renewal began in the 1920s and continued into the 1960s. This wave of development saw many large housing estates constructed.

1.42 In the 1970s the focus shifted to conservation led rehabilitation which breathed new life into many historic buildings and places. See Policy Q5 and Lambeth Local Distinctiveness Study, 2012 for more information.

Figure 8: Extract from Historic England: London's Local Character and Density





1.43 In very broad terms Lambeth's built environment is characterised by:

- Conventional housing in the centre and north of the borough generally urban in character and to higher densities than the southern part of Lambeth. Terraced housing prevails in the centre and north of the borough with semi-detached and detached properties being more common in the south. The average Lambeth rear garden is 111m<sup>2</sup> although in north and central Lambeth the average is 53m<sup>2</sup>.
- Low-rise suburban development (detached and semi-detached houses in generous plots is most common in the south of the borough. The typical rear garden size in the south of the borough is about 185m<sup>2</sup>.
- Town centres which tend to be retail, business and leisure dominated, long established often containing concentrations of heritage assets.

Q5

Q6

Q7

Q19

1.44 The most prevalent building type in Lambeth is the pre-1900 terraced house, and over half of domestic floorspace in Lambeth is in buildings constructed before 1929. Such buildings typically have poor levels of energy efficiency. Facilitating the decarbonisation of this building stock will be essential for Lambeth's efforts to tackle the climate emergency, given that energy use in the home is the single largest source of emissions in the borough.

Q20

1.45 There are around 3,000 heritage assets distributed across the borough, but with the greatest concentration in the centre and north. Housing estates, large and small, are distributed across the borough. Estates vary in scale, layout, type, tenure and materiality. However, the majority were built by London County Council / Greater London Council and Lambeth Council which means certain common types prevail, such as walk-up blocks.

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### Lambeth's Positive Characteristics

1.46 Lambeth today is an attractive place to live and work as the result of a combination of factors including the quality of the built environment and open spaces, entertainment and leisure attractions, the richness of the cultural landscape and the treasured character of its historic environment.

1.47 In the last 20 years development densities across London have increased significantly to meet the demand to live and work in the city. Lambeth has evolved to meet the housing needs of London's growing population with familiar historic areas being maintained, and opportunities for growth and reinvention being carefully realised.

1.48 More people living in the borough provides the opportunity to improve public services and sustainable transport infrastructure. Increased populations enable local businesses to thrive and support local shopping parades. Whilst optimising the density of development presents practical challenges, Lambeth Council aims to ensure that new developments respond positively to their local and borough contexts. This is especially important given the requirement for new development to respect the settings of Lambeth's heritage assets (Policies Q20, Q21, Q22 and Q23), the River Thames (Q24), and the presence on the borough boundary of the Westminster World Heritage Site (Policy Q19).

1.49 Generally new development should assimilate the positive attributes of local context and not dominate in the settings of heritage assets. Some of the easiest ways that new buildings can reinforce local character is through sensitive architectural design and the careful selection of materials. Across Lambeth as a whole, craftsmanship, quality and the use of brick are unifying factors and key to local distinctiveness.

1.50 New developments should respect historic street patterns, reinstating and repairing where possible and appropriate. Traditional street layouts are robust and flexible and in most places are best preserved or replicated.

1.51 In general, areas which can support higher densities are where there is a variety of typologies and dense character already exists and as London Plan Policy D3 states "higher density development should generally be promoted in locations that are well connected to jobs, services, infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling."

1.52 When considering higher density, the relationship of buildings with the street is critical. The human scale of Lambeth is one of its strengths and this should be maintained through careful massing and facade articulation

1.53 Lambeth and London typologies including terraces and mansion blocks which have proven to be successful over time, should be the basis for new developments and Lambeth welcomes reinterpretations of these timeless typologies

1.54 Lambeth's green character should be preserved. Trees, soft landscaping, generous parks, green squares all contribute to making Lambeth a highly livable place where people can live alongside nature, animals and birds, where the air is naturally cleaned and cooled and where the pressures of the city can be left behind. New developments are expected to reinforce this characteristic.

See Lambeth's Local Distinctiveness Study:

[https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-07/EB08\\_13\\_Lambeth\\_%20Local\\_Distinctiveness\\_2012.pdf](https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-07/EB08_13_Lambeth_%20Local_Distinctiveness_2012.pdf)

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## North of the Borough



The Newport Street Gallery's extension respects the industrial character of the area



Brightly painted traditional terraces at the centre of Kennington



The Southbank Centre's buildings and spaces are of national importance



Bonnington Square is a highly attractive residential neighbourhood with a strong sense of place.



## North of the Borough



New mixed-use building, Baylis Road



Headquarters building in Portland stone



Good quality inter-war estate at China Walk



Traditional Georgian terraces, Roupell Street



World Heritage site setting and approaches



Contemporary development



Historic street of great character, Lower Marsh



## Middle of the Borough



Victorian railway architecture



Characterful Town centres - Brixton (above) Clapham Common (Bottom left)



Large open spaces such as Clapham Common and Brockwell Park are of great value



## Middle of the Borough



Council housing reflecting local character



Good quality mid-century housing



Prominent railway engineering



Georgian and Victorian buildings give the area its background character



Housing estates of varied character



South of the Borough



20th Century suburban flats



Characterful Town Centre - Streatham



Semi-detached suburban housing  
Left: West Norwood High Street





Semi-detached housing



Suburban housing



20th Century suburban flats



inter-war building of quality



blocks of flats



Garden City character housing estates

## Lambeth's Distinctive Building Types

1.55 The Lambeth Local Distinctiveness Study, (2012) is a useful starting point for anyone wishing to understand Lambeth's character. Section 5 of that study provides a detailed explanation of the borough's built form and character, looking closely at common building types, detailing and materials. Much of the stock of purpose-built houses is a product of the 19th Century, when London expanded rapidly. Developments of flats are largely a product of the 1920s onward. Tall buildings began to appear from the late 1950s onward.

### Early to mid 19th Century (Georgian)

1.56 Generally, the housing stock is at its oldest in the north of the borough, as this area was urbanised first. However, surviving historic settlements and older groups of building such as Clapham are exceptions. In the early 19th Century grand terraced houses and suburban villas developed in areas of Stockwell and Kennington. Stock brick and stucco predominate. Terraces from this period typically have semi-basements, flat front and rear elevations and London (butterfly) roofs. Mansards are common, but not prolific. It is not uncommon for 'closet additions' to have been added at the rear. These are small extensions which were built off the half-landings on the staircase; they can be one, two or even three storey, but nearly always stop half a storey below the eaves of the house. Internally the standard plan form, a room to front and rear on each floor with entrance hall and staircase to one side, is most common.

1.57 Semi-detached and detached houses are common from this period. These often have flat front and rear elevations without closet additions. However, modest single storey rear returns often serve as the kitchen.

1.58 The majority of buildings in Lambeth pre-dating 1840 are designated and non-designated heritage assets. Many are protected by statutory listing, others are given recognition through inclusion on the local heritage list. Where they are situated in a conservation area they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of that area.

### Mid to late 19th Century / early 20th Century (Victorian and Edwardian)

1.59 Building forms changed gradually and from the mid decades of the 19th Century basements were no longer incorporated. Terraced houses became more ornate; generally, as the decades progressed, the houses got smaller. There was also a general shift from stock brick and stucco to red brick, terracotta and tile. The 'standard plan' form continued in use and it is not unusual to have a two storey rear return, which is subservient to the main bulk of the house and under a lower roof. On modest terraced houses this often leaves only space for a small passage down the side. London roofs and mansards generally fell out of favour, with pitched and hipped roofs prevailing. 'Tyneside' Flats - Flats built to resemble a terraced house are common in this period.

1.60 There is quite a lot of development in the borough from this period and much of it is of good quality. The very best examples are generally statutory listed. For inclusion on the local heritage list examples from this period generally need to be of recognisable high quality or distinct from similar development of the period. Again, where they are situated in a conservation area, they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of that area. Conservation areas largely containing development from this period have been designated because the area is a good representative example of a common type across the borough. In such instances, the presumption in favour of preservation is in order to protect the very ordinary, often modest character of the buildings and wider area. Buildings from this era are typically solid wall construction, with poor levels of energy efficiency. Sympathetically improving their fabric performance is a priority for the borough's response to the climate emergency.

### 20th Century

1.61 In the inter-war years suburban development in the form of short terraces and symmetrical semi-detached pairs was built in the southern parts of Lambeth. These properties are typically two storeys high. Purpose-built blocks of flats also became common at this time; typically the walk-up type with access decks. Post Second World War housing provision varies greatly. Infill on bomb-damaged sites is common throughout Lambeth. So too are housing estates, with a mix of flats and houses. Lambeth's Council housing, designed under Edward Hollamby from 1965—1980, is considered to be some of the best in London from that period. Much of it is carefully considered in brick and slate, in order to reinforce local character.

1.62 Along the South Bank there is an exceptional group of post-war buildings which are fine examples of Brutalist architecture, for example' The Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Hayward Gallery complex, designed with reinforced concrete and horizontal lines are a landmark cluster of cultural buildings on the South Bank of national significance. The National Theatre and IBM Building are equally important examples of this period.

### Recent residential development

1.63 Small infill developments of terraces and one-off houses have been common in the central and northern parts of the borough in recent decades; these tend to be bespoke designs on constrained sites. Residential tall buildings can be found in Lambeth from the post-war period with a number of recent schemes coming forward as part of estate renewal projects in Vauxhall, Waterloo and on the Albert Embankment.





Georgian House, Larkhall Lane



Mid Victorian terrace, Claribel Road



Late Victorian terrace, Orsett Street



Edwardian Terrace, Amesbury Avenue



Interwar flats - Macaulay Square



Mid-20th Century terrace, Myatt's Field South Estate



Mid 20th Century Estate - Cottington Close



Modern flats - Oval Quarter



# Built Heritage

## Heritage Assets

1.64 Lambeth has a particularly rich historic built environment which is multi-layered and forms a significant part of Lambeth's local distinctiveness. Collectively the Local Plan Policies seek to preserve the significance of these heritage assets and protect their settings. Designers should be mindful of the sensitivity of the historic environment when preparing schemes in accordance with the guidance in all parts of this Design Guide.

1.65 The original designation information and character appraisal (where available) for conservation areas and registered landscapes should be consulted to inform the design approach. The demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to conservation areas is not supported.

1.66 Archaeological sites should be considered early on in the planning and design process of all projects to inform proposals through possible preservation in situ issues or potential to reflect previous uses in new design. There are a number of Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) in Lambeth as illustrated on Historic England map: <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/planning/apa-lambeth-pdf/>

1.67 Taking steps through sustainable design to tackle the climate emergency and ensure resilience to future climate change is essential to ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy Lambeth's heritage assets.

Development affecting registered parks and gardens and conservation areas should:

1. Be respectful of prevailing heights and building lines,
2. Use materials which integrate the new development into its historic context; and
3. Irrespective of the chosen architectural style, have architectural rhythms and forms which reinforce the established positive character / local distinctiveness.
4. Respect established landscape features of value
5. Ensure lighting schemes cause no harm. Historic England provides guidance on issues to be considered when designing and installing external lighting to illuminate a historic structure or building and its surroundings. See link: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/building-services-engineering/external-lighting-of-historic-buildings/>



Church, Grade I listed



Georgian house, Grade II listed



1930s house, local heritage list

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# The Design Process

Design Guide SPD Part 1: Introducing Lambeth



Wright and Wright Architects



# The Design Process

## Applicant's Role

1.68 By learning from experience we can improve future design outcomes. Designers and developers working regularly in Lambeth should consider post-occupancy evaluations of their schemes which can range from occupier satisfaction surveys, monitoring of environmental performance, thermal imaging, fitness for purpose of the built forms, and energy assessments.

1.69 Anyone considering development should:

1. Identify the opportunities and constraints of the site and the implications of planning policy on these. Planning constraints can be viewed online at Lambeth Local Plan Interactive Map. Link below: <https://lambeth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/lambeths-local-plan-guide>
2. Have a clear brief setting out the desired outcome based on point 1. above.
3. Employ registered architects and competent design professionals with the right expertise and experience for the project.
4. Mayoral Guidance on the Circular Economy (CE) should inform the design from an early stage.
5. Draw on specialist independent advice where the site constraints require it such as Arboricultural, engineering, built heritage, air quality, transport, daylight and sunlight etc.
6. Ensure all drawings are accurate and to a recognised industry scale.
7. Consider meaningful engagement with the local community at pre-application stage. For further guidance on this matter see Part 4 of Lambeth's Statement of Community involvement (SCI), 2020. <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/statement-community-involvement#:~:text=The%20SCI%20sets%20out%20Lambeth,the%20consultation%20will%20take%20place.>

## Pre-application advice

1.70 Pre-application advice is an important first stage. A Planning Officer will review the proposal and provide advice on whether or not it is likely to be supported at application stage. This, where appropriate includes advice from the Conservation and Urban Design, Policy and Transport teams.

1.71 For larger, more complicated projects, it will be appropriate to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). This is a project management framework where a dedicated team of officers will input into the project development within an agreed time frame.

1.72 Design review is most effective when it takes place at an early stage in the planning process, before design proposals become too fixed. Suitable schemes will be referred to the Lambeth Design Review Panel following initial preapplication meetings with Council officers.

1.73 Further information on the pre-application service and PPAs can be found on the Council website. Link to Lambeth Pre-application Advice below: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-applications/pre-application-planning-advice-and>

## Planning Applications Guide

1.74 This guide explains the planning application process. Link below: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-applications/planning-application-process/preparing-submitting-your-application>

## Local Planning Applications Requirements (LARS)

1.75 This document contains the requirements for each type of application area. Link below: [https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LAR\\_Final\\_22.07.2016.pdf](https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LAR_Final_22.07.2016.pdf)







Sample panels constructed on site for approval



### Planning Conditions

1.76 The Council adds design conditions to planning approvals as a means of controlling the quality of outcomes. The most common design conditions include the:

1. Submission of additional drawings at 1:10 scale (including sections) to show external construction detailing.
2. Approval of sample panels of materials (to be erected/ agreed on site).
3. The permanent display of property names and numbers at all entrances.
4. Tree protection during construction.
5. Submission of full soft and hard landscaping details and its maintenance until established.
6. No vents, pipes or extracts (other than those shown on the drawings).
7. Lowest 500mm part of full-height windows to be obscured glass.

1.77 Where possible, Lambeth will avoid imposing conditions requiring the submission of details prior to works commencing, and will seek agreement from applicants before imposing conditions that require details prior to works commencing.

1.78 Applicants should:

1. Inform the planning case officer of the proposed phasing of large developments so that the condition wording can reflect this.
2. Remember that the approval of conditions requires the formal submission of the information for which a fee is payable. Applicants who do not wish to submit further detailed design information via condition should provide all the detailed information up-front at planning application stage.
3. Consider entering into a Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) to assist with the submission and timely determination of planning conditions.

# Design Excellence

1.79 To achieve excellent design new development in Lambeth must be:

1. Fit for purpose (and adaptable for future)
2. Well-built (for longevity without excessive maintenance)
3. Responsive to context (fits in rather than stands out)
4. Visually attractive (rewarding visually from a distance and close up)
5. Sustainable (with low embedded emissions, highly energy efficiency, and low carbon heating systems) and resilient (to heat, flooding, and other climate change impacts)

1.80 The Council shows its commitment to deliver design excellence by:

1. Employing urban designers, conservation officers and other specialists to review schemes.
2. Employing Sustainability specialists
3. Offering a paid pre-application advice service.
4. Offering design review for large or complex schemes from the Council's independent Design Review Panel.

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Department Store by Squire and Partners architects – refurbishment project of the Year, Building Awards, 2018



Ivor House by Cartwright Pickard architects – Highly Commended, British Homes Awards, 2019





Lambeth Civic Centre by Cartwright Pickard architects – winner RIBA London Award, 2019



Newport Street Gallery by architects Caruso St. John - winner of Stirling Prize 2016



Thrale Almshouses by BPTW architects – shortlisted - National Housing Design Award, 2016



Lambeth Palace Library by Wright & Wright architects – supreme winner of Brick Awards, 2021



End of Part 1



Lambeth