

An aerial sketch of a town, likely Gedling, showing a dense residential area with a prominent church spire in the center. The sketch is rendered in a dark purple color and serves as the background for the document cover.

Gedling Borough Council Design Code Framework

Extensions and Alterations Design Code

NOVEMBER 2024

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Introduction

This document forms part of the Gedling Design Code Framework which sets out the Council's expectations for good design in the Borough. It encourages exemplar and innovative designs that align with the Framework Principles. The Framework comprises five documents:

- a Core Design Code Document which applies to all development and provides useful background information;
- a standalone Design Code for alterations and extensions (this document);
- a standalone Design Code for small sites (1-9 dwellings);
- a standalone Design Code for major sites (10 dwellings and greater); and
- an Observation Library which contains valuable background information to support applicants in understanding sites and their contexts.

The Design Code must be taken into account when submitting a planning application for an extension or alteration to your property.

How to use this Document

Step 1

Establish if the site:

- is in a [conservation area](#);
- affects a [listed building](#); or
- affects a [non-designated heritage asset](#).

Step 2

Identify your site on the Coding Plan

Use the **Coding Plan** in the **Core Design Code Document** to identify the relevant Settlement Type and Local Area Type that the property is located in. The Core Design Code Document also provides helpful information on the character of the local area so you can ensure your proposal reflects the local context.

Step 3

Make sure your proposals accord with the Design Code requirements set out in the following pages. You will need to ensure that you have carefully observed the area around the application site.

Step 4

Complete the **checklist** to show that all elements of the design code have been addressed. The case officer who assesses the planning application will use the same checklist to see if it complies with the design code. There may be valid grounds for not fully complying with the code(s) for reasons specific to a particular site or application, in which case any non-compliance should be fully justified.

Step 5

Submit the completed checklist with sufficient information to show how each Design Code requirement has been met, alongside other documents required as part of your planning application.

Design Code Principles

The Design Code addresses three themes, a **Characterful Gedling**, a **Greener Gedling** and a **Connected and Healthy Gedling**. Listed below are Design Principles that are relevant to proposals for developments of 1-9 dwellings. For each principle, applicants must observe the area around the application site to consider the local context and then be able to show that the proposal meets the design requirements for that principle. The reference (e.g. 'C1') for each principle cross refers to the Core Design Code Document which provides more detailed information.

For each principle, **observation** is important in order to consider the local context before demonstrating how each design requirement is met. For each principle there are requirements that **must** be met and requirements that **should** be met.



Characterful Gedling Principles

- C2 - Characterful Homes
- C4 - Boundaries and Thresholds
- C5 - Materials



Greener Gedling Principles

- G1 - Topography
- G7 - Biodiversity & Ecology



Connected & Healthy Gedling Principles

- C+H3 - Liveable Homes

Characterful Gedling

Characterful Homes



Locally distinctive homes play a key role in creating local character. Applicants must identify how their home and neighbouring properties contribute to the character of the local area and avoid any design features that continue to erode their character.

Observe and Evaluate:

Applicants must observe the local area and demonstrate a clear understanding of:

- patterns of building lines, set backs, building heights and separation distances.

It should be noted that where the existing pattern of development does not accord with the design principles set out below, then this Design Code SPD takes priority over existing examples on the ground in order not to further erode local character.

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- a) demonstrate that extensions are sympathetic to the main property and its neighbours.

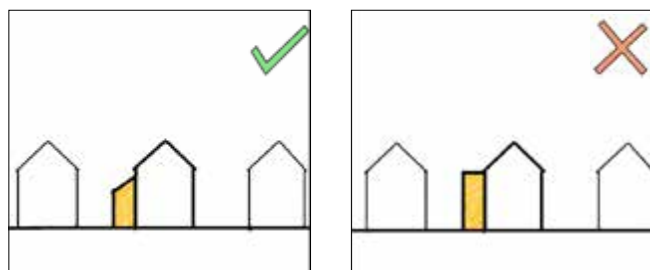


Figure 1: How to create an extension with a form that is sympathetic to the main property

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- b) reflect existing patterns of spacings between dwellings.

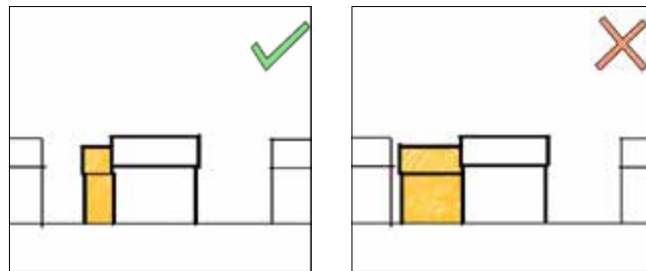


Figure 2: How to ensure that extensions reflect the patterns of spacings between dwellings

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- c) avoid sudden changes in height with neighbouring properties, particularly on sites with steep gradients.

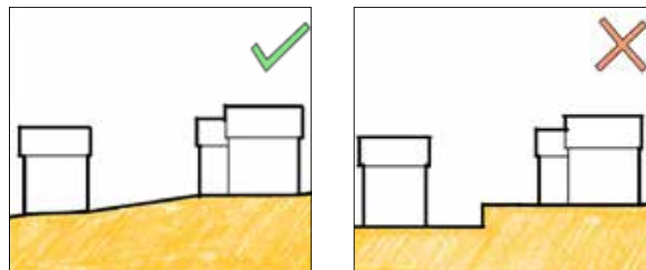


Figure 3: How to avoid sudden changes in height with neighbouring properties

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- d) be subservient to the scale and form of the original dwelling.

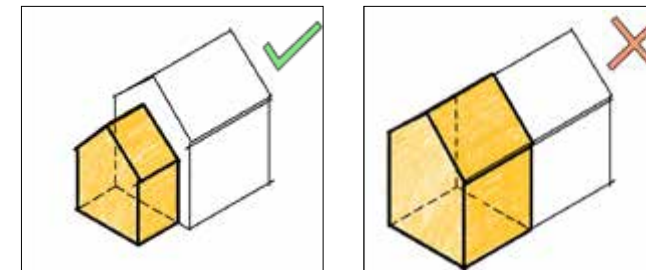


Figure 4: How to ensure that extensions are subservient to the scale and form of the original dwelling

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- e) adopt the same types of roof forms and match existing roof pitches of the main building for a two-storey side extension (other extensions, i.e. single-storey, rear extensions, to be considered on their merits).

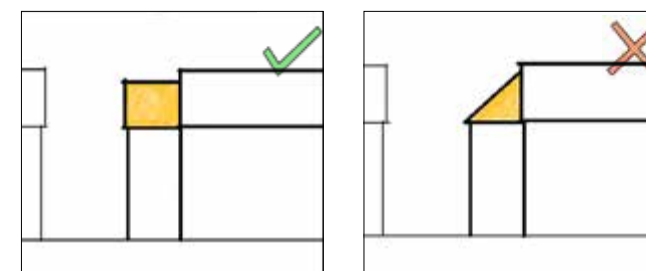


Figure 5: How to ensure that extensions adopt roof forms that match existing roof forms and pitches

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- f) reflect the existing pattern, sizes and proportions of architectural features such as porches, roof forms, window and door openings, eaves and verge detailing for a side extension (other extensions, i.e. rear extensions, to be considered on their merits).



Figure 6: How to ensure that the pattern and detail of architectural features reflect those on the original dwelling

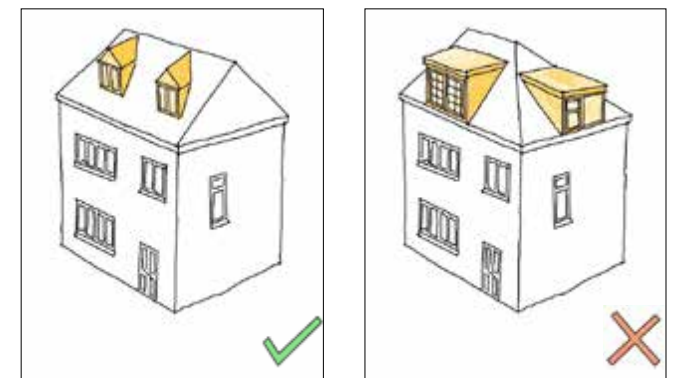


Figure 7: Getting the architectural detail right will be critical for features such as dormer windows



Characterful Gedling

Boundaries and Thresholds

Boundaries and thresholds play an important role in defining the character of streets and spaces, as much as individual dwellings. They also define the distinction between private spaces (front gardens and drives) and public spaces (streets and pavements) and can help to create a high quality environment.

Observe and Evaluate:

Applicants must observe the local area and understand:

- whether boundaries are generally open or closed and the proportion of each;
- the height, width and depth of common boundary treatments; and
- whether boundaries are hard or soft (planted) and the proportion of each.

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- use boundary treatment design and materials which reflect local character;
- use boundary treatments to clearly distinguish between public and private areas;
- use 'open' boundary treatments or planting to allow for the movement of wildlife and contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), such as with native hedgerows, timber fencing between gardens and treatments that integrate features such as hedgehog holes; and
- avoid close boarded fencing on boundaries facing the public realm.



Stone boundary wall enclosing a garden in Woodborough contributes to street character

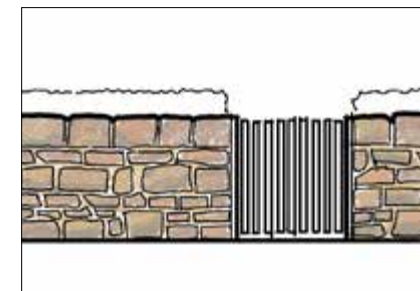


Continuous front boundary wall treatments in Bestwood, with distinctive gate pillars

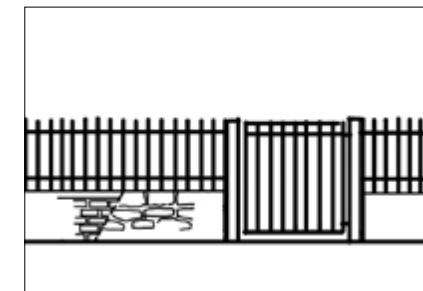


Soft boundary treatments in Ravenshead

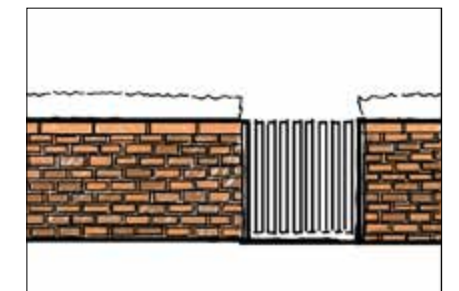
Examples of hard and soft boundary treatments that can be found in the Borough that contribute to the character of residential environments.



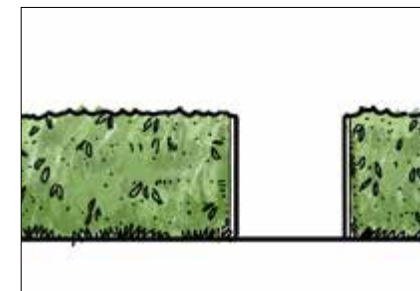
Limestone boundary wall reflecting treatments found in Linby and Papplewick and mature suburb of Woodthorpe



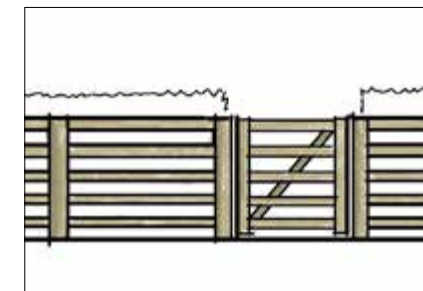
Low walls of brick or stone, sometimes with metal railings found in older parts of the urban area, particularly in the Mature Suburbs



Red brick boundary wall reflecting treatments found in Bestwood and some of the Historic Villages



Hedgerows reflect many boundaries in the Historic Villages and older Suburban areas



Timber rail fencing reflecting treatments found at Ravenshead

Figure 8: Boundary Typologies that can be applied in Local Area Types in the Borough

Characterful Gedling Materials



Historic development has a clear connection to the surrounding landscape, local building materials and manufacturing expertise, which ensure that local character is distinctive.

Observe and Evaluate:
 Applicants must observe the local area and understand:

- the materials used in the locality; and
- identify those that contribute to local distinctive character.

Mandatory Requirements:
 Design proposals **must**:

- identify a building materials palette;
- use materials that reflect and complement the main dwelling (extensions) or original dwelling (alterations); and
- use locally distinctive materials where relevant and appropriate.



Red-brown coloured pantile roof



Limestone roof tiles



Keuper marl brick



Limestone wall



Keuper marl brick



Limestone paving

Examples of the varied historic materials used across the Gedling Borough



Other Historic Villages feature red keuper marl brick with the use of render and with some brick walls painted, creating some variety in Calverton. Pantiles remain dominant



Locally distinctive surface materials include Staffordshire blue diamond pavers in Woodborough and granite setts. In Linby Limestone is used more extensively for paving slabs, setts and kerbs



Greener Gedling

Topography



Topography plays a vital role in shaping and defining the landscape, vegetation, and land uses. The Borough is characterised by a varied topography which creates character and distinctive contexts for settlements.

Observe and Evaluate:

Applicants must observe the local area and understand:

- the topography of the site, including direction and steepness of any slopes



Example of a gabion retaining wall to manage changes in levels.

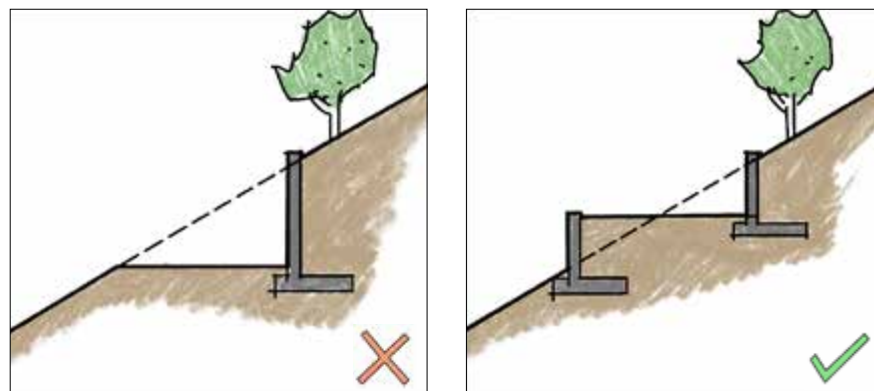


Figure 9: Where retaining structures are needed, avoid or minimise the need for overbearing retaining walls with more modest and regular retaining walls

Mandatory Requirements:

Design proposals must:

- work positively with the existing landform and avoid or minimise the reprofiling of (or any need for engineered approaches – e.g. excessive or unsightly retaining walls to) the landform;
- respond positively to the topography to minimise impacts on accessibility; and
- where changes in levels need to be managed with retaining structures, use appropriate materials such as timber, gabion walls or brick terracing integrated with landscaping to create attractive retaining structures - concrete structures may be used if over-clad with an appropriate material.

Greener Gedling

Low Carbon Homes



There is an opportunity for the design of extensions and alterations to help achieve a step change in sustainable design and construction. More information is provided in the Council's ['Low Carbon Planning Guidance'](#) (May 2021), which relates to large sites.

Observe and Evaluate:

Applicants must identify opportunities to optimise features that will minimise the carbon intensity of extensions and alterations, including:

- renewable and low carbon forms of energy, such as photovoltaics and heat pumps;
- recycling and reusing construction materials; and
- electric vehicle charging.



Home electric vehicle charging

Mandatory Requirements:

Design proposals must:

- use locally sourced materials;
- include rainwater harvesting;
- integrate permeable surfaces;
- integrate renewable or lower carbon technologies for heat and power such as photovoltaics or heat pumps; and
- integrate electric vehicle charging for off-street car parking.

Desirable Requirements:

Design proposals should:

- minimise the use of primary materials by recycling and re-using demolition and excavation materials from site (where applicable) to minimise material leaving the site; and
- minimise non-mineral construction waste (e.g. packaging, timber, plastics) on site.



Example of a heat pump installation.

Greener Gedling

Biodiversity and Ecology



There is an opportunity to enhance the biodiversity of sites through the provision of features that support bird and bee populations.

Observe and Evaluate:

Applicants must observe the local area and understand:

- the biodiversity of the site and its context, including connectivity of habitats and opportunities for increasing Biodiversity Net Gain across the site.

Mandatory Requirements:

Design proposals **must**:

- a) avoid the use of artificial grass.

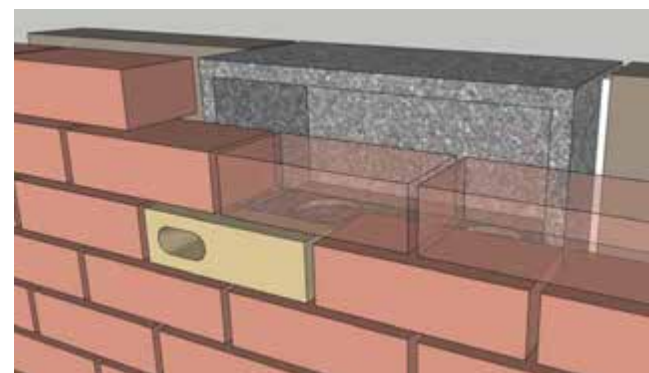
Desirable Requirements:

Design proposals **should**:

- a) consider additional features that can support biodiversity and ecology such as green roofs/walls, swift bricks, bee bricks, bird boxes, insect hotels and hedgehog shelters.



Image © Dick Newell



Options for protecting and enhancing biodiversity and ecology

Connected and Healthy Gedling

Liveable Homes



Extensions must be designed to ensure they do not adversely impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by neighbouring residents.

Observe and Evaluate:

Applicants must observe the local area and understand:

- the proximity of neighbouring dwellings and how an extension could impact upon daylight to habitable rooms (bedrooms, kitchens and living rooms); and
- any potential for extensions or alterations to adversely overlook neighbouring dwellings and their curtilage and consider how this can be avoided.

It should be noted that where the existing pattern of development does not accord with the design principles set out below, then this Design Code SPD takes priority over existing examples on the ground in order not to further impact on amenity.

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- ensure that plot ratios/outdoor amenity areas retained reflect the character of the local area; and
- maintain a distance of not less than 1 metre between side elevations where two-storey development is proposed to avoid creating a terracing effect.

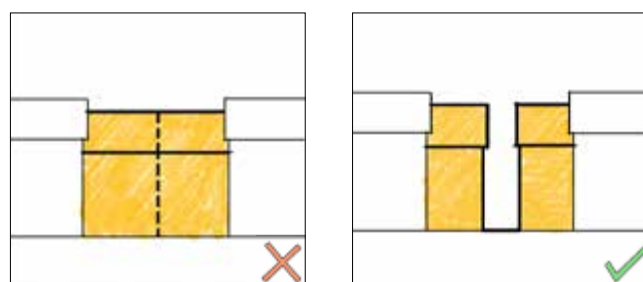


Figure 10: Avoid extending up to boundaries where this is likely to cause a terracing effect

Mandatory Requirements:

Design proposals **must**:

- ensure that extensions do not overshadow neighbouring properties, through applying the "45 degree" test. The 45-degree line should be drawn from the centre of the ground floor window for a single-storey extension and from the inner edge of the ground floor window for a two-storey extension.

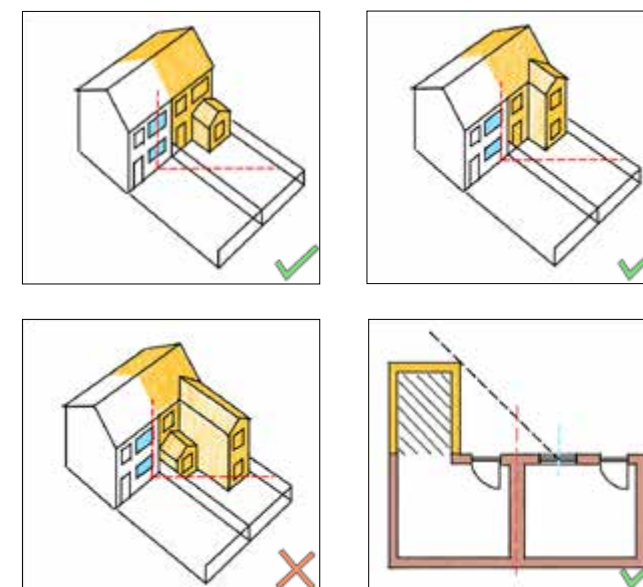


Figure 11: How to apply the "45 degree" test for single and two-storey extensions

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- maintain a minimum back to back distance of 21 metres between opposing rear elevations, of homes up to two-storeys, avoiding interruptions in existing patterns of dwellings in how they are grouped and spaced. Where back-to-back distances already conflict with this principle or where an additional storey is proposed over an existing single storey extension, consideration will be given to whether the extension would be overbearing or result in overlooking for neighbouring properties.

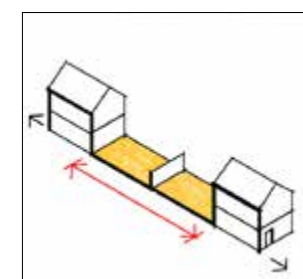


Figure 12: Houses that overlook each other require a minimum back-to-back distance of 21 metres

Mandatory Requirements:

When designing alterations and extensions, applications **must**:

- maintain a minimum back-to-side distance of 11 metres between any side gable wall and an opposing rear elevation of homes up to two storeys. This distance will need to be greater for homes more than two-storey, overlooking habitable rooms, or where changes in levels between sites leads to height differences between dwellings of at least one storey or more; and
- ensure that any windows on the gable end walls (except on corner plots) must be to non-habitable rooms only, obscurely glazed to a minimum level of Pilkington 4 and are non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed.

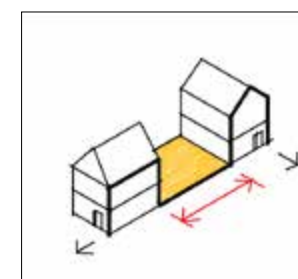


Figure 13: Side gable elevations opposing rear elevations require a minimum back-to-side distance of 11 metres

Desirable Requirements:

Design proposals **should**:

- ensure that north facing properties are dual aspect, especially apartment units to ensure they benefit from sufficient natural light.

Appendix A: Design Code Compliance Checklists

Extensions and Alterations

Planning Application Details

Applicant:

Description:

Site Location (Settlement Type + Local Area Type):

Read and referenced the Design Code: YES / NO

Instructions: You **MUST** comply with the Mandatory Requirements (shown in red) for each design principle set out in the Design Code. The information provided in support of the planning application **MUST** clearly explain how each design principle has been met. In terms of demonstrating compliance, it is the wording of the Design Code itself that takes precedence over the summary in this checklist.

Design proposals need to refer to the wording of the mandatory requirements. The checklist provides a summary for ease of reference.

If the application does not comply with one of the principles, applicants **MUST** submit sufficient justification and evidence, or your application may be refused. You should cross refer to the precise section of document submitted in support of the planning application which justify any non-compliance. Where any outputs are not applicable to your application site, you must indicate this in the table below, and provide justification if requested by your Case Officer.

Characterful Gedling



| C2 - Characterful Homes | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|--|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must: | | | | |
| a) Demonstrate that extensions are sympathetic to the main property and its neighbours. | | | | |
| b) Reflect existing patterns of spacings between dwellings. | | | | |
| c) Avoid sudden changes in height with neighbouring properties, particularly on sites with steep gradients. | | | | |
| d) Be subservient to the scale and form of the original dwelling. | | | | |
| e) Adopt the same types of roof forms and match existing roof pitches of the main building. | | | | |
| f) Reflect the existing pattern, sizes and proportions of architectural features such as porches, roof forms, window and door openings, eaves and verge detailing. | | | | |

| C4 - Boundaries and Thresholds | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|--|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must: | | | | |
| a) Use boundary treatment design and materials which reflect local character. | | | | |
| b) Use boundary treatments to clearly distinguish between public and private areas. | | | | |
| c) Use 'open' boundary treatments or planting to allow for the movement of wildlife and contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). | | | | |
| d) Avoid close boarded fencing on boundaries facing the public realm. | | | | |

Characterful Gedling



| C5 - Materials | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|---|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must: | | | | |
| a) Identify a building materials palette. | | | | |
| b) Use materials that reflect and complement the main dwelling (extensions) or original dwelling (alterations). | | | | |
| c) Use locally distinctive materials where relevant and appropriate. | | | | |

Greener Gedling



| G1 – Topography | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|---|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must: | | | | |
| a) Work positively with the existing landform and avoid or minimise the reprofiling of the landform. | | | | |
| b) Respond positively to the topography to minimise impacts on accessibility. | | | | |
| c) Use appropriate materials integrated with landscaping for retaining structures – concrete may be used if overclad. | | | | |

| G5 - Low Carbon Homes | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|--|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must: | | | | |
| a) Use locally sourced materials. | | | | |
| b) Include rainwater harvesting. | | | | |
| c) Integrate permeable surfaces. | | | | |
| d) Integrate renewable or lower carbon technologies for heat and power. | | | | |
| e) Integrate electric vehicle charging for off-street car parking. | | | | |
| Design proposals should: | | | | |
| a) Minimise the use of primary materials by recycling and re-using demolition and excavation materials from site (where applicable). | | | | |
| b) Minimise non-mineral construction waste on site. | | | | |

| G7 – Biodiversity and Ecology | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|---|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must: | | | | |
| a) Avoid the use of artificial grass. | | | | |
| Design proposals should: | | | | |
| a) Consider additional features that can support biodiversity and ecology such as green roofs/walls, swift bricks, bee bricks, bird boxes, insect hotels and hedgehog shelters. | | | | |

Connected and Healthy Gedling



| C+H3 - Liveable Homes | Yes | No | N/A | If 'No', justify |
|--|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Design proposals must : | | | | |
| a) Ensure that plot ratios/outdoor amenity areas retained reflect the character of the local area. | | | | |
| b) Achieve a distance of not less than 1 metre between side elevations where two-storey development is proposed. | | | | |
| c) Ensure that extensions/dwellings do not overshadow neighbouring properties, through applying the "45 degree" test. | | | | |
| d) Maintain a minimum back-to-back distance of 21m between opposing rear elevations of homes up to two-storeys, avoiding interruptions in existing patterns of dwellings in how they are grouped and spaced. | | | | |
| e) Maintain a minimum back-to-side distance of 11m between any side gable wall and an opposing rear elevation of homes up to two storeys. | | | | |
| f) Ensure that any windows on the gable end walls (except corner plots) must be to non-habitable rooms only, obscurely glazed to a minimum level of Pilkington 4 and are non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed. | | | | |
| Design proposals should : | | | | |
| a) Ensure that north facing properties are dual aspect, especially apartment units to ensure they benefit from sufficient natural light. | | | | |

