

HBO Neighbourhood Plan

Design Guidance and Codes

In autumn 2024 Aecom Limited were commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government via Locality, who represent over 1600 local community organisations, to provide design support and guidance to Hatfield Broad Oak Parish Council as part of the making of a Neighbourhood Plan.

In general, the brief was to set out design guidance and codes based on the existing features of Hatfield Broad Oak in accordance with paragraphs 131 and 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states: *good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.*

Design guidance will identify how a development can be provided in accordance with good design practice.

Design codes are specific, and detailed parameters that developers are required to adopt and should accord with the Uttlesford District-wide Design Code 2024. Where a proposed development cannot comply with a code, or codes, then justification, supported by factual evidence, should be provided.

When compiling a list of design codes, the Community Survey, carried out in early 2024, was consulted to assess concerns of residents such as accessibility of the village, environmental challenges and some design related issues.

The survey results coupled with site visits and a desktop study have formed the basis of the design guidance themes and these themes were chosen to highlight and preserve the positive assets of the Neighbourhood Area and address some of the current challenges and potential opportunities for improvement.

Typical design guidance would include:

- Future development must not result in the village coalescing with surrounding settlement clusters.

- Edge of settlement development that backs onto the open countryside should gradually transition into the landscape by utilising 'green curtain' type buffering.
- Proposals must reflect the density, height, building type and variety and layout currently present in the parish.