SAHAM TONEY VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDE

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LIST OF FIGURES

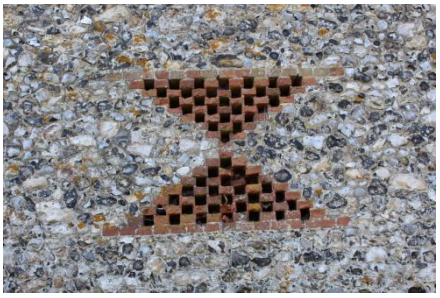
This document was prepared for Saham Toney Parish Council by the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan Work Group with input, help and guidance from Lucy Batchelor-Wylam, February 2019

It forms Part Four of the Saham Toney Landscape Assessment and is informed by the other three parts of that assessment, which were prepared by Lucy Batchelor-Wylam:

Part One: Landscape Character Assessment

Part Two: Fringe Sensitivity Assessment

Part Three: Key Views Assessment


1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Saham Toney is a village and a civil parish in the Breckland District of Norfolk. The parish comprises not only the village of Saham Toney, but also Saham Hills, which has its own distinct history and character, together with a number of small hamlets. The majority of land in the parish is open farmland or parkland.

1.2 The Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure the village continues to grow and thrive by embracing new developments but expects them to respect and conserve its character. Design that does that, combined with the application of high-quality modern design philosophies, should make a positive contribution to the "look and feel" of the village.

1.3 All design shall comply with the general principles and criteria specified in the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3A - Design. This Design Guide expands on those principles to guide users in their day to day application.

1.4 The characteristics of built form, in terms of materials, designs and details, make an important contribution to local distinctiveness. This guide identifies the features that make Saham Toney distinctive, with the intention that new design will reinforce and enhance the best aspects of village character.

1.5 This guide is for the use of all those who are involved in the development process including architects and developers, householders, planning consultants, Local Planning Authority officers, and Inspectors hearing planning appeals. It will be used as a basis against which the design of all new development is judged and assessed and it will constitute an important planning material consideration alongside the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan, to which it forms an annex.

1.6 This guide does not comprise a set of rigid formulae to be followed slavishly. In any real situation, various guidelines may conflict and some will be more appropriate than others. Good design will result from consideration being given to a wide range of factors and the creative resolution of potential conflicts. In the real world, the planning and design process must lead to a solution that takes into account all factors and balances them appropriately. This requires, first, a judgement of how important each is in the circumstances and, second, design skills capable of rising imaginatively to the demands of the brief.

1.7 This guide has been prepared with the active contributions, input, oversight and advice of chartered landscape architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam CMLI, to whom grateful acknowledgement and thanks is extended.

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 The general purpose of this document is to provide design guidance for development in the Parish of Saham Toney. The overall aim is to ensure that high standards of design are met by new development, and that the distinctiveness of the local environment is retained and enhanced. Although many of the guidance principles given herein relate to new development, they shall also be applied for conversions, extensions or any other type of land use change.

2.2 More specifically the purpose of this Guide is:

a) To identify, describe and raise awareness of the locally distinctive characteristics of the Parish of Saham Toney, as informed by the Parish Landscape Character Assessment, parts 1-3, January 2019;

b) To manage change in buildings: both new and additions or alterations; and of landscape in the Parish, in a way that reflects, harmonises with and reinforces the best aspects of the local character of its buildings, spaces and landscape setting;

c) To promote understanding and awareness of the importance of local design distinctiveness;

d) To promote variety in design while maintaining coherence, both within a particular development, and across the Parish as a whole;

e) To enhance and expand upon the village vernacular outlined in this Guide, such that it gains more prominence over the less attractive and more uniform designs introduced in the latter 20th and early 21st centuries;

f) To guide the design of all developments in the Parish with due regard to their setting;

g) To provide specific and helpful design guidance to designers, planners, developers, landowners, householders and other stakeholders, that in turn improves the quality of development in the Parish;

h) To contribute to the townscape of Saham Toney in a way that promotes villager pride in the place where they live;

i) To reduce unsympathetic development by providing a tool for the Local Planning Authority, where necessary, to seek improvements to design proposals submitted with planning applications and refuse those which lack sufficient regard to this guide;

j) To highlight typical and special design features it is desirable to conserve, restore, enhance or create;

k) To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe and uncluttered, and which work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people;

l) To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport;

m) To aid crime prevention by providing defensible private and communal spaces, and active, overlooked streets;

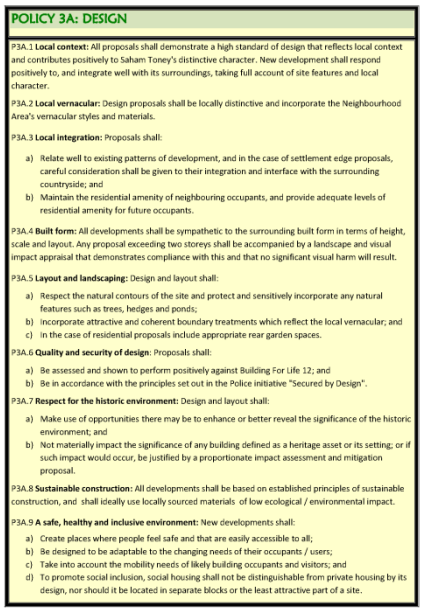
n) To promote sustainable design and use of resources, particularly locally produced building materials;

o) To promote energy efficiency and exploit the potential for solar gain by orientating buildings appropriately;

2.3 The ultimate aim is for Saham Toney to be a pleasant, safe and attractive place to live with a vibrant sense of community, aided by good design.

3.0 PLANNING STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

3.1 This document supports the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan: specifically, Policy 3A of that Plan. It has been formally adopted by Saham Toney Parish Council and hence is to be used as a material consideration in planning decisions relating to development in the Parish.


POLICY 3A: DESIGN

P3A.1 **Local context:** All proposals shall demonstrate a high standard of design that reflects local context and contributes positively to Saham Toney's distinctive character. New development shall respond positively to, and integrate well with its surroundings, taking full account of site features and local character.

P3A.2 **Local vernacular:** Design proposals shall be locally distinctive and incorporate the Neighbourhood Area's vernacular styles and materials.

P3A.3 **Local integration:** Proposals shall:

a) Relate well to existing patterns of development, and in the case of settlement edge proposals, careful consideration shall be given to their integration and interface with the surrounding countryside; and
b) Maintain the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants, and provide adequate levels of residential amenity for future occupants.

P3A.4 **Built form:** All developments shall be sympathetic to the surrounding built form in terms of height, scale and layout. Any proposal exceeding two storeys shall be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact appraisal that demonstrates compliance with this and that no significant visual harm will result.

P3A.5 **Layout and landscaping:** Design and layout shall:

a) Respect the natural contours of the site and protect and sensitively incorporate any natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds;
b) Incorporate attractive and coherent boundary treatments which reflect the local vernacular; and
c) In the case of residential proposals include appropriate rear garden spaces.

P3A.6 **Quality and security of design**: Proposals shall:

a) Be assessed and shown to perform positively against Building For Life 12; and
b) Be in accordance with the principles set out in the Police initiative "Secured by Design".

P3A.7 **Respect for the historic environment:** Design and layout shall:

a) Make use of opportunities there may be to enhance or better reveal the significance of the historic environment; and
b) Not materially impact the significance of any building defined as a heritage asset or its setting; or if such impact would occur, be justified by a proportionate impact assessment and mitigation proposal.

P3A.8 **Sustainable construction:** All developments shall be based on established principles of sustainable construction, and shall ideally use locally sourced materials of low ecological / environmental impact.

P3A.9 **A safe, healthy and inclusive environment:** New developments shall:

a) Create places where people feel safe and that are easily accessible to all;
b) Be designed to be adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants / users;
c) Take into account the mobility needs of likely building occupants and visitors; and
d) To promote social inclusion, social housing shall not be distinguishable from private housing by its design, nor should it be located in separate blocks or the least attractive part of a site.

Fig. 1: The Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan and its design policy

4.0 THE CHARACTER AND LANDSCAPE SETTING OF SAHAM TONEY

4.1 The Saham Toney Landscape Assessment (Lucy Batchelor-Wylam, January 2019, comprising three parts) helps identify the different characteristics of landscape across the parish and serves as the background to this design guide in terms of the setting of new development.

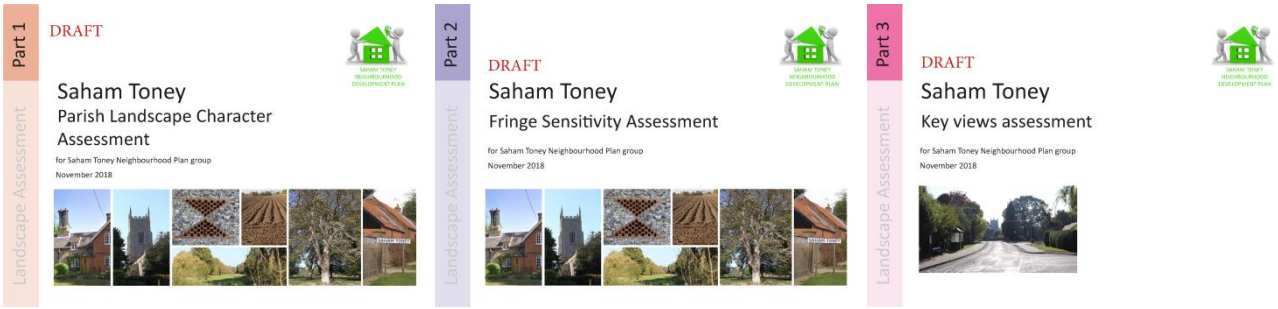


Fig. 2: Cover sheets of the Saham Toney Landscape Assessment, parts 1-3

4.2 Those undertaking the design of new or amended buildings in the Parish are strongly urged to refer to the three parts of the Landscape Assessment to understand in detail the particular characteristics of the particular area in which their work is located and to use it to inform their design proposals and decisions.

4.3 The Landscape Assessment divides the parish into five rural character areas and six village character areas. Part one describes the landscape features that distinguish each area. Building on that information, part two assesses the sensitivity of each area to future development, with a particular focus on eight settlement fringe areas. Part three identifies 10 key views that are especially valuable in visual terms. Maps taken from the Assessment to identify the various areas and views are given in Figures 3 to 6.

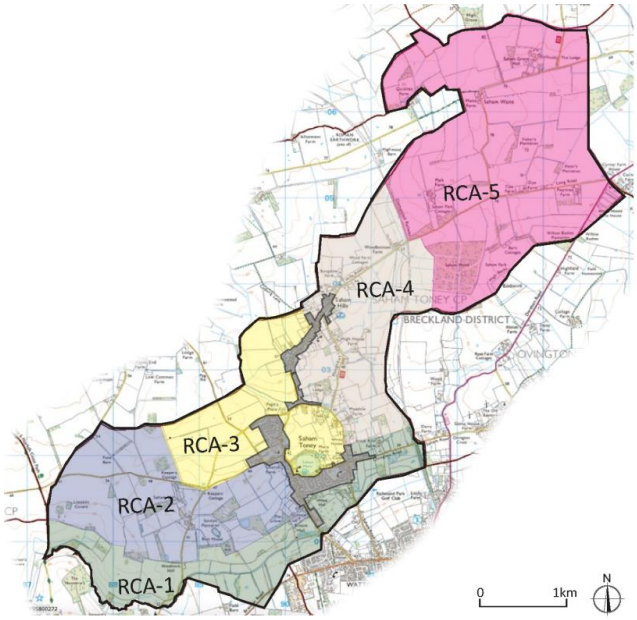


Fig. 3: Rural Character Areas

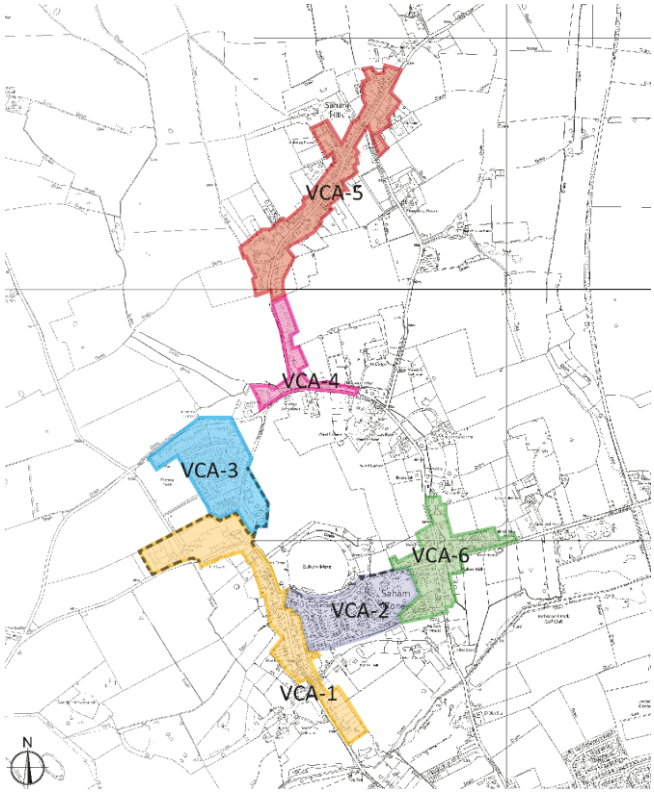


Fig. 4: Village Character Areas

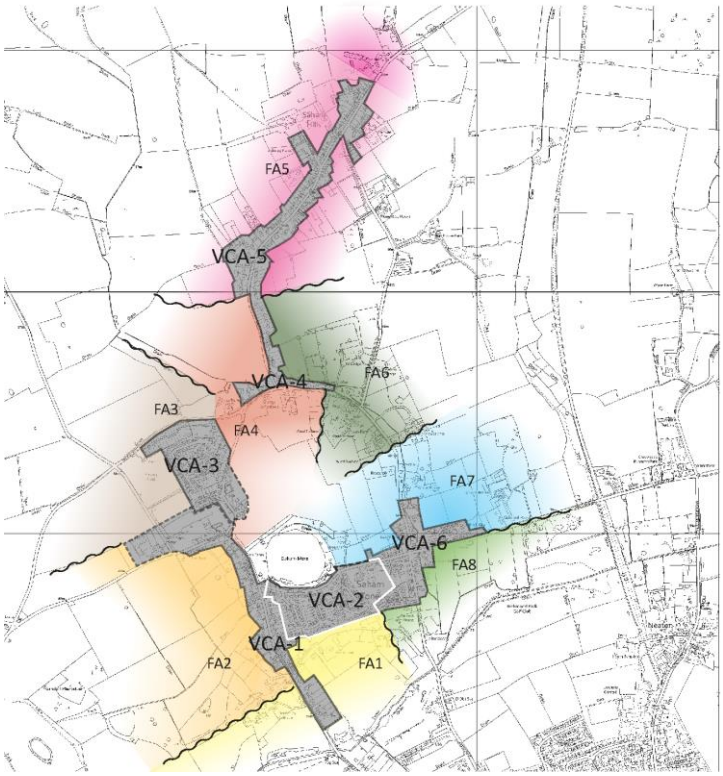


Fig. 5: Settlement Fringe Areas

Fig. 6: Key Views

4.4 For convenience the main findings of the Landscape Character Assessment are summarised in Appendix 1 of this Guide, and its overall conclusions are outlined below.

4.5 The Landscape Assessment concludes that it is important to conserve the rural character of much of the parish, hence some of the guidance provided herein aims to avoid urbanising influences.

4.6 The spread-out nature of the existing clusters of settlement and the rural spaces between them are also identified as being of key importance to the character and identity of the village.

4.7 The assessment stresses a need for local character to be recognised and reinforced in new developments.

4.8 Design shall respect and be sympathetic to the principle characteristics of a site's Landscape Character Area (as defined in Policy 7A of the Neighbourhood Plan).

5.0 APPLICATION OF THIS DESIGN GUIDE

5.1 This Design Guide applies to all development in the Parish of Saham Toney, whether residential or non-residential; new-build or renovation, extensions or alterations.

5.2 Adherence to this Design Guide does not mean that development proposals will necessarily be approved, since other planning policy considerations may make a proposal unacceptable.

5.3 This Design Guide does not replace Building Regulations or other regulatory building codes.

6.0 VILLAGE VERNACULAR: ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES, DETAILING AND MATERIALS

6.1 General

6.1.1 How buildings are detailed can have a considerable impact on their final appearance, hence good design of external elevations is important, and shall have full regard for the village vernacular described in this section, leading to its reinforcement and enhancement.

6.1.2 Where contemporary designs are adopted, they shall draw on the local qualities of landscape, historic features and buildings to reinforce local distinctiveness. This should only be at the appropriate scale: inflating traditional domestic forms to significantly larger scales is generally to be avoided.

6.1.3 Wherever possible development should make use of advances in construction or technology that enhance performance, quality and attractiveness.

6.1.4 Standard "off the shelf" house types by volume house builders will be unacceptable. A bespoke approach that responds to context and makes use of vernacular materials is required to maintain and enhance local distinctiveness.

6.1.5 Materials used shall be of high quality, ideally sourced locally and of low ecological / environmental impact.

6.2 Walls and Their Materials

6.2.1 Historically the traditional building material in the village was clay lump, using clay extracted from local pits, and many of the oldest buildings that remain are of this form. Over the last 60-70 years brick has become predominant and is expected to be the principal material for external walls. Timber-framed buildings with brick cladding are also acceptable. Across the Parish, walls predominantly comprise red and grey/buff brick, as the following examples illustrate:

Fig. 7: 19th and 20th century red brick houses

Fig. 8: 20th century buff brick house

6.2.2 Sometimes decorative quoins are included on corners, chimneys and around windows and doors and make attractive features as shown below, and these are encouraged:

Fig. 9: Decorative quoins in a brick facade

6.2.3 Flint is an attractive feature that adds character when used as facings and in flush-work, in combination with bricks. Where adopted, ideally this should comprise local black flint.

Fig. 10: Black flint faced house

6.2.4 Rendered finishes may be used in a limited way but should not be visually dominant. Long term treatments to prevent algae growth, discolouration and degradation of such finishes shall be applied.

Fig. 11: Good and poor (discoloured) use of render

6.2.5 Timber cladding has started to feature in some recent designs but is not part of the village vernacular, looks obtrusive and is discouraged.

Fig. 12: Inappropriate use of timber cladding

6.3 Roofs and Their Materials

6.3.1 The height and pitch of roofs must be sympathetic to the structural design and to neighbouring properties. Roofs on extensions or alterations must be sympathetic to the original dwelling.

6.3.2 Traditional materials commonly found on roofs include plain tiles but more often pantiles[1] - both red and black versions and sometime the two are seen mixed together; slate roofs are also seen.

Fig. 13: Various pantile roofs

6.3.3 Chimney stacks with chimney pots should be encouraged for functional use and to add visual interest. On some of the older buildings and estate houses there are ornate chimney stacks which add visual interest and such features, where appropriate, are encouraged.

[1] 'S' shaped tiles with single laps

Fig. 14: Various decorative chimneys

6.3.4 While only a limited feature locally, thatched roofs are acceptable.

6.4 Windows and Doors

6.4.1 Windows and doors are to be in keeping with the house design and should reflect vernacular styles, means of opening, materials, proportions and glazing bar patterns. New fenestrations, which will allow leakage of artificial light at night (light pollution) and/or create excessive daylight shining / reflection in sunlight, which interrupts a vista by its presence, should be avoided.

6.4.2 Dormer windows are seen on traditional cottages and houses in the village and their use is acceptable, particularly where they enable overall building heights to be kept lower.

6.4.3 Timber is preferred to plastics in such features as doors and windows, but the latter are not explicitly excluded.

Fig. 15: Various dormer windows

6.5 Porches

6.5.1 Porches are a common feature, often timber framed and open with tiled roofs. They should be considered as a simple but character-adding feature in new designs. The examples below show how this traditional design feature has been carried through from an older building to a new-build:

Fig.16: Porch examples

6.6 Architectural Styling

6.6.1 Bespoke, contemporary architectural styling will be supported as part of the evolving built tradition, particularly where it complements the character of a particular setting. In such cases the use of traditional vernacular materials remains the preference: their use is not incompatible with contemporary architecture.

6.6.2 The housing stock in the village has a mixed character so uniformity in design and materials for new housing shall be avoided.

6.6.3 Designs shall normally reflect the village vernacular as defined in this section, good examples of which in new and restored buildings are given below.

Fig.17: Vernacular design examples in modern buildings

6.7 Design Features For Occupant Convenience

6.7.1 While it is understood that there is a balance between the cost of development and the features that can be provided, there are a range of items that can be built in from the outset at low cost that will be helpful to occupants and at the same time, in a small way, would be likely to increase a property's appeal to buyers. All such features are encouraged and the list below is not intended to be exhaustive, but to serve as examples:

- Power points in garages or externally specifically for recharging electric vehicles;
- Broadband cabling run to wifi sockets throughout a property rather to just one point;
- Pre-installed entry points for satellite dish cabling;
- LED lamps;
- Smart meters;
- Water butts and other water conservation items;
- Outdoor taps;
- TV aerial points in a range of rooms;
- USB charging points built into electrical sockets;
- Self-cleaning glazing units.

7.0 SETTING, GARDENS AND SITE LANDSCAPING

7.1 The most harmoniously designed building can look out of place if it is not properly integrated into its setting; hence sensitive design of the spaces around buildings is essential to preserve local character.

7.2 Where development is close to a heritage asset building (either designated or non-designated, as defined in the Neighbourhood Plan), it must take a particularly sympathetic approach and not adversely impact on the setting of the asset, and where possible seek to enhance it.

7.3 Landscape setting is also important as set out in Section 4 and reinforced by the Saham Toney Landscape Assessment, parts one to three.

7.4 A site's overall design shall have appropriate regard to its skyline and any notable landmarks therein, and enhance it wherever possible. Fig. 29 illustrates preferred and non-preferred approaches in this respect.

Fig. 18: Preferred and Non-Preferred Treatment of A Skyline With Landmark

Fig. 19: A prominent village skyline

7. 5 New development shall be integrated into its landscape setting in a way that reduces its impact on nature and reinforces local distinctiveness. This can be achieved by such measures as:

a) Using structural planting, shelter belts, green wedges, and - along natural features, roads, rivers and canals - green corridors.

b) Using plant species that are common locally to help reinforce the distinct natural qualities of the area.

c) Integrating new and existing development at their boundaries to maintain the continuity of urban form and landscape.

7.6 Overly ornamental species selection for frontages shall be avoided: for example, suburban-looking shrubs with variegated or yellow leaves. Instead soft hedges, cottage garden style planting, and native or semi-native plantings are favoured.

7.7 Avoid the use of landscape bunds for screening as these can sometimes have a more adverse visual impact than the features they are trying to screen, and planting can often be difficult to establish on bunds.

7.8 Avoid standardised residential plot planting schemes. Ensure adequate resources are planned for, and made available, to ensure successful establishment and ongoing management of structural planting schemes.

7.9 Residential gardens should afford privacy to the house occupants.

7.10 Trees make an important contribution to the character of the village and its approaches. The planting and management of both hedges and trees shall be afforded importance in the consideration of any development. Appropriate indigenous species, planted in a natural rather than regimented arrangement shall be used for boundaries with the countryside. Planting of fruit trees in communal areas is encouraged.

7.11 In larger developments, break up rooflines by creating space for larger scale native trees, with appropriate input from engineers in relation to foundation design as needed to enable this.

7.12 Any unavoidable loss of trees or hedges must be more than adequately compensated by new planting. This means that replacement planting shall take into account the size and condition of the items being replaced. For example, it will not be acceptable to replace a mature tree with a single sapling. Likewise, fast-growing conifers, such as leylandii, are not an acceptable way to compensate the loss of mature trees.

7.13 Screening planting should not be regarded as a substitute for well-designed development. Screening can have as substantial an adverse effect on a landscape setting as the development it seeks to mitigate so, where it is necessary, it merits careful design.

7.14 Deciduous trees and climbers can filter heat and pollution in summer and allow low winter sunlight and so are preferred to coniferous tree planting.

7.15 Trees and woodland can play a key role in improved health and wellbeing. An appropriate number of trees to suit plot size should be planted in the garden of each new house, and in communal areas.

7.16 External ground levels should always slope away from any building, especially entrances to avoid ponding of water against or within a structure.

8.0 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

8.1 The perimeter of new developments shall be considered from the outset especially where they break into open countryside. Avoid designing layouts which result in a stark interface with adjacent farm or park land. Landscaped buffers are generally desirable to help developments integrate with open countryside.

8.2 Retention of existing natural boundary features including ditches, hedges and hedge-banks, and trees shall be ensured, other than where removal is necessary to provide access to a site, or where measures to enhance existing features are proposed.

8.3 The typical frontage treatment in the area is a front garden; the depth of frontage shall be designed in sympathy with the properties nearby.

8.4 Any distinctive front garden features such as walls, railings, gate piers or footpath tiles should be protected on older dwellings, and if appropriate to the area their inclusion in new designs is encouraged.

8.5 Close board fencing or similar should only be used for enclosing back gardens; it is not acceptable along the road side.

8.6 Street frontages should be coherent as well as attractive, a feature not exhibited in the example below.

Fig. 20: Lack of coherence along a street frontage as a result of varied blank elevations and mix of boundary treatments

Fig. 21: A coherent and attractive street frontage

8.7 Vegetated boundaries shall be retained and enhanced as much as possible, particularly those of intact hedgerows and trees.

8.8 Where new development borders established woodland it should include a 50 m wide planted buffer strip to protect the woodland and soften the settlement edge.

8.9 Open plan gardens without a physical boundary adjoining public areas are strongly discouraged.

9.0 STREAMS, DITCHES AND VERGES

9.1 The retention and / or enhancement of traditional verges, streams, ditches and hedgerows adjacent to the highway is essential to surface water management, and so must be suitably addressed (on a local basis) where potentially affected by development.

9.2 Where a stream or ditch runs within a site or along all or part of its boundary, and will therefore fall into the responsibility of future residents as riparian owners, the stream of ditch shall be dredged or cleared during construction and necessary and appropriate measures taken to improve the way it functions in draining surface water.

Fig. 22: Example of a well-maintained ditch

9.3 Careful attention to detailing is required when installing culverts. These shall:

a) Be of adequate size to accommodate water flow in excess of that expected at peak flow rates;
b) Be constructed in a way that prevents their blockage by debris; for example, by the use of metal grilles at each end of a culvert;
c) Be readily maintainable.

Fig. 23: Good and poor examples of culverts

10.0 SITE LAYOUT

10.1 New development must relate well to the existing patterns of development. It must relate appropriately to the orientation of the landform and topography, particularly in the adaptation of building mass and elevations to sloping street frontages.

10.2 A site's natural features such as streams, wetlands, ponds and lakes, hills, trees, hedges and wildlife habitats shall be conserved, and where possible enhanced, in a way that retains a good relationship between development and its environment.

10.3 The creation of level sites by the use of large areas of cut and fill or retaining structures shall be avoided. More imaginative solutions should be sought, as illustrated below.

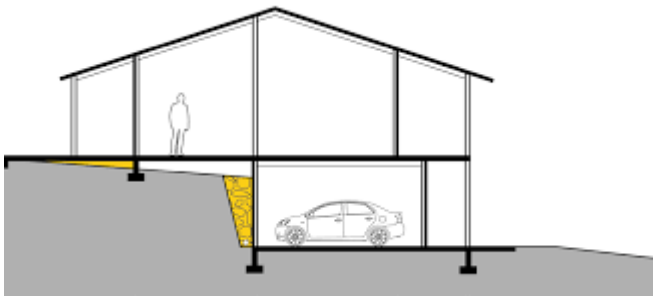


Fig. 24: Sloping site solution that avoids extensive cut and fill

10.4 Connectivity shall be maximised. Cul-de-sac developments can be problematic as they fail to create a connected network; however they may offer the only solution where there is only one point of access to a site. In such cases opportunities should be sought to maximise connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

10.5 Common building lines are preferred, to help create an unambiguous distinction between public and private spaces, but projections and setbacks from the building line, such as bays and entrances may add valuable emphasis without undermining the principle of continuity.

10.6 Linear developments may be acceptable: in such cases active and overlooking frontages are preferred to blank elevations or houses that turn their side or back to the street.

10.7 Buildings should front onto streets.

Fig. 25: Houses should not "turn their backs" on the street, as seen in this example

10.8 Careful consideration should be given to a site's integration and interface with its surroundings particularly when that comprises open countryside. The sides and rear of new developments can look very stark if insufficient thought is given to their integration. Native boundary tree belts and hedges that tie into the surrounding network of vegetation can be very effective in assimilating development as well as having benefits for biodiversity.

10.9 Streets within a site shall not dominate the area and will be set out in accordance with good design principles.

Fig. 26: Good and poor examples of street design

10.10 Access to the rear of dwellings from public spaces, including alleys, should be avoided: a block layout, with gardens in the middle, may be a good way of ensuring this.

10.11 Width between buildings is a key factor and needs to be considered in relation to function and aesthetics.

10.12 The layout and massing of development should take account of factors such as daylight and sunlight, wind, temperature and frost pockets.

10.13 Developments should be designed with regard to their effect on traffic speeds. Changes in materials or ‘gateways’ at the entrance to low speed areas can be used to alert motorists to the need to reduce speed. Smaller corner street radii will encourage more careful vehicle movement.

Fig. 27 Examples of traffic calming by a simple change in road surface

10.14 Good site plans will successfully integrate services, and screen unsightly aspects such as bin storage from general view.

11.0 PUBLIC REALM

11.1 The success of the public realm depends on the arrangement of its paving, planting, orientation, shelter, signage, street furniture, and the way it is overlooked, as well as the routes which pass through it, and the uses in and next to it.

11.2 The public realm is made up of the parts of a development that are freely available for use by everyone. It shall be the aim for development to enlarge and enrich the public realm in a way that welcomes a broad range of people, rather than keeping out or discouraging all but a narrow range of users.

11.3 A sense of place is influenced by the design of the public realm and its contribution to an area’s character and identity. Bespoke design can help reinforce that sense.

11.3 Public spaces should be designed to create a variety of types, character and scale of space, rather than being merely the parts of an area that have not been built on.

11.4 Making use of natural assets such as water, riversides, slopes, trees and other planting helps to create attractive public spaces and at the same time encourages biodiversity.

11.5 Privacy for ground floors of residential development can be maintained by raising the floor above street level.

11.6 Public space should be designed with a purpose in mind, since space "left over" after development, without a function, is a wasted resource and will detract from a sense of identity, as well as being prone to abused and vandalism, diminishing safety and security.

11.7 There are advantages in play areas, other communal space and parked cars being overlooked.

11.8 Street design should take account of the need for maintenance, resistance to vandalism and access to underground services.

12.0 OPEN SPACES

12.1 Existing undeveloped green space, both private and public, should be generally conserved for its visual and biodiversity value. This includes gardens, allotments, meadows and woodland.

Fig. 28: Open and green spaces contribute positively to orientation and to a sense of place

12.2 Measures to create or enhance access to public open space or rights of way or the creation of new rights of way or public open space will be strongly supported.

12.3 It shall be ensured that the usability of new public open space is not compromised by the provision of flood water attenuation measures.

12.4 Site design shall consider opportunities to incorporate public open spaces in order to provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles. Sport England's Active Design guidance is a useful reference in this respect.

13.0 SITE ACCESS ROADS AND FOOTWAYS, DRIVES AND SURFACING

13.1 Streets shall be designed to adoptable standards. Guidance given in the most up to date edition of "The Manual for Streets" shall be followed in the design of streets, footways and street furniture.

13.2 It is important to provide a rural character to driveways and shared access roads. Large, unrelieved areas of tarmac, monolithic concrete, or geometric concrete pavers can have an undesirable urbanising effect and are inappropriate to Saham Toney's rural setting.

13.3 it is recommended that all materials meet the following requirements:

a) Easy to maintain;
b) Safe for purpose;
c) Durable;
d) Sustainable (including the manufacturing process and energy use); and
e) Appropriate to the local character.

13.4 Natural materials such as stone, whether crushed or cut into setts, or shingle dressings are preferred. Tumbled concrete setts in muted, natural colours would be acceptable but only across single driveways or otherwise small areas.

13.5 Designers should start from a position of having no street furniture or markings and only introduce these elements when they serve a clear purpose.

13.6 Where street furniture is included in a design it shall be laid out such that pedestrian routes along and across a street are kept clear.

13.7 Street furniture should be well designed and in sympathy with the character of a street.

13.8 It is recommended that the Local Highway Authority adopts a process of de-cluttering street signage as an integral part of their ongoing maintenance regime.

13.9 Planting, particularly trees, should be integrated into street designs wherever possible, because it helps to soften the street scene while creating visual interest, improving the microclimate and providing valuable habitats for wildlife.

13.10 Where trees are to be used, careful consideration needs to be given to their location and how they are planted. Trench planting, irrigation pipes and urban tree soils will increase the chance of trees establishing themselves successfully, thereby minimising maintenance and replacement costs.

13.11 Trees and shrubs should not obstruct pedestrian sightlines. In general, driver sightlines also need to be maintained, although vegetation can be used to limit excessive forward visibility to limit traffic speeds. Slow growing species with narrow trunks and canopies above 2 m should be considered. Vegetation should not encroach onto the carriageways or footways.

13.12 Maintenance arrangements for all planted areas need to be established at an early stage, as they affect the design, including the choice of species and their locations.

13.13 Planting intended for adoption by a public body should match standards set locally and be capable of regeneration or easy renewal if vandalised. Planting shall be designed for minimal maintenance. Evidence that buildings and walls have been built with foundations to allow for tree growth may be required.

13.14 Alternatives to formal adoption may require innovative arrangements to secure long-term landscape management. These may include the careful design of ownership boundaries, the use of covenants, and annual service charges on new properties.

13.15 Permeable surfaces shall be used to minimise surface water run-off.

13.16 The paving of front gardens for vehicle hard-standings shall be avoided.

14.0 PARKING

14.1 Where and how vehicles are parked influences the feel of a place and its design and layout needs to balance the following factors:

a) Convenience;
b) Safety and security;
c) Cost;

d) Quality of the streetscape; and
e) Accommodating cars and other vehicles while at the same time recognising alternatives.

14.2 Sites shall be designed to avoid on-street parking. On-plot parking shall be preferred for residential developments. Parked cars are less prone to damage or theft if parked on-plot. If on-plot parking cannot be provided, parking in view of the home should be provided.

14.3 Parking courts need to be designed carefully and be overlooked with direct access to/from the surrounding dwellings, and should ideally serve no more than six dwellings.

14.4 The location and overall design of parking courts and bays in communal areas should encourage maximum use of the parking areas in order to minimise the risk of on-street parking problems. As well as taking into account design features such as security and landscaping, adequate bay sizes that are easy to enter and exit will increase the appeal and utilisation of the parking area.

14.5 Parking provision shall address not only the parking standards set out in the Local Plan, which are based on dwelling occupancy norms, but the need for visitor parking as well. Sufficient parking bays to accommodate visitors shall be provided to avoid on-street parking.

14.6 Parking provision shall include convenient and secure parking for cycles.

14.7 It is recognised that despite being an important design feature of residential developments, garages are often used for other purposes, such as general storage. Therefore, garages need to be large enough to accommodate a modern, family sized car and some storage.

14.8 Garages shall be visible from the properties they serve and should not be positioned in a way that restricts views to and from dwellings.

14.9 As with other aspects of design a uniform approach throughout may not be the best solution and a balance of such options as garages, car ports, on-drive parking, street lay-bys and parking courts may offer a better overall result.

14.10 It is important to consider a design-led approach to the provision of car-parking space that is well-integrated with a high-quality public realm.

14.11 Parking should attempt to be visually recessive by making use of existing buildings and landscape features to shield views of parked areas.

15.0 PARISH ROADS AND LANES

15.1 The main roads and rural lanes of the Parish have different characters and sites along them need different responses to reflect that.

15.2 Changes and repairs to all roads and lanes resulting from site development should maintain the rural nature of the parish and avoid standardisation and urbanisation resulting from the installation of inappropriate surfaces, kerbs or street furniture.

15.3 Rigorously applied highway standards can have a sizeable adverse impact in rural areas. Discretion should be used to limit their application particularly where new access points are created onto existing

roads. A minimal approach to features such as signage, concrete kerbing and safety railings is recommended.

15.4 In the lanes development should be set back from the carriageway and assimilated behind hedges, to preserve the character of the lane.

15.5 The rural lanes of the Parish have a special rural character that warrants special protection. They have no footways, no street lighting and very little signage. They are generally bordered by grass verges with hedges. They form important landscape features in the parish, are valuable as wildlife habitats and are historically noteworthy. New development shall not dominate or adversely affect the character, setting or value of any of these lanes.

Fig. 29: Typical village lanes

15.6 Hedges along lanes enhance the rural feel and their loss should be resisted. Visual spays for access to and from developments shall be positioned to minimise hedge loss.

15.6 New footways on existing lanes would generally be inappropriate / impractical owing to their narrow width. Hence alternative solutions to pedestrian safety should be sought, for example by routing a footpath for general use through a development site.

16.0 ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR REFURBISHMENTS, REPLACEMENTS, CONVERSIONS AND EXTENSIONS, AND NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

16.1 New extensions and additions to buildings shall respect the character and setting of the original building.

16.2 Where new buildings are proposed adjacent to traditional ones, consider the group as a whole, using scale, form, colour, and materials to link new and old.

16.3 Extensions shall respect the scale and massing of the parent structure and adjacent buildings and not detract from the street scene as a whole.

16.4 When refurbishing existing buildings, whenever possible, features such as windows should be retained or replaced like-for-like. Where this is not possible, they should be replaced by an alternative that does not detract from the existing character of the building.

16.5 In general the same principles shall be applied to non-residential buildings as to residential ones, but it is not the intention that larger non-residential buildings should attempt to mimic housing design.

Nevertheless, it is anticipated that most commercial, leisure, tourist or retail development will be of a small-scale rural type and it is expected that such developments should adopt a similar palette of vernacular materials and styles as residential developments where practical and appropriate.

17.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 Sustainable Building

17.1.1 Designs should incorporate features that reduce the environmental impact of development. Support will be given to schemes that take a comprehensive approach to sustainable building principles such as use of sustainable materials, inclusion of systems for minimising water use, and sustainable technologies for heat recovery and cooling and renewable energy sources.

17.1.3 Development should aim for minimal negative impact on the environment.

17.1.4 When choosing construction materials and products, consideration should be given to the amount of energy used in manufacture and transport, and any pollution caused at extraction and processing sites.

17.1.5 The use of local and reclaimed materials is encouraged wherever possible, together with the use of local labour and the selection of materials that are environmentally certified, such as FSC timber.

17.1.6 Construction should be planned to cause the least possible damage to the immediate environment. This may mean carrying out work at certain times of the year to avoid disturbing nesting birds or damaging trees for example.

17.1.7 The aim shall be to create an appropriate balance between the needs of people and nature, as illustrated in the diagram below:

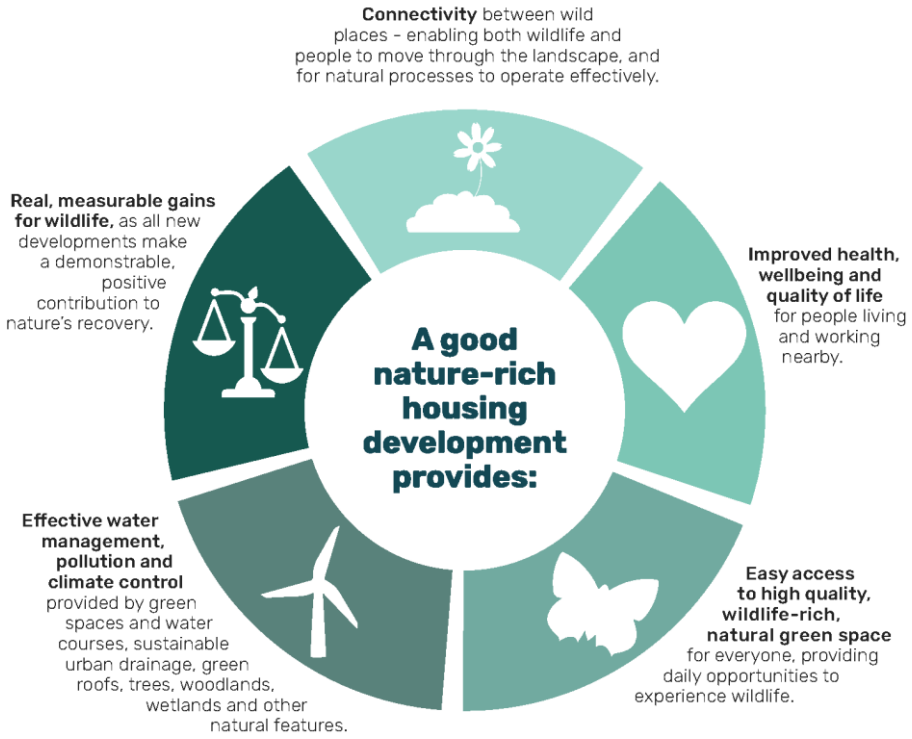


Fig. 30: Nature-rich development principles

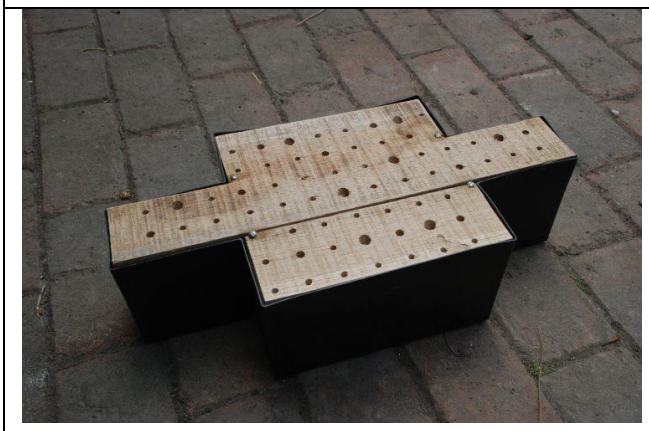
17.2 Wildlife Friendly Features

To assist in preserving and enhancing biodiversity in the parish and to offset adverse effects of development on it, design shall incorporate features that are "wildlife friendly". These may include, but shall not be limited to the following:

a) Brick bird, bat and bug boxes, incorporated into new builds, or retro-fitted when making alterations to properties;
b) Hedgehog-friendly fence panels and gravel boards;
c) Green roofs, rain gardens, drainage swales and balancing ponds;
d) Wildflower verges rather than simply grass;

Typical brick bird box*

Typical built-in bat box*



Typical built-in bug box*

Hedgehog-friendly fence panel

Hedgehog-friendly gravel board

Wildflower verge

Fig. 31: Wildlife friendly features (Photos marked * courtesy of Bird Brick Houses® - www.birdbrickhouses.co.uk)

17.3 Dark Skies Conservation and Street Lighting

17.3.1 Full regard shall be given to maintaining the parish's dark skies. This does not mean lighting is unacceptable in all cases, but does requires it to be designed and installed in a manner that avoids light pollution. Hence thought must be given to the type and position of lighting sources, both internal and external.

17.3.2 Traditional street lighting is not supported by Policy 3E of the Neighbourhood Plan. Throughout the entire parish there are only sixteen such street lights (on the Amys Close development), and to add more would be out of keeping with village character as well as causing light pollution and dilution of the dark skies that villagers value. Other forms of external lighting, particularly if they aid the safety and security of those on foot, may be acceptable, providing it can be shown that they would avoid glare, sky-glow, light-spill, light trespass or clutter (i.e. bright, confusing or excessive grouping of light sources). Low energy, low wattage bulbs shall be used and hoods or shields fitted where practical. Exterior lights shall be angled or directed to avoid spill up into the sky or out of the site.

17.3.3 Conspicuous street light columns or lighting fitted above head height will not be supported. Low bollard style lighting or lights set into pavers are examples of solutions that may be acceptable subject to a review of their design and layout. Innovative technology developments that allow the provision of lighting without harming dark skies will be supported.

Fig. 32: Example of bollard lighting for pedestrians

17.3.4 Lighting design should always proceed in parallel with careful site appraisal, planning and landscape design.

17.3.5 Internal lighting can also contribute to light pollution, for example from the glow produced behind large areas of glazing, which are often employed in contemporary house designs. The impact of such proposals on the surrounding dark landscapes can be notably adverse. Proposals for expansive glazing should therefore balance the need for light, solar gain and views, with limiting impact on surroundings.

18.0 UTILITIES

18.1 General

18.1.1 Developers and designers should liaise with utility companies when the layouts of the buildings and streets are being set out. Ideally this should be prior to the submission of a planning application. Where

streets are to be adopted, it will be necessary to ensure that all legal documentation required by the utility companies is completed as soon as is possible.

18.1.2 The availability and location of existing services should be identified at the outset. The requirements for new apparatus should be taken into account in the layout and design of the streets, and a balance should be struck between the requirements of the utility companies and other objectives. The locations of any existing trees or shrubs, and proposals for new planting, will require special consideration.

18.1.3 Where possible, all utility apparatus should be laid in corridors throughout a site. This will facilitate the installation of the services and any future connections as the development proceeds. Consideration should be given to the use of trenches and ducts to facilitate this.

18.1.4 In designing for utilities, there are advantages in developing streets along reasonably straight lines rather than introducing gratuitous bends and curves, but this consideration needs to be balanced with the use of bends and curves in the control of traffic speeds.

18.2 Cabling and Overhead Wires

18.2.1 All cabling and associated equipment for all utilities required for any new development shall be placed underground.

18.2.2 Where there is the potential to do so as part of a development a programme to re-site existing overhead wires underground should be explored.

18.3 Drainage and Rainwater Conservation

18.3.1 Developments shall adopt sustainable drainage systems, with appropriate and regulated maintenance regimes, to help prevent and mitigate flood risk and improve water quality.

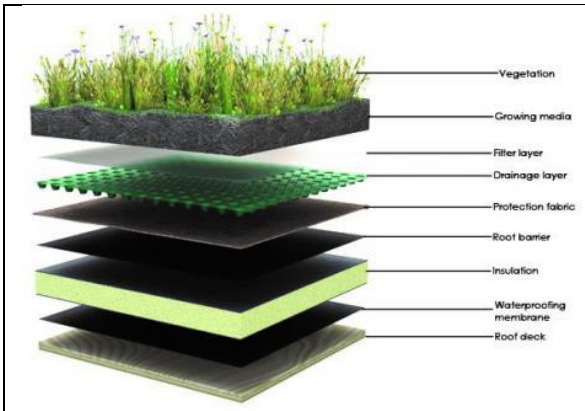
18.3.2 Foul sewers and SuDS drainage schemes shall comply with the guidelines given in "Sewers for Adoption", Edition 8, 2019, or any more up to date version made available.

18.3.3 When considering the management of surface water, designers, developers and planning decision makers shall take account of Planning Policy Guidance on the subject, together with the most up to date guidance published by the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Local Water Authority.

18.3.4 Where possible SuDS schemes should be designed in a way that both serves a practical purpose and enhances site landscaping and appearance, as illustrated by the example below:

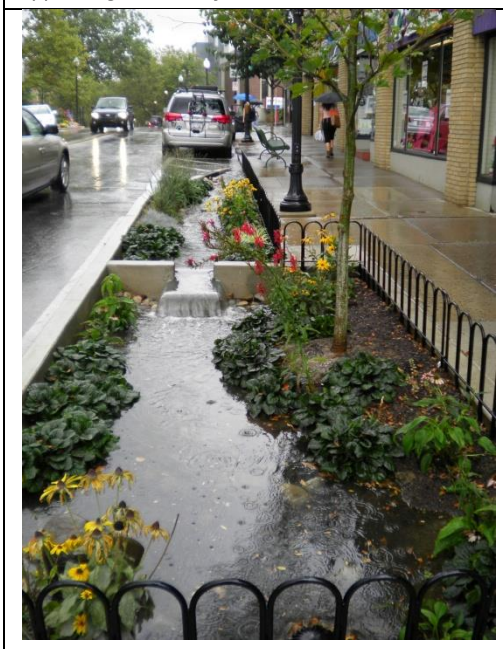
Fig. 33: Attractive incorporation of a SuDS feature

18.3.5 Features to mitigate and alleviate flood risk as well as conserve rainwater are strongly encouraged, and in some cases where there is a risk of surface water flooding, the former will be a necessary feature of design.



Typical green roof construction

Rain garden



Roadside drainage swale

Balancing pond

Rainwater harvesting

Water butts need not be unattractive

Fig. 34: Flood mitigation and rainwater conservation features

18.5 Internet Provision

It is expected that all new developments will be connected to fibre broadband or any better future technology for internet access.

19.0 CRIME PREVENTION AND SECURITY

19.1 Both construction phase and post-construction security shall be addressed.

19.2 Reference shall be made to the guidance given in the most up-to-date published version of "Secured By Design" (an official police security initiative), which covers a wide range of aspects relating to crime prevention and security, including:

a) The layout of roads and footpaths;

b) Footpath design;

c) Communal areas;

d) Property boundaries and rear access;

e) Layout and identification of dwellings;

   i. Parking;
   ii. Planting;
   iii. Door-set standards; and

f) Windows and roof-lights.

19.3 Site entrance roads should incorporate either a rumble strip or a change of road surface to create a symbolic barrier highlighting that one is leaving the public highway and helping to deter casual intrusion by non-residents. The change in road surface can be as simple as a strip of granite sets.

19.4 Open spaces must be designed with due regard for natural surveillance, and care should be taken to ensure that the security of a lone dwelling will not be adversely affected by the location of amenity space.

19.5 Communal areas, such as playgrounds and seating areas have the potential to generate crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. They should be designed to allow supervision from nearby dwellings with safe routes for users to come and go.

19.6 Boundaries between public and private space should be clearly defined and open spaces must have features which prevent unauthorised vehicular access. Communal spaces should not immediately abut residential buildings.

20.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENTS

20.1 It is a nationally mandatory requirement that proposals for major development[2] must include a Design and Access Statement. Developers are strongly encouraged to use such a statement to explain how the design principles on which a proposal is based comply with the requirements of the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan and this Design Guide, and how those will be reflected in its layout, density, scale, landscape and visual appearance.

20.2 The statement should explain how the design principles were evolved from the relevant policy, site and area appraisal (including reference to the Saham Toney Landscape Assessment), and consultation.

[2] Defined as proposals for 10 or more dwellings; buildings with a floor space of 1,000 m^2 or greater; or development on sites of 1 hectare or more

20.3 While not mandatory it is also encouraged that proposals for minor development should include a Design and Access Statement.

20.4 The level of detail required will depend on the scale and sensitivity of the development. A statement relating to an application to build or alter a single house can be brief and straightforward. Describing the context, for example, might involve a simple sketch of the house and the buildings on each side of it, and a short description of the general character of the street. The design statement for a development on a large and sensitive site would need to be detailed and comprehensive.

20.5 As a minimum a Design and Access Statement for proposals in Saham Toney should outline:

a) The policy background, identifying all relevant policies, development briefs, design guides, standards and regulations;

b) The context, including a site and area appraisal (illustrated with diagrams, and with reference to the Saham Toney Landscape Assessment), summaries of relevant studies, and reports of any relevant consultations;

c) Landscaping proposals;

d) The design principles which have been formulated in response to the policy background, the site and its settings and the purpose of the development, and an outline of how these will be reflected in the development's layout, density, scale, landscape and visual appearance;

e) A description of any engagement and consultation undertaken with stakeholders.

21.0 ENCOURAGED ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES

21.1 General Measures

21.1.1 An increasingly important consideration when making alteration to existing properties and building new properties is the energy and resource consumption resulting from their use.

21.1.2 Materials shall be selected to have as low as possible impact upon the environment.

21.1.3 Measures shall be introduced to help building occupiers minimise their consumption of energy, particularly energy from carbon emitting, finite fossil fuels.

21.1.4 The use of micro-generation energy installations (photovoltaic units, solar thermal units, wind turbines and ground, water and air heat source units) can help reduce consumption of fossil fuels. However, these installations may be highly visible in the landscape and street scene, sometimes significantly changing the appearance of a building or its setting. Therefore, as a first step it is advisable to consider measures to reduce energy use and improve energy efficiency before thinking about renewable energy installations.

21.1.5 Care should be taken when applying modern energy conservation measures when altering or renovating older[3] buildings, because they function more closely with the environment than modern buildings in that while they may allow a little damp in, by virtue of draughts that can also get in, the damp is generally dispersed into the atmosphere. Attempts to make such buildings function as a modern building by trying to make it impermeable to damp and cold can result in damp problems.

[3] Built before around 1950

21.1.6 It will be advisable to discuss matters such as damp proofing and insulation with a surveyor experienced in the care of older buildings prior to implementing any changes to ensure that they will achieve the end goal rather than adding to any problem.

21.1.7 In an older building it is desirable for any roof insulating material to be vapour-permeable to allow any damp to pass through. Hemp and sheep's wool insulation are ideal for this.

21.1.8 In older buildings draught proofing of doors and windows, and openings such as letter boxes can rooms feel warmer. Sash windows can be draught proofed so that they still operate effectively but let in a lot less unwanted air.

21.1.9 If vapour producing rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms are effectively draught proofed then mechanical ventilation in the form of a fan may be required to remove the damp air from the room.

21.1.10 In older houses built with single glazed windows, although their replacement with double or triple glazing will make a house feel warmer and reduce energy loss, it may not always be a viable option in historic buildings or on cost grounds. Thick curtains, shutters and secondary glazing are alternative, cheaper, energy conservation measures that could be considered.

21.1.11 All pipes should be insulated to ensure that heat gets to where it is wanted rather than being lost under floors or in roof spaces.

21.2 Orientation and Passive Solar Gain

21.2.1 Design measures that conserve energy can also reduce carbon output and so assists combat global warming.

21.2.2 Capturing warmth from sunlight to help heat a building is known as passive solar gain. This should be exploited wherever possible within an appropriate design.

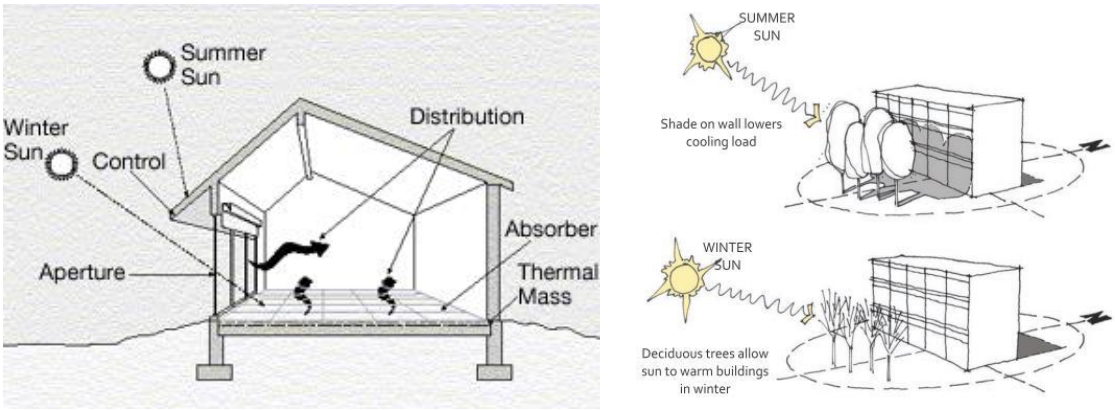


Fig. 35: Passive solar gain principles

21.2.3 Where practical, the longer elevations of a house should be orientated towards the sun and the principal rooms placed on the sunny side of the house. In a development of more than one house, there needs to be a balance between optimal positioning for passive solar gain, and a layout which fits in with the character of the area.

21.2.4 Further advantage of solar gain can be taken by using solar control glass in windows.

21.2.5 A design with a significant amount of south-facing glass should only be proposed if the appearance is in keeping with the character of the area and the heat dynamics are fully understood. Over-heating can result in excessive energy consumption because of a need for air conditioning.

21.3 Domestic Renewable Energy

21.3.1 This guidance focuses on providing some simple advice on ways to reduce any impacts from household micro-generation installations in relation to the immediate built environment.

21.3.2 The Local Planning Authority should be contacted before undertaking any work to establish whether planning permission or listed building consent is required for a specific project and to seek advice on building regulations requirements.

21.3.3 Solar Panels

21.3.3.1 New developments offer the opportunity to consider the inclusion of solar panels as part of the overall design, for both electricity and hot water generation. Photovoltaic panels are available in different colours and a range of designs that can be used to provide a contemporary design or match more traditional materials and finishes.

Fig. 35: Typical solar panel installation

Fig. 36: Solar panels blend with roof tiles

21.3.3.2 Photovoltaic panels designed to look like roof tiles are available and may be used to avoid panels detracting from a property's appearance. Solar panels flush with a roof minimise contrast

Fig. 37: Roof tile solar panels

21.3.3.3 Solar heating collectors are available that can be incorporated into a new or existing roof in much the same way as a roof light, or incorporated into ground level window frames.

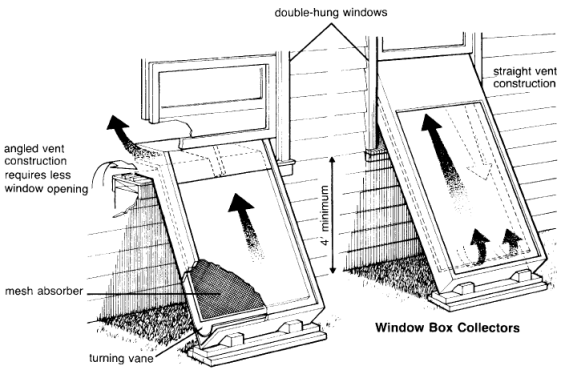


Fig. 38: Roof light and window box solar heat collectors

21.3.3.4 Consideration of the positioning of panels can help minimise any visual impact by retaining the balance and appearance of a house; for example, by lining the panels up with windows and matching the size of the panels to existing features.

21.3.3.5 Outbuildings or extensions can be good locations for solar panels, or freestanding panels within a garden may offer a good solution, especially in the case of older vernacular buildings.

Fig. 39: Solar panels on an outbuilding are less obtrusive

21.3.4 Wind Turbines

21.3.4.1 Wind speeds in the local area are typically low to moderate and hence a wind turbine is unlikely to be the most effective form of renewable energy generation, particularly on a small-scale domestic basis.

21.3.4.2 Even small wind turbines can have visual impacts on sensitive landscapes and so should be sited with great care.

21.3.4.3 If used turbines should be sited so as not to break a skyline. Impact in this respect can be minimised if a turbine is set against a backdrop of trees or group of buildings.

21.3.4.4 Landscape impact can be reduced by the choice of a suitable colour for the turbine and its pole. Examples are the use of semi-matt off white or light grey to blend with the sky or dark grey or black to blend with hills and trees. If possible, cables connecting a turbine to the dwelling or grid should be run underground.

21.3.4.5 Appearance-sensitive turbines are becoming available such as the example shown below and are much preferred to more traditional types.

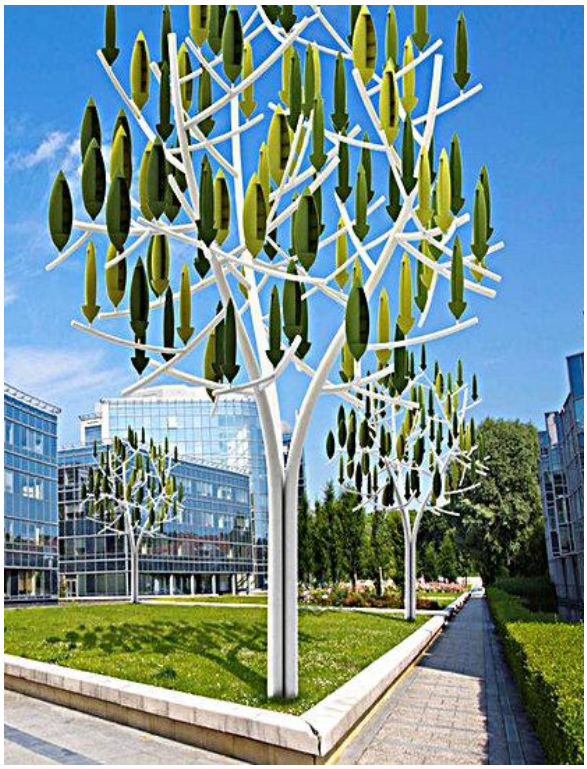


Fig. 40: A wind tree turbine

21.3.4.6 The likely noise produced by a turbine shall be considered with regard to potential impact on the tranquility of neighbouring properties and surrounding countryside.

21.3.4.7 It shall be ensured that the turbine shadow will not cause a flicker effect on neighbouring windows.

21.3.4.8 Turbine height shall be selected to be in proportion to neighbouring buildings.

21.3.4.9 If mounted on a building a turbine fixed to the gable end will minimise the length of its pole.

21.3.5 Ground, Water and Air Source Heat Pumps

21.3.5.1 Ground source heat pumps use a buried ground loop which transfers heat from the ground into a building to provide space heating, generally with under-floor heating, and sometimes to pre-heat hot water.

21.3.5.2 Water source heat pumps use temperature differences in a similar way to extract heat from a body of water via a heat exchanger.

21.3.5.3 Air source heat pumps are mounted directly on an external wall to make use of the ambient air as a heat source.

Fig. 41: Types and principles of heat pump (ground; water; air)

21.3.5.4 Before digging trenches to install ground source heat pumps, check with Norfolk County Council archaeology service to ensure there are not likely to be any archaeological remains that would be damaged by the works.

21.3.5.5 Consider also whether trenching work may cause damage to a habitat that is of high wildlife value. In such cases it could be better to install the pipes vertically using a borehole.

21.3.5.6 Using heat exchangers in water bodies such as ponds and lakes could lead to ecological impacts through localised temperature changes and specialist advice should be sought.

21.3.5.7 Air source heat pumps should be positioned carefully to avoid detrimental impacts on a building particularly if it is or a non-designated heritage asset. Detailed design issues such as pump fixing, colour, reflectivity and size should be considered.

21.3.5.8 Due consideration shall be given to possible noise nuisance arising from the operation of an air source heat pump.

APPENDIX 1: KEY AREA CHARACTERISTICS IDENTIFIED BY THE SAHAM TONEY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

RURAL CHARACTER AREAS (See Figure 3, page 8)	
AREA	**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**
RCA-1	• Low lying, gently rolling valley bottom below the 40m contour along the Watton Brook • Soils are seasonally wet, sands loams and peats with high water table. • Land use dominated by meadows, used for hay and grazing. • Forms of enclosure are gappy and scrubby hedges, and trees along ditches. • Visual experience is varied. Open within the valley bottom, trees edge the skyline on the upper valley sides to the north. More intimate where small field systems endure to the east side of the village. • Little settlement, which is instead is found on higher land, the exception being Ovington Road • Lack of public access
RCA-2	• Gently sloping farmlands between 40 and 60m AOD with sandy, easily worked soils • Arable estate farmlands, with a strongly rural and unified feel. Parkland provides setting for Saham Hall. • Wooded feel from frequent belts, plantations and small woodlands. No ancient woodlands. Oaks stud the field boundaries and parkland trees have skyline presence. • Straight sided large arable fields with network of narrow straight lanes. • No settlement other than the Hall and its associated cottages • Unified estate style with flint facing, brick quoins and ornate chimneys. Flint features in walls. • Sense of scenic well managed countryside. Quiet and tranquil feel. long views possible.
RCA-3	• Flat or very gently sloping • Land use is entirely arable farmland (cereals) • Simple, open farmland dominates. No woodlands. Hedges sometimes present. Roadsides often un-hedged, or hedges present behind narrow verges. Ash trees in hedgerows. • Large open fields with straightened boundaries. • No settlement but views across open farmland to village edges of Ashill and Saham Toney are part of the visual experience • Expansive views across large fields, under big skies • No particular landmarks but poplar trees have skyline impact.
RCA-4	• Gently sloping valley side on the east side of the parish. • Land use is often pasture in the lower parts and arable farmland on the more elevated areas • Where there is a network of hedges and trees that creates an intimate feel. Opens out to long views when absent. • Finer grain to the landscape, smaller field sizes than seen elsewhere. Strong sense of time depth. • Settlement scattered along the west side of the area, often integrated within well vegetated settings but some stark edges. • Disused railway embankment is a strong linear feature in the east • Vernacular materials are red brick and render houses, large decorative chimneys. Pantile roofs, some black-coloured.
RCA-5	• Elevated plateau farmland in the far northeast of the parish • Land use is arable farmland with a well managed feel. • Large woodland at Saham Wood (Ancient woodland) as well as regular plantations and coniferous shelter belts. • Regularised landscape with geometric feel to the grid of lanes, fields have straight boundaries • Settlement found in the form of scattered farms, some on the site of ancient manors and the location of medieval deer park • Vernacular materials are red brick and render houses with pantile roofs, some black glazed.

VILLAGE CHARACTER AREAS (See Figure 4, page 8)	
AREA	**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**
VCA-1	• Linear development along Richmond Road, generally one plot deep. Plot depths vary. • Main road is busy and carries traffic from Watton to Ashill and other outlying villages • Historical dwellings are scattered, in small clusters along the Richmond Road. Now much infilled with substantial 20th additions, all generally following the ribbon pattern • No open space or public realm but opens out at junction with Bell Lane, and important node where adjoins space in front of St. George's. Important for orientation. • Trees west of the mere provide a strong green edge • Settlement edges are hard to experience from the highway but appear backed by well vegetated edges. • Glimpses of church tower heading north along Richmond Road provide a series of key views to this landmark
VCA-2	• Modern, compact, estate-type development dating from the 1980/90s. • Served by two estate roads - Amy's Close and Bellmere Way/Mere Close - each displaying a unified built form type. • Dwellings on Amy's Close have a particularly uniform appearance with little variation in house type or materials. • Curved estate roads - no through roads with no connectivity • Strong green edges of the Mere provide a well-defined edge, and provide containment, preventing views to the north. • No public open space within the estates but large area of open space adjacent at the village hall. • Mature trees play a role on the skylines along boundaries to the north and south, but trees within the estates are smaller scale and more suburban in character.
VCA-3	• Slightly elevated and gently rolling landscape north of the Mere along Pound Hill between St. George's church and Page's Lane. • Shallow soils over chalk, adjoining land use is both arable and unenclosed pastures. • Comprises some older properties along Pound Hill, including the schoolhouse, but larger area is covered by unified 1970s bungalow estate development. • The tracts of open arable land provide extensive views and are key to sense of place. • Land bounding to the north provides separation between different clusters of settlement. • Notable views to tower of St George's church along southerly route on Pound Hill.
VCA-4	• Flat and gently rolling landscape associated with a small stream • Shallow soils over chalk, adjoining land use is both arable and unenclosed pastures. • Features an ancient manor at Pages Place indicating the long-settled nature of this area, as well as a number of attractive cottages displaying traditional vernacular finishes. • Low density dwellings along the southern end of Hills Road and along the north side of Chequers Lane. • Farmsteads are found at intervals along the southern side of Chequers Lane with large scale buildings and a sometimes commercial purpose and character, with associated visual intrusion. • The tract of open arable land to the west of Hills Road provides extensive views. • Rural feel maintained owing to little modern development and maturity of vegetated curtilages and edges which contribute positively to rural character.
VCA-5	• Elevated fringes of the plateau, indented with small streams. Heavier land - clayey and loamy soils over chalky boulder clay. Poorly drained meadows along tributary stream. • Settlement pattern is strongly linear, gaps between historic scattered farmsteads and cottages since in filled with 20th century bungalows and houses. Important open space around Ploughboy Lane. • Built form type mixed - older cottages and occasional farmsteads within 20th century additions • No public open spaces, but footpath offers access to countryside from Coburg Lane. Undeveloped meadows adjacent to Ploughboy Lane contribute to character.

	• No landmarks as such, but Chapel is notable in the streetscape. • Contained visual experience often, longer views along streetscape where Hills Road straightens out and over countryside at either end of the cluster. • Ornamental garden frontages and boundary treatments create a suburban feel at points in the streetscape.
VCA-6	• Well vegetated, small scale pastoral valley bottom landscape provides setting. Tree belts line small fields. • Low-lying village edge separated from Watton only by a narrow belt of undeveloped land. Golf course occupies much of the valley bottom. • Linear settlement pattern where older cottages and 1970/80s housing sit side by side. A recent small estate has been added at Labybird Lane. Farms and holdings west of Cley Lane. • Settlement edges well integrated with well vegetated landscape. Enclosure from hedges and tree belts creates sense of intimacy. Long views are not obtained. • A number of vernacular buildings are seen, small scale brick and flint cottages and a works building. Narrow plot frontages for older properties. • Mill tower is local landmark, but not easily seen in the landscape owing to well wooded nature. View from the west from Ovington Road.

Prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Work Group

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