

Place Shaping

Supporting the delivery of the

NWDA Sustainable Building Policy





SustainableBuildings Northwest

This factsheet on Place Shaping has been produced by the Centre for Construction Innovation (CCI) on behalf of the North West Development Agency.

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Further copies of this factsheet are available from CCI www.ccinw.com and the Sustainable Buildings Northwest website www.sustainablebuildingsnw.co.uk.

Introduction to Place Shaping

Place shaping is a term coined by Sir Michael Lyons. 'The Lyons Report on Local Government' was published in March 2007. While its main recommendations on the financing of local government have not been implemented, the report was influential in arguing for a strengthened leadership role for local authorities.

The Lyons Inquiry called place shaping:

“The creative use of powers and influence to promote the general wellbeing of a community and its citizens”.

‘Place shaping’ is seen as the responsibility of local government and all the local partners in the public, voluntary and business sectors. It is about creating attractive, prosperous, vibrant, safe and strong communities where people want to live, work and do business.

The 2006 Local Government White Paper, ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities,’ referred to local government as “a strategic leader and place shaper”.

The Local Government Association (LGA) said at the time:

“The emerging policy agenda around ‘place shaping’ describes how local government can work with residents to develop and deliver high-quality public services that meet the needs and preferences of local people. The place-shaping role is the basis for everything that a leader of localities sets out to do.”



Agency Position

Place Shaping is one of ten themes that shape of the NWDA Sustainable Building Policy. The policy has been developed in support of the Sustainable Assessment Framework (below) to set the standard for commercial developments in The Northwest and to meet the challenges of climate change. The policy was approved by the NWDA Board in May 2007 for all new major refurbishment projects over £500,000.

The implementation of the policy is supported by Sustainable Buildings Guidance Note and provides a series of mandatory primary and secondary key performance indicators, which are applied depending on the total cost of the development.

NW Sustainable Development Checklist For Developments

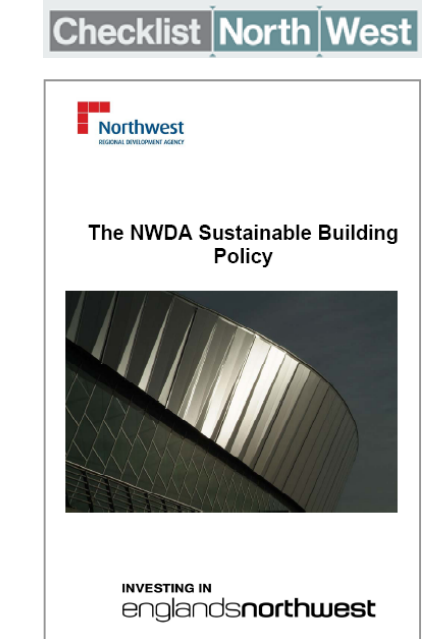
The delivery of the NWDA Sustainable Building Policy objectives is supported by *NW SD Checklist for Developments*. All new build and refurbishment projects are required to complete the checklist which should demonstrate how sustainability is embedded

into the early stages of the design and planning of a new development or a refurbishment. NWDA requires the checklist to form part of the concept process and it is a mandatory requirement for construction projects greater than £500,000 in value.

There is broad agreement that new developments need to contribute to the creation of sustainable communities. Tools such as BREEAM assess the sustainability of new buildings. The Checklist works at the level before this, as shown below; helping developers, local authorities and other interested parties to assess how sustainable designs are for new and regeneration developments.

In terms of **Place Shaping** the NWDA Sustainable Buildings Policy states:

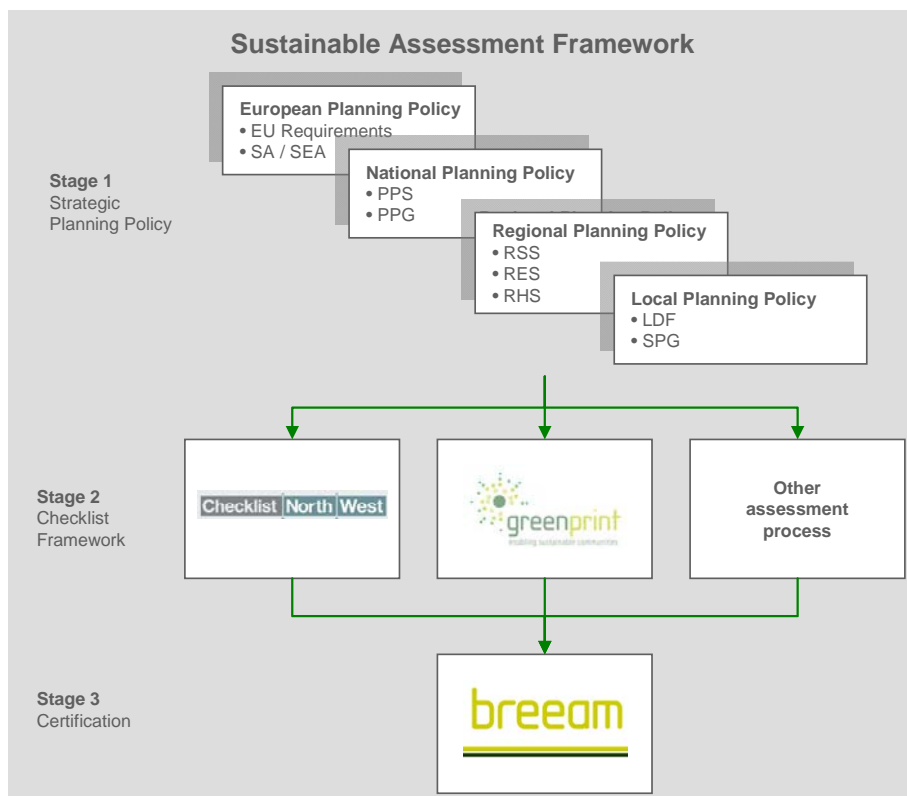
'Place Shaping and Adaptation is about good design. This is concerned not only with the building in isolation, but also about how it affects the surrounding area, addressing issues such as access and public space. The policy objective is in place to ensure that



developments consider their wider environment and how the people who live and work in the area relate to the building on a day-to-day basis'.

The policy also commits to ensuring that developments enhance a sense of place and respond to climate change issues and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as warmer summers and heavier rainfall.

Through the checklist framework this commitment is covered within the Placemaking section, shown overleaf.



BRE's GreenPrint is an alternative checklist framework for use outside of NWDA scope and region.

Figure 1: Sustainable Assessment Framework

Regional Checklist

Placemaking

Checklist North West

www.sdchecklist-northwest.org.uk

To ensure that the most sustainable sites are used for development and that the design process, layout structure and form provide a development that is appropriate to the local context and supports a sustainable community



To ensure the most effective and efficient use of land, applying a sequential approach.

Question 2.1

How can the site be best characterised?

- A. Remediated or awaiting remediation in accordance with Environment Agency best practice guidance
- B. Previously developed land, with existing buildings on-site appropriate for re-use or refurbishment
- C. Previously developed land
- D. Undeveloped- Includes residential gardens, not green belt/ outdoor grass pitches
- E. Other: Including brownfield-rural land / Designated open space / Designated sports pitches or recreation land / Green belt / high quality agricultural land / land designated as of ecological importance / land with workable or potentially workable minerals / Environment Agency Flood Zones 2&3

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
B or A	100% of site characterised as brownfield	Local Authority Minimum PLUS Meets indicative sub-regional targets for brownfield land and building use	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.



To ensure that the landscaping scheme is appropriate to the local environment whilst respecting and responding to wider local landscape characteristics.

Question 2.2

Has a landscaping scheme been drawn up for the site – to include public open space, street scenes, public/private space boundaries and site boundaries, with landscape and ecological assets preserved and / or enhanced?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Drawn up with landscape architect AND ecologist	Drawn up with landscape architect or ecologist	Landscape Scheme Drawn up	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To achieve visual and physical links that makes it easy to find the entrance points to the development and to navigate around and through.

Question 2.3

Are there physical and visual links between the development and the surrounding area and is the development signage legible and the site permeable to pedestrians?

- A. Are new routes into the site continuations of existing access points from the surrounding area?
- B. How direct are sight lines of existing neighbourhood streets continued through the site?
- C. Are main routes within the site connected directly to main routes in the wider area, without feeding through existing routes with less capacity or with a primary residential function?
- D. Have the needs of the pedestrian been fully considered to achieve a permeable and legible layout?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
A properly structured urban design hierarchy within the masterplan	A design strategy addressing all four issues	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To create a place with a clear identity that is easy to understand and navigate.

Question 2.4

Has the development been designed to be easy for users to understand and orientate themselves in and does it promote a neighbourhood identity?

- A. Will entrances to the development and its different areas be designed as gateways?
- B. Will landmarks, including memorable buildings, be used to help users orientate themselves?
- C. Will clear views and deflected views of landmarks be created?
- D. Will corner buildings be heightened or building line altered to act as landmarks?
- E. Will nodes be emphasised through surface treatment?
- F. Will design, materials and street furniture lend themselves to support easy place navigation?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Not currently identified	A design strategy that addresses all the listed issues	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.



To ensure that building frontages encourage pedestrian usage of streets contributing to vitality.

Question 2.5

Will 'Active Frontage Guidelines' of the English Partnerships Urban Design Compendium be met in order to promote vitality?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Not currently identified	A design strategy that addresses all the listed issues	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To ensure that the development responds to local character whilst reinforcing its own identity.

Question 2.6

Will the appearance of the development be visually appropriate, taking into account local character assessment, and will it complement local character whilst reinforcing local distinctiveness (e.g. materials, road pattern, etc) and being clearly integrated with the wider community?

- A. Building materials and colour complementing local character
- B. Building style and form enhancing local character
- C. Roofscapes visually respecting the developments location within a local context (allowing for low carbon technologies where appropriate)
- D. Continuity of local building details such as windows and doors
- E. Residential component of the development fostering a potential for personalisation by prospective residents
- F. Contemporary approach to reflect the local vernacular

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
A - F or Undertake Landscape Character Assessment	A - D	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To encourage the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity/amenity for the development and/or for the surrounding area.

Question 2.7

Which of the following localised strategies for sustainable drainage have been proposed. Any proposed strategy must be designed in accordance with the 'Sustainable drainage systems design manual' published by CIRIA (C522):

- A. Prevention of runoff at source – simple design measures have been included on individual dwellings/buildings (such as minimised paved areas) to allow water to return to the natural drainage system as near to the source as possible and not to contribute to runoff.
- B. Source Control of runoff rate/volume – design measures have been included that control the rate/volume of runoff being generated close to source such as rainwater harvesting systems, green roofs and individual soak-aways for dwellings.
- C. Site control of water management – water will be managed from several sub-catchments such as roofs and car parks into one large soakaway or device such as an infiltration basin. By control of potential localised flooding and/or pollution, this will incorporate the enhancement of biodiversity/amenity for the development and/or its surrounding area.

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
A, B and C	A and B	Local Authority minimum for flood impact assessment incorporated into design	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To ensure access to high quality green space for all.

Question 2.8

How far will the local community have to travel to reach high quality public green space?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Minimum and Good practice plus ANGST standard met with green infrastructure, such as SUDs, utilised as multifunctional public green space	100% of dwellings are within 500m of designated public green space where children can play	100% of dwellings are within 500m of designated public green space where children can play	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To promote outdoor recreation, health and community interaction within a planned network of green infrastructure that accommodates multifunctional public green spaces.

Question 2.9

Is there provision of accessible green space for the new development including facilities for play?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Exceeds the good practice guide's requirements, with green infrastructure, such as SUDs, utilised as multifunctional public green space (including cycle paths)	Meets good practice guide "Developing accessible play space: a good practice guide"	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To ensure that new buildings (including refurbishments of existing buildings on site) can be adapted to the demands of new uses.

Question 2.10

Has flexibility been designed into units to provide adaptability to changing market needs?

- A. Residential units designed to Lifetime Homes Standards
- B. Optimum adaptability to future use changes in terms of building depth (9-13m)
- C. Optimum adaptability to future uses in terms of building width (5-7m frontages) or multiples of
- D. Building height allowing for vertical segregation of mixed uses
- E. Percentage of buildings designed for flexible use (25% or more)

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Yes to 4 or more issues	Yes to 3 issues	All homes meeting Lifetime Homes Standards	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.



To prevent social inequalities and foster a socially inclusive community .

Question 2.11

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Affordable housing type indistinguishable and pepper potted	Affordable housing distributed, (pepperpotted) across site	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.



To apply design principles to increase the security of the development and to clearly define public and private space as part of urban design principles.

Question 2.12

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Secure By Design as part of urban design principles	Secure By Design' standards met	Specialist advisor involvement in the design process, such as a Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO) or Crime Reduction Design Officer (CRDO)	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.



To ensure that heritage or archaeologically important features are conserved or preserved if present.

Question 2.13

What will happen to heritage/archaeologically important features and their settings, which could be affected by the development?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
Both are protected and enhanced either physically or through public access/ interpretation	Important features are protected	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

To reduce the impact of noise upon the development

Question 2.14

Will the site be designed to minimise the impact of noise from external sources?

Best	Good	Minimum	Applies To
As Good Practice with advice from an acoustic engineer	Key sources identified and design plan drawn up to mitigate against noise sources	See relevant local planning authority standard	This question applies to Small, Medium and Large developments.

Case Study—GreenPrint

Development

Shannon Free Zone, Shannon, Ireland

Client

Shannon Development / PM Group

Background to site

Shannon Free Zone, established in 1959, is an International Business Park adjacent to Shannon International Airport on the West Coast of Ireland. Shannon Free Zone is Ireland's leading multi-sectoral business park with Ireland's largest cluster of North American investments and a current base of over 100 overseas companies employing over 7,000 people.

Shannon Development owned by the Irish government, is Ireland's only dedicated regional development company and are responsible for master planning the Shannon Free Zone with an aspiration to provide the basis for the regeneration of Shannon Free Zone and create the most sustainable business park in Ireland.



Key elements of the masterplan

- Minimum of 25% of new offices and units to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' and 75% of new offices and units to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good'
- Installation of a community energy scheme in either Shannon Free Zone West or East
- Shannon Free Zone to contain rainfall from a 1 in 500 year rain event
- Enhanced network of safe pedestrian and cycle routes around site and to local facilities
- Bus stops within 500 metres of all buildings with a frequent service of 15 minutes at peak times between Shannon Free Zone and Limerick
- Landscaping strategy for high quality public green space ensuring that 100% of buildings are within 500m of designated public green space
- Enhancement of existing water ways to create new public space for workers to enjoy
- Planting scheme designed by an ecologist and landscape architect, which will be resilient to the predicted impacts of climate change such as drought, higher temperatures and wind speeds
- Access for workers and local people to facilities on the Shannon Free Zone out of office hours. These facilities will include green space, pedestrian routes, cycle paths, and other amenities.

GreenPrint Rating and Score

The Shannon Free Zone Masterplan achieved a GreenPrint score of 85%, with a Placemaking score of 98% giving it an 'Exemplar' performance rating.

Who Can Help?

BRE North West & West Midlands

World leading sustainability in the built environment consultancy and research organisation.
www.bre.co.uk/nwandwm

CABE

CABE is the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.
www.cabe.org.uk

Centre For Construction Innovation

CCI is the Best Practice hub of the North West Development Agency Construction Cluster in the North West
www.ccinw.com

Greater Manchester Police - Architectural Liaison Unit

The Unit provides risk management advice on developing the built environment in such a way as to reduce the opportunities for crime and disorder across Greater Manchester. The Unit now acts as a Discretionary Consultee in the planning process to all local authorities within Greater Manchester and processes some 2,500 cases per year. GMP Architectural Liaison Unit currently holds the chair of the North West Region ALO Committee and the Principal ALO sits on the ACPO Crime Prevention Design Group Committee, the ATM Security Working Group and chairs the Safer Parking Scheme Standards Committee.
<http://www.gmp.police.uk/mainsite/pages/alu.htm>

Heritage Works

Heritage Works is a registered charity that regenerates historic buildings whose cost of repair is uneconomic for the private sector.
www.heritageworks.co.uk

Natural Economy

Natural Economy Northwest maximises the economic benefit from existing and new investment in the region's natural environment.
www.naturaleconomynorthwest.co.uk

NWDA

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) is responsible for stimulating the economic growth and regeneration of England's Northwest
www.nwda.co.uk

PlacesMatter!

An Architecture & Built Environment Centre and a member of the Architecture Centre Network. Places Matter! aims to drive up the quality of place making in the Northwest, providing support and celebrating success.
www.placesmatter.co.uk

RUDI

Resource for Urban Design Information: Featuring more than 5,000 documents and more than 9,000 images, RUDI is the largest web resource dedicated to urban design and placemaking.
www.rudi.net

Sustainable Buildings North West

Sustainable Buildings Northwest is the new regional website raising awareness and providing knowledge to help you deliver sustainable buildings in the region.
www.sbnw.co.uk

The Mersey Forest

Create and regenerate forests within the North West.