

# DESIGNGUIDE

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Designing for Landscape & Settlement Form

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VOLUME 2

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Prepared by:



DHUD Ltd  
6 Bakers Cottages  
Longmeadow Road  
Lypstone  
EX8 5LP

info@dhud.co.uk  
01395 227052  
www.dhud.co.uk

in conjunction with:

Hilton Barnfield Architects

Hilton Barnfield Architects  
The Studio  
158 Heavitree Road  
Exeter  
EX1 2LZ

studio@hiltonbarnfield.co.uk  
01392 349222  
www.hiltonbarnfield.co.uk

and:



Hyas Associates Ltd  
35 Silver Street  
Newport Pagnell  
MK16 0EJ  
(also Bristol)

0117 4057370  
info@hyas.co.uk  
www.hyas.co.uk

# Introduction



**This volume provides a step by step guide to preparing design responses to landscape, settlement form and site situation.**

*Initially this volume should be used to understand a site's context with reference to relevant Landscape Character descriptions associated with its location, the form of the settlement the site lies within -described as 7 distinct settlement typologies, and then identify the role of the site within the settlement in relation to where the site is positioned within the settlement. The guide indicates 13 different site situations to choose from and design parameters for each.*

*Users may find a variety of characteristics apply to a given settlement or site, in which case consideration should be given to the range of guidance and parameters provided.*

*A framework of design guidance is also provided for each of the 3 main towns in the district, providing a spatial interpretation of the policy objectives for each of these towns. Design in these locations should also take account of landscape and settlement characteristics as described in other sections.*

*Additional guidance is provided for development in the countryside but it should be acknowledged that this will only occur under certain circumstances in accordance with the adopted Local Plan Review (2013-2033) policy for these areas.*

*Distinctive places form the basis of more sustainable places. This Design Guide, in supporting a process of distinctive Mid Devon design, supports the Council's commitment to a carbon zero district.*







# THE MID DEVON LANDSCAPE

**Mid Devon is a large district, comprising a rich variety of landscapes and natural features which have shaped the settlements which lie within it. As such the landscape remains the primary source of the district's distinct identity and should therefore be the foundation of the design process.**

Influencing and regulating the design process and its outcomes can take a variety of forms and have a variety of objectives. For example: to stimulate growth in a particular area, topical or geographic; to conserve particular assets; to mitigate the impact on areas of sensitivity. However, since the landscape is not simply an aesthetic resource interventions are in order to guide social and economic outcomes and to support the commitments made by Mid Devon District Council and Devon County in declaring a climate emergency and subsequently achieving a carbon zero district by 2030.

The responsibility for much of the strategy controlling intervention across the district falls to the Local Plan which includes a hierarchy of social, economic and environmental objectives. It remains for this Design Guide to expand on how the strategic policy objectives of the Local Plan can be implemented. The Design Guide also provides the basis for embedding a zero-carbon requirement on all future development taking place in Mid Devon in order to respond to the climate emergency.

The first step in guiding the design of development across Mid Devon is to recognise the way in which the landscape of the district has already

guided, and continues to guide human's activity and their response to the strategic constraints placed upon them by the landscape in which they have lived over the ages.

The landscape has not been a static canvas upon which human habitation and activity has occurred over the ages. The landscape as seen today displays a combination of geological and human pattern making which are interlinked. As one exerts pressure on the other, each has undergone adaptation. There continues an iterative process of cause and effect resulting in the inextricable relationship between landscape and buildings.

Just as the course of a river is guided by the geological features around it but at the same time it cuts its own path through the same geology, so the path of human history has been affected by, and shapes, the landscape through which it passes.

Landscape and buildings together combine to create a unique expression of life and location and it is in this context that this Design Guidance exerts the appropriate influence in order to help all those involved in planning and development to firstly be aware of the composition of character throughout the district and secondly,

be confident to respond in ways which pro-actively pursue the positive contribution new development can bring to this character.

At the same time new character may emerge by virtue of changing conditions and context and these influences should not be ignored. For example building design and landscape change in response to the climate change emergency.

Use of this guide should be in conjunction with the Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment (2011) and the Mid Devon Towns and Villages Character Assessment (2012).

With a view to keeping the Design Guide concise and usable it relies on referencing the more comprehensive information available in the Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment (2011) and the Mid Devon Towns and Villages Character Assessment (2012).

Both these studies have carried out extensive analysis in the field and on desktop to accumulate a vast resource of observations and other data from around the district. Carried out by the Local Authority, these documents form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and should be considered a companion resource to the Design Guide.

## Mid Devon Landscape Character Types:

Landscape character assessment is:

- The process of identifying and describing variation in character within the landscape. It includes all landscapes, whether outstanding, everyday or degraded.
- A tool for guiding landscape change and allowing the distinctive character and special qualities of landscapes to be taken into account in the planning, management and design of sustainable development.

The identification of character has been carried out in a hierarchical way across Devon and in turn across Mid Devon:

National Character Assessment identifies broad character similarities occurring throughout the country;

The Devon Character Assessment identifies geographically unique areas within the county and;

The Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment work carried out in 2012 by Mid Devon District Council maps the Landscape Character Types (LCTs) which share common characteristics but which can occur throughout the county. This study identifies 12 LCTs,

chosen from the Devon Menu and are colour coded opposite.

### Administrative Boundaries

Variations in Landscape Character rarely coincide with administrative boundaries. Because of this a hybrid methodology for the application of Landscape Character Assessment through design has been adopted within this Guide.

### Landscape Character and Design Guidance

This Design Guide has as its foundation the variation in Landscape Character across Mid Devon and the influence these variations have on settlement form.

While Landscape Character Assessment provides a basis for assessments of sensitivity and capacity for specific development types some interpretation is required to provide an adequate platform on which to base meaningful and useful Design Guidance.

### Preservation of Landscape Character

By understanding the relationship between buildings and the landscape, the contribution buildings and human activity has on the character of the landscape the Design Guide is more accurately able to shape how development

can continue to maintain the distinctiveness of settlement form and in turn the preservation of the landscape character across Mid Devon.

The second purpose of Landscape Character Assessment is to provide a tool for further guidance and it is this purpose that the Design Guide looks to the above documents to perform.

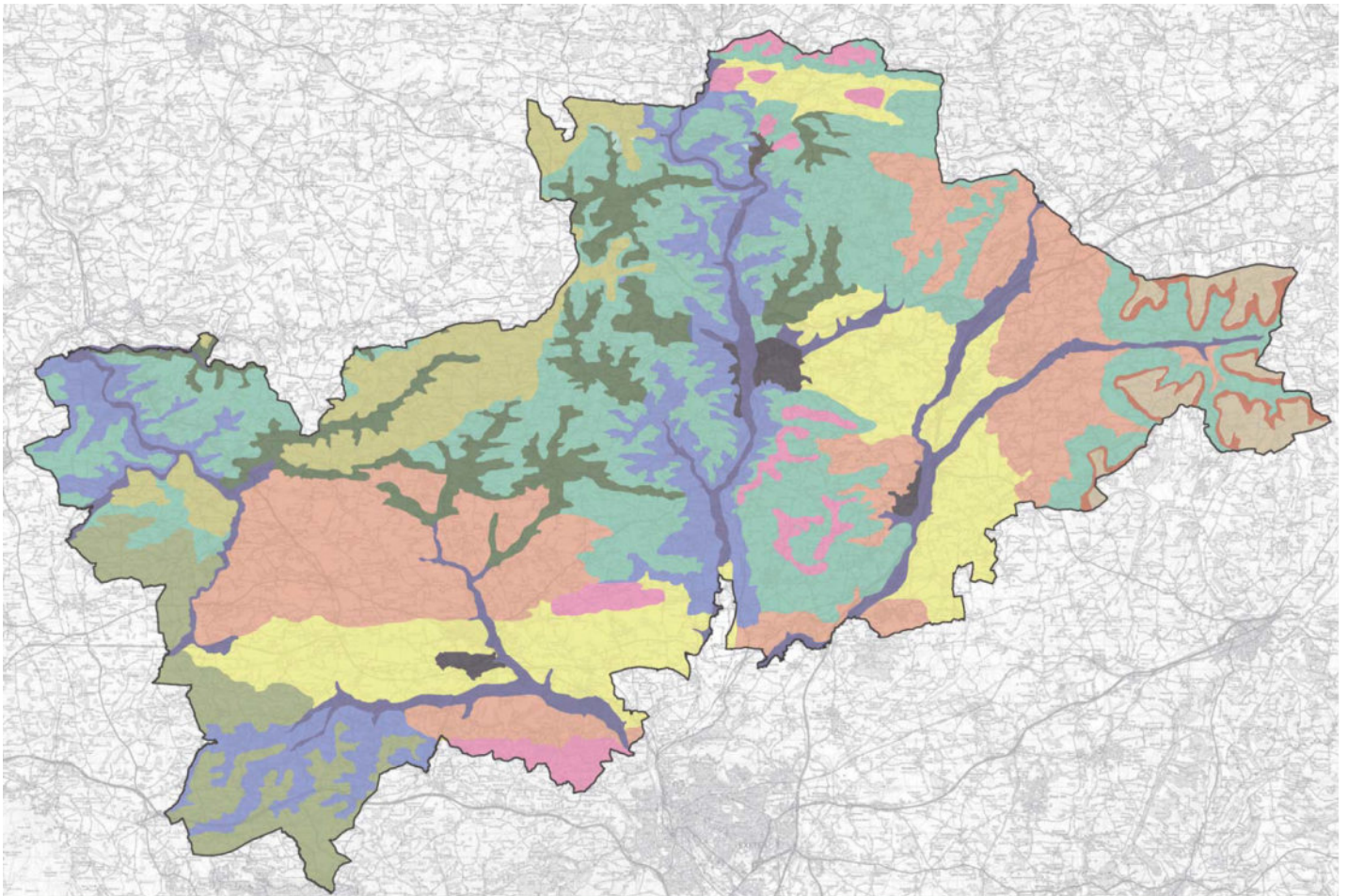
It is for this purpose that the Design Guide turns to the Mid Devon Town & Settlement Character Assessment as a representation of a combined assessment of Landscape and Settlement form.

### Mid Devon Town & Settlement Character Assessment

The Town & Settlement Character Assessment carried out by Mid Devon District Council established a thorough assessment of the majority of settlements, large and small, throughout the district. It acknowledges that buildings and settlement form are an intrinsic part of the landscape character of Mid Devon.

While it stopped short of identifying objectives for design or any intervention to address issues within each of the settlements it did establish a structure of character areas.





- LCT 1A: Open inland planned plateaux
- LCT 1E: Wooded ridges and hilltops
- LCT 1F: Farmed lowland moorland and Culm grassland
- LCT 2A: Steep wooded scarp slopes
- LCT 3A: Upper farmed and wooded valley slopes
- LCT 3B: Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes
- LCT 3C: Sparsely settled farmed valley floors
- LCT 3E: Lowland plains
- LCT 3G: River valley slopes and combes
- LCT 3H: Secluded valleys
- LCT 5A: Inland elevated undulating land
- LCT 7: Main cities and towns

# Mid Devon Settlement Character Areas:

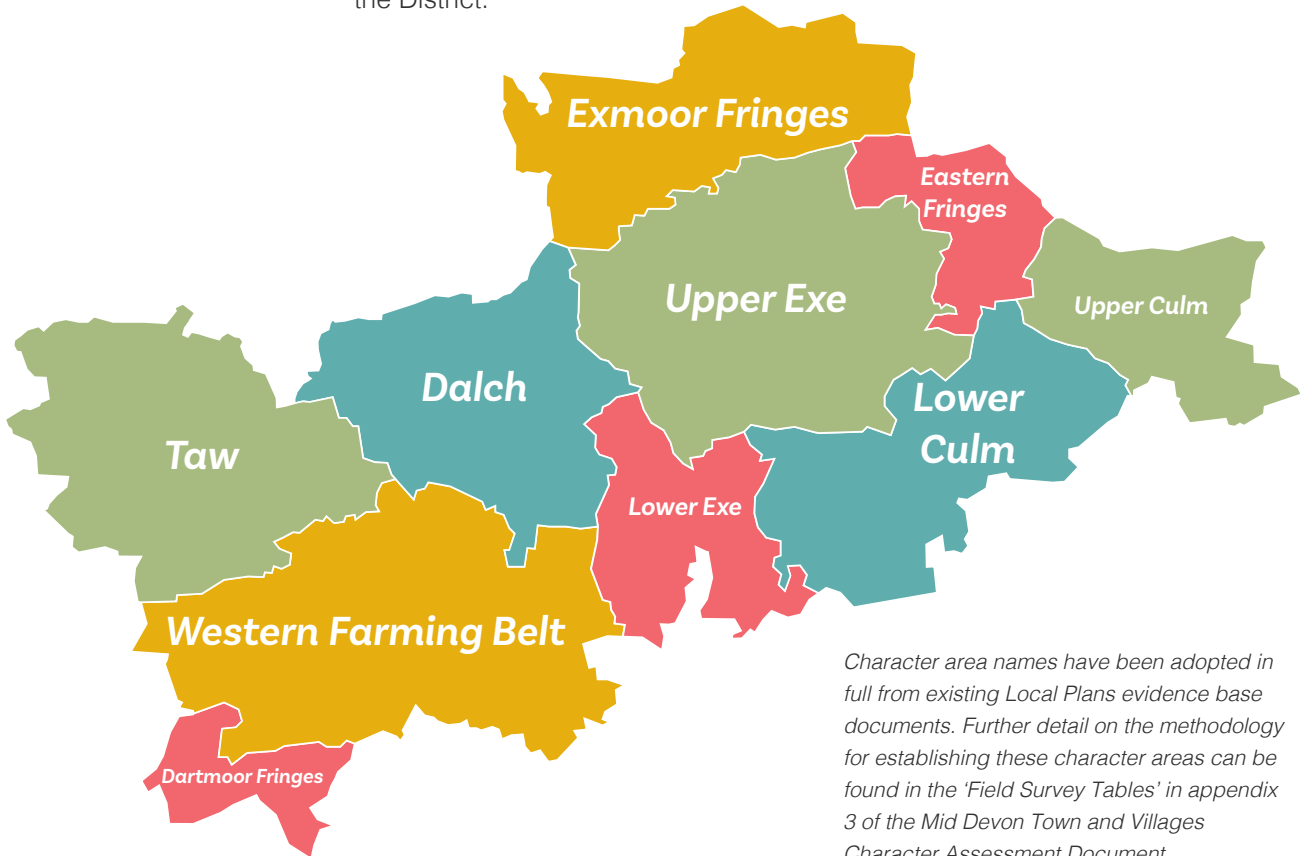
**Settlement Character Areas**  
10 Settlement Character Areas are identified, each of which are a composite of river catchment, main town catchment, landscape character, topography and geology, all of which contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the district's built environment and landscape. For ease of mapping and analysis, catchment areas follow parish boundaries, though several parishes may be included within a character area.

The Settlement Character Areas (SCAs) describe physical and human influences, such as patterns of settlement, influences from pre-historic times to the present day, as well as perceptual characteristics.

**A Foundation for Design Guidance**  
It is due to its synthesis of the variety of baseline studies which this Town & Settlement Character Assessment carried out that this Design Guide now adopts these Settlement Character Areas as the foundation of the initial approach to design across the District.

The table opposite identifies some of the main design considerations for each of the SCAs. Users should identify the location of their site within this framework.

Additional area characterisation work such as more localised landscape or area-based heritage assessments for registered parks, gardens or conservation areas are encouraged as part of design development where they compliment parish and district scale studies.



*Character area names have been adopted in full from existing Local Plans evidence base documents. Further detail on the methodology for establishing these character areas can be found in the 'Field Survey Tables' in appendix 3 of the Mid Devon Town and Villages Character Assessment Document.*



Settlement Character Area	Description and references	Main Design Considerations
<b>1. Upper Exe</b> <i>Including: Tiverton, Sampford Peverell, Uplowman, Halberton.</i>	<p>Centred around Tiverton with this and other settlements occupying flat lowland areas. Other more sporadic buildings among wooded valleys sides of the Exe Valley and on higher ground to the north of the area.</p>	<p>Contrasting development approach to low and level areas to sloped and higher areas contribute to the diversity of the landscape character. Permian sandstone exposed in lower areas gives rise to the <b>distinctive red</b> soil and buildings.</p>
<b>2. Dalch</b> <i>Including: Cheriton Fitzpaine, Kennerleigh</i>	<p>Comprises two contrasting types of landscape: the exposed plateau moorland with sweeping views of irregular rolling flattish hills and the more intricate rolling landform which includes coniferous woods, stream filled valleys and meadows and pastures.</p>	<p>Buildings often <b>clustered</b> on flat plateaux allow distant views. Development remains sparse with access to services difficult but the remote <b>rural feel</b> is distinctive of this area.</p>
<b>3. Exmoor Fringes</b> <i>Including: Bampton.</i>	<p>A steeply rolling landform. Lush fertile land primarily within the Exe Valley gives rise to tracts of medium scale fields in permanent pasture.</p>	<p><b>Limestone</b> quarried locally is prevalent in historic parts of settlements. Built form can contribute to the <b>sequence of views</b> along key routes and in long views.</p>
<b>4. Lower Culm</b> <i>Including: Cullompton, Bradninch, Kentisbeare, Uffculme, Willand,</i>	<p>Low lying flat Culm Valley, an open landform surrounding the Culm river floodplain, and the strongly undulating landform of the Blackdown Hills to the east. (See also the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24 and Design Guide for Houses).</p>	<p>Settlement form along the Culm Valley is generally linear. <b>Long reaching views</b> enjoyed across lowlands but therefore prominent within the wider landscape. Buildings contribute to the unique Blackdown Hills AONB character.</p>
<b>5. Upper Culm</b> <i>Including: Culmstock, Hemyock</i>	<p>A gently rolling and undulating landscape with low lying land along rivers and featuring the steep ridges and high plateaux of the Blackdown Hills. Small hedged fields, beech hedges and isolated mature trees. Located within the AONB national designation.</p>	<p>Limited C20th development means <b>traditional building materials</b>: Cob, Chertstone, Thatch still proliferate the area. Since settlement location and form has developed along springlines development <b>does not break/dominate skylines</b>.</p>
<b>6. Lower Exe</b> <i>Including: Bickleigh, Silverton, Thorverton</i>	<p>Located east and west of the River Exe. Upper valleys have steep wooded sides with strong sense of enclosure and lush valley landscape. Landform becomes more gently rolling further from the River Exe, with medium scale arable and pasture fields.</p>	<p>Reflect typical settlement association with the River. Space for new development away from the river form contends with <b>rising slopes and varied orientation and outlook</b>. Landform offers mix of views and enclosure, obscuring views.</p>
<b>7. Western Farming Belt</b> <i>Including: Crediton, Bow, Copplestone, Newton St Cyres, Sandford, Shobrooke, Yeoford.</i>	<p>Open, low lying, gently rolling landscape, prosperous agricultural area. Medium to large scale arable fields, some areas of improved grassland. Moving north, the landscape becomes more steeply undulating, rolling landform.</p>	<p>Settlement growth is a result of good access via rail and road along the valley bottom. <b>Promoting connectivity</b> with these maintains relationships between landscape, movement and the settlement form which results from these.</p>
<b>8. Eastern Fringes</b> <i>Including: Holcombe Rogus, Burlescombe</i>	<p>Gently to strongly undulating landscape with small to medium scale farming. Dense, beech hedgerows are well managed and bound regularly shaped, medium to large scale enclosures of pasture.</p>	<p>Enclosed landscape form results in <b>short views</b> with mature trees and green close by forming a <b>landscape back drop</b> to many buildings.</p>
<b>9. Taw</b> <i>Including: Chawleigh, Lapford, Morchard Bishop, Zeal Monachorum</i>	<p>Dramatic 'Taw Valley', and contrasts with the surrounding open elevated farmland. Wooded slopes, bends and spurs. Away from the river landform is more gently rolling, small scale pasture.</p>	<p>Settlements mainly on valley sides or hilltops. Those on high land afford <b>expansive views</b> but are present in many views. Building <b>orientation relative to contours</b> influences overall appearance.</p>
<b>10. Dartmoor Fringes</b> <i>Including: Cheriton Bishop</i>	<p>A strong cultural association with that of Dartmoor, as it forms part of the setting of the moor. There is a strong sense of isolation with far reaching views from higher areas.</p>	<p>Views from higher ground may influence building orientation and positioning of landmarks within the landscape.</p>







# MAIN TOWNS

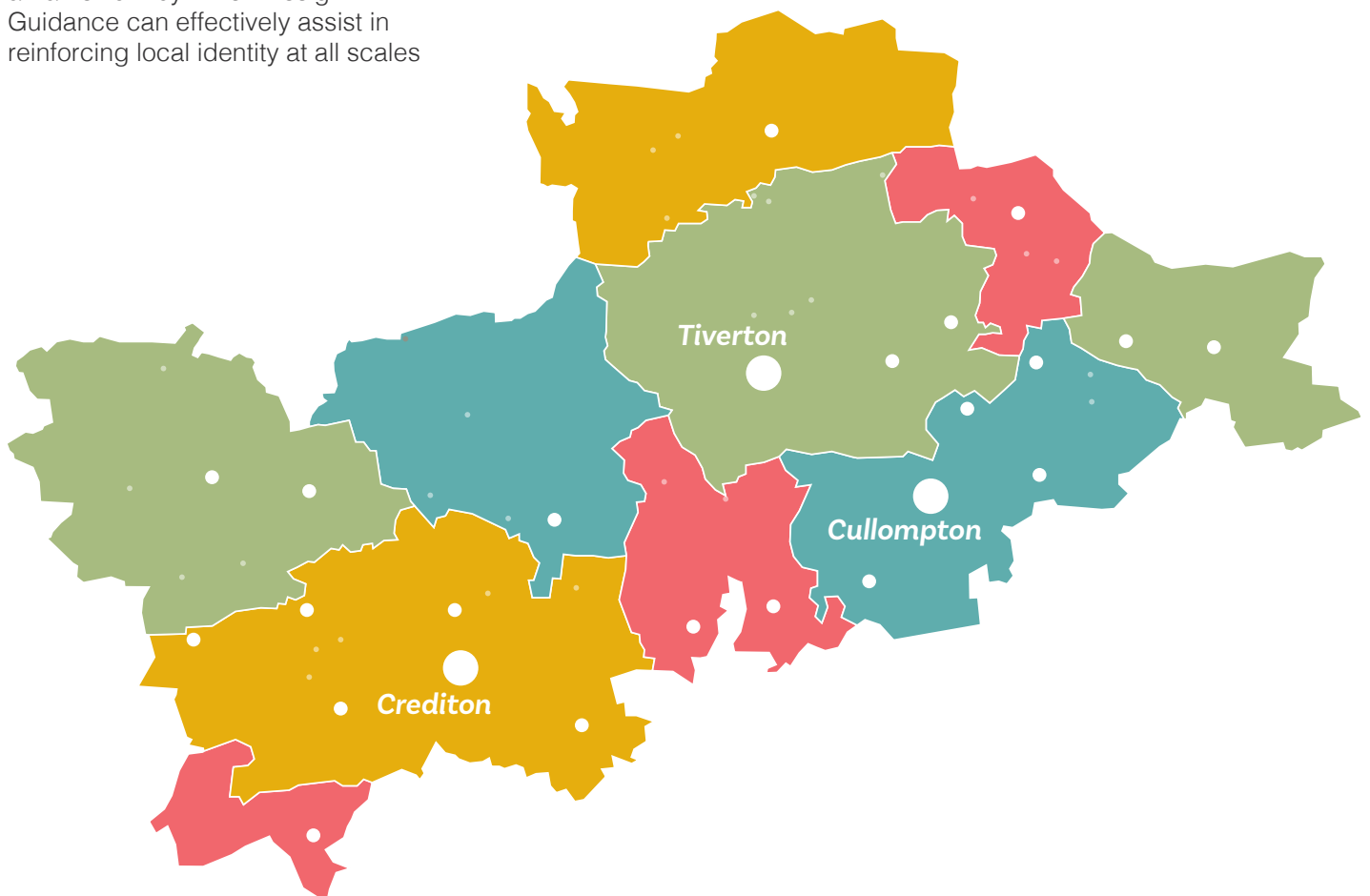
**Cullompton, Tiverton and Crediton are the focus of development in the district. In achieving the scale and mix of development set through the Local Plan, the Design Guide can assist in retaining each town's individual identity.**

The Local Plan's sustainable development priorities (Policy S1) and specification of amount and distribution of development (Policy S2) outline the strategy in the district for development to be concentrated in the most sustainable locations at Cullompton, Tiverton and Crediton.

Within the scale and mix of development set by the Local Plan, the Design Guide determines a framework by which Design Guidance can effectively assist in reinforcing local identity at all scales

of planned development. Work in preparing this Design Guide has included a broad assessment, and collated sources which have helped identify a summary of existing strengths and weaknesses of each of the 3 main towns. (Many more exist in each case and this chapter is intended to provide a basis for the further attention which may be given to each settlement.)

In each case the Local Plan policy for each town (Tiverton: S10; Cullompton: S11; Crediton S12) has been the foundation for a spatial interpretation of these strengths and weaknesses. However, these should not be construed as masterplans or development frameworks for the main towns, they exist purely to structure the design guidance.



## Settlement Form

It is difficult to generalise about the settlement form of the three Main Towns. As larger settlements they display various patterns of development across different parts of the settlement. It is also difficult to identify concise rules or guidance as to how the design of various sites across these settlements as a whole contributes to the overall form and structure of the settlement and the landscapes within which they lie.

Design Guidance for the main towns therefore is more usefully steered towards encouraging the enhancement of recognisable assets and strengths of the towns and overcoming weaknesses and threats.

An initial broad observation of how each settlement is positioned in the Landscape in order to identify the main drivers of identity and distinctiveness in each of the 3 places:

**Tiverton:** is positioned at the junction of the valley landforms of the River Exe and Lowman. The majority of the town is on level ground within the valley bottom and straddling the two river course. The rising slopes on all sides enclose the town and define its setting.

**Cullompton:** stretches in a linear form along the sloped side to the River Culm corridor. More undulating landscape form to the west has shaped the layout of development to that side of the town and the river corridor constraints the settlement form to the east.

**Crediton:** is a linear settlement hidden in a valley. North and south facing slopes address each other proximately across the valley and the town centre is nestled along the bottom of the valley. There is a strong sequence of built form, spaces and events along the length of the valley. As the town has grown, development has spilled out of the ends of the valley posing new challenges to its identity as a contained and discrete valley settlement.

The Conservation Area Appraisals for each of the 3 settlements have also contributed to understanding the full character of each of the settlements. Cullompton also has a Conservation Area Management Plan which identifies where changes and improvements would be welcome and could take place. This provides further context for design and the application of the Design Guide.

## Coordinated Design and Development in the Main Towns

The Design Guide's purpose in relation to the Main Towns is to amplify the adopted Local Plan Review (2013-2033) policies relating to each location:

- *Policy S10: Tiverton*
- *Policy S11: Cullompton*
- *Policy S12: Crediton*

Each of these towns comprises a variety of development opportunities and allocated sites and it is not within the scope of this guide to consider each site on its own merits. Furthermore, as new sites are identified, the guide can remain relevant to all future development opportunities where it is not site specific.

The Design Guide therefore recommends development coming forward in the main towns is considered in the context of the framework plans which have been prepared as part of this design guide and which reflect an initial spatial interpretation of the Local Plan policy objectives for each town (policies S10-S12).

In each individual site scenario, it will be necessary to carry out further site and context analysis to understand more thoroughly the contribution each site can make in addressing the policy objectives for each town and any opportunities they provide to respond to the climate emergency declaration and subsequent commitment to zero-carbon development in Mid Devon by 2030.

A site needs first to be appreciated within the context of the whole town, the challenges the town faces and the role the site has to play in contributing to a joined up solution. The Design Guide can assist this process by providing broad spatial interpretations of the challenges articulated as framework plans for each of the 3 main towns.

In some cases, for neighbourhoods, or distinct districts within towns, area or themed masterplans may be advantageous in coordinating a number of sites and development pressures. Identifying objectives for these areas in the context of the whole town can bring clarity of vision, avoid piecemeal development and ensure the added value of every project is harnessed but at minimum additional effort or cost. It can also help adopt an holistic view of development across the town which contributes to the sustainable whole and can be brought about in an integrated way.

It is also important to coordinate work with those areas embarking on, or having completed, a Neighbourhood Plan to understand the community objectives for various distinct parts of each town.





CREDITON

## Methodology for establishing a framework for Design Guidance in the Main Towns:

*Broad observations from research carried out as part of the preparation of this Design Guide and considered along side the policies for each of the 3 Main Towns combine to form a framework for Design Guidance which can establish a strategic approach to design for a variety of development which may occur in each of the 3 Main Towns. Design for individual development will need to build on this broad framework and follow design guidance in order to identify more specifically the approach appropriate in each site's case.*

*The following process has been followed to ensure an evidenced and Local Plan led Design Guide framework:*

1. *Cross reference policies with main town strategy maps;*
2. *Assessment of town wide strengths and weaknesses;*
3. *Align Local Plan policies with Strengths & Weaknesses;*
4. *Identify Local Plan policy challenges spatially;*
5. *Identify assets of the town which Local Plan policies aim to retain/protect;*
6. *Create a photographic catalogue of strengths & weaknesses;*
7. *Undertake townscape assessment;*
9. *Identify opportunities with reference to townscape assessment for addressing Local Plan policy challenges;*
10. *Establish a Design Guide framework plan;*
11. *Articulate Design Guidance for a variety of site situations.*





# TIVERTON

## *Strengths & Weaknesses*

Tiverton is currently the largest town within the district but its assets are also its constraints to further growth.

The town is enclosed by moderately steep slopes to the south east and south west. To the north the town is constrained by the route of the North Devon link road and sensitive landscape and the setting of the Knightshayes Estate beyond this. The town was originally formed around the river but topography has dictated it expanded eastwards. This natural growth continues with the delivery of the Eastern Urban Extension.

Maintaining a sustainable network of pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre becomes more difficult for neighbourhoods extending to the east of the town and opportunities exist to explore how connectivity and integration can be achieved.

There are opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle

connectivity within neighbourhood areas, overcoming the difficulty in accessing local facilities. The presence of a variety of barriers to movement and interaction limit communities' capacity to develop in a sustainable way despite good physical and economic conditions in which to do so.

Improvements in the quality of the environment in and around the town could encourage more sustainable patterns of living to emerge and for the town to grow and attract the inward investment and confidence of its residents as a place to be proud of. Tiverton's parks and green spaces could be linked to become more prominent and accessible resources, particularly for residential areas to the north east of the town. The public realm within and around the town centre can be used to enhance its appeal and improve the perception of its proximity as a good quality and unique local resource for residents.

The town has a variety of good quality heritage assets which could contribute more effectively for the benefit of



## Strengths



The surrounding landscape is visible throughout the town.



Developments near the town centre create interesting sequences of connections.



Heritage assets within the town centre area create distinctive environment.



Narrow streets and building enclosure link the town centre to its surrounding neighbourhoods.



Mature parkland with buildings overlooking the space.



Historic streets and buildings have been adapted for traffic and a mix of uses.

## Weaknesses



Pedestrian connections among new estates are an after thought.



Oversize highways through neighbourhoods result in poor public realm and car dominance.



Large junctions to small infill, cul-de-sac developments in outlying areas.



Pedestrian and cycle links around the town not integrated well with neighbouring areas.



Highways dominate layouts among the newest neighbourhoods around the town.



Town setting and surrounding landscape not referenced in sensitive way in new developments.

# A Framework for Design Guidance in Tiverton

The preparation of the Design Guide provides an opportunity to improve the quality of future development in Tiverton and ensure it can contribute to the continuing vibrancy and sustainability of the town as a whole and any opportunities it may offer to respond to the climate change emergency.

This broad framework identifies a series of components to the town which together can provide some guidance regarding the role new development can play in structuring

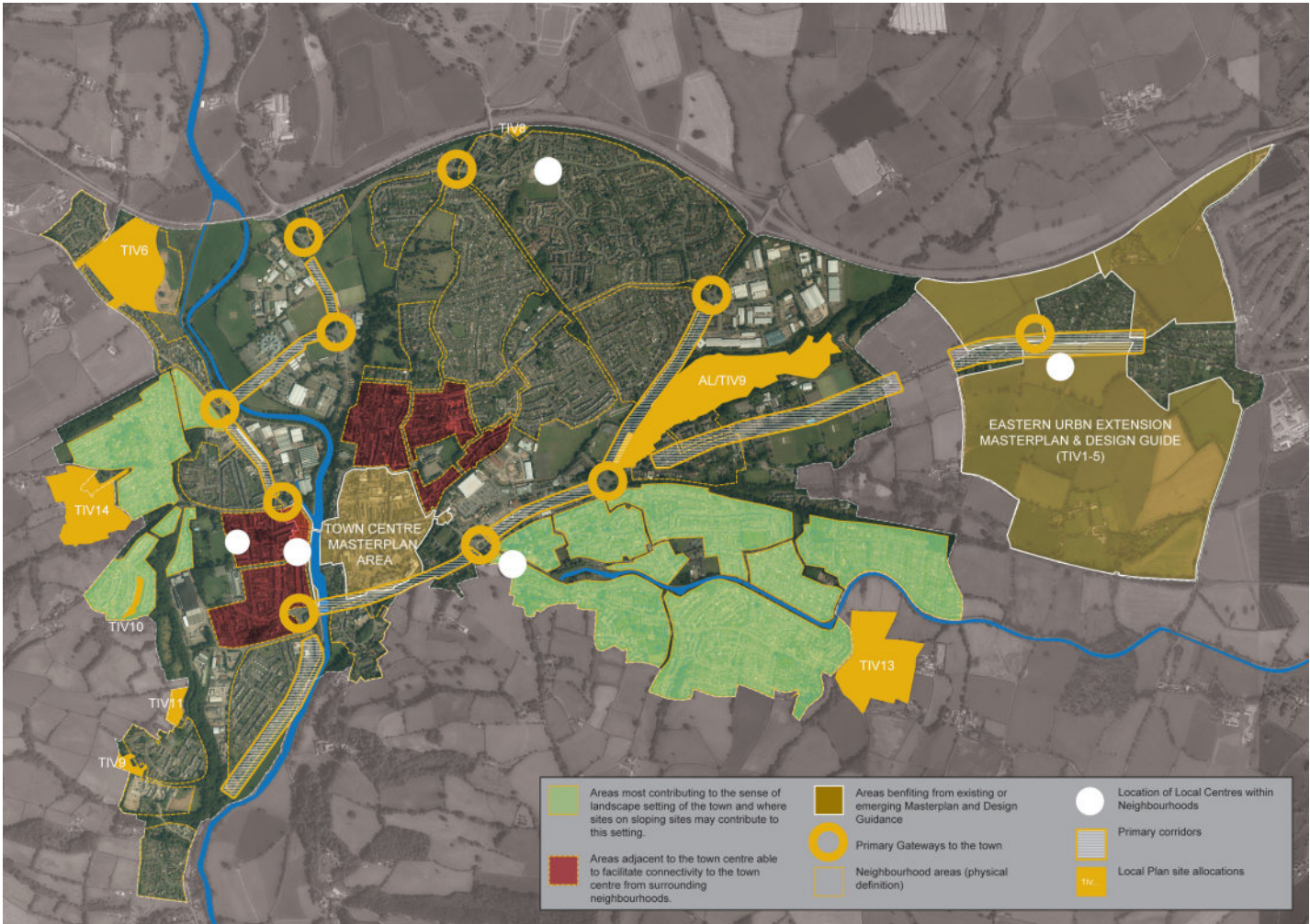
the town and enhancing its distinctiveness.

Design proposals for even the smallest of sites should consider the contribution they can make to the overall structure of the town and initial analysis of the site and its context should look to the wider setting within the town to reveal the opportunities within a broader framework which any development may have.

This framework for design guidance

is only intended to guide further investigations into the role of a site in its context. All design proposals should be justified against their own appreciation of the context and the wider townscape form and function and not rely on this framework alone.

Tiverton displays the remnants of a settlement which was formed initially around an enclosed core. It also grew up either side of the River Exe and therefore demonstrates characteristics of a divided settlement.





Town component	Main Design Considerations and references
<b>1. Town Centre</b>	<p>Reference Town Centre Masterplan for town centre issues.</p> <p>Sites around the margin of the town centre area can <b>enhance legibility</b> and wayfinding towards the town centre by <b>creating landmarks</b> and a <b>clear street hierarchy</b>.</p> <p>Sites at the periphery of the town can contribute to improvements to accessibility and sustainability of the town centre by establishing <b>better pedestrian and cycle movement</b>.</p>
<b>2. Corridors</b>	<p>The approaches into the town can better reflect the towns setting in the wider landscape.</p> <p>Sites along these corridors, regardless of use, can assist in creating a town more connected to its surrounding landscape by considering key views, <b>placing key landmark buildings</b> and providing a higher quality environment which introduces the town to those approaching by all means. Buildings should avoid turning their backs on currently highways dominated corridors. Public realm and pedestrian and cycle movement should be an integral part of proposals for any sites located along the main corridors into the town. Most corridors approach along shallow gradients and while topography is not a major constraint in most cases, <b>building heights and orientation</b> can contribute to an awareness of the surrounding landscape and legibility of the town.</p>
<b>3. Gateways</b>	<p>Tiverton will benefit from a much <b>clearer series of gateways</b> when approaching from all directions around the town and between areas within the town. Building form and use of public realm can be effectively utilised to <b>create more recognisable features</b> along key routes and to aid pedestrian legibility generally around the town. Prominent features and their locations within views and the <b>sequence of movement</b> around the town should be consideration on every site.</p>
<b>4. Neighbourhoods</b>	<p>New development around the town, even where modest in size, should consider the contribution it can make to achieving a more <b>integrated series of neighbourhoods</b>. Significant barriers exist between neighbourhoods currently from busy or wide roads to boundaries or large impermeable cul-de-sac estates. The strategic opportunity of every site to make connections should be considered and for layouts not to prohibit further the movement around the town.</p>
<b>5. Local Centres</b>	<p>Local centres are limited throughout Tiverton. For day to day needs the lack of local shops and facilities can encourage short car journeys to the town centre (or to out of town destinations) which contributes to the dominance of the car throughout the town. Development should contribute to the <b>legibility and accessibility by foot or cycle</b> of nearby Local Centres. The design of Local Centres should be founded on them being <b>safe, walkable and sociable places</b> with the public realm quality a priority above car parking and highways arrangements.</p>
<b>6. Eastern Urban Extension</b>	<p>Reference the Eastern Urban Extension Masterplan and Design Guide which establishes a framework for the distinctiveness of the Urban Extension as a series of neighbourhoods and public open spaces with facilities at the centre. Care should be taken in other development opportunities which arise to the east of the town to consider the Urban Extension and its design principles as part of the context.</p>
<b>7. Surrounding Slopes</b>	<p>Development on sites around the town on rising ground often adopts unconventional layouts allowing for the topography of these areas. Awareness of these development patterns in <b>views from the town out</b> must be a factor in design for these sites since the surrounding slopes are a defining characteristic of views out of the town, giving the town its sense of having a distinct setting. <b>Tree canopy and detached built form</b> within the landscape contribute to this. Buildings which break the skyline should be avoided. Gaps through which vistas of the town can be glimpsed assist the overall sense of place from within these sloped margins.</p>
<b>8. Employment Areas</b>	<p>Improvements to <b>public realm and pedestrian connectivity</b> in these areas, typically vehicular dominated business parks, are essential to <b>integrate more sustainably with the town</b>. Where employment areas are positioned on the edge of the town they have the potential to perform a strategic gateway role, but they fail to do so. New developments should <b>turn buildings to face the street</b> and consider <b>landscape as a more usable resource</b> for the public and employees. Distribution of functions within an employment building can <b>create active frontage</b> and <b>provide overlooking</b> to the street (e.g. office space and taller built form at a corner).</p>



# CULLOMPTON

## *Strengths & Weaknesses*

Cullompton is located on gentle slopes which rise to the west of the Culm river corridor. This corridor, as well as the M5 and the mainline railway, have created significant constraints to the town's growth to the east. As a result the town has grown further to the west occupying increasingly more undulating land. The landform creates challenges for the design of legible and well connected development.

Cullompton is distinct in its positioning within the river corridor landscape type with no other settlements in the district occupying the same position in relation to the landform. This location affords distinctive views out over an expansive low lying landscape with the backdrop of the Blackdown Hills. In the foreground however, the motorway and railway dominate the environment.

An Article 4(2) Direction is currently in force and the town has a High Street Heritage Action Zone and there are a series of several historical foci – the Roman fort (potential for public open space), the early medieval church and later medieval market areas. Coordination between High

Street initiatives, other town centre design and heritage assets will be important in affecting sustainable change.

Proposals to create a Garden Village to the east of the river corridor will mean Cullompton becoming the largest town in the district and while infrastructure and access support this strategic aim, there are challenges for the design of existing areas of the town retaining their identity and for new areas becoming effectively integrated and becoming a larger sustainable settlement.

The main route through the town which includes Fore Street, leading to the High Street and in turn leading to Station Road and access to the motorway runs parallel to the contours. This accentuates the town's historic linear form although at either end of the route through the town the approaches to the town are of poor quality. Development either side does not reflect the opportunity to create gateways to the town centre, or provide any sequence to the arrival to the town. This is particularly true on the approach from the motorway and the former location of the railway station (potentially reopening).



## Strengths



A well defined town centre: Fore Street and High Street offer space and diversity.



The legibility and connectivity to the town centre is good in the immediate surroundings.



Good examples of buildings complementing landform outside of the town centre area.



The town has a variety of historic routes connecting to Fore Street and the High Street.



Alleys and pedestrian links directly from Fore Street surrounded by dense building form.



Access to a mix of uses and spaces in the immediate surroundings to the town centre.

## Weaknesses



Congestion and poor quality public realm impact the air quality and environment.



Development has not always responded well to the river corridor - a distinct landscape setting.



Recent development adjacent to the town centre has not retained the linear form.



Boundaries and fronts of properties have not contributed to attractive streets and spaces.



There has not been an integrated approach to development and public space.



Piece meal development has failed to create easy links for pedestrians (a historic characteristic).

## A Framework for Design Guidance in Cullompton

Cullompton's primary linear form, stretches along the uniformly gentle slope to the west of the Culm, concentrated around Fore Street and the High Street and this should become the focus of design of sites throughout the town.

Development proposals in areas directly adjacent to Fore Street and High Street offer opportunities to improve the legibility of the town centre throughout the town. These areas could be suitable for a mix of uses which are complimentary to

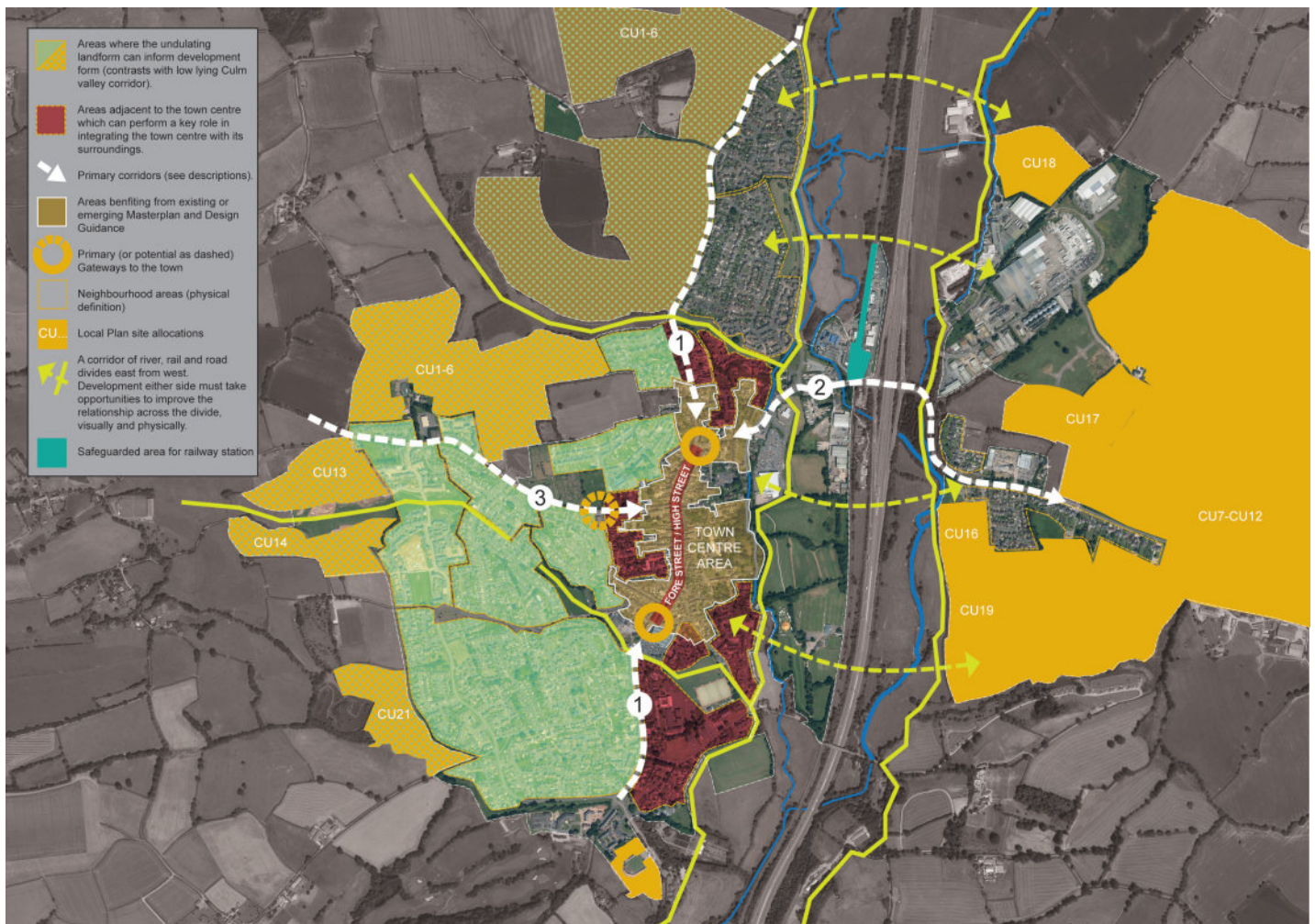
the town centre subject to the site's suitability in planning terms and relevant planning policies.

Development peripheral to the town centre can contribute to improving the ease of access by foot and attractiveness of the town centre whereby the sustainability of the town centre is supported.

Sites large and small, throughout the town should initially consider their role in addressing the focus and connectivity to the town centre

by bringing about incremental improvements to the integrity of the street hierarchy throughout the town.

Routes towards the town centre from all directions would benefit from structuring of building frontage and public realm to create sequence of views and safe space for pedestrians and cyclists. No single site by itself can affect these changes and therefore the coordination of site by site design is also required.





Town component	Main Design Considerations and references
<b>1. Fore Street &amp; High Street</b>	Maintain distinction between the narrow enclosure of Fore Street and the wider framed space of the High Street. Sites fronting the street should ensure the <b>continuity of building line</b> with no setbacks. Along Fore Street there should be as few gaps as possible between all storeys of buildings. Along the High Street while most buildings are still attached at ground floor the roof form is more detached providing a more open feel to the skyline. Variety in the height, materials and roof form and orientation can <b>perpetuate the existing diversity</b> as long as the building line is constant. Any vehicular access ways which are required should be kept as narrow and discrete as possible but <b>pedestrian alleyways and cut throughs can be frequent</b> .
<b>2. Fore Street &amp; High Street Margins</b>	Sites at the margins of the town centre area located behind Fore Street and the High Street should have a <b>highly permeable layout</b> with routes orientated towards and connecting to Fore Street and High Street. Intensification of these areas can provide the opportunity for a <b>mix of residential and other uses</b> subject to other policy. These areas are suitable locations for <b>prominent landmarks</b> , visible from around the town.
<b>3. Primary Corridors</b>	<p><b>1. North/South approaches.</b> Greater enclosure and sense of <b>sequence and gateway</b> in the built form achieved through the use of the undulating landform and development of sites which front onto this route.</p> <p><b>2. Approach from motorway/reopened railway station and East-West connecting route.</b> Recognition of the contrast between the open river corridor and the enclosure of the town centre and reflection of this in the development of sites either side of this route. The opportunity of the reopening of the railway could attend to the need to create a more significant <b>sense of arrival</b> on the approach to the town from the former station location. The station road corridor would benefit from a coordinated <b>public realm strategy</b>.</p> <p><b>3. Tiverton Road.</b> Occasional, individual /detached <b>prominent buildings</b> positioned along this route would help mark <b>routes to surrounding neighbourhoods</b> and punctuate the <b>approach to the town centre</b>.</p>
<b>3. Neighbourhoods</b>	Any opportunity to establish a <b>greater sense of street hierarchy</b> should be taken including the strategic use of corner plots, differentiation between street character through common boundary and threshold treatment, street trees and public realm treatment and variation in the highways specification for residential areas. <b>Mitigate divisions caused by the landform</b> by including topographically difficult areas as public open space with streets and buildings surrounding and overlooking the spaces.
<b>4. Low lying, river corridor margin</b>	The open aspect of the area between east and west should be retained. Sites to either side can be organised to make the most of <b>expansive views</b> to the north and the south and where possible <b>encourage public access</b> to footpaths and routes through the space.
<b>5. Western variable topography</b>	The undulating topography to the west requires a contrasting building form to that of the town centre and its margins however this should not be at the expense of the <b>integrity and legibility of streets and public realm</b> . All sites should ensure <b>distinction between public and private</b> areas. This is generally achieved by buildings which face the street and enclose private space at the rear. Safe, and obvious connectivity through these areas is key to ensuring connected communities and sustainable patterns of movement. Undevelopable parts of the landform and strategic <b>green infrastructure should be used to effectively link communities</b> and the town centre placing <b>landscape at the heart of the area's identity</b> .
<b>6. River/Road/Rail</b>	While infrastructure capacity and accessibility is key to the town's growth and sustainability, design response to negative aspects such as noise or visual intrusion should <b>take care to avoid equally detrimental consequences</b> such as impact on views, east-west movement, green space, conservation of heritage assets or the emergence of a highways dominated environment, particularly in the case of the provision of a town centre relief road (Policy CU19, Local Plan Review).
<b>7. East of Cullompton Garden Village</b>	The proposed Garden Village to the east of the town is the subject its own masterplanning exercise to structure development and coordinate design. This should however be carried out in the context of the whole town's setting and take the opportunity to address any of the issues above in a <b>coordinated</b> way.
<b>8. North West Urban Extension</b>	As a strategic scale development, the NW Urban Extension benefits from its own masterplan, however, its integration with the town is very important to ensure it also <b>contributes to the issues and opportunities for the town</b> as outlined in the Local Plan and in all the areas above.



# CREDITON

## *Strengths & Weaknesses*

Crediton's strengths and weaknesses stem directly from the constraints imposed upon its form by the landscape. Located within a steep sided east-west orientated valley, it is one of the most distinctly linear settlements in the district, the town centre displaying a series of linear segments linked together as one.

The historic linear form of the settlement occupies the space along the bottom of the valley form but the rising slopes to the north and the south of the town increase the perception of the enclosed linear form and the ridges of the hills facing one another echo the building line along either side of the high street.

Constraints on the expansion of the town to the north and south have meant that more recent development has been to the east and west ends of the valley where there is exposure to views from the surrounding landscape. To the west this has comprised residential development which has been relatively sensitive to these views from

the west and occupied an undulating landscape without a large impact to the surrounding landscape.

In the east, the predominant land use is employment. This has created an impermeable and vehicle dominated environment. As development continues to the east the town risks causing damage to its own setting as it creeps closer to the historic park landscapes of Shobrooke to the east, Creedy to the north and Downes to the south east.

The topography which constrains (and defines) Crediton's development form presents a significant challenge to the town being able to remain accessible using sustainable means. Design innovation and problem solving which enable development to respond to the challenge of climate change in this particular regard will be welcomed.



## Strengths



The town centre supports a range of facilities, retail and vibrant spaces.



The East Town area displays distinct urban form and assembly of historic buildings.



St Lawrence Green is a unique feature of the historic form of the settlement.



The linear form of the town is made up of distinct segments and transitions.



New interventions like the public plaza enhance the surroundings to the town centre.



The sense of the town in the valley is appreciated from locations across the town.

## Weaknesses



The approaches to the town are let down by the lack of landmark buildings and their uses.



The quality and safety of the public realm between the station and town centre is poor.



Development affects the setting of surrounding historic parklands.



The sense of enclosure in the valley is threatened by buildings on the ridge.



Development tumbles out at each end of the valley into surrounding landscapes.



Congestion and poor quality public realm impact the air quality and environment.

## A Framework for Design Guidance in Crediton

The smallest of the main three settlements in the district and yet most complex in terms of the constraints which have influenced the growth of the town and which continue to influence the need for a variety of design responses.

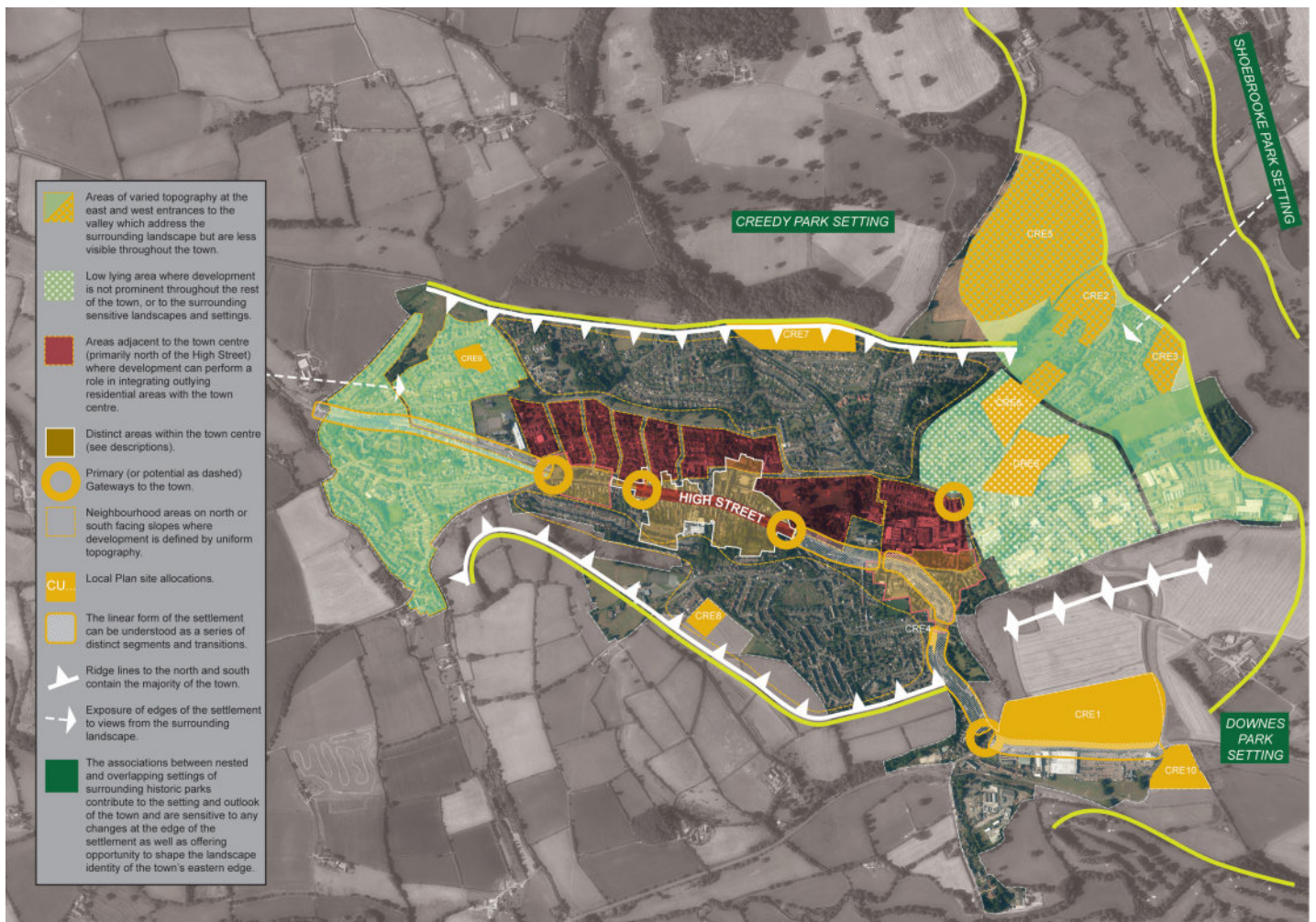
A compact town centre form, positioned at the centre of the 'arena' created by the valley landform means that surrounding neighbourhoods look down and over the town. As a result the town centre area and its immediate surroundings

can continue to support a dense form and opportunity for a variety of landmarks which feature in views and aid navigation throughout the town. Development on sites within this area can assist the overall legibility of the town centre and its integration with and accessibility to the outlying neighbourhoods.

There is also justification for a mix of uses in and around the town centre area, subject to other policy requirements and needs assessment, but which contributes to

reducing carbon emissions by promoting a self sustaining local neighbourhood which does not rely on the car for access.

Overall the design should seek to retain the town's identity as a hidden place to be discovered within the valley, but with highly prominent areas at the west and east entrances to the valley the visibility of the current edges and potential new development this concealed identity becomes prominent within the wider landscape.





Town component	Main Design Considerations and references
1. The High Street, north side	<i>The High Street stretches East West resulting in the north side of the street enjoying more sun. This should be reflected in the design of a <b>generous public realm</b>. The dominant material on the north elevation is <b>red brick</b>. Buildings should <b>retain the existing building line</b> and <b>maintain the continuity</b> along the street which in turn maintains the strong linear form. Most buildings are 3 storeys, with <b>ridges parallel to the road</b>, although <b>eaves height and parapet details vary</b>. There are very few side streets, spaced at more than 100m apart and few pedestrian alleyways between these.</i>
2. The High Street, south side	<i>The south elevation has more <b>painted and rendered buildings</b>. Buildings are typically long side on to the street with <b>no setback</b>. At ground floor shop fronts are single (up to 6m) fronted and double (approx 9m) fronted, where as above ground floor <b>colour and materials usually span the building width</b>. Windows are generally symmetrical. Traditional joinery shop fronts provide <b>variety of colour and ornamentation</b> and are of a higher quality to modern upvc printed signs.</i>
3. High Street margins	<i>In and around the town centre area <b>development can afford to be dense</b> where access is easy to the centre. <b>Layout is adhoc</b> which helps ensure the linear form of the High Street remains distinct. However, in this adhoc, patchwork layout, some <b>wayfinding and additional permeability</b> is needed to <b>improve connectivity</b> between surrounding neighbourhoods and the High Street. The area around the western end of the High Street and St Lawrence Green are some of the oldest parts of the town and incorporating or referencing their heritage and public realm value into development proposals will help to improve their contribution to the identity of the town.</i>
4. South facing slopes	<i>Development on the north of the valley (south facing slopes) enjoys a lot of sunlight throughout the day. Consequently <b>larger gardens and public green areas</b> are found throughout this area. Despite this, development should seek to maintain the <b>integrity of streets</b> with buildings facing the street and enclosing private space to the rear. The <b>legibility of streets</b> which descend the slope directly to the High Street should be enhanced where possible.</i>
5. North facing slopes	<i>The south side of the valley is steeper and with the shading here this results in less development which is north facing. As a result, views south from the other side of the valley generally have a green backdrop and any further development on north facing slopes should <b>avoid breaking the ridge line</b> so that the landscape setting in the valley can be appreciated. More frequent <b>links down the hill</b> to the High Street should be explored to <b>improve access</b> to the neighbourhoods on this side of the valley.</i>
6. East valley entrance	<i>The town has seen its most recent expansion to the east, the majority of this being employment space in the form of industrial estates. New development provides the opportunity to <b>rationalise the building form</b>, reestablishing the distinctiveness and <b>identity of East Town</b> and vastly <b>improving legibility</b> and the approach into the town from the east. <b>New gateway features</b> are needed to the north east and to the east where the supermarket development and bypass road contribute little to the townscape. New edge of settlement condition and views into the valley here need to consider the <b>setting of the 3 historic parklands</b> as part of their context and justify their layout and design with respect to these views.</i>
7. West valley entrance	<i>To the far western end of the valley the landform is more undulating resulting in a variety of <b>open, glimpsed and obscured views</b> of the wider landscape beyond. The design response will vary according to localised topography however, preserving the <b>sense of discovery</b> of the town in valley will depend on considerate development at the valley entrances.</i>
8. Beyond the valley	<i>Where possible constraining development form to <b>within and below the ridge lines</b> to the north and south of the town assist in preserving the distinct linear and contained form of the town. Beyond this, various development proposals must seek to <b>create distinction</b> between themselves and the town in the valley. They must consider the <b>wider landscape setting</b> as part of their context.</i>







# VILLAGES

**The settlements have a unique character, with a variety of building styles, materials and ages. These settlements have diverse relationships with their surrounding landscape, either hidden in wooded valleys, nestled within the folds of rolling hills or sited on fairly flat elevated plateaux.**

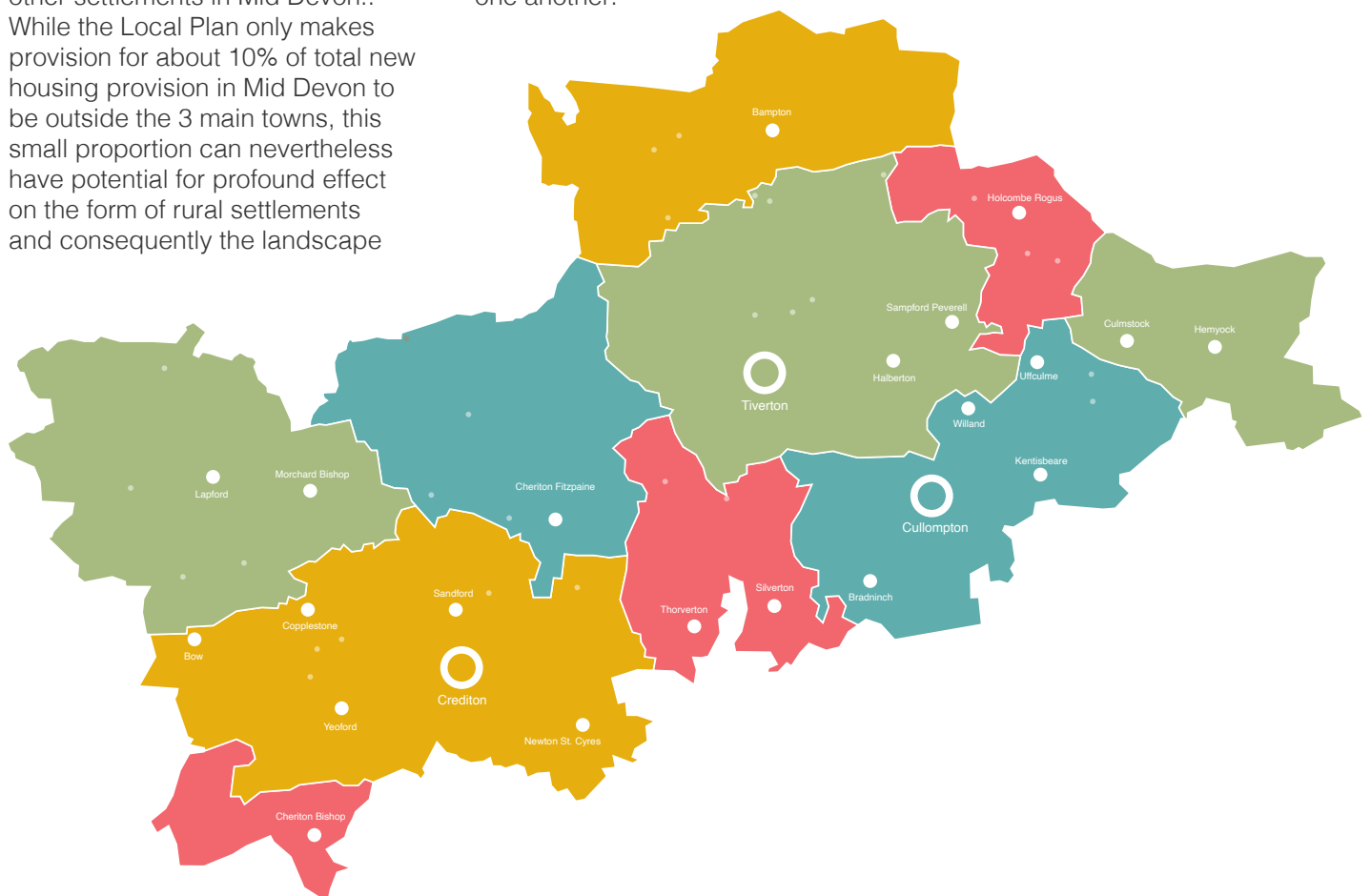
There are 22 designated villages set out in Local Plan policy S13 which are considered to be appropriate for a limited level of development based on their physical characteristics and availability of services.

While the Local Plan makes policy provision for development at the 22 designated villages and 3 main towns, design guidance in this chapter can also be applicable to development (where permitted) at other settlements in Mid Devon.. While the Local Plan only makes provision for about 10% of total new housing provision in Mid Devon to be outside the 3 main towns, this small proportion can nevertheless have potential for profound effect on the form of rural settlements and consequently the landscape

character as well as facilitating smaller communities meaningfully responding to the climate change emergency.

The methodology for preparing this Design Guide has included characterising (by a process of field surveying and desktop study) the 22 designated villages and other settlements across the district into a series of typologies which display common characteristics and forms to one another.

Mid Devon District Council have completed Conservation Area Appraisals for many villages and Management Plans for some. These identify where changes and improvements would be welcome and could take place. These provide further context for design and the application of the Design Guide. Details of these studies can be found on the MDCC website.



## Settlement Typologies

The process of field survey work and desktop analysis has arrived at the summary of 7 settlement typologies which can be recognised across Mid Devon.

### Generalisations of settlement form.

The Design Guide for rural settlements is based primarily based on the characterisation of 22 Villages as defined within the Local Plan (Policy S13) but is also relevant to the form of the main towns: Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton, as well as settlements without a boundary which fall with the Local Plan 'Countryside' policy (S14).

Settlements may demonstrate a variety of characters and it is unlikely that any one settlement is as simple in form as these generalised typologies.

The typologies are intended as a guide to assist observations of settlement characteristics but to provide a catalyst to the more comprehensive description of the characteristics of the context of sites and development.

In some cases the form of settlement may have changed over time as development is added and the settlement has grown and changed. In these cases it is worth identifying the characteristics of the historic form and identifying whether the changes over time have retained the settlement's distinctiveness in the landscape.

In some cases change will have been positive, in others negative. The analysis of settlement form in each site and settlement case will be

a bespoke process.

As an initial guide this document has identified the form of a range of settlements (listed over) but other characteristics may be observed too.

### Main Towns

In the cases of Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton and to some extent in the larger villages within the District (e.g. Willand and Bampton), different areas of the settlement display different settlement forms. One neighbourhood or district may be structured around a linear feature, another around an open space and another still may display dispersed parcels of development with no particular focus or centre due to topography or infrastructure.

The guide is applicable here and users should translate the characteristics which have been observed and described to each individual situation.

### Landscape Character

This guide, as identified in the previous chapter, outlines how the form of settlements across Mid Devon are first and foremost a product of the diverse landscape character across the district. For this reason, these typologies should not be adopted without further assessment within each individual design process.

This process should ask the question whether the characteristics observed within a settlement and its context are contributing to the distinctiveness of the landscape character. For instance, a settlement

maybe observed as having a dispersed form, but this has come about as a function of infrastructure, planned industrial estates which are designed for operational requirements, not as public areas, isolated housing estates etc. In this case it is not the landscape character which has determined the form of the settlement and it may be decided that the settlement form actually detracts from the distinctive character of the landscape.

Care should be taken to observe those characteristics which originate from the landscape character and which are distinctive to Mid Devon.

### Selecting a Settlement Typology

After defining which settlement character area a development site is located within and identifying the relevant Design Guidance, the next step is to identify which of the Settlement Typologies most suits the place where the development will be located.

The 7 settlement typologies are generalisations of the settlement forms of all the settlements across Mid Devon and it is unlikely that a settlement conforms exactly to any one generalisation.

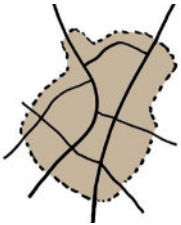
It may be that some of the features of two or a number of the settlement typologies seem to match the development location. The guide should be used flexibly to form a judgement as to which elements of the Design Guide are applicable to creating a development which contributes in the best way possible to the settlement form of the given location.





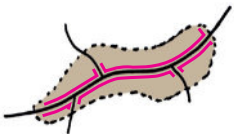
## Central Square or Green

Uffculme  
Morchard Bishop  
Cullompton



## Patchwork

Willand  
Tiverton



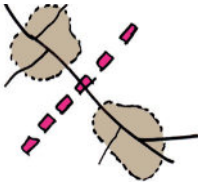
## Linear

Chawleigh Halberton Sampford Peverell Cheriton Fitzpaine Kennerleigh Oakford Bow	Bradninch Uffculme Colebrooke Lapford Cheriton Bishop Culmstock Crediton Cullompton
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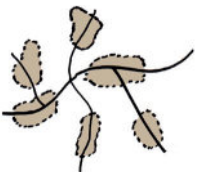
## Enclosed Core

Thorverton  
Sandford  
Holcombe Rogus  
Halberton  
Tiverton



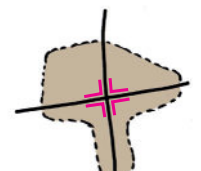
## Divided

Culmstock  
Newton St Cyres  
Yeoford  
Burlescombe  
Tiverton



## Dispersed

Hemyock  
Bickleigh  
Westleigh  
Zeal Monochorum  
Cheriton Bishop  
Cullompton



## Cross Roads

Bampton Kentisbeare Silverton Copplesstone Morchard Bishop	Bradninch Hemyock Newton St Cyres Sandford Colebrooke Zeal Monochorum
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## Landscape Variations

Some settlements of a similar form perform a very different function in contributing to landscape character by virtue of their topographical position.

For example, a linear settlement maybe located along a valley bottom and the hidden nature of its form within the landscape changes how it and the surrounding landscape is perceived as well as affecting the sense of the surroundings experienced from within the town.

Alternatively, the same linear form found on the top off a hill, or situated along the contours of a valley side create landmarks within the landscape. These linear settlements, in being visible and prominent when approaching from far off, create a very different sense of arrival and a wider awareness of the settlement size and form. Again from within the settlement positioned on higher ground, views, glimpses and the sense of the wider setting looking out from the settlement is very different to that of the valley setting.

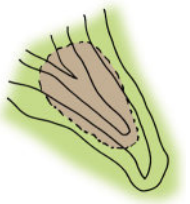
Once an understanding of the form of the settlement and the relevant settlement typologies have been selected, consideration of the topographical setting should be made.

A summary of five typical topographical settings are listed below. Again it is unlikely that a location's topography is similar only to one of these 5. In which case consideration should be given to the effect of a variety of topographical factors on the design of a development within a given settlement form.

Understanding variations in landscape form includes identifying any differences in micro-climatic conditions. Different landscape forms may present different opportunities to respond to the climate change emergency by orientating for maximum solar gain as well as structuring development to create the most walkable development form.







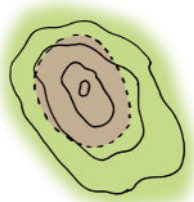
## Valley

Within a valley setting, the characteristics of any settlement typology are exaggerated as the settlement is squeezed into a more constrained location. The prominence of the settlement in the wider landscape will be limited and development can make the most of the sense of discovery that can be enjoyed on arrival within a settlement in a valley.



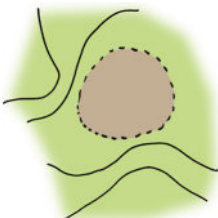
## Hillside

A sloped situation can be the most challenging topography for most of the settlement typologies. To achieve access and connectivity through and around a development unconventional building orientations and arrangements are often used. The design of streets and integrity of public/private definition of space can be threatened as a result. Consider varying the approach to access and connectivity (non-vehicular routes) and how overlooking is achieved (side windows and visually permeable garden boundaries). These constraints and design solutions can lead to the most distinctive places.



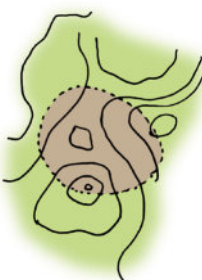
## Hilltop

Positioned on a hilltop, any settlement typology becomes a prominent feature in the landscape. Development in these locations is a distinctive feature of parts of the district however and the automatic approach should not be to screen or hide development. Rather careful consideration of the opportunities to make the most of views out and vice versa, looking from afar and on approach to a settlement to consider how a development stands out or is integrated with a settlement which is prominent in the landscape.



## Low Lying

Settlements in low lying locations are defined as much by the surrounding rising ground as they are by the opportunity for development on the lower level areas. Care should be taken to acknowledge the setting as part of the character of the settlement. Views can often be short distance, but with very mature, green backdrops. Where development is to be located on the rising ground surrounding a settlement there should be a realisation that this itself becomes the backdrop to the town. Openings in the landscape too can be opportunities for contrasting approaches to orientation and views but that these locations be sensitive to the wider exposure they have to a wider landscape still.



## Undulating

Often this type of topography has forced a settlement to become dispersed or divided as it has negotiated development in the easiest locations first. Many of the macro conditions above exist at a micro level within an undulating topography as additional development is left with no choice but to tackle the more difficult topography. The rising slopes around a settlement can define parts of a settlement. Even small sites may find they are on a locally prominent high point. Some development maybe squeezed into small valley features where density and enclosure are a result.



## Central Square or Green

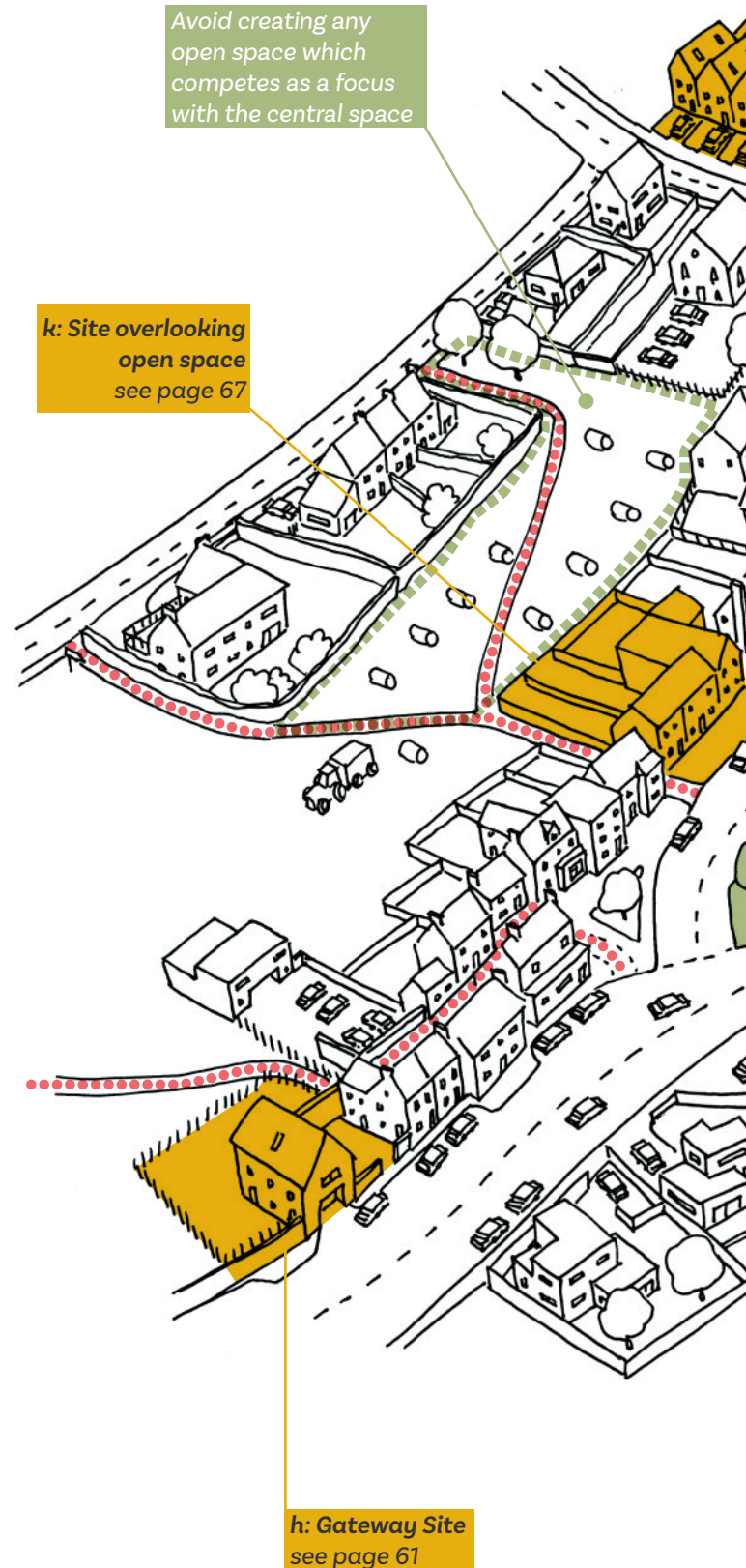
A settlement which is focussed around a square or a green has a recognised centre where activity and uses are concentrated. Development increases in density and scale around the central space providing a clear sense of arrival. Navigating and sense of direction around these settlements is always with reference to the centre and development form assists in indicating in which direction the centre is located.

Design of development within these settlements should:

- Maintain the density and scale of development at the centre and overlook the square or green;
- Locate any mix of uses at the centre and celebrate the opportunity for diversity of materials and form which this presents;
- Ensure development away from the centre is well connected and helps orientation around the centre;
- Avoid inadvertently creating a substitute for the central space by the provision of similar open space, or location of non-residential uses elsewhere.



UFFCULME





**d: Edge Site**  
see page 53

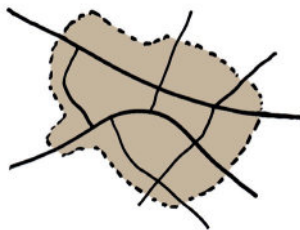
**m: Site along a Thoroughfare**  
see page 71



**Central Square or Green**  
Any development within the settlement should seek to preserve a focus on and access to this central space.

**Lanes & Alleys**  
Preserve, and where possible create, paths which lead to and provide short cuts to the central space





## Patchwork

A series of blocks of development are organised around an often grided or permeable and interconnected street network but with no clear sense of a single centre to the settlement. Community facilities and non-residential uses are widely distributed throughout the settlement and require a well connected street network to make accessibility easy. Sometimes there is a small historic part of the settlement which displays the characteristics of a different settlement typology, e.g. linear or crossroads.

Design of development within these settlements should:

- Avoid creating a distinct centre;
- Maintain an interconnected street network and avoid any cul-de-sacs;
- Add to the distribution of occasional landmarks which mark corners and views along streets;
- Maintain the integrity of development blocks with buildings which face the street and enclose private space to the rear;
- Acknowledge any historic development pattern and cross reference with relevant design guidance.

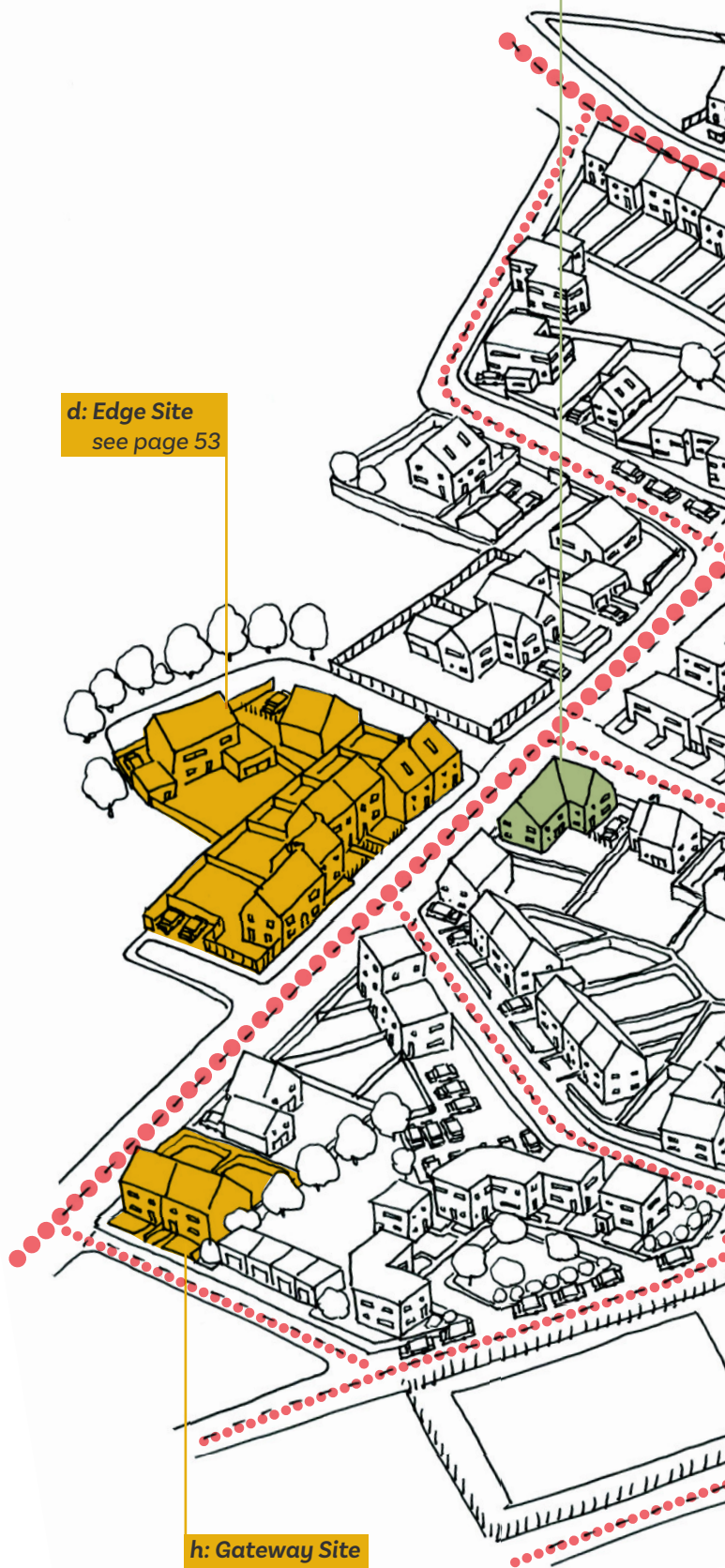


CREDITON

**Distributed Landmarks**  
Prominent buildings in a variety of locations throughout the settlement marking corners and views assisting wayfinding.

**d: Edge Site**  
see page 53

**h: Gateway Site**  
see page 61





### Additional Gateways

The distributed nature of the settlement means there are a number of approaches which can benefit from gateway buildings.

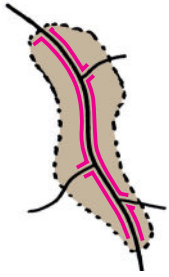


i: Infill Site  
see page 63

### Connected Street Network

A grid of connected streets. One or two routes have subtly greater priority. No dead ends.





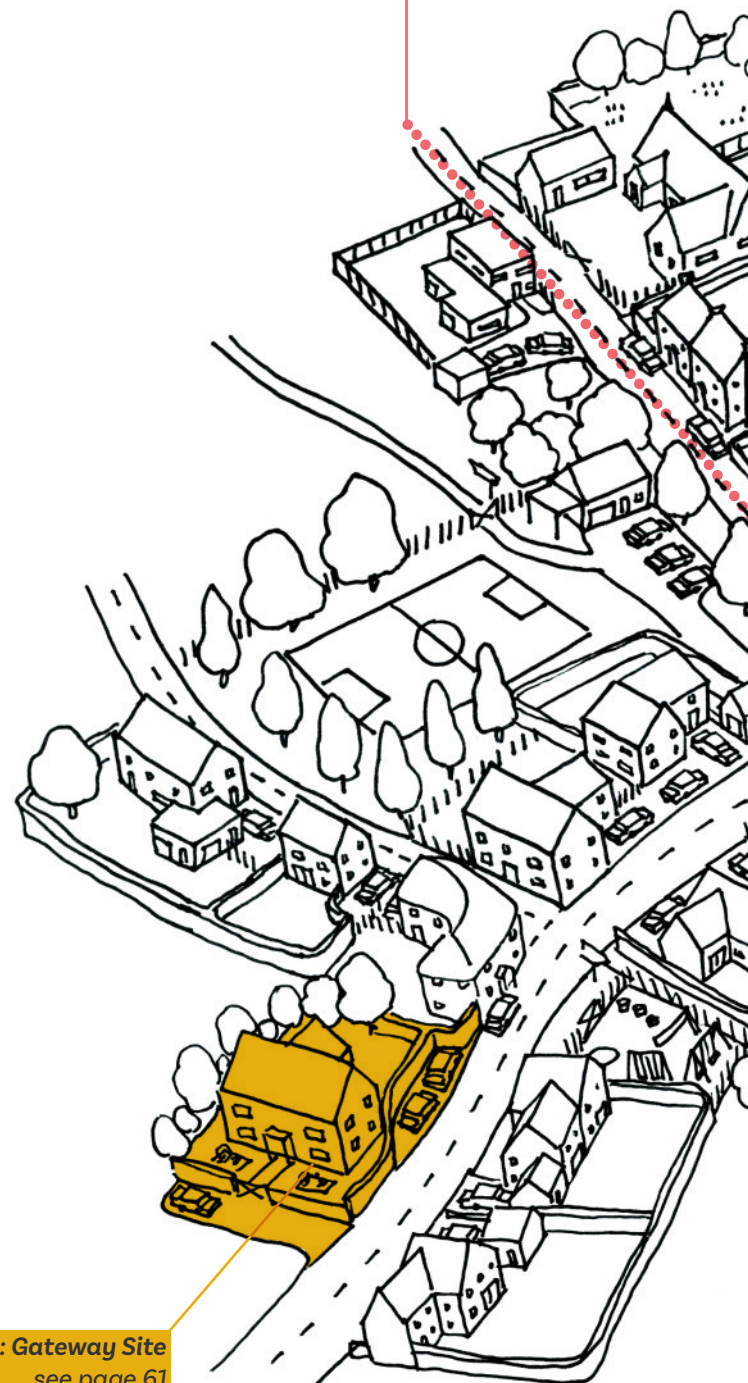
## Linear

This is one of the most common settlement forms across Mid Devon although it exists in a variety of topographical situations which require a variety of design approaches in order that the settlement form maintains its integrity:

- A primary objective of design is to maintain the continuity of built form along the main route;
- A sequence of views and events along the linear route is created starting with the use of gateways at either end of the settlement and then varying building scale and the continuity of elevations along the route;
- Towards the centre, buildings are positioned immediately against the back of the pavement, or at the edge of the carriageway if no pavements to increase the sense of enclosure and linear form;
- Routes leading off of the linear form should be overtly secondary with discrete junctions;
- From the surrounding area looking in, the settlement appears to turn its back towards the landscape. This is reinforced by development always orientating inwards towards the main route and the rear of development being planted and having a fragmented edge to the landscape.

### Secondary streets

Routes off of the linear route are minor and have discrete junctions, not disrupting the continuity along the main route.

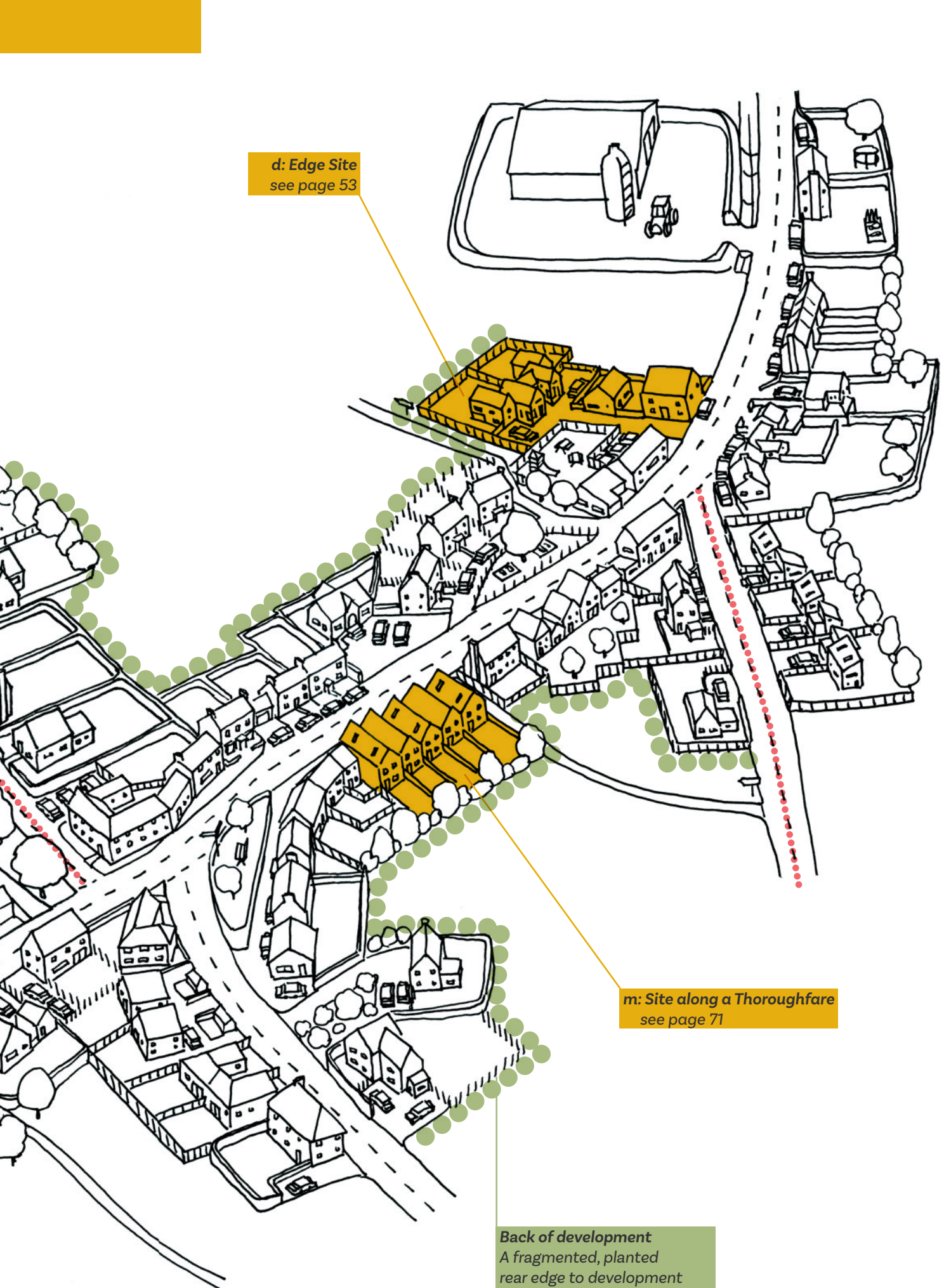


h: Gateway Site  
see page 61



CHAWLEIGH

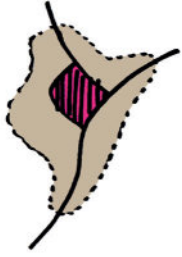




d: Edge Site  
see page 53

m: Site along a Thoroughfare  
see page 71

**Back of development**  
A fragmented, planted  
rear edge to development  
maintains the impression  
of the settlement looking  
inwards along the linear route.



## Enclosed Core

The settlement has a compact form arranged around a distinct development block at its centre. This central development block has a virtually continuous perimeter (sometimes some discrete driveways or accesses exist) which faces outwards. The continuity of the perimeter can be accentuated by a uniformity of building line, ridge line and eaves line although there can also be variety around the block. There is no specific centre to the settlement. Facilities and non-residential uses tend to be distributed around the outside of the settlement, not within the historic core. There are usually a number of routes which approach the settlement with no particular priority between streets.

Development in these settlements should:

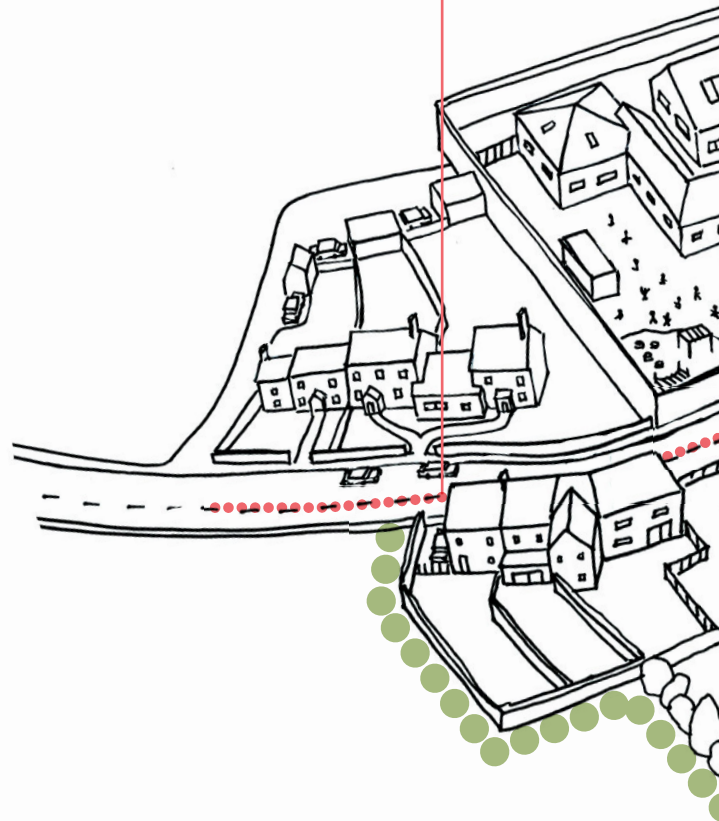
- Maintain the integrity of the core with outwards facing, dense, continuous development;
- Distribution of facilities around the settlement to decentralise its layout;
- Avoid creating additional routes and access to development around the town which does not first use the streets surrounding the core;
- Maintain a fragmented, planted outer edge.



HOLCOMBE ROGUS

### Surrounding Streets

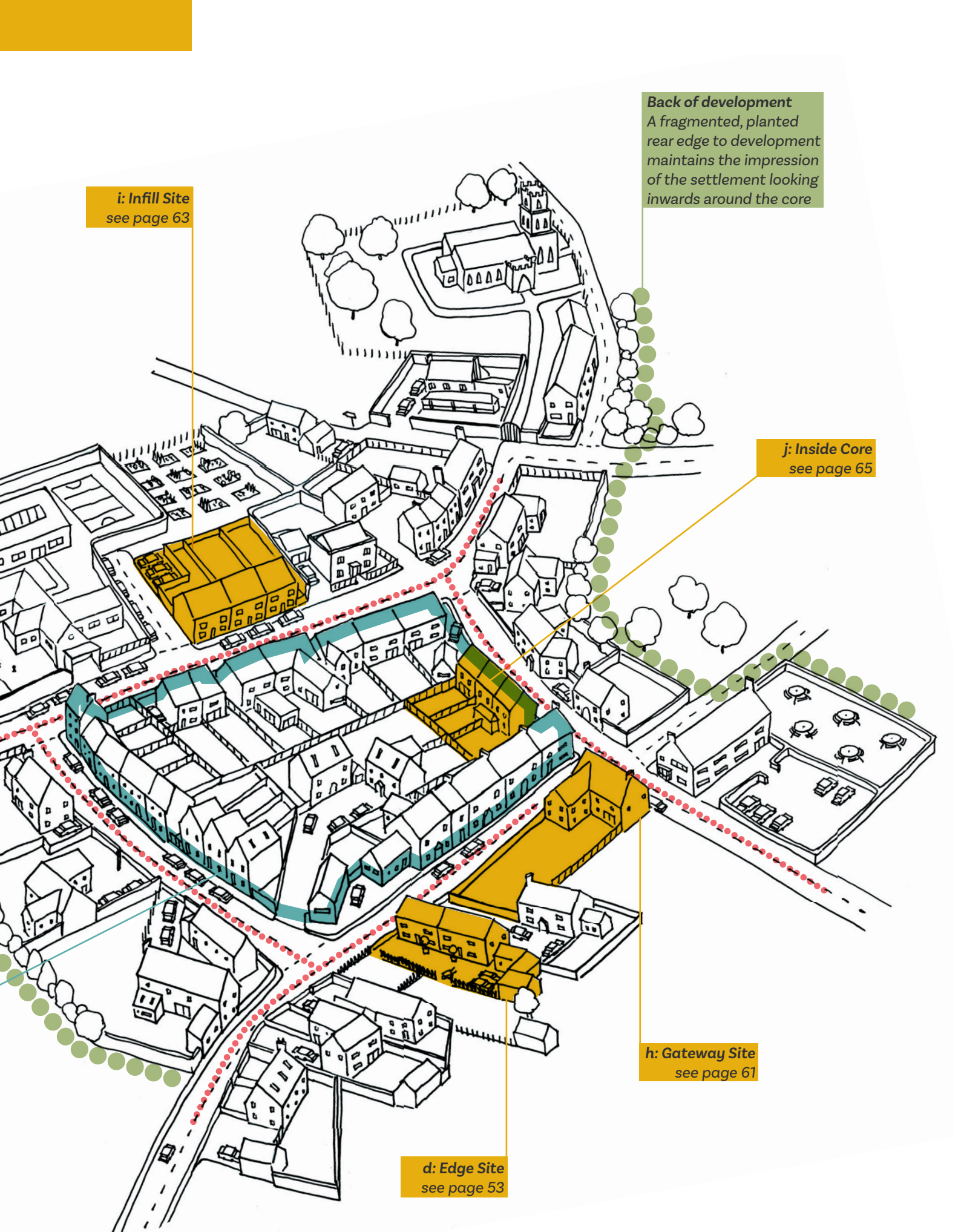
Various approaches to the settlement have equal priority and encircle the core area.

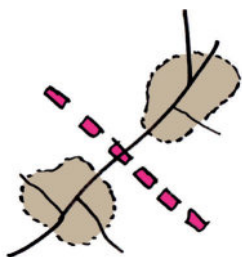


### The Core

Maintain the integrity of the core with continuity of built form.







## Divided

A divided settlement retains two distinct parts located either side of a natural or man-made feature (e.g. a river or railway line). The settlement in two parts draws attention to the features of the landform with development form and orientation influenced by the divide. The settlement avoids becoming two separate places however by the sharing of facilities one side to another, and by virtue of the two parts being proximate enough to remain well connected.

Design of development can contribute to these characteristics by:

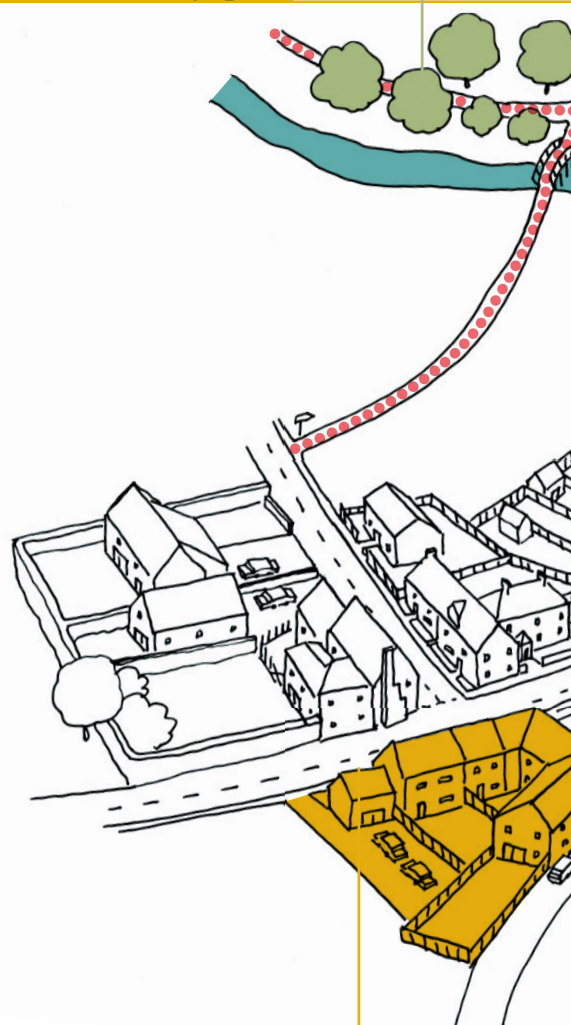
- Maintaining the integrity of the two distinct parts of the settlement;
- Improving connections between the two parts but not duplicating facilities;
- Avoiding development encroaching into the gap.



### Dividing Feature

The divide between settlement parts can be manmade or natural but should be acknowledged as a feature and where possible utilised for public access.

**b: Site located between settlement parts but joined**  
see page 49



**f: Site at the edge, on a limb**  
see page 57



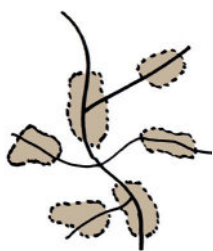
i: Infill Site  
see page 63

l: Site out on a limb  
see page 69



e: Site located at the edge  
between settlement parts  
see page 55

**Connections**  
Links across the divide  
help maintain a unified  
community and draw  
attention to the landscape.

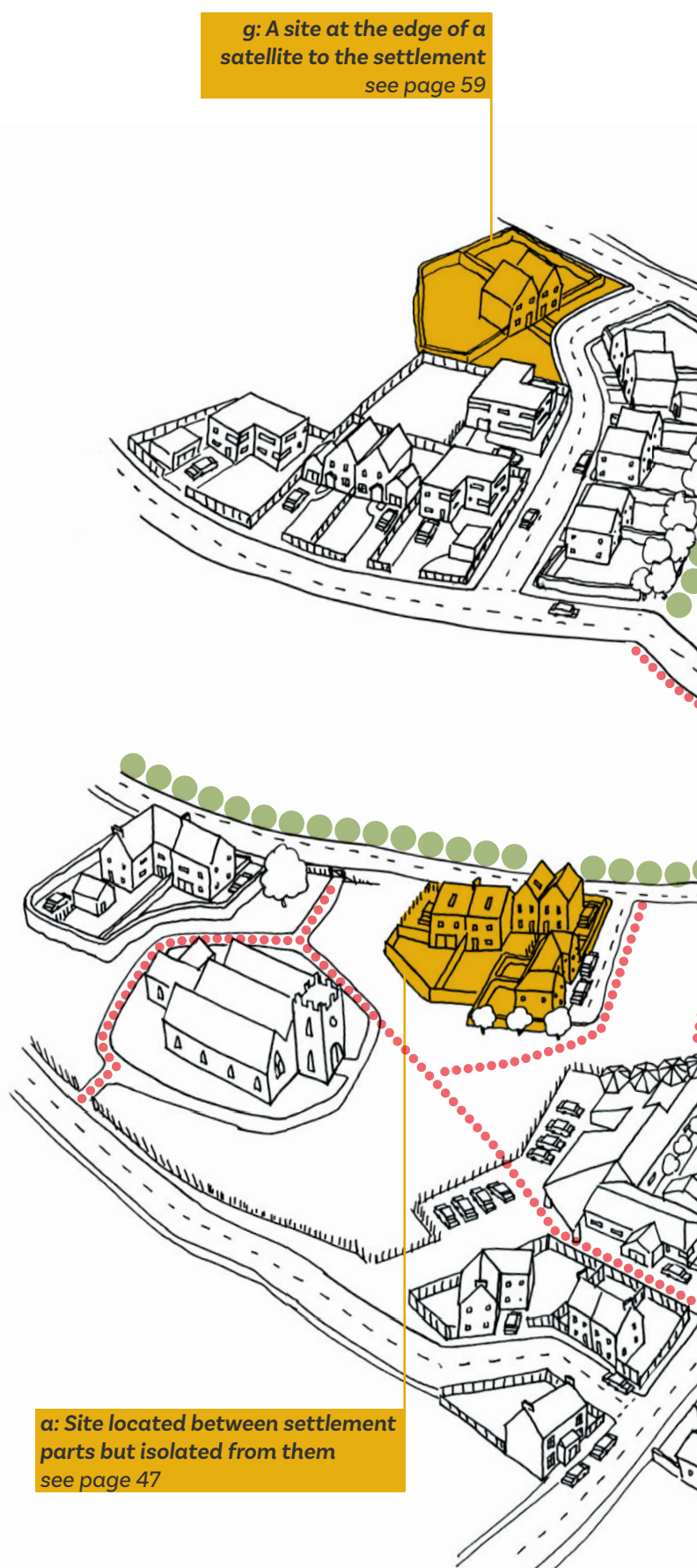


## Dispersed

Development can be dispersed in the landscape and result in a settlement of multiple parts. This can be due to various elements dividing the settlement, or development having negotiated various landscape features over time. The approach in these settlements is to attempt to maintain the various individual parts as distinct elements as this reflects the landscape form. At the same time efforts should be taken to link the community together and the facilitate the ability to share facilities. There is no defined centre to these settlements. There is often a variety of building form to attend to a variety of topography.

Design of development can contribute to these characteristics by:

- Where possible, maintain the integrity of the individual distinct parts of the settlement;
- Avoid creating a defined centre;
- Facilitate various connections to help the community integrate and share facilities;
- Consider a variety of approaches to building form to respect a variety of topographical situations.



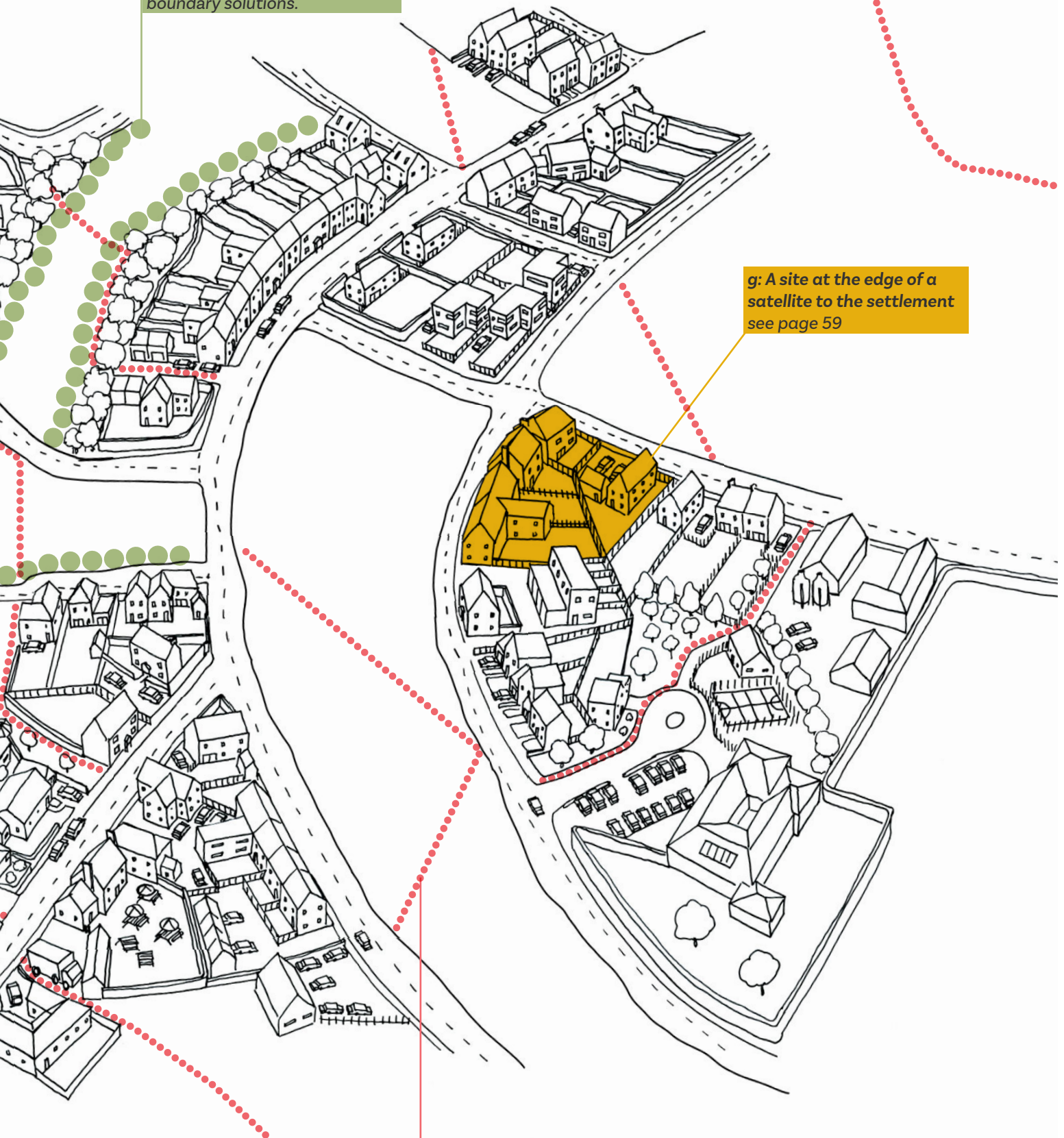
**g: A site at the edge of a satellite to the settlement**  
see page 59

**a: Site located between settlement parts but isolated from them**  
see page 47



### Edges to Landscape

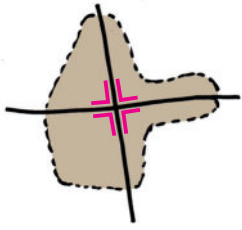
A variety of different relationships with the landscape require different building and boundary solutions.



g: A site at the edge of a satellite to the settlement see page 59

### Connections

Paths and links help maintain a unified community and draw attention to the landscape.



## Cross Roads

Where historically a settlement has formed around two significant routes the development pattern is focussed around this crossroads. The density and enclosure increase towards the junction and there is usually equal priority between the two routes with a distribution of commercial and community uses along both axis.

Development in these settlements should:

- Maintain the continuity of buildings around the crossroads using a uniform building line, common ridge alignment and minimum gaps between buildings;
- Create landmarks at corners of the crossroads;
- Create permeability throughout the various quarters of the settlement;
- Allow landmarks (new and historic) away from the crossroads to be visible throughout the settlement.

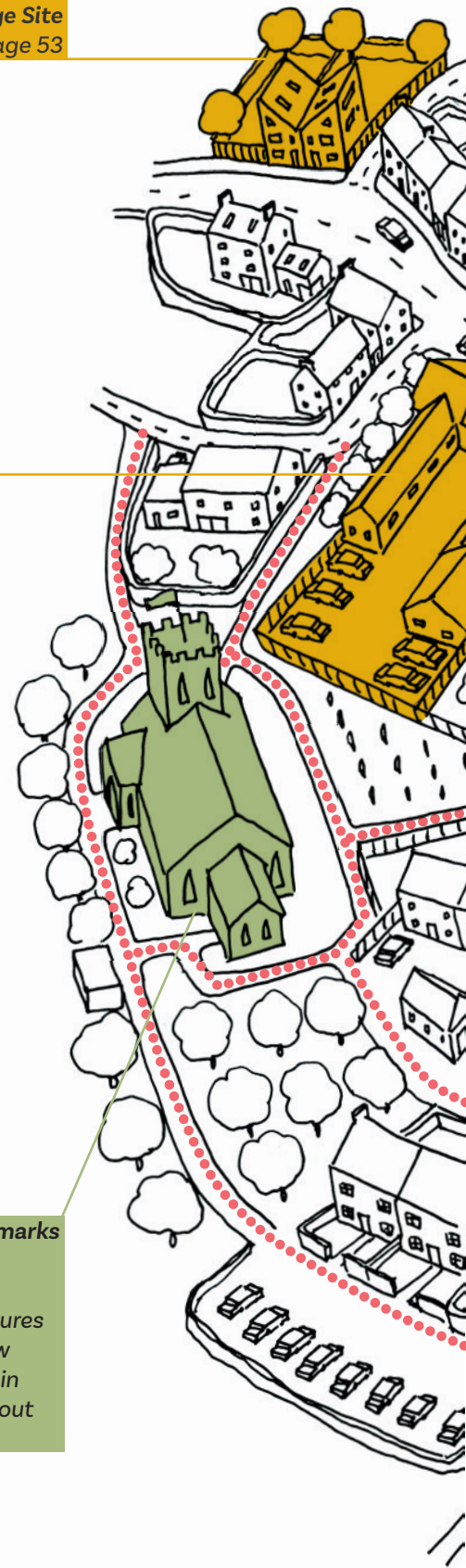


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**d: Edge Site**  
see page 53

**m: Site along a  
Thoroughfare**  
see page 71

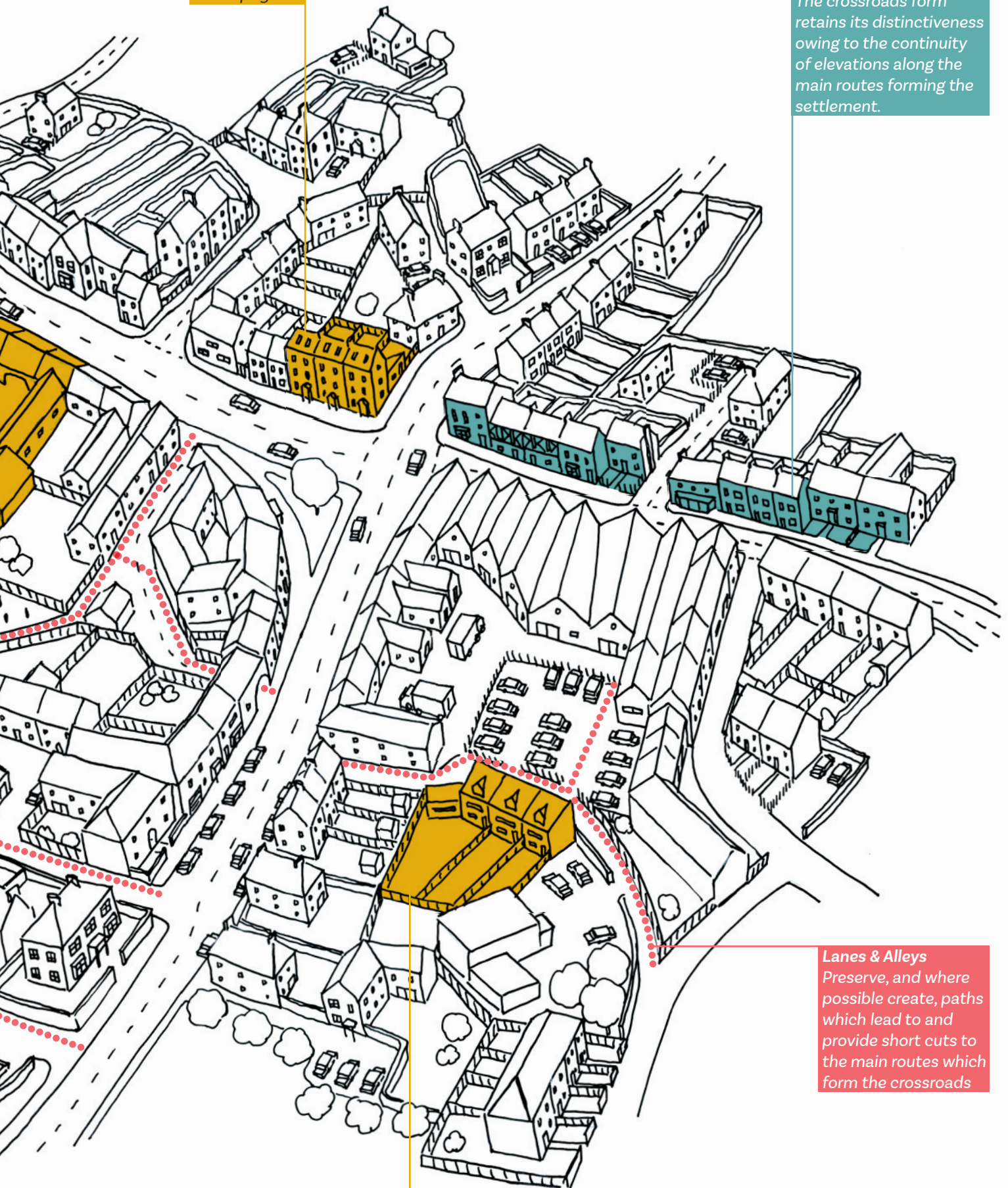
**Features and Landmarks**  
The legibility of the settlement is established by features and landmarks (new or historic) located in prominent throughout the settlement.





c: Corner Site  
see page 51

**Continuity of main routes**  
The crossroads form  
retains its distinctiveness  
owing to the continuity  
of elevations along the  
main routes forming the  
settlement.



**Lanes & Alleys**  
Preserve, and where  
possible create, paths  
which lead to and  
provide short cuts to  
the main routes which  
form the crossroads

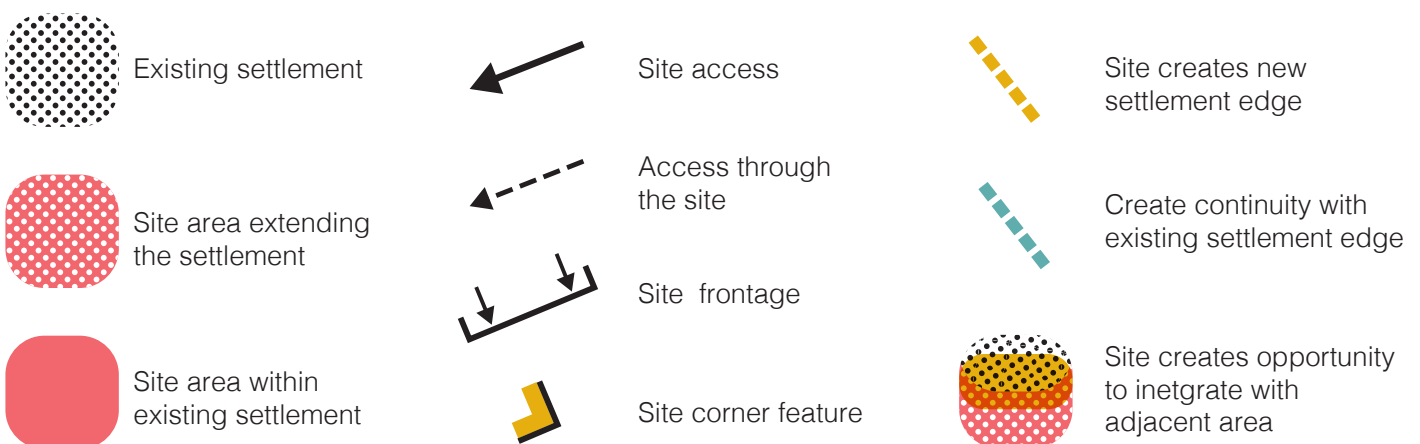
i: Infill Site  
see page 63

## Site Situations

*Across the variety of Settlement Types a series of common site situations can be found. Not all site situations occur in all settlements. Each site situation demands a different approach to design and the following pages outline a series of parameters for the design of sites in each of these situations.*

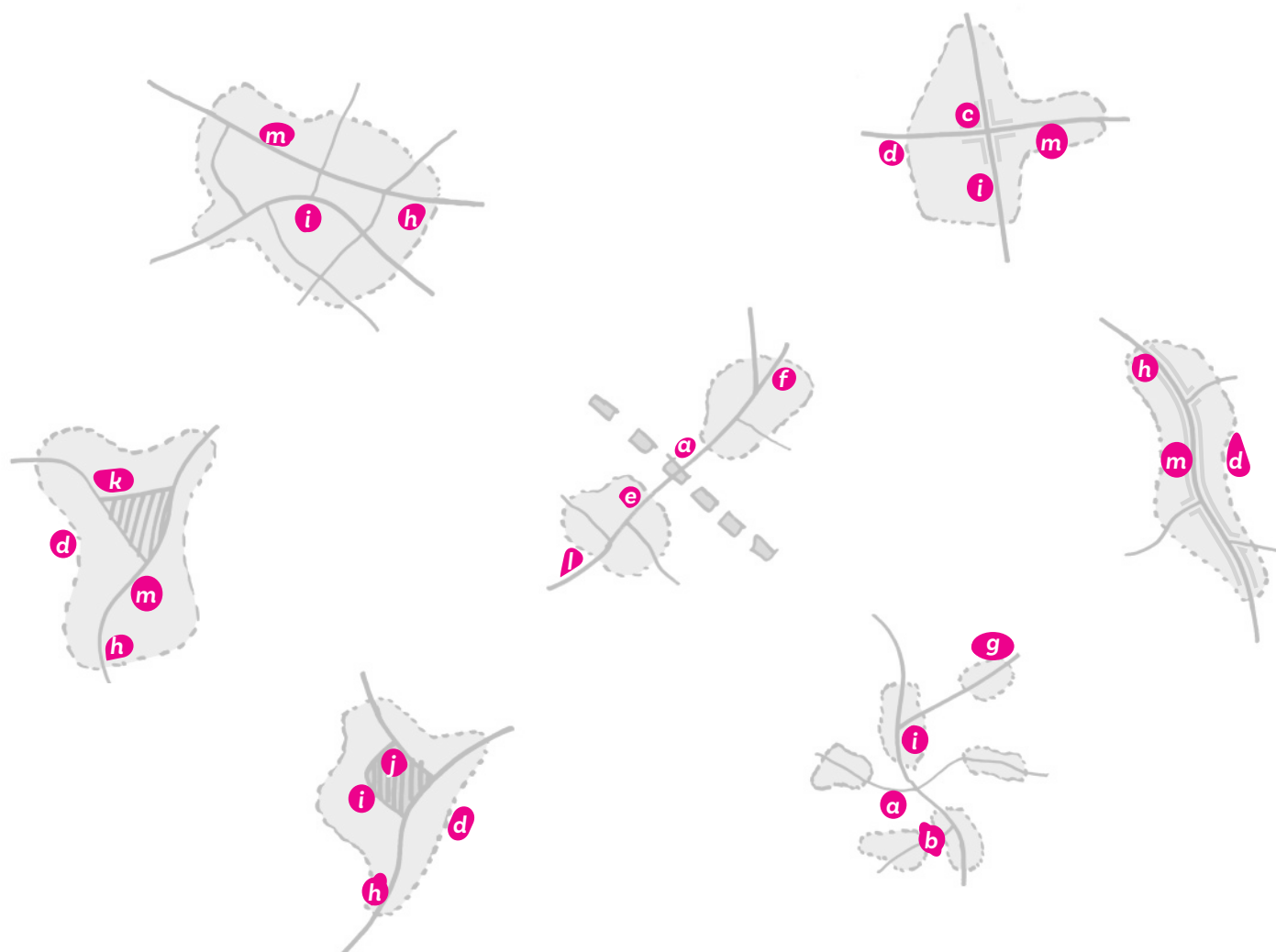
*The following section of the guide provides simplified diagrams for the purposes of outlining the key principles of designing for each site situation. These diagrams are not intended to provide an accurate site representation of particular locations.*

*A simplified key is used in these diagrams for the purposes of showing the key parts of settlements and sites as follows:*



*The section should be read and applied with close reference to Volume 3: The Compendium of District Design in order to identify architectural features and other detailed design considerations which can be used as tools to achieve the site situation design principles.*





**a. Between Isolated**

**b. Between Joining**

**c. Corner**

**d. Edge**

**e. Edge Between**

**f. Edge on a Limb**

**g. Edge to Satellite**

**h. Gateway**

**i. Infill**

**j. Inside Core**

**k. Open Space**

**l. Out on Limb**

**m. Thoroughfare**

*Please refer to the settlement typology sheets (pages 31-44) which place the site situations in context. Sites may display characteristics of multiple situations and appropriate responses be interpreted accordingly.*

*Local Plan site allocations determine development distribution but the Design Guide approach to landscape and settlement form may play a role in future plan making.*

## ***a. Between isolated***

This site situation may occur where a settlement displays a dispersed series of components which together make up the whole settlement.

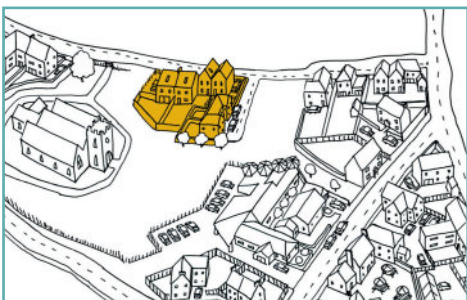
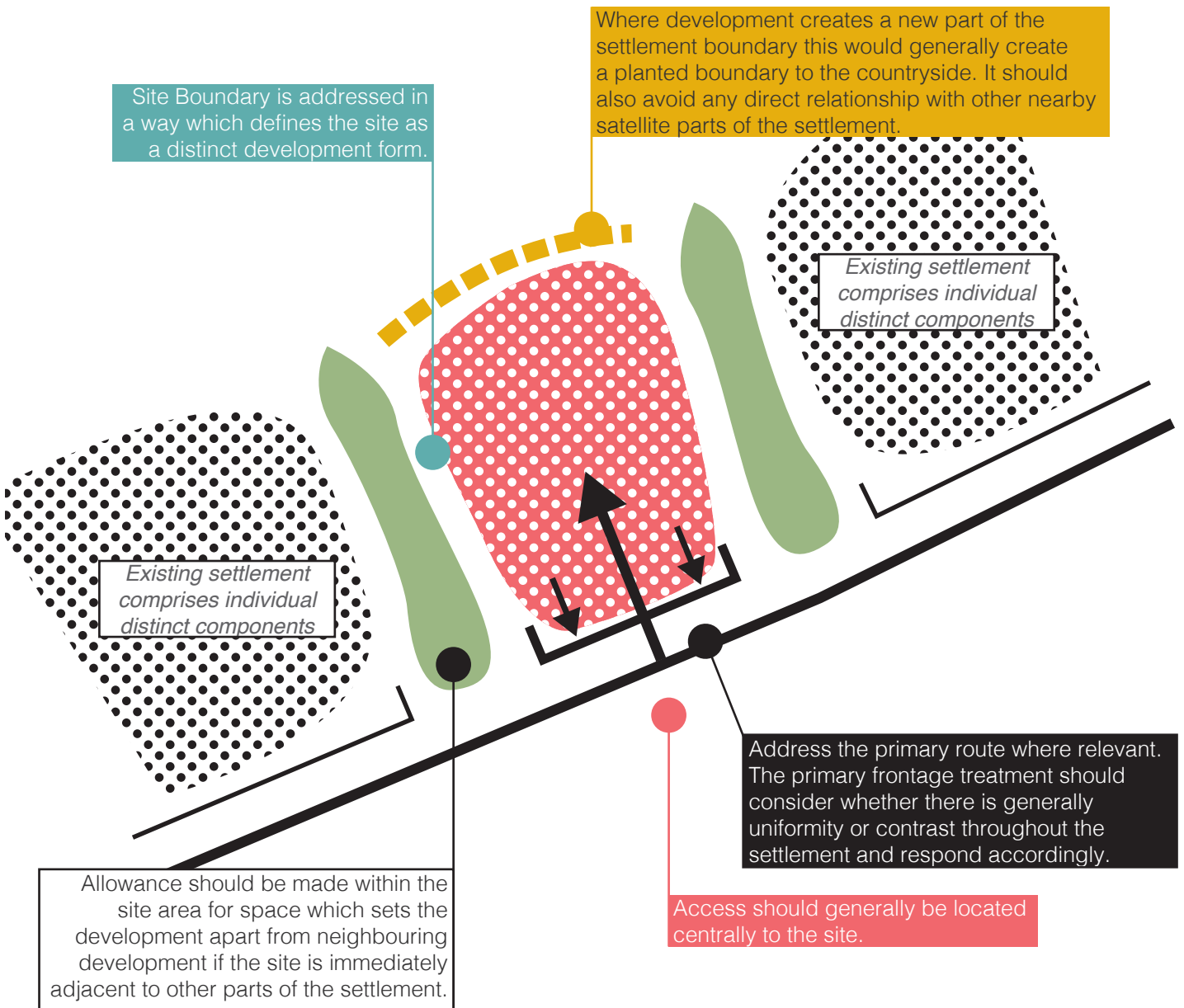
Each component is to some extent isolated from each other and the form of development establishes this isolation as well as being a result of the landscape and topography.

A site for development may be between some of these isolated elements. The role of a site in this location is as follows:

- The site should create an additional distinct element within a dispersed or divided settlement form;
- It should avoid threatening other sites/existing settlement components from performing their own distinct function within the landscape and within the whole settlement.







A site shown 'between', but 'isolated' from a part of a Dispersed Settlement.  
(See page 41)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may provide useful tools.

## ***b. Between joining***

A site located between two parts of an existing settlement but which is joined to one or other of the existing parts of the settlement.

The approach to designing site should seek to maintain the separation between existing distinct elements of the settlement. The role of the site in this situation is as follows:

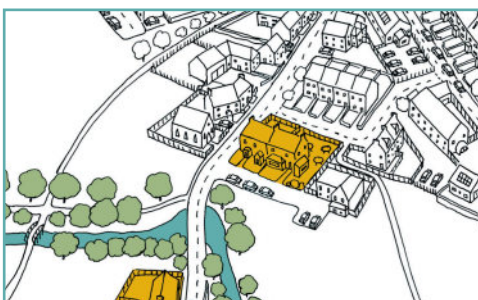
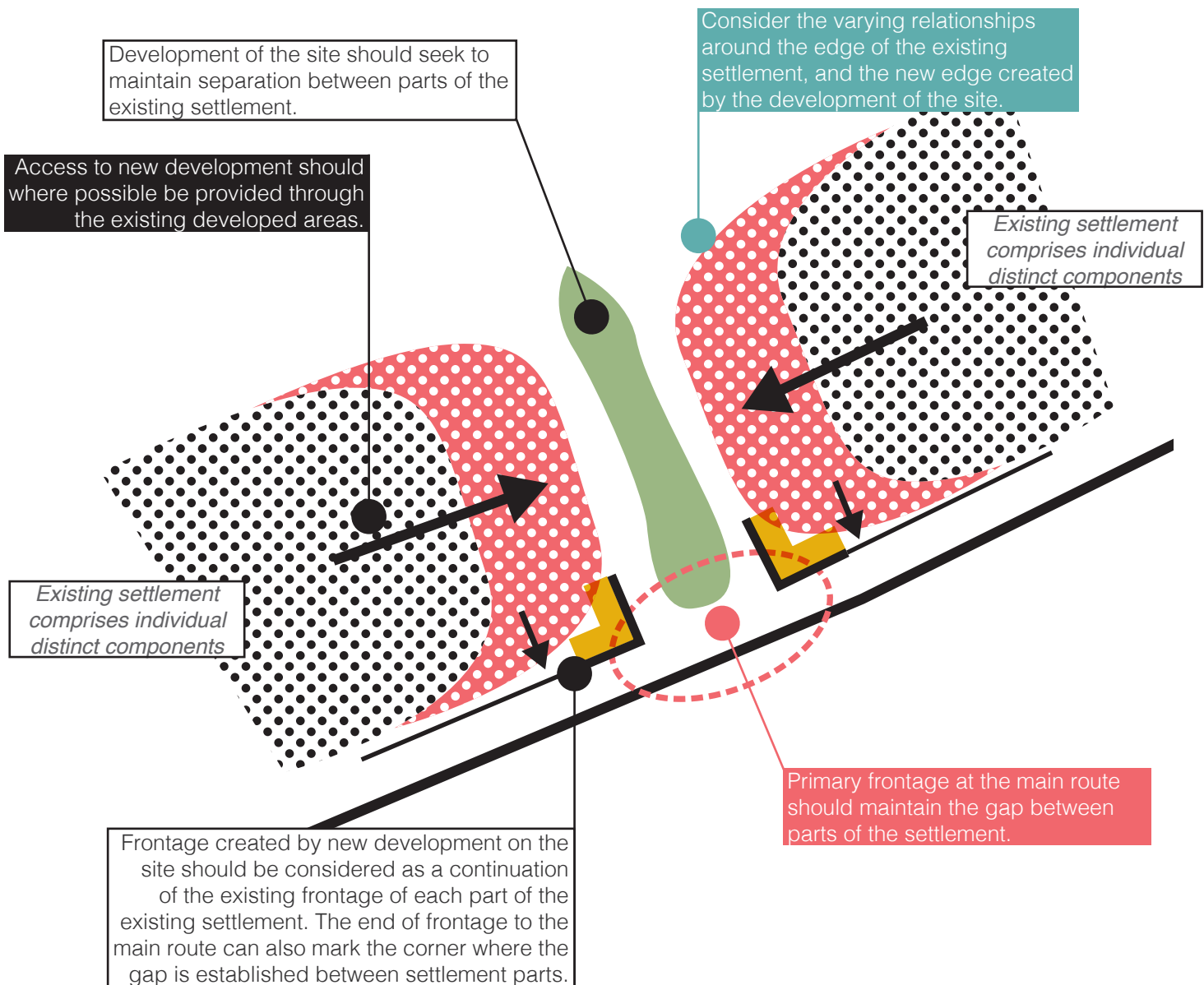
- The site should contribute to the distinctiveness of whichever part of the settlement it is joined to, this may be by reflecting the character of the existing character, or by helping to define where the edge

of one part is and not to encroach on the edge of the adjacent part of the settlement.

- The development of sites in these situations should be considered as an extension/addition to existing development rather than a development in its own right.
- Where the site is a single piece of land adjoining both existing settlement parts two contrasting layouts may be necessary to address the two contrasting settlement parts. Part of the site will be required to maintain the separation between settlement parts.







A site shown 'between', but 'joined' to a part of a Divided Settlement.  
(See page 39)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define frontage, and in particular any corner buildings (eg. Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13); Materials (page 15).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may provide useful tools.

## c. Corner

A site located at the corner of two routes which cross within a settlement needs to consider addressing routes. These routes may have equal importance in the settlement or one may be more important than the other. The way the site addresses these routes should reflect the relative importance of the routes.

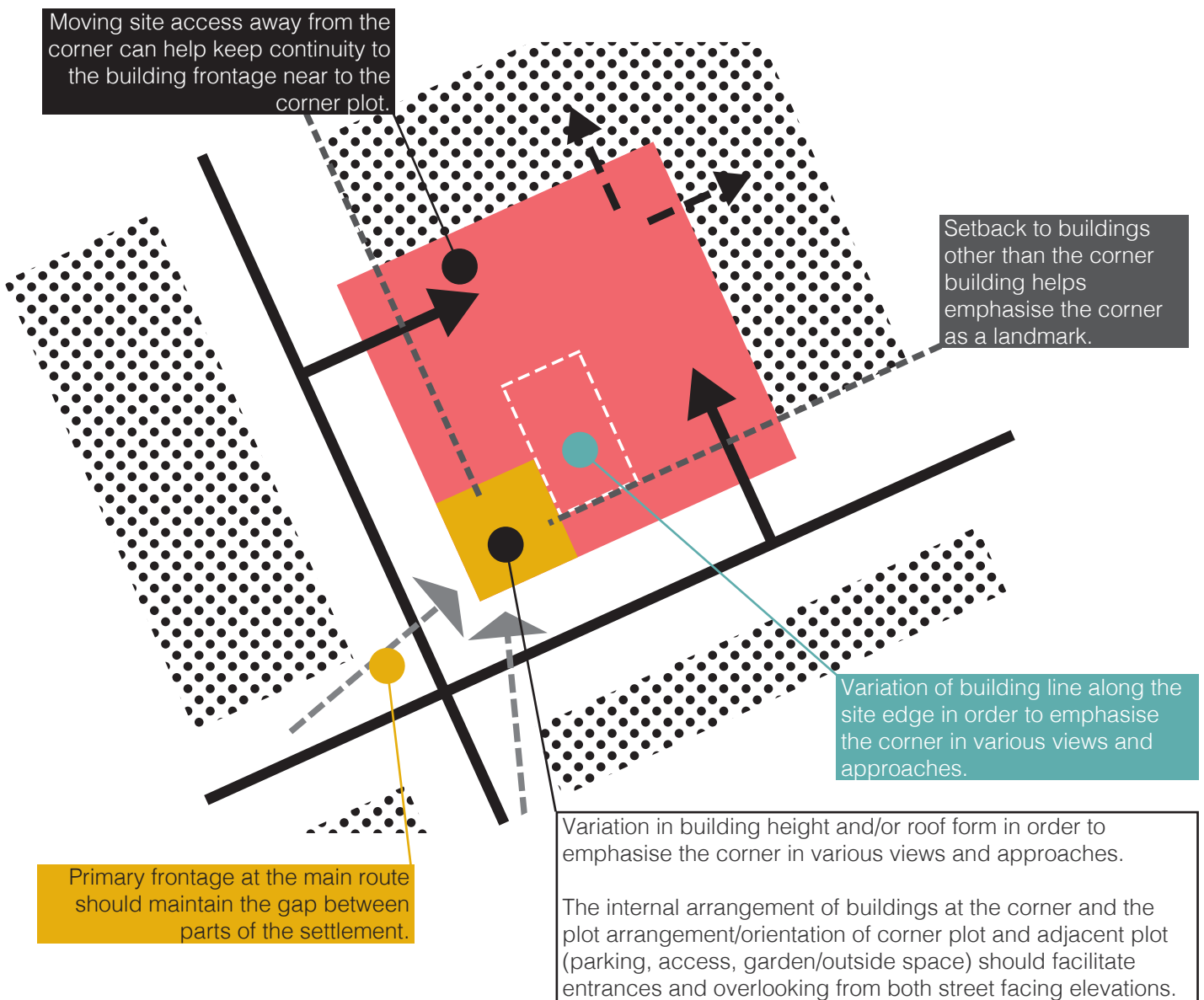
A site located at a corner performs the following role:

- Anchoring a corner between two similar priority streets, or;
- Helping distinguish between the priority of two contrasting streets;

- Establishing a landmark/feature at a central point or junction within a settlement;
- Addressing two streets at the same time and in doing so consider the appropriate location of key frontages, entrances, fenestration and other features accordingly.







A site shown at a 'corner' within a Settlement formed around a Crossroads.  
(See page 43)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Proportion & Scale (page 5); Frontages & Elevations (page 7). Consideration of the appropriate features to define corner buildings (eg. Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13); Materials (page 15). Due to the prominence of the site and space constraints, a variety of parking arrangements may be considered: Parking & Transport (page 23).  
Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may prove useful tools.

## d. Edge

Edge sites are one of the most likely ways in which the majority of growth across the district will be achieved where space at the edges of settlements is available and sites are of a suitable size.

As a result, these sites often have a role in defining a new edge to the settlement as a whole and define how a settlement relates to the countryside surrounding it.

A settlement may already experience constraints on growth due to its landscape setting and the surrounding topography and it is important therefore to identify how development responds to sometimes heavily constrained

areas.

With the exception of the very largest allocations for development at the edges of the larger towns, all development at the edges of settlements should not detract from the focus of a settlement around its centre.

Efforts should be made to provide direct and safe pedestrian and cycle links to facilities and the centre of a settlement such that developments at the edges of settlement do not become isolated or promote excessive use of the car as a result.





Where different conditions occur around the edges of a settlement (e.g. frontage to road or relationship with adjacent development or countryside) the site should respond in different ways at its edge.

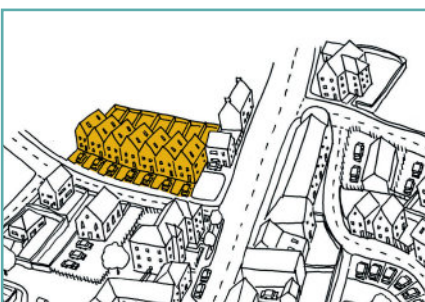
New settlement edge to utilise planted or visually permeable boundaries (e.g. low walls) with the rear of properties to the countryside in order that a gradual transition from open countryside to built form is made.

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

Where possible a connected route through new development can help integrate development at the edge with the existing settlement.

Back to back or front to front relationships should be created across the existing settlement edge (avoid front to back relationships).

Access where possible should be provided through existing, adjacent developed areas and cul-de-sac arrangements avoided.



A site shown at the 'edge' of a Settlement formed around a square or a green.  
(See page 31)



A site shown at the 'edge' of a Linear Settlement.  
(See page 35)



A site shown at the 'edge' of a Settlement formed around an enclosed core.  
(See page 37)

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may proved useful tools.

## e. Edge between

Where settlements comprise several parts which remain separated, sites can be located at the edge and yet be between the divided parts of the settlement.

These sites perform a role in helping to define the individual parts of the settlement.

The approach to development of these sites can avoid the settlement becoming joined. Often the divided nature of the settlement is reflective of the landscape, or structuring features such as river corridors or steep valleys.

These sites can help however help a settlement's divided parts share facilities effectively. Despite the divided character of a settlement sites in this location should promote and maintain access to community facilities which need to be reached from all the divided parts of a settlement.

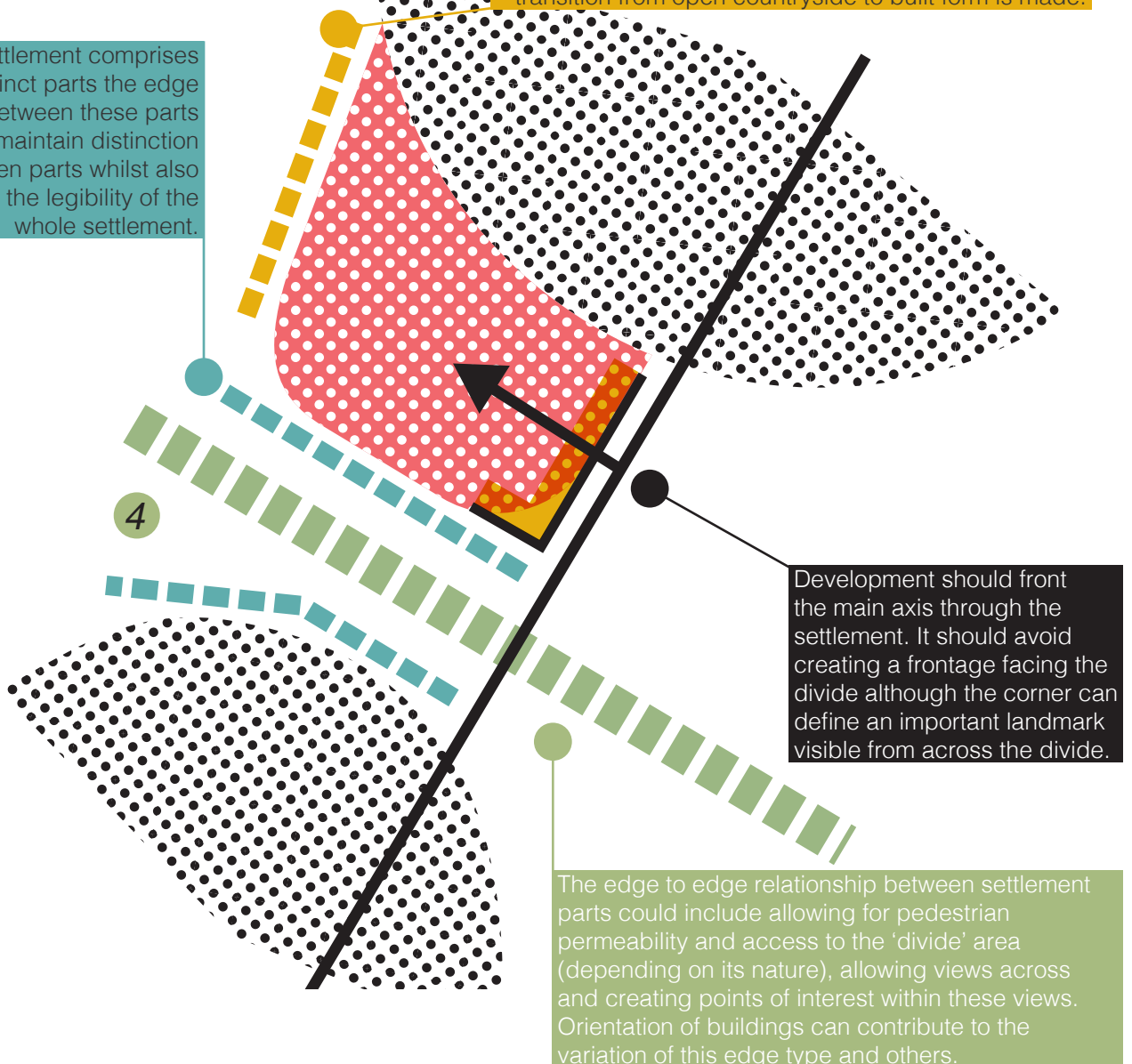
Where appropriate as well, these sites can provide prominent locations for additional or relocated facilities if required.





New settlement edge to utilise planted or visually permeable boundaries (e.g. low walls) with the rear of properties to the countryside in order that a gradual transition from open countryside to built form is made.

Where a settlement comprises several distinct parts the edge conditions between these parts needs to maintain distinction between parts whilst also helping the legibility of the whole settlement.



A site shown at the 'edge,' and 'between,' parts of a Divided Settlement.  
(See page 39)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define frontage, and in particular any corner buildings (eg. Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13); Materials (page 15). Relationship with public realm and green space: Public Realm (page 3).  
Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Health & Well Being (page 5).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may proved useful tools.

## ***f. Edge on a limb***

Where settlements comprise several parts which remain separated, sites can be located at the outside edge of any of these individual parts .

These sites help define the settlement edge at the far limit of the divided elements of the settlement.

They can help define the primary route through the settlement by creating frontage and appropriate hierarchy to the relationships with adjacent development.

Within divided and dispersed settlements it is important that the separation of component parts of the settlement

is retained since these are often a result of distinct landscape features or other structuring elements which have determined the settlement pattern over time.

Sites at the outer edge of these settlements influence how the settlement is perceived in the wider landscape.

The approach to the site will vary therefore on the topography of any individual site which is found in this location. It may slope towards, or away from the settlement and therefore have varying prominence in the wider landscape.



WOODLAND HEAD



CHERITON BISHOP



Where a site is surrounded by existing development it should take care to respond positively to its surroundings whether this is creating natural surveillance to open space or back to back/front to front relationships with other buildings.

An edge which continues the existing settlement edge should utilise planted or visually permeable boundaries with rear of properties facing the countryside.

Site access should be positioned so as not to compromise the design in other ways.

Access provided to the site should where possible also provide further connections into adjacent development areas avoiding cul-de-sacs.

Development should front the main axis through the settlement. Depending on the nature of the edge site, development may be able to contribute to the approach into the settlement by creating a gateway or a prominent feature at the entrance to the settlement limits.



A site shown at the 'edge,' and 'on a limb', which extends from a Divided Settlement.  
(See page 39)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define frontage, and in particular any corner buildings (eg. Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13).

Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may provide useful tools.

## ***g. Edge to satellite***

Sites at the edge may be located beyond the existing natural extent (or settlement boundary) of the settlement.

In this situation sites will establish a new settlement edge.

The site will have a role in ensuring a suitable transition to the surrounding countryside.

Sites in these locations should create development which is proportional and integrated within the context of a settlement whose character is formed by it having multiple small parts.

Sites related to settlements which do not have a defined centre or create great contrast between their centre and their edge should not over emphasise the need to perform a significant gateway role.

Some sites in these locations may find their role being mixed. The condition of the site may need to be both frontage and settlement edge and hybrid solutions employed e.g. alternative parking locations, mixed building orientation, planted or visually permeable front boundaries.



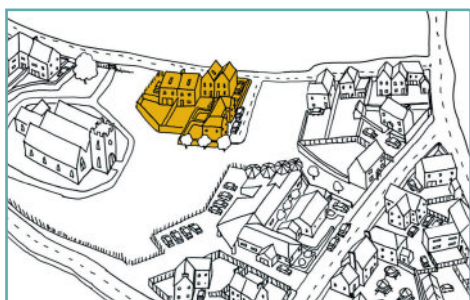


Where the outer edge of the site creates a boundary to the surrounding countryside, boundaries should utilise planted or visually permeable (e.g. low walls) boundaries. This is to ensure a gradual transition between built form and countryside.

Relationships between the site and adjacent development should look to enable connections and suitable relationship between buildings: e.g. back to back or front facing front of existing and new development.

Frontage of the site should be created to the main route which enters the settlement. This frontage may also be facing surrounding countryside where the site occupies only one side of the road. In this case care should be taken to consider an appropriate front boundary treatment.

Access to the site should be directly from the main route entering the settlement and where possible create additional connections to adjacent development. Selection of site access location may help in creating a suitable relationship with existing development.



A site shown at the 'edge,' of a satellite part of a Dispersed Settlement.  
(See page 41)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may proved useful tools.

## ***h. Gateway***

Gateway sites are positioned at or near to the edge of a settlement and adjacent to a main route into a settlement and related to a settlement which has a defined and perceivable centre.

Development of sites in these locations can assist in the sense of arrival into the settlement and form part of a sequence of stages of transitioning from the countryside into the heart of the settlement.

A gateway site establishes the first point of entry into a settlement from the countryside surroundings.

While a site is likely to only occupy one side of a main route entering a settlement, it needs to consider how the gateway is created together with existing development on the opposite side of the main route into the settlement.

Many Mid Devon settlement gateways are established by the narrowing of the road by building location, orientation and creating contrasting enclosure along the street.

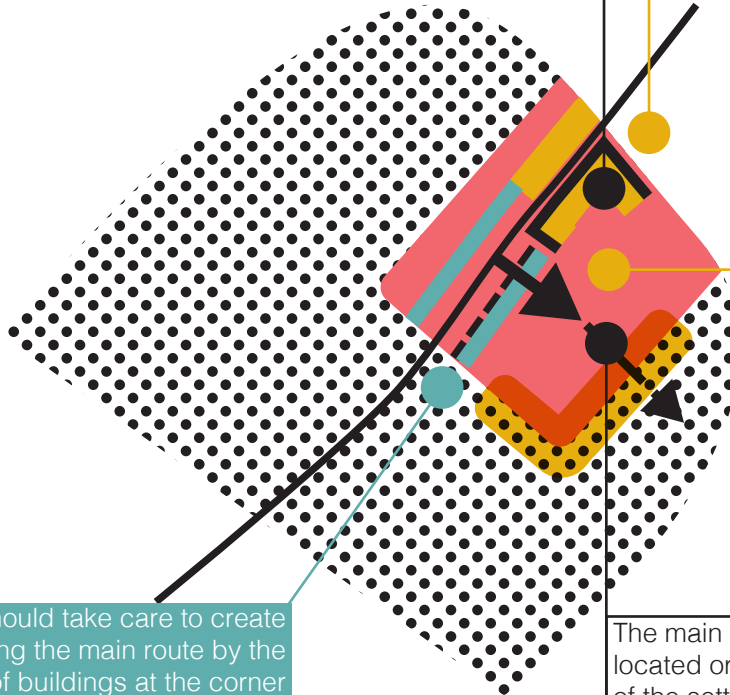
Sites may be considered in portions with the corner of a plot performing a key landmark role, and remaining parts of the site creating setback and frontage to the main route which contrasts with the corner plot.





Contrast at the corner may be created by varying building height as well as plot positioning. Materials and architectural features can also help in distinguishing the corner from the rest of the site.

Frontage to the main route is not a distinctive feature of corner gateway developments. Many Mid Devon settlements demonstrate that sideways building orientation to the street, blank side or unanimated elevations, with small or upper storey windows and often no pavement or setback/privacy strip to buildings in this location.



Arrangement of parking and entrances will need to be considered to facilitate a viable plot at the corner.

The site should take care to create contrast along the main route by the positioning of buildings at the corner with the settlement edge, and by varying the setback (widening the street) further along the site (depending on the site dimensions and alignment).

The main access to the site should be centrally located or located further towards the centre of the settlement than towards the edge to enable the corner plot to fulfil a high quality gateway role. Additional connections and positive relationships should be created with surrounding areas.

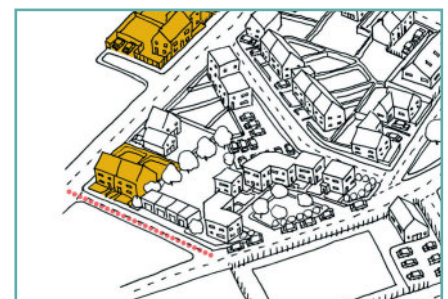
Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.



A 'gateway' site to a Settlement formed around a square or a green.  
(See page 31)



A 'gateway' site to a Linear Settlement.  
(See page 35)



A 'gateway' site to a Patchwork Settlement.  
(See page 33)

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define frontage, and in particular any corner buildings (eg. Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13); Materials (page 15). Due to the prominence of the site and space constraints, a variety of parking arrangements may be considered: Parking & Transport (page 23).

Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may prove useful tools.

## ***i. Infill***

Infill sites will vary in scale and location within a settlement. It is likely that many sites of this type will share characteristics with other site descriptions in this section and so there should be an awareness of the variety of guidance on site situations as parts of this may also be relevant.

Sites which infill locations within settlements should attempt to integrate with the existing form of the surrounding settlement.

The role these sites play will depend on the type of settlement they are located within. Attention should

be paid to opportunities there may be to reinforce or enhance the characteristics of each particular settlement type as described within the Settlement Typologies section of this guide.

Sites will often be positioned to be able to facilitate connections between different parts of the existing settlement and every effort should be made to avoid creating cul-de-sacs on sites which sit within the fabric of existing settlements.





Where a site fronts a main route through the existing settlement the relationship within this route will be different than at other edges of the site. The existing corridor character on the main route and where the site sits within this are important considerations in the design of this edge of the site.

The relationship the site has with adjacent existing development will vary but back to back, or front to front relationships are preferable.

The site may be able to facilitate links across the settlement connecting existing routes within the settlement.

Additional connections should be explored which facilitate the wider permeability of the settlement and particularly where these create better links to the centre of a settlement or with facilities located throughout the settlement. These may be pedestrian links only, if so they should be safe and obvious and the building orientation around the access can help the legibility of connections.

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.



An 'infill' site within a patchwork Settlement.  
(See page 33)



An 'infill' site within a Settlement formed around an enclosed core.  
(See page 37)



An 'infill' site within a Settlement formed around a Crossroads.  
(See page 43)

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define frontage, and in particular any corner buildings (eg. Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13).

Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may prove useful tools.

## ***j. Inside Core***

Sites located within the enclosed part of a settlement have a role in maintaining the definition of the core.

This core area is characterised by buildings facing outward to create a nearly continuous perimeter to the core of the settlement. Any gaps in this continuity to allow for access to the rear of properties, or which provide access to individual buildings which are not fronting the street, should be narrow, generally less than 6m wide, so as not to detract from the continuous frontage around the perimeter of the enclosed core.

The enclosed core of a settlement is a dense area of often historic and small terraced properties. Contemporary development maintains this density and scale although it may be contrasting in form or the use of materials.

There are very few gable ends, or other building orientations than the front of buildings facing outwards to the street.

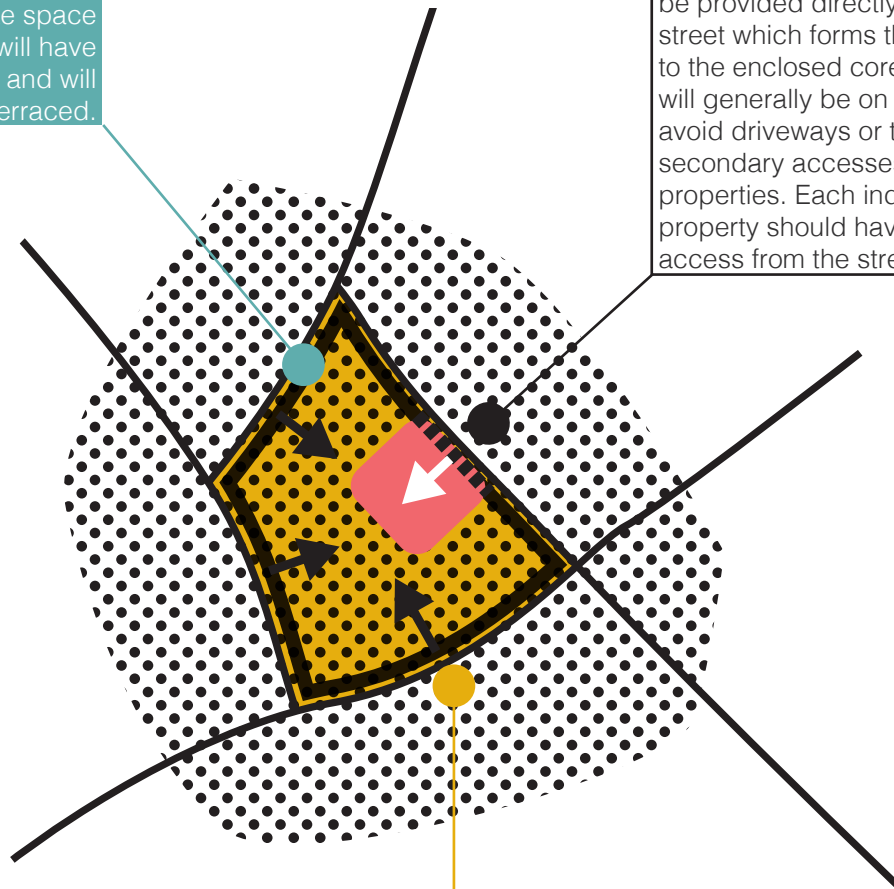
Generally the ridges of buildings run parallel to the streets.





The site should maintain the continuity of the perimeter of the core, enclosing private space behind the building. Plots will have very limited setback, if any, and will generally be terraced.

Access to buildings should be provided directly from the street which forms the perimeter to the enclosed core. Parking will generally be on street to avoid driveways or the need for secondary accesses to individual properties. Each individual property should have individual access from the street.



Other access already provided should remain dedicated to each individual plot. New development should not seek to connect through routes within the core. This maintains activity and the outward facing nature of buildings around the perimeter of the core.



A site positioned 'inside the core' within a Settlement formed around an enclosed core.  
(See page 37)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define continuity eg. Chimneys (page 19); Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13). Single access to a the site may require a variety of parking arrangements: Parking & Transport (page 23).  
Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may proved useful tools.

## ***k. Open Space***

A settlement which is centred around an open space or square incorporates sites around its centre which focus on and overlook the open space.

And open space created at the centre of a settlement is defined by the approach taken to each of the individual plots surrounding the open space. Together, the surrounding plots can contribute to the natural surveillance of the space, the definition of edges and the sense of scale within the space.

The open space is often accompanied by larger and more densely arranged built form providing a sense

of arrival in the space but the age and character of buildings around a space can vary greatly since these open spaces have performed a central role in these settlements over centuries. New contemporary development in these locations has continued to perpetuate their role and draw attention to them being the central focus of the settlement.

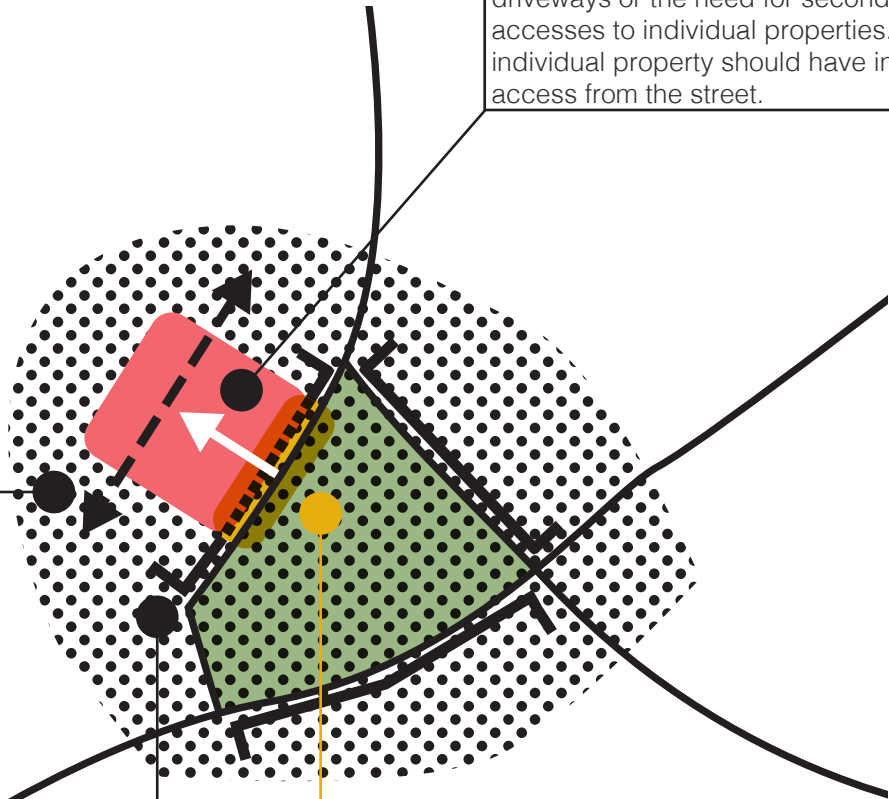
Since they are central to the settlement they have been and can continue to be the most suitable location within these settlements for additional or relocated community facilities or commercial uses where these are justified according to other policy and assessment of need.





Access to buildings should be provided directly from the street which forms the perimeter to the open space or square. Parking will generally be on street to avoid driveways or the need for secondary accesses to individual properties. Each individual property should have individual access from the street.

The site may facilitate additional connections to adjacent existing development particularly where this provides new links from existing areas of the settlement towards the open at the centre of the settlement.



The site should maintain the continuity of the perimeter of the core, enclosing private space behind the building. Plots will have very limited setback, if any, and will generally be terraced. Buildings may be taller to suit their surroundings and maintain the scale of the perimeter to the open space.

Development frontage and where possible, community facilities or commercial uses, should face the open space and add activity to the space. Where possible use of the pavement or street to spill out, e.g. a small front garden area for a bench or a cafe table and chairs can be provided to increase activity within the open space.



A site alongside an 'open space' within a Settlement formed around a square or a green.  
(See page 31)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define continuity eg. Chimneys (page 19); Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13). Relationship with public realm and green space: Public Realm (page 3).  
Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Health & Well Being (page 5); Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may provide useful tools.

## ***1. Out on limb***

Similar to sites located at the edge of any satellites to dispersed settlements, sites which lie at the edge of a divided settlement have a role in defining the distinctiveness of one part of a divided settlement.

Sites in these locations may be located beyond the existing natural extent (or settlement boundary) of the settlement.

In this situation sites will establish a new settlement edge.

The site will have a role in ensuring a suitable transition

to the surrounding countryside.

Unlike sites at the edge of dispersed settlements, sites at the outer edge of divided settlements can create a gateway to the settlement as a whole. Although divided settlements are in two parts they represent one cohesive settlement. Sites at the outer edge of the settlement can mark the approach to the settlement.

Sites will often be located on one side of the main route and they therefore will also have a role in addressing the countryside which they face out onto as well as creating a frontage to the street in the foreground.





Where a settlement comprises several distinct parts the edge conditions between these parts needs to maintain distinction between parts whilst also helping the legibility of the whole

Frontage of the site should be created to the main route which enters the settlement.

Frontage to the main route is not a distinctive feature of corner gateway developments. Many Mid Devon settlements demonstrate that sideways building orientation to the street, blank side or unanimated elevations, with small or upper storey windows and often no pavement or setback/privacy strip to buildings in this location.

Where the outer edge of the site creates a boundary to the surrounding countryside, boundaries should utilise planted or visually permeable (e.g. low walls) boundaries. Ensuring gradual transition between built form and countryside.

Contrast at the corner may be created by varying building height as well as plot positioning. Materials and architectural features can also help in distinguishing the corner from the rest of the site.



A site 'out on a limb', which extends from a Divided Settlement.  
(See page 39)

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): consideration of the variety of ways to address the contrasting edges and define prominent or corner buildings: Frontages & Elevations (page 7); Boundaries & Thresholds (page 9); Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13); Materials (page 15).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may proved useful tools.

## ***m. Thoroughfare***

Sites which have frontage to a main route through a settlement have a variety of roles.

These sites contribute to the continuity of the built form through the settlement and their design should begin with the structure of the built form through the settlement.

These sites often offer opportunities for key buildings in prominent locations and the addition or relocation of community facilities or commercial uses where justified against other policy or need would be well suited to the prominent location which the frontage of these sites offer.

Sites may have been vacant for some time in these locations and the gap in the built form divided up the settlement. In this case sites in this location offer the opportunity to repair the street scene by taking an integrated approach. Perpetuating this divide should be avoided.

The approach to these sites should be considered alongside other site design parameters as these sites may also perform other key roles in the context of the overall landscape and settlement form.

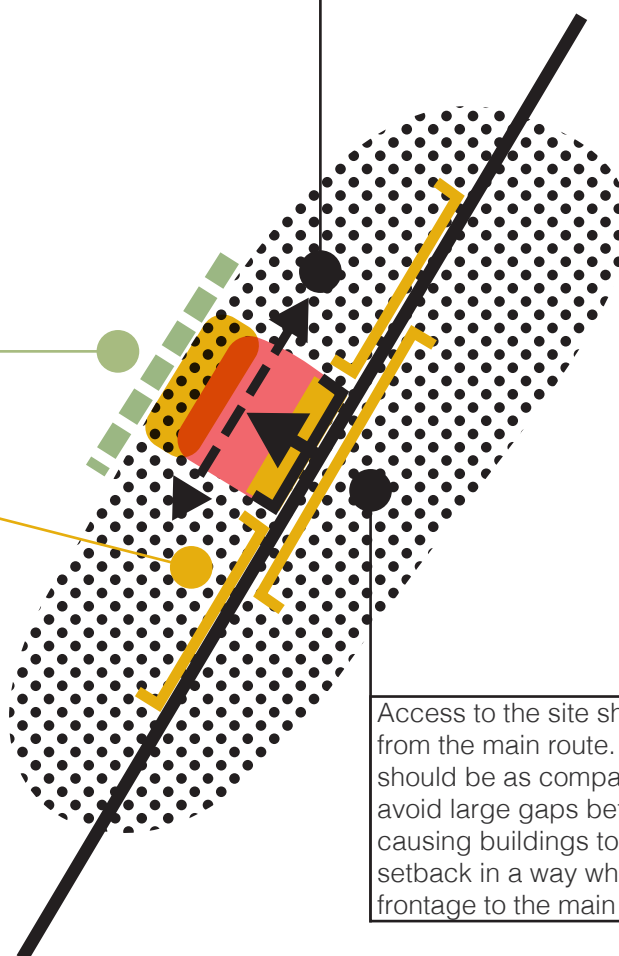




Depending on the form and scale of the settlement these sites may be located such that they also have an edge to the countryside which should be planted or visually permeable with the rear of properties facing the countryside. There may also be opportunities to link footpaths between the centre and the countryside through the site.

The site should maintain the continuity of the built form through the settlement and add to existing frontage along the main route. Any rear boundaries or the rear of buildings along the route should be avoided but there are examples around Mid Devon of the sides and side garden boundaries creating successful edges to main routes where natural surveillance can be achieved.

Connections to adjacent development should be made where possible and encourage movement to and from the main route by foot.

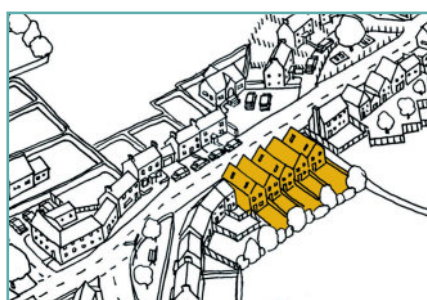


Access to the site should be provided from the main route. Junction design should be as compact as possible to avoid large gaps between buildings or causing buildings to be orientated or setback in a way which compromises their frontage to the main route.

Open space and other Green Infrastructure are important elements in addressing the principles of responding to site situations and should be considered alongside built elements.



A site along a 'thoroughfare' in a Settlement formed around a square or a green.  
(See page 31)



A site along a 'thoroughfare' in a Linear Settlement.  
(See page 35)



A site along a 'thoroughfare' a Settlement formed around a Crossroads.  
(See page 43)

#### References:

Design Compendium (Volume 3): Frontages & Elevations (page 7); as well as variety of considerations of the appropriate features to define continuity eg. Chimneys (page 19); Doors & Porches (page 11); Windows (page 13). Maintaining continuity of built form with consideration of: Proportion & Scale (page 5); may be particular constrained by: Parking & Transport (page 23) opportunities. Special Topic Sheets (Volume 4): Designing for Accessibility & Inclusiveness (page 9).

While these references are of particular relevance, many other aspects of the Guide may prove useful tools.







# COUNTRYSIDE

**Development in the countryside, in the context of the Mid Devon Local Plan Policy S14, is defined as land outside of the main towns (S10-S12) and designated villages (S13). Such land is defined as the countryside but can include small settlements and hamlets.**

The aspirations for development in the countryside while within the constraints set by this policy and other broader development control are as follows:

*“Development outside the settlements defined by Policies S10-S13 will preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy”.*

The hierarchy of Local Plan policy for allocated development in Main Towns and Rural Settlements acknowledges that these locations are sequentially the most sustainable locations and therefore offer the best opportunities to respond to climate change. Vice versa, the absence of allocated sites in the countryside acknowledge that these locations are least sustainable.

Opportunities for design to respond to the climate change emergency tend to be limited to innovations in built fabric and energy generation although the social and economic sustainability of rural communities is not to be ignored as an important consideration in the assessment of proposals in countryside locations.

## Countryside settlements

Across the Mid Devon Countryside are a wealth of small settlements which are not designated villages within the policy S13 and yet the settlement form is informed by the landscape in the same ways as the 22 designated villages.

The Local Plan distinguishes clearly between settlements which have settlement boundaries where development is allocated (S10-S13), and the Countryside, beyond these boundaries which includes many small settlements (S14). Policy within these distinct areas directs development to the designated places and restricts (with some exceptions) development outside of designate places.

However, the approach to the design of any non-allocated types of development allowed within these smaller settlements scattered throughout the countryside, (which in some cases are as large as some designated settlements and in other cases are merely a gathering of a few buildings), should follow a similar process to the approach taken to development within the designated villages:

**First** consider the landscape setting and the characteristics of this setting which help development retain a distinctiveness in association with each particular landscape type (see Page 7 of this volume of the guide).

**Secondly**, consider the form of the settlement as described within the 7 settlement typologies defined within the guide for Villages (see, Page 26 of this volume of the guide).

**Thirdly**, consider the position of the development in relation to the settlement form and the guidance on the appropriate design approach according to the 13 variations of site situation defined within the guide for Villages (see Page 45 of this volume of the guide).

**Finally**, using the Compendium of District Design (Volume 3 of the guide), consider how various detailed elements of design are dealt with in different situations across the district and how these should be applied in relation to the settlement location.

## Development Typologies in Open Countryside

Mid Devon is recognisable for the relationships between landscape and development in the countryside outside of any designated settlement, and outside of those smaller settlements which fall within the countryside, is demonstrated in a variety of ways. Whether residential, agricultural or other community buildings, the majority of existing buildings within the open countryside in Mid Devon can be grouped into four distinct typologies:

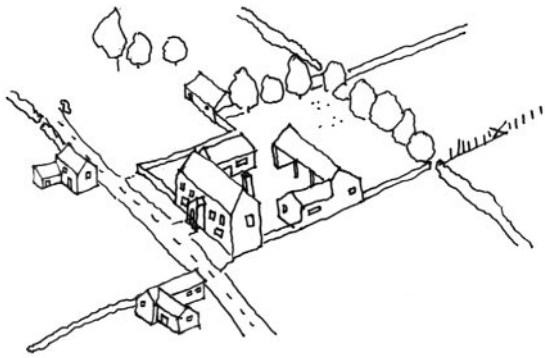
- *Ribbon/Terrace*
- *Farmyard Cluster*
- *Manor House*
- *Landmark/Isolated building*

These typologies are useful references when considering new development in the open countryside or alterations to existing buildings. Each of the typologies contribute in different ways to the landscape and will be suitable in different situations. When used in the right places, each of them can add to the distinctiveness of the district. Each typology is also in part, a result of the different functions of development. It may therefore not be appropriate to use a certain form of development for certain functions.

Where new developments in the open countryside are supported by planning policy they will be more sympathetic to the character of the district when designed to be in accordance with these typologies.

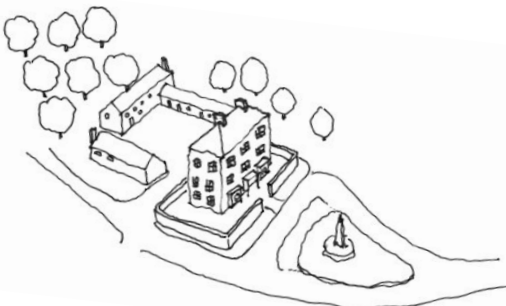
Different typologies will be more suitable to different types of development and consideration should be given to an appropriate typology for the building uses and this reasoning should be explained in the design and access statement. The four typologies will also be more or less suitable depending on the site context and design proposals should take into account landscape setting, existing natural features, nearby buildings and other features to determine the most suitable typology, again this reasoning should be demonstrated in the design and access statement. Alterations and extensions to existing buildings should be designed to enhance and compliment the characteristics of the existing typology of the development.





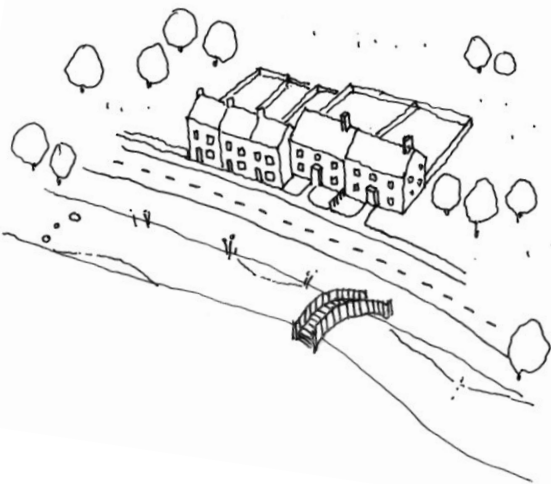
#### Farmyard Cluster:

- Tight groupings of buildings
- Typically create enclosed courtyard(s)
- Fairly consistent scale but often with one dominant building (often the farmhouse)
- Clusters can include small farmyards as well as slightly larger groupings that may incorporate buildings in separate ownership that probably historically developed around the presence of a working farm.
- Predominantly frontages face inwards to courtyards although often the principle building will be double fronted - addressing the street and the courtyard.
- Clusters are usually positioned close to streets with little spacing between the street and the building.



#### Manor House:

- Large, grand buildings set in the open countryside.
- Manor houses are typified by large frontages orientated towards their main approach.
- Often featuring large front gardens and long access drives.
- A selection of smaller outbuildings and sometimes other small homes are associated with the Manor House.
- Distinct hierarchy and variation in scale between the principle building (the Manor House) and its outbuildings.
- Outbuildings are typically positioned behind the Manor House out of sight on approach to the main property.
- Historically Manor Houses are set within extensive grounds featuring a combination of ornamental gardens, kitchen gardens and farmed land.



#### Ribbon/Terrace:

- A small collection of buildings in the open countryside arranged in a linear form and typically terraced.
- Often these terraces are arranged on one side of a highway facing the open countryside or a natural feature such as a stream or river.
- This typology is characterised by its linear form.
- Design detailing creates rhythm and consistency reinforcing the linear emphasis of the buildings.



#### Isolated Building which form Landmarks in the Landscape:

- Isolated individual buildings in the open countryside.
- Often larger homes but can include churches and other building types.
- Buildings have sufficient scale and interest to create a strong presence in the landscape.
- Form and layout often respond to the landscape setting where at times such buildings are nestled into valleys or at other times may break the horizon to form a landmark feature in the landscape.





## Form & Scale of Buildings in the Landscape

The siting of development within a plot should be a response to the characteristics of the site. Let the site shape the development rather than have to heavily engineer the site to accommodate a preconceived type of development.

This is primarily concerned with the topography but may also include surrounding trees, hedges and watercourses.

Adapting the layout of development according to these site constraints can help reduce the cost of a development.

Where a development includes more than one building, it can also help avoid awkward or unsociable relationships between buildings or difficult access arrangements.

Use the development typologies above to determine an appropriate layout of development on the site.

The layout of development may vary in the following ways:

- Slope: work with the contours where possible to avoid excessive cut and fill or underbuilding;
- Plot: the size of each individual building within its plot and where it is located within the plot change the character of development;
- Form: Access & Parking should be considered in an integrated way and should be arranged differently according to the development typology. Avoid excessive areas of hard surface.

## Rural Exception Sites

Local Plan policy DM6 outlines the criteria for Rural Exception sites where a development of predominantly affordable housing may be permitted outside of allocated sites or settlement boundaries, where, among other criteria, it adjoins a settlement.

The design of rural exception sites should take the same approach outlined in the Guide for designing according to landscape and settlement form, identifying the settlement typology and then the site situation to inform the design of the scheme. In this way, Rural Exception Sites can contribute, in the same way as any other development, to the distinctiveness of the place by establishing the correct relationships between buildings and landscape.

All of the design approaches outlined so far are in this guide as applicable to affordable housing as they are to other types of development: landscape setting, settlement form, site situation, or the development typologies in the open countryside are applicable in the design of affordable housing. In regards to build costs, good design does not rely solely on expensive solutions.

It is just as possible to create a well-designed affordable home as it is to create a poorly designed costly dwelling. Simple, understated, sometimes repeating building design and form and tight, efficient layouts are common features of development within the landscape of Mid Devon and can become cost effective models for new development.



## Site considerations

Every site is unique but it has been necessary to make certain generalisations within this guide regarding the setting, layout and features of development throughout the district.

In the open countryside each site should be considered in its own right according to the following considerations:

Whether a site is large or small development should be positioned carefully within the wider landscape:

- Avoid dominating the skyline
- Avoid being the only element which breaks the horizon
- Avoid becoming the only dominant feature in the wider landscape

- Consider the orientation of buildings according to any roads or other buildings (buildings are generally parallel or perpendicular to roads and lanes and to one another) and in response to climatic conditions, creating or avoiding exposure and shelter as well as affecting the building's performance e.g. optimising passive solar gain.

Be prepared to allow the site characteristics and surroundings to determine the type of development on the site. For example, a steeply sloping site may not be appropriate for single storey buildings whose footprint is large as this may lead to lots of change of levels within the building or significant earth works to create a platform for the building.







### Building Features

There are no universal features which are particular to Mid Devon. Many characteristics can be observed across the district and some relate to specific availability of certain building products at certain times historically.

The design of buildings involves balancing their appearance, their environmental performance and the cost of achieving both. For example, the use of a particular natural stone may be in keeping with surrounding buildings but the only cost effective (or available) source requires importing a stone similar in appearance from overseas.

The Compendium of District Design (Volume 3) provides information on how architectural features of a variety of kinds are typically employed across the district to reinforce settlement pattern and distinctiveness. In many cases contemporary materials and detailing can be used in an effective manner in the same way to retain the distinctiveness of the district which is at first borne out of the relationship between settlement pattern and the landscape character.

### Flexibility of buildings

Design of buildings in the open countryside should consider the embodied energy over the lifecycle of the building with the flexibility for re-use rather than rebuild being a foundation of sustainability. Ever changing techniques, economic trends and patterns of living are likely to effect the use and suitability of such buildings and to avoid redundant buildings adaptable and future proofed structures are encouraged.

Responding to landform and existing features in the landscape along with considerate building design can help to reduce the impact of new buildings in the open countryside.

### Landform:

- Buildings aligned parallel with the contours on sloping sites will be less intrusive on the landscape.
- The layout of buildings should be fitting with the natural grain of the landscape.
- Topography can be used to help reduce the impact of new buildings by making use of landform to screen new development.
- New developments should avoid positioning buildings on the brow of hills to reduce their impact.
- On sloping sites, where ground conditions permit, using retaining features to set buildings into the hillside can help them to integrate into the landscape.

### Existing Features:

- Where possible existing trees, hedges and walls should be retained and integrated into any new proposals and landscaping.
- Buildings and layouts should be designed to integrate with and compliment existing patterns of boundaries and other landscape features.
- Where possible new roads and parking areas should be avoided and existing infrastructure should be used to reduce the impact on the landscape.
- Existing opportunities for biodiversity should be identified and new development should be designed to enhance and protect these habitats.

### Building Design:

- Larger buildings or developments should be broken down to reduce their visual dominance in the landscape.
- Building heights should respond to topography and consider visual impact, placing smaller structures to the foreground can help to soften the transition between landscape and built environment.
- Large expanses of roof and walls should be avoided or broken up with changes in materials, heights and set backs.
- Materials and colours should be carefully selected to compliment the landscape and avoid being overly prominent. Selections should respond to the immediate surrounding landscape.
- Where new areas of road and hard landscaping are unavoidable the use of harsh materials such as tarmac should be avoided with more traditional finishes being more appropriate.