AECOM

ALDCLIFFE WITH STODDAY
Design Code

2020

Quality information

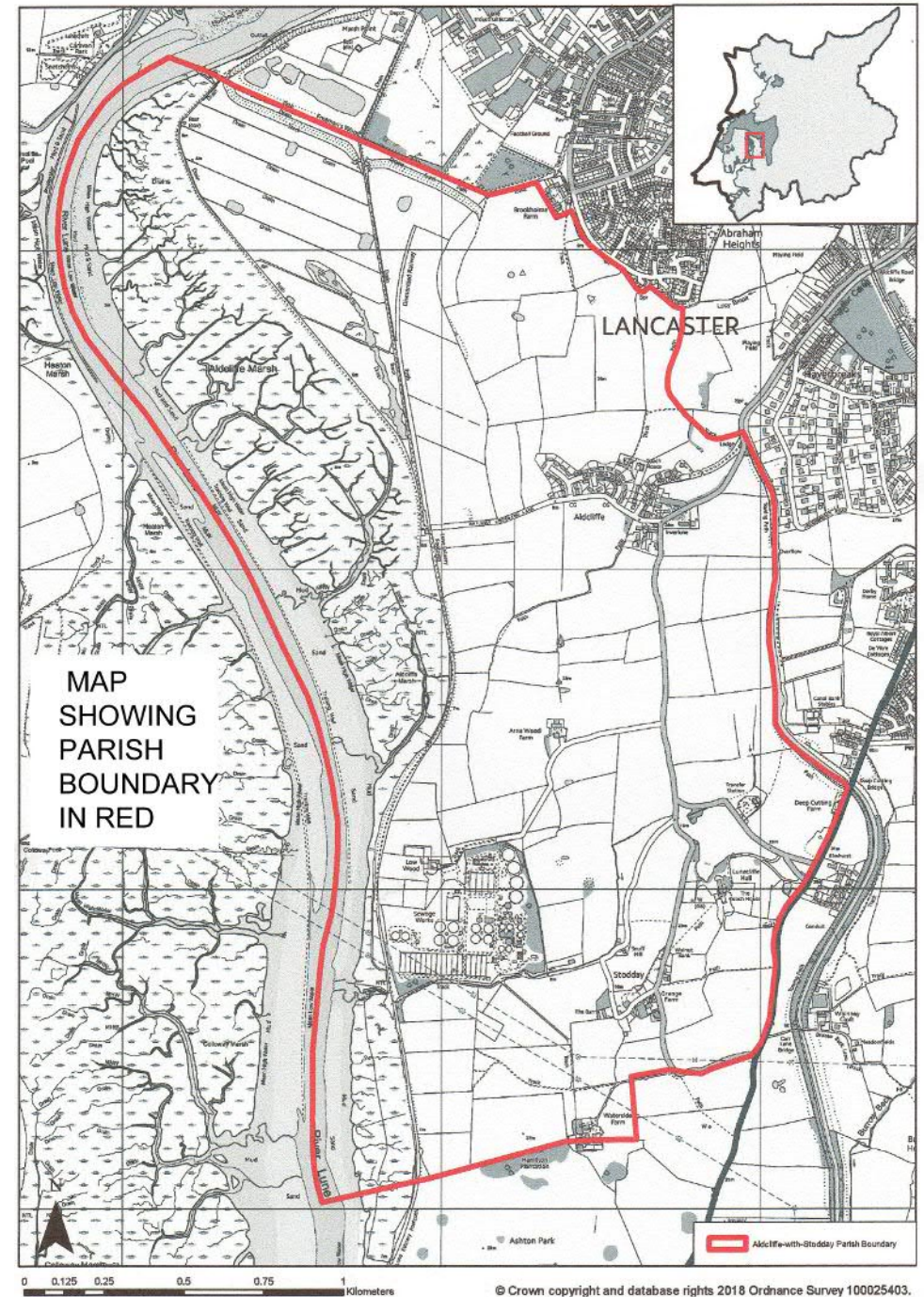| Document name	Ref	Prepared for	Prepared by	Date	Reviewed by
Aldcliffe with Stodday Neighbourhood Plan Design Code	DR-10941	Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Council	Elliot Joddrell, AECOM	23/11/2020	Becky Mather, AECOM

Revision history

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorised	Name	Position
01	14/09/2020	1st Draft reviewed by Denise Parrett and NPSG	BM	Becky Mather	Regional Director
02	05/10/2020	2nd Draft capturing comments received from Denise Parrett on 23/09/2020	BM	Becky Mather	Regional Director
03	12/10/2020	3rd Draft reflecting additional comments received from Denise Parrett on 09/10/2020	BM	Becky Mather	Regional Director
04	27/10/2020	Final Draft reflecting comments shared in Zoom meeting attended by Denise Parrett and NPSG on 26/10/2020	BM	Becky Mather	Regional Director
05	03/11/2020	Draft issued to Locality	BM	Becky Mather	Regional Director
06	11/11/2020	Final Document	LW	Lee Wood	Regional Director

Copyright and Limitations

MAP SHOWING PARISH BOUNDARY IN RED

LANCASTER

Aldcliffe-with-Stodday Parish Boundary

0   0.125 0.25   0.5   0.75   1   Kilometers

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Contents

1. Introduction

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) is making good progress in the production of its Neighbourhood Plan. Although the Local Plan has not allocated any new housing numbers to Aldcliffe and Stodday, the Steering Group is seeking professional advice on a design code for any potential future development within the parish. This document should support Neighbourhood Plan policies that guide the assessment of any future development proposals and encourage high quality design. It advises on physical development helping to create distinctive places integrated with the existing settlements.

The approach set out here is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which encourages local authorities to consider using design codes, to help deliver high quality outcomes for new development. It is important however, that guidance finds the balance between promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and allowing for innovation and originality. The NPPF suggests that 'design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics' (NPPF, 2019).

The NPPF also emphasises that 'the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities' (NPPF, 2019).

1.1. Objectives

The main objective of this report is to develop a design code that future development in Aldcliffe with Stodday should follow to retain and protect the rural character and scenic beauty of the area. In particular:

- The design of new buildings should respond to the scale, density, and position of existing buildings in relation to the roads and layout of properties. It should enhance local distinctiveness without limiting originality and innovation;

- Any loss of green space should be compensated by providing publicly accessible footpaths and green spaces. Any trees removed should be replaced with native species (where possible). Overall any new development must demonstrate a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%. It should include for example hedgehog friendly fencing, bird and bat boxes and planting schemes that benefit the fauna that inhabit the Parish. Any development proposal must demonstrate that it does not cause any detriment to the green corridor of Lancaster Canal on the east side of the Parish and to the Lune Estuary SSSI to the west of the Parish;

- Any development should conserve and protect both historical building heritage and historical landscape heritage of low coastal drumlins and hedged fields;

- Where new domestic access points are required, small-scale features such as hedgerows, walls, fencing, and entrance gates should respond to the local vernacular to promote and enhance local distinctiveness;

- Proposals to alter historic buildings should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the history and design qualities of the buildings and provide a clear rationale for how this has been taken into account in the design of the proposed alterations, without limiting originality and innovation.

- Any new housing must demonstrate that it will not compromise the limits on the existing road system and will enhance the potential for cycling and walking within the Parish. As a minimum all properties should include provision for cycle storage and off street charge points for electric vehicles.

- In addition, new housing should also demonstrate that it is responding to climate change. Developers should note that housing developments of any size should strive to achieve carbon neutrality in line with the Government's forthcoming Future Homes Standard. The Future Homes Standard will require new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency; it will be introduced by 2025.

1.2. Process

Following an inception meeting and a site visit, AECOM together with Aldcliffe with Stodday Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members carried out a high level assessment of the settlements. The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:

- Initial meeting and site visit;

- Urban design analysis;

- Preparation of design principles and coding to be used to assess future developments;

- Draft report with design codes; and

- Final report.

Figure 1: Stodday

Figure 2: Aldcliffe

Figure 3: Aldcliffe with Stodday parish area, with the parish boundary shown in red (source: Google Earth).

1.3. Area of Study

Location

The parish of Aldcliffe with Stodday lies about 1 mile south west of Lancaster City Centre. The parish includes two main settlements - Aldcliffe and Stodday, which are located about a mile apart. Settled areas consist of a mix of housing types ranging from large detached dwellings to smaller terraced cottages and farm / barn conversions.

The parish is situated within Lancashire's Low Coastal Drumlins and Open Coastal Marshes landscape character areas. The surrounding landscape gradually slopes down towards the Lune Estuary.

Population

At the 2011 census the population of Aldcliffe with Stodday was 222.

Figure 4: Grade II listed, Lunecliffe Hall.

Figure 5: Grade II listed 1 - 5 Aldcliffe Village.

Figure 6: Grade II listed East Lodge to former Aldcliffe Hall.

Figure 7: Aldcliffe and Stodday parish boundary with contours illustrating the drumlin landscape setting

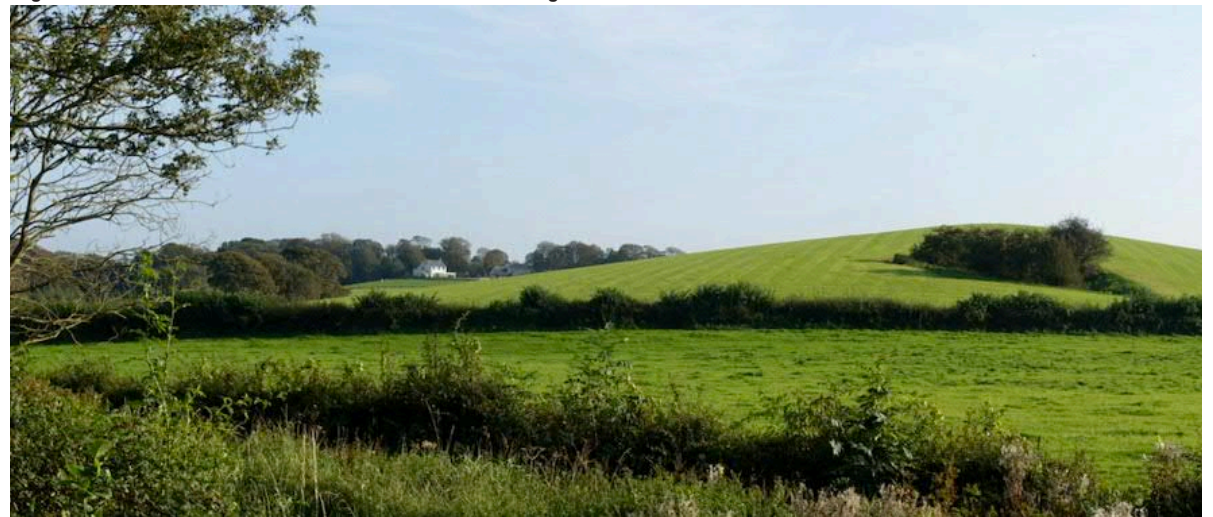Figure 8: View from Aldcliffe Hall Lane to the south showing the roll of Drumlins

Figure 9: View from Willow Lane to the south showing the roll of Drumlins

2. Local Character

This section outlines the broad physical, historical and contextual characteristics of Aldcliffe and Stodday. It analyses the pattern and layout of buildings, hierarchy of movement, topography, building heights and rooflines, and parking. Images in this section have been used to illustrate the built form of Aldcliffe and Stodday.

2.1. Introduction

There is much architectural diversity in Aldcliffe and Stodday. The villages have evolved from small pockets of cottages, farms and large country homes. More contemporary buildings are present in Aldcliffe with the addition of Oaklands Court, following the demolition of Aldcliffe hall in the 1960s. Further housing has also been constructed in more recent years.

There are 3 listed buildings within the parish boundary - East Lodge, Aldcliffe Cottages and Lunecliffe Hall. In addition, there are a number of noteworthy (unlisted) buildings such as West Lodge, Inverlune and Inglewood in Aldcliffe, and Briar Cote and Rowallen in Stodday.

Figure 10: Inverlune

Figure 11: Aldcliffe sits within the sloping landscape of the former grounds of Aldcliffe Hall and is well screened with mature trees.

Figure 12: Concrete shuttered Rose Cottage and Grange Farm

Figure 13: Inglewood, Aldcliffe

Figure 14: View from Willow Lane to the south-west

Figure 15: Bank Farm, Aldcliffe

Figure 16: View from Aldcliffe towards Stodday showing drumlin contour

2.2. Local Character Analysis

Roads and Public Realm	The main roads are organic in nature and seemingly evolved from historic routes, influenced by natural features and topography. Most roads are bordered with hedges and mature trees. There is an absence of pavements and most roads including the only through routes, Aldcliffe Road and Lunecliffe Road are narrow and dependent on passing places. There are no roads with central white lines and few where HGVs can pass each other.
Pattern and Layout of Buildings	Most dwellings in Aldcliffe and Stodday are detached houses sited on large plots, with some terraces and a small number of semi-detached houses. Recesses of varying depths in the building line enable the formation of large front gardens or yards. There are also some examples of dwellings the sit up against the street or have very short front gardens. There remains a high degree of openness to the surrounding countryside and green spaces; with most properties backing onto or facing open land. Outside the settlement areas, the settlement pattern is characterised by dispersed farmsteads. The 20th century developments tend to have strong curvilinear arrangements of detached houses facing the roads as demonstrated in Oaklands Court. 21st century additions to Aldcliffe include a number of very large detached dwellings between Aldcliffe Hall Drive and Aldcliffe Road. These are of a scale that is not typical of the village character.
Building Heights and Roofline	Both settlements are predominantly built up of two storey dwellings. There are also some examples of single storey dwellings and buildings with dormer windows making use of the roof space. The more historic parts of the parish comprise varied rooflines with changes in roof orientation and type whereas the later developed areas tend to have a uniformity to the roof line.
Car Parking	Across the parish, there are a variety of ways that parking is provided. There are examples of on-street parking, on-plot parking on driveways and parking with garages as well as shared parking courts. Due to the nature of the narrow roads, there are no designated parking areas on roads in the parish.
Open Spaces & Landscape	The landscape surrounding Aldcliffe and Stodday slopes down towards the Lune Estuary, which is accessible along the estuary multi-use footpath and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Ramsar Site. The area is also unique with the presence of drumlins (see figure - 8)- low whale-back hills around 40m high with broad rounded tops. From the more elevated parts of the parish, views across to the Lakeland Fells and Bowland Fells can be seen. Surrounding the main settlement areas are open fields bound by hedgerows. The settlements are well screened with mature trees. The Lancaster Canal corridor runs along the western edge of the parish boundary with the tow path and adjoining footpaths providing recreational routes.

Figure 17: Aerial photo of Stodday showing settlement area, roads (white solid lines), and public right of ways (white dotted lines).

East Lodge

Oaklands Court

Aldcliffe Hall Drive

Aldcliffe Road

Aldcliffe Mews

Figure 18: Aerial photo of Aldcliffe showing settlement area, roads (white solid lines), and public right of ways (white dotted lines).

2.3. Architectural Details

Building detailing is a set of architectural tools that contribute to local distinctiveness by adding interest to buildings.

New buildings should be designed in harmony and proportional to each other and should enhance and complement the overall street character.

All building elevations (all floors) should be designed with equal care and include design details to create a well integrated overall composition. The design of windows, in particular, must carefully balance considerations for natural surveillance, interaction, and privacy; openings must be of sufficient number and size to allow abundant natural light inside the buildings.

The following section showcases a selection of local building details which should be considered as positive examples.

Inward looking courtyard space

Stone elevation with a change in elevation material on the upper floors

Natural render or shuttering elevation

Natural finish concrete shuttering

White windows and eaves boarding

Variety in rendering materials and surface treatments.

Multi-paned white sash windows

Combining stone and rendered elevations and quoined corner detailing

Dormer windows

Retention of barn architectural detailing such as arched openings

Stone and render elevation with white window frames

3. Design Guidelines

3.1. Introduction

This section is divided into two parts. The first is a set of key elements to consider when assessing a future design proposal. These are presented as general questions which should be addressed by developers and their design teams who should provide clarification and explanation as necessary. The second part is design guidance and codes setting out the expectations of the Aldcliffe with Stodday Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

It is important that full account is taken of the local context and that the new development responds to and enhances "sense of place" and meets the aspirations of people already living in that area. The aim of this section is to produce design guidelines that help to assess design quality and appropriateness in residential development proposals.

The guidelines developed in this document focus on residential development, considering the character of the immediate neighbouring buildings and the context and landscape of the surrounding area. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of new development whilst recognising that new building technologies can deliver acceptable built forms and may sometimes be more relevant.

3.2. General Design Considerations

This section sets out a series of general design principles followed by questions against which the development proposals should be evaluated. As an initial appraisal, there should be evidence that development proposals have considered and applied the following general design principles:

- Integrate with existing paths, roads, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

- Reinforce or enhance the established village character of roads, greens, and other spaces;

- Respect the rural character of views and gaps;

- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;

- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;

- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long distance views;

- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to existing features;

- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; and

- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours.

3.2.1 Key questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

Based on established good practice, this section provides a number of questions against which any design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

Following these ideas and principles, there are number of questions related to the design guidelines outlined later in the document.

Road pattern and Layout

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?

- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists, and those with disabilities?

- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern? Are these reflected in the proposal?

- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Local Green Spaces, Views and Character

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site and how does it impact on wildlife corridors?

- Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?

- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?

- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?

- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

- Can any new views be created?

- Is there adequate amenity space for the development and is this amenity space available for the wider community?

- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

Gateway and Access Features

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?

- Have the needs of different road user types been addressed

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?

- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed heritage asset such as a building or listed landscape?

- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings Layout and Grouping

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?

- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the settlements?

- What effect would the proposal have on the character of the settlement?

- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?

- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

Building Line and Boundary Treatment

- What are the characteristics of the building line?

- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?

- Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site and it surroundings?

Fenestration

- Are windows of sufficient size and number to allow abundant natural light inside the building?

- Have long stretches of blank (windowless) walls been minimised?

- Have considerations for natural surveillance and privacy been carefully balanced?

- Have consistent window styles and shapes been used across the elevation to avoid visual clutter?

- In historic areas, does the fenestration demonstrate a careful understanding of locally distinctive features such as scale, rhythm, materials, ornamentations, and articulation?

Building Heights and Roofline

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?

- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing, and scale? Does this fit in with existing buildings? If not, why not?

- If a higher than average building is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

Household Extensions

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing, or overshadowing?

- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?

- Do the proposed materials match those of existing dwellings or complement them?

- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?

- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?

- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

Building Materials and Surface Treatment

- What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?

- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?

- Does the proposal use high quality materials?

- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves, and roof been addressed in the context of the overall design?

- Do the proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

Car Parking Solutions

- What parking solutions have been considered?

- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

Architectural Details and Contemporary Design

- Does the proposal harmonise with adjacent properties? Does it follow the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and take cues from materials and other physical characteristics.

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance existing landscape features?

- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

3.2. Design Codes

The codes and guidelines in this section should be applied as a starting point to all new development, regardless of where it is in the Aldcliffe with Stodday Neighbourhood Area.

These guidelines advocate character-led design which responds to and enhances the existing context. Reference to context does not mean to copy or use pastiche solutions. It means responding to what is around as inspiration and influence and it could be a contemporary solution that is in harmony with the surroundings.

The design codes focus on the unique characteristics of the parish which are to be considered in any future development. They are to be considered in combination with the general questions in section 3.2 above.

3.2.1. Code 1: Sustainability & Energy

Any new housing for Aldcliffe with Stodday should mitigate its impact from the loss of countryside, wildlife and the natural environment and demonstrate that it is responding to climate change with the highest currently recognised government standards of insulation and energy conservation.

- Cavity wall and under floor insulation should avoid where possible heat loss through thermal bridging. Double or triple glazing , window and door draft sealing should reach Passivhaus standards wherever possible and viable. If a developer cannot reach these standards they should provide evidence to demonstrate why.

- All proposals must demonstrate sustainable surface drainage systems that will not unduly increase pressure on existing wastewater and natural drainage systems.

- Gardens and parking areas should have the majority of their area landscaped, with permeable surfacing used on hard landscaped areas to enable rainwater absorption and reduce the rate of run off caused by development.

- New development should provide suitable and safe storage for bicycles of sufficient size. For residential development at least one cycle storage facility or enclosure should be provided per bedroom. Covered and secure cycle storage units are preferred but where enclosures are open suitable racks or hoops should be provided.

- Solar, heat recovery, air source and ground source energy is encouraged in new development and should be designed to have a minimal visual impact on a development. Where technologies have a visual impact on sensitive areas (such as solar shingles and photovoltaic slates within or close to the setting of a heritage asset) they should be designed in from the start of the scheme. Designs should aim to conceal wiring and infrastructure and use carefully chosen slates or tiles on roofs to complement the solar panel materials. Where groups of housing are proposed they should demonstrate energy efficient heating though a combined heat and power system.

- The orientation of buildings and roof pitches should incorporate passive solar design principles and allow for efficient solar energy collection. One of the main glazed elevations of future dwellings should therefore keep within 30° of south, when in keeping with the topography and clustering of existing buildings. Where it would be inappropriate for the main glazed elevation to be facing south or within 30 degrees of the this for the reason outlined above, every attempt should be made to design the roof so that is of this alignment to allow for the fitting of solar panels This applies to all future dwellings whether solar panels are proposed or not to allow for retrospective implementation.

- New housing should demonstrate how rainwater and greywater will be stored and reused to reduce demand on mains supplies.

- The installation of water butts within new residential developments is encouraged to collect rainwater from roofs and reduce the overall rainwater run off impact of any development.

- Where existing buildings are being converted or extended every effort should be made to minimise the use of on-site energy.

- Whenever possible, developments should aim to re-use existing materials or procure reclaimed and recycled materials from local suppliers. Building materials made from construction and demolition waste are preferred to primary aggregates. Many types of construction waste can be used for these purposes including soil, asphalt, concrete, bricks and tiles. In conversion schemes roof tiles and slates should be carefully stored and re-used. In addition, priority should be given to materials that can be deconstructed and re-used at the end of the building's usable life.

- Trees should be retained and/or planted on development plots. All tree planting should be native species in order to promote biodiversity.

- Gardens and boundary treatments should be designed to allow the movement of wildlife and provide habitat for local species.

- The adoption of swift bricks, bat and owl boxes are encouraged to help provide nesting and roosting spaces or bats and birds.

- The use of green roofs and/or living walls is encouraged. These can assist with insulation and summer cooling requirements. They can also be readily integrated with solar systems and have even been shown to increase the efficiency of PV cells on hot summer days.

- Open spaces should be located within walking distance of residential areas and linked through a series of green networks or corridors. Such linkages support a Green Infrastructure approach to development, allowing wildlife to move along corridors to access foraging opportunities and habitats and people to access a range of different recreational facilities.

Where a proposal falls short of these sustainable measures it must be explained why and what compensatory measures are being offered.

Figure 19: Precedent image - Optimising permeability in front gardens (3)

Figure 22: Precedent image - illustrating integration of sustainable urban drainage solutions (2)

Figure 20: Precedent image - Solar tiles used to minimise visual impact (5)

Figure 23: Precedent image - safe, convenient and covered home cycle storage (4)
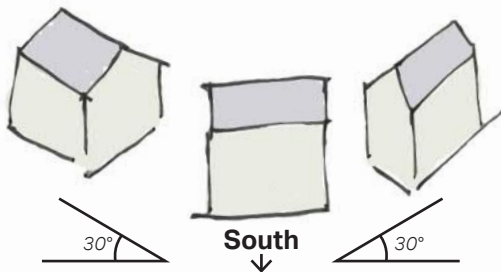

South

$30°$ $30°$

Figure 21: Building/roof orientation for solar gain (6)
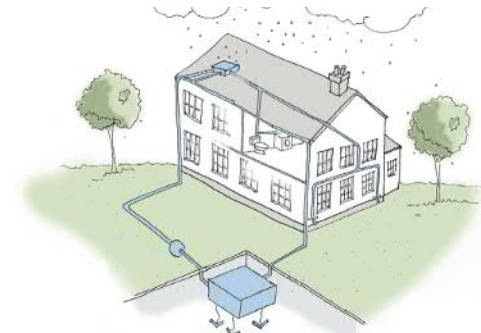
Figure 24: Rainwater harvesting - collection and re-use (7)

Solar panels

Native tree planting

Water butt

Covered cycle storage

Permeable surfacing

3.2.2. Code 2: Roads and Access

– Roads must be designed to an adoptable standard and meet technical highways requirements. Roads should be designed as spaces for all and incorporate the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

– Highways should be future proofed with conduits installed for the retrograde fitting of services without the road surface being disrupted.

– New roads, should any be built, should tend to be linear with gentle meandering - providing interest and evolving views. Routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot.

– Any cul-de-sacs should be relatively short (maximum 60m - see Figure 29) like a farmstead courtyard, and include provision for onward pedestrian links.

– Estate-like developments with impermeable looped access routes and multiple cul-de-sacs branching off will not be appropriate in the parish (see Figure 28).

– Pedestrian paths should be included in new developments and be integrated with existing pedestrian routes and where possible be adopted as a Public Right of Way to avoid inaccessible private pathways.

– High level street lighting should be kept to a minimum to reduce light pollution on the surrounding landscape. Where street lighting is proposed it should use LED lights and have fully shielded fixtures that emit no light upward.

Figure 25: Roads (solid lines) and public right of ways (dotted lines) in Aldcliffe and Stodday (source: Google Earth).

Figure 26: Buildings positioned close to the street, behind short front gardens in Stodday

Figure 27: Former agricultural buildings laid out in a courtyard arrangement at Aldcliffe Mews.

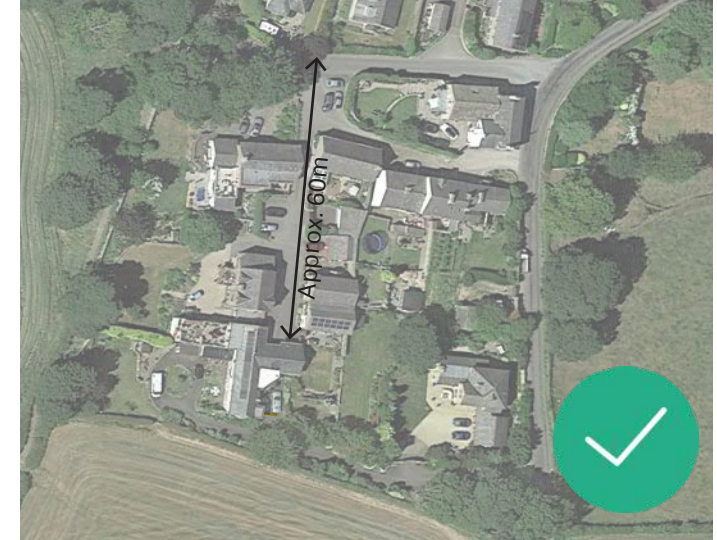Figure 29: Appropraite layout at Aldcliffe Mews with an informal courtyard arrangement of buildings and short access road of approximately 60m.

Figure 28: Estate-like developments with numerous cul-de-sacs stemming from a looped access route will not be appropriate

3.2.3. Code 3: Gateway and Access Features

– Future development should seek to aid legibility and maintain a distinctive sense of place. In order to achieve this, design proposals should look to include feature elements at key gateways / arrival points. These features should take reference from the existing context, but could include: the use of feature tree planting (figure 31); positioning of buildings on key corners (figure 30), creating a pinch point in the building line(figure 32); and orientating the gable end of buildings to face onto the street.

– The feature buildings or built elements should be prominent and emphasise local character. This could mean larger houses in local materials with emphasis on the design of chimneys and fenestration, as well as well laid and cared for landscape.

Figure 30: Buildings positioned on the corner are visible on the approach and perform as an rrival point to both Stodday
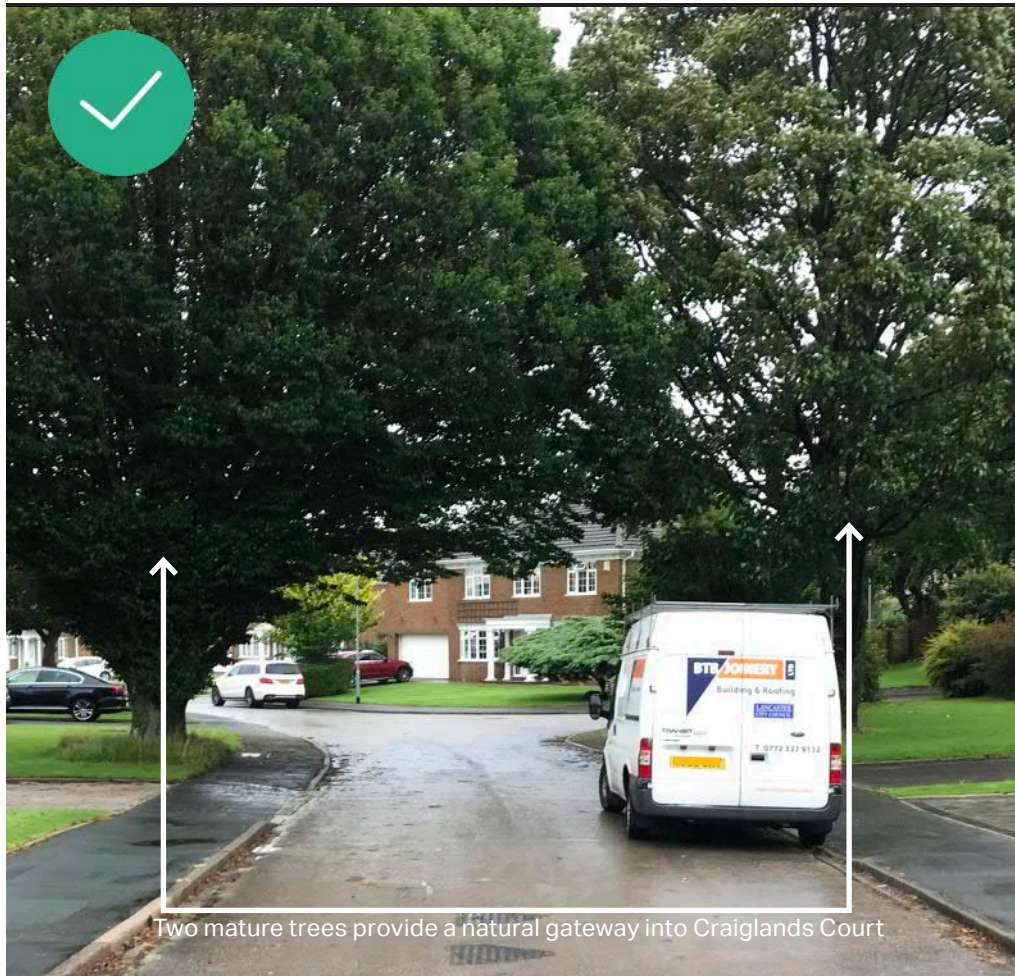
Two mature trees provide a natural gateway into Craiglands Court

Figure 31: Entrance on to Craiglands Court with mature trees providing a gateway feature.

Gateway pinch point

Figure 32: A gateway consisting of a 'pinch point' between buildings.

3.2.4. Code 4: Green Spaces, Views and Character

– Development adjoining open spaces and important gaps should enhance the character of these spaces by either providing a positive interface (i.e. properties facing onto them to improve natural surveillance) or a soft landscaped edge (See Figure 37).

– Development should not negatively impact on any important views (See Figure 39) . The topography should be carefully considered when any new buildings are being placed.

– Any trees or woodland lost to new development must be replaced. There should be a non-negative impact on biodiversity from a new development and a biodiversity net gain of 10% should be aimed for.

– The spacing of new development should reflect the rural character and allow for long distance views of the countryside from the public realm. Trees and landscaping should be incorporated in the design.

– The existing quiet and peaceful atmosphere of Aldcliffe and Stodday should be preserved. Future development should respond to the rural character of the settlements and retain the existing levels of privacy by including hedgerow and tree screening.

– The degree of separation between the settlements and built up areas must be retained to avoid coalescence (see Figure 38).

– Landscape schemes should be designed and integrated with the open fields that currently border the settlements.

– Native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the rural character of the village.

Figure 33: View of Lancaster Canal with Lancaster in the distance

Figure 34: View of the Bowland Fells from the riverside path

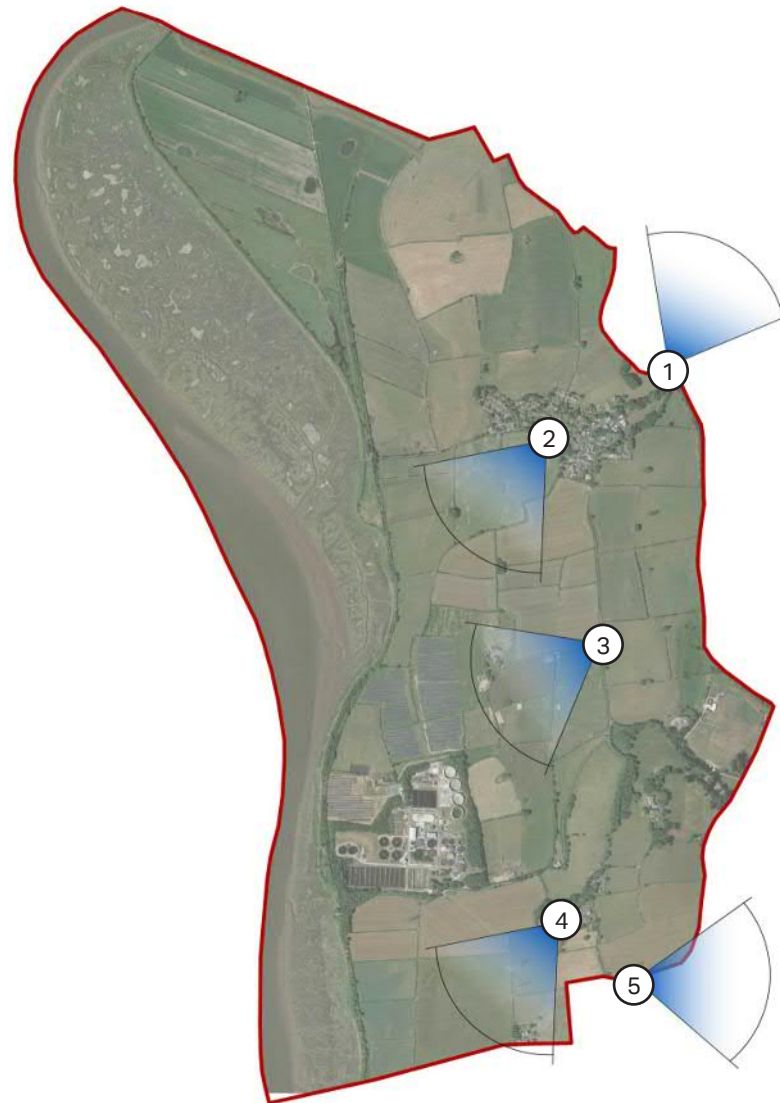**Figure 35: Sloping landscape down the River Lune**

Figure 36: The River Lune estuary

Soft landscaped edge (tree screening)
Figure 37: Trees screen the settlement of Stodday, protecting the open rural character of the surrounding landscape

Figure 38: The degree of separation between the two settlements should be retained to avoid coalescence

1. Views to Lancaster from Aldcliffe

2. Views to the Estuary from Aldcliffe

3. Views to the Estuary from Aldcliffe Road

4. Views to the Estuary from Stodday

5. Views to the Bowland Fells from Stodday

Figure 39: Important views towards the Estuary, Lancaster and the surrounding drumlin landscape should be protected.

3.2.5. Code 5: Pattern and Layout

– The existing rural character must be appreciated when contemplating new development, whatever its size or purpose.

– The layout of new development should look to arrange properties in small clusters. In keeping with the existing character, differentiation materialiality, building line and orientation of properties should be designed to provide a rich variety in the streetscene, whilst maintaining a cohesive identity.

– Boundaries such as walls or hedgerows, whichever is appropriate to the street, should enclose and define each street along the back edge of the highway, adhering to a consistent property line for each development group.

– Properties should provide rear gardens that are at least 10m deep and front gardens at a depth of at least 3m.

– Any new development proposed adjacent to the surrounding open landscape should be of a lower density than the main settlement areas to allow it to blend more sensitively with the rural context.

Figure 40: Aerial photo showing loose building lines created by informal clusters of houses with varied orientations

Figure 41: More formal layout of 20th century dwellings on Oaklands Court in a crescent shaped layout

Figure 42: The extent of development in Aldcliffe currently adheres to the former grounds of Aldcliffe Hall within the contours of the landscape
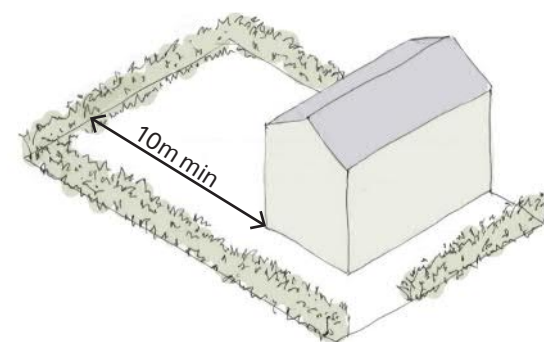

Figure 43: Front and back gardens should be provided

3.2.6. Code 6: Building Line

– In order to provide overlooking and natural surveillance buildings should generally position their main façade and entrance facing the street where this is in keeping with local character. In some instances (courtyard arrangements and key gateways) it may be appropriate to orientate the gable end of the building on to the street, however this gable end must include windows facing on to the street.

– The building line should have variations in the form of recesses and protrusions to create visual interest, but will generally form a unified whole (as shown in Figure 44).

– Buildings should be designed to ensure that roads and/ or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from buildings. This can be ensured by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows facing the street.

– In order to accommodate parking buildings should be set back behind front gardens where this is characteristic of the area. Where parking is to be provided to the front of the property a minimum set back of 6m should be provided. Where parking is provided to the side a minimum set back of 3m should be provided.

Protrusions in building line create varied frontage

Natural surveillance of the street

Figure 44: Strong building line with protrusions creating a more dynamic frontage

Buildings arranged around a courtyard

Figure 45: Agricultural buildings laid out in a courtyard arrangement

Buildings set back behind front gardens

Figure 46: Buildings set back from the street behind front gardens, Aldcliffe Hall Drive

3.2.7. Code 7 Boundary Treatments

–   Should there be any new development in the parish it may be appropriate to include a front boundary wall or gate. This is characteristic of many properties within Aldcliffe with Stodday.

–   Boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the rural character of the area. The use of either panel fencing or metal or concrete walls in these publicly visible boundaries should be avoided.

–   Boundary treatments to the front of properties should not impair natural surveillance and therefore should not exceed 1.8m.

–   In the case of infill development it is important to ensure continuity and adherence to the existing character of the street. Therefore, boundary treatments should look to continue the height and materiality of those boundaries used in the adjacent properties (See Figure 47).

–   It will be necessary to provide on-plot waste storage. This will need to be be integrated as part of the overall design of the property and potentially incorporated within the boundary treatment. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers.

Figure 47: Stone boundary treatments with adjacent properties sharing the use of the same boundary treatment type.

3.2.8. Code 8: Building Heights/ Roofline

Creating a good variety in the roof line is a significant element of designing attractive places. The following elements serve as guidelines in achieving a good variety of roofs:

– The scale of the roof should always be in proportion with the dimensions of the building itself;

– Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, therefore subtle changes in roofline should be ensured during the design process;

– Buildings should be 2 storeys high and can provide an additional storey in the roof/loft space using dormer and gable end windows (See Figures 48 & 49);

– Local traditional roof detailing elements should be considered and implemented where possible in cases of new development;

– Dormers can be used as design elements to add variety and interest to roofs.

– Positioning of buildings should be such that roof lines add to the interest of the landscape and the long views, rather than distract or obscure the views.

Dormer window used to create additional storey in loft space

Two storeys

Figure 49: A mix of two and three storey buildings in Stodday with chimneys and dormer windows along the roofline.

Dormer window used to create additional storey in loft space and add visual interest

Two storeys

Figure 48: Stepped roofline responding to a sloping gradient and chimneys and a dormer along the roof.

Figure 50: A variety of roof types and building heights and orientations

3.2.9. Code 9: Materials and Building Details

The materials and architectural detailing used throughout Aldcliffe with Stodday contribute to the rural character of the area and the local vernacular. It is therefore important that the materials used in any proposed development are of a high quality and reinforce local distinctiveness. Any future development proposals should demonstrate that the palette of materials has been selected based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment.

Where there is a conflict between sensitivity to local context and reflecting traditional designs, and using more innovative, energy efficient technologies, the priority will be the need to address sustainability so that buildings maximise resource efficiency and minimise carbon emissions in line with Government targets."

This section includes examples of building details that contribute to the local vernacular of Aldcliffe and Stodday which should be used to inform future development. Page 31 provides a material palette that will be appropriate for future development.

CONCRETE SHUTTERING

GABLE END CHIMNEY

OVERHANGING GABLE ROOF

HALF RENDER HALF STONE ELEVATION

VARIATIONS IN ROOF HEIGHT

FRONT PORCH WITH PITCHED ROOF

BAY WINDOW WITH WHITE SASH WINDOW FRAMES

COBBLED BUILDING APRON

PLANTED BOUNDARIES ADJACENT
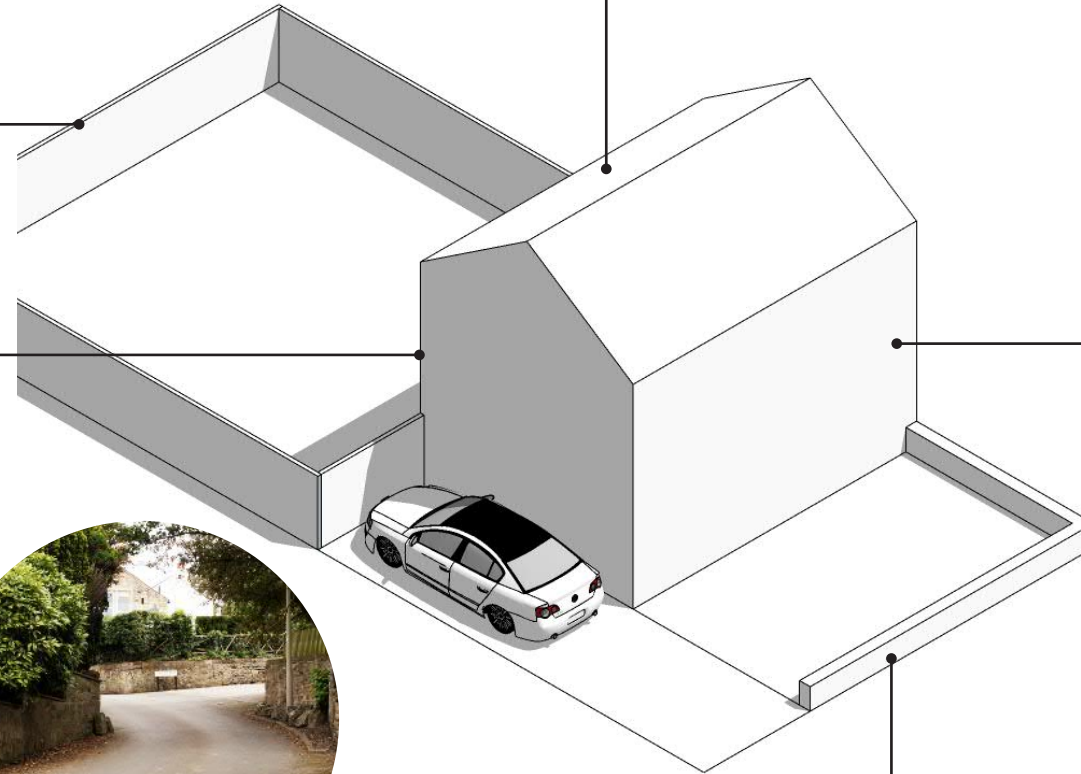TO SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

FLAG STONE ROOF TILES

SLATE ROOF TILES

STONE WINDOW SURROUNDS

STONE QUOINED CORNERS

OFF-WHITE RENDER

BUFF STONE

STONE WALL AND HEDGEROW
BOUNDARY

STONE WALL BOUNDARIES

Figure 51: Appropriate material palette

3.2.10. Code 10: Parking

– Success in parking design relies on careful detailing, lighting and landscaping. In all cases, new development should adopt 'Secured by Design' principles and consider 'Manual for Streets' guidance where appropriate.

– There are a number of streets which currently depend on on-street parking due to the short set back of the building line and terraced nature of the buildings. Due to the narrow width of the streets this can cause conflict between pedestrians and cars. Therefore, future development should provide car parking on plot in a mixture of driveways and garages (See Figure 54).

– Rear parking courtyards should only be considered when all other options have been exhausted and where there are highway constraints. Where residential courtyard parking is considered to be absolutely necessary it should: be provided for no more than six to ten dwellings; be within 20m of an entrance to the property; be provided with a direct pedestrian route to every appropriate property entrance; offer residents full view of their vehicle from lower and upper floor windows; be designed to encourage natural surveillance; be well lit and appropriately landscaped; and have an agreed maintenance and management schedule.

– When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. Front gardens should be a minimum depth of 6m if it is intended for a car to be parked directly in front of a dwelling. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting, and use of differentiated quality paving materials (See figure 53).

– If parking is to be provided to the side of a dwelling the space provided should be a minimum of 5m in depth to allow vehicles to park behind the frontage line and reduce the visual impact on the street.

Figure 52: Shared parking court on Aldcliffe Mews

Figure 53: Vegetation-screened front garden parking.

Figure 54: Side garage building and driveways, Craiglands Court.

Figure 55: On-street parking, Stodday.
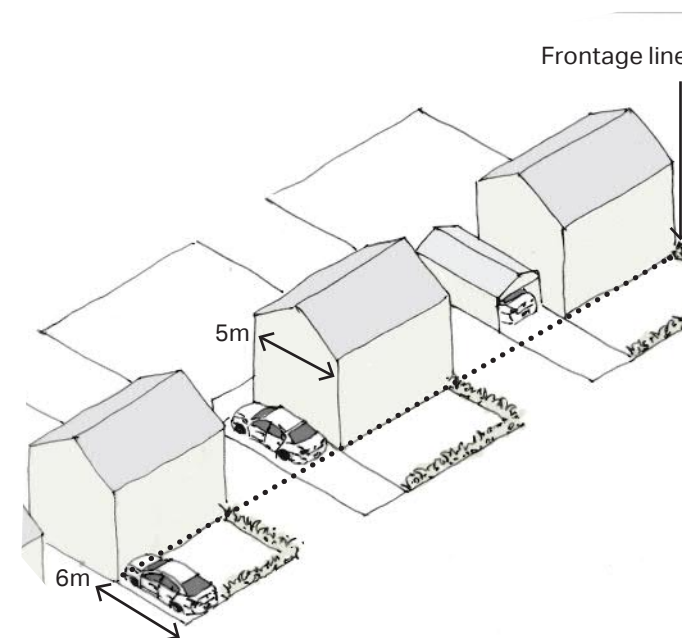

Frontage line

5m

6m

Figure 56: Appropriate parking solutions - On-plot parking provided to the front and side of a dwelling as well as in a parking garage.

3.2.11. Code 11: Highlighting Special Places

– In order to highlight the significance or potential historical importance of a particular area, it will be neccessary to demonstrate a specific change in the quality of public realm and building materials. In these areas materials should include natural stone (sandstone and limestone) which should be locally sourced where possible.

– High quality stone, gravel, granite, and bricks should be used to provide durable and attractive hard surface throughout the public realm.

– As demonstrated on Aldcliffe Hall Drive avenue planting of trees along the route can assist in highlighting the importance of the space.

Figure 57: An avenue of planted hedges and mature trees framing Aldcliffe Hall Drive, adding quality to the public interface.

Figure 58: Aldcliffe Cottages maintains a historic character with the retention of cobbled surfacing

3.2.12. Code 12: Traditional Architecture

The gradual evolution of the parish over the centuries has resulted in an organic character to development. The majority of the buildings have their own individuality resulting from variations in construction materials, height, the pattern of openings, and detailing.

Properties in both Aldcliffe and Stodday have broken roof lines with hips and gables, mock wood work contrasting with plaster and render above stone walls with stone quoins

Future buildings should be predominantly 2 storeys and include changes in roof height and the presence of chimneys to contribute to the visual interest of the historic hamlets (See figure 59).

Chimney detailing

Varied roof forms
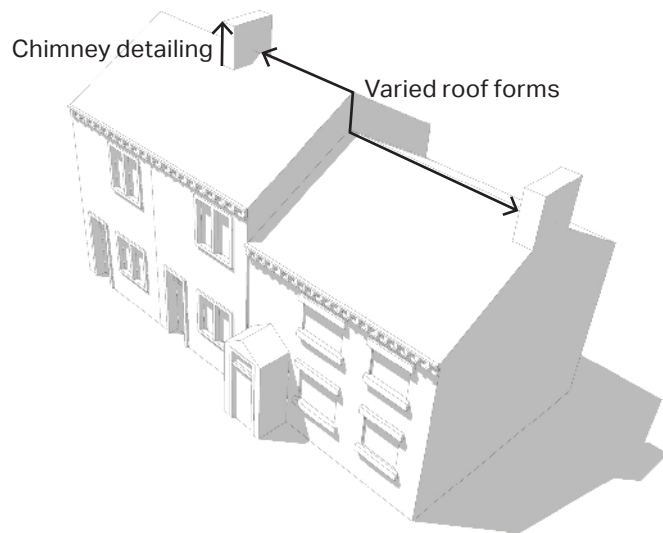
Figure 59: Two storey dwellings with changes in roof height and chimney detailing

3.2.13. Code 13: Sensitive Conversions

Within the parish there are a few examples of the successful conversion of agricultural buildings in to residential use. These buildings create the opportunity to provide large single dwellings or can be split into a series of smaller dwellings (See figure 63). Contemporary interpretations of farmstead styles of development could be a positive way to introduce new development to the parish that both responds to the local character as well as meeting the local demand for smaller dwellings.

– Any conversion should look to preserve and enhance existing heritage features, to maintain the integrity of the original building.

– Any new openings should be positioned carefully to maintain the character and balance of the building and reflect the existing design through use of complementary materials and finishes.

– Design the area around the building to the same standard as the changes to the building itself. Consider the existing character, the defining features of the local landscape, and any views into the site.

Figure 60: Agricultural buildings now used as dwellings in Aldcliffe

Figure 61: Former agricultural building now used as a dwelling in Stodday

Figure 62: Former agricultural buildings split into a series of dwellings in Aldcliffe
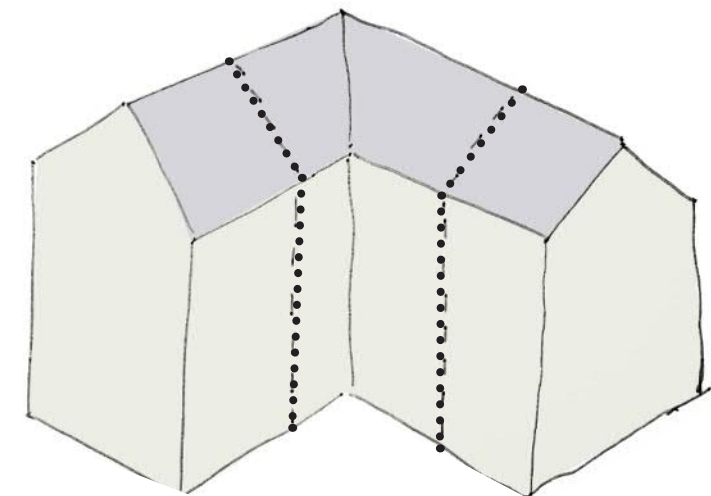

Figure 63: A large building such as a former agricultural building can be split in to smaller dwellings or provide one large dwelling

4. Next steps

This section concludes the report with recommendations on how to embed findings in the Neighbourhood Plan and engage with Lancaster City Council to develop policies supporting the guidelines.

4.1. Embed the guidelines in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The objective of this report is to develop a series of design codes for development possibilities in Aldcliffe with Stodday.

The report can be used as evidence to support the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan (and its draft policies) where the analysis highlights relevant issues and opportunities that can be influenced by land use planning interventions.

The focus of this report has primarily been on local character and urban design codes to be adhered to in future development proposals. These codes should be considered alongside other non-design interventions, such as exploring opportunities for supporting or restricting certain types of development/land uses. Any policies put forward must be capable of meeting the basic conditions (e.g. having regard to national policies and general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan).

4.2. Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals

The inputs from the Council's policy and development management specialists would be invaluable in advance of formal consultation and submission. The Steering Group should consider how our recommendations can be transposed into policy through discussions with Lancaster City Council and use the best practice guidance from Locality to prepare draft policies for consultation. Locality's 'Writing Planning Policies' guidance sets out how different planning policies are designed to achieve different things. The guide describes the three most common as:

Generic – a simple policy which applies universally to development across the entire Neighbourhood Plan area;

Criteria based – a policy with a series of requirements that should be met by development proposals. These can be set out as separate bullet points; and

Site specific – this is where a policy applies to particular areas of land. One of the most powerful tools for a Neighbourhood Plan is to allocate land for a particular type of development. As well as allocating land you can use your plan to set out the principles which need to be followed in developing a particular

site. This might include specifying what needs to be covered in a design brief to accompany any planning application. If you have site specific policies then you need to include a clear map showing the location and boundaries.

Site specific allocations are the hardest to do well. They would normally include associated policy related to land uses, quantum of development, configuration and design.

The Steering Group should check with the Local Planning Authority that their emerging preferred options are planning matters (i.e. suitable for inclusion as land use planning policy). Those that are not can be considered as community projects or neighbourhood infrastructure to be included within a delivery and implementation section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure 64: Aldcliffe Hall Drive

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