

Policy DC3 Requirement for good design

Require that all developments demonstrate good quality design, responding to and integrating with local surroundings and landscape context. In Dartmouth Park good design means:

- (a) achieving high quality design that respects the scale, mass, density and character of existing and surrounding buildings and preserves the open and green character of the area;
- (b) relating developments to the urban landscape value of the street setting, including respecting the established orientation and grain of existing development, established building set-backs, and arrangements of front gardens, walls, railings or hedges;
- (c) relating developments to established plot widths in the streets where development is proposed, particularly where they establish a rhythm to the architecture in a street;
- (d) where multi-storey developments are permitted in accordance with the other policies in this Plan, avoiding juxtaposition of buildings of significantly different scale and massing and incorporating a gradual transition from the scale of the surrounding built context where appropriate;
- (e) ensuring that any extensions or modifications to existing buildings are subordinate to the existing development and in keeping with its setting, including the relationship to any adjoining properties;
- (f) using good quality materials that complement the existing palette of materials used within the immediate area;
- (g) providing within the development boundary sufficient appropriately sited and well integrated amenity space, refuse and recycling storage, bicycle and mobility vehicle parking and storage, and delivery space (as appropriate to the size and type of development) to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape; and
- (h) in construction or alteration of shopping and other commercial frontages in the Neighbourhood Centres, ensuring that the development contributes positively to the accessibility, sense of place and individual character of the Centre. In particular, solid external security shutters and shops that do not provide access to everyone will be resisted.

3.27 Examples of the application of these design principles are shown in the photographs below. Good design can characterise any period of architecture; we have focussed here on relatively recent examples, as being potentially more relevant to development during the period covered by this Plan. However, good design will respect, and will often borrow from, characteristics and features of the neighbouring area, whatever the period.



St Anne's Close; Walter Segal, 1950-52; scale, materials (brick, glass), massing and orientation, communal green space



24A York Rise; van Heyningen & Haward, 1975; scale, materials (brick), relation to urban streetscape



22-32 Winscombe Street, Neave Brown, 1965; scale, materials, relation to urban street, massing and orientation, communal open space. Neave Brown, Royal Gold Medallist 2018.



7 Glenhurst Avenue; Maccreanor Lavington and Khoo, 2015; materials and palette of extension, respects established orientation and grain

Justification for Policy DC3:

3.28 The principles set out in the policy are not exhaustive and cannot guarantee good design. They are intended, however, to provide guidance as to the balance sought between new development, including high-quality contemporary design, and protection of Dartmouth Park's character and setting. They reflect the wish to allow new opportunities for living and working space while protecting the expectation of local people that this will continue to be an inner suburb of London, not the city centre. This

implies a mix of buildings and open space, or of green and brick/concrete, which will not be very different from the pattern today.

- 3.29 Policies **DC3(a) to DC3(e)** seek to support appropriate and useful development whilst ensuring that new development is well integrated into the existing pattern of development. This is largely a question of form, mass, density and scale, rather than style. The appropriate scale will clearly vary from street to street: for example, a building that would be completely out of place in the Brookfield Estate (gentle streets of interwar cottages) could be a welcome addition in York Rise Neighbourhood Centre (narrow but 4-5 storey shopping street). The integration of new development in a manner that does not disrupt the cohesiveness of the Area also requires respect for the existing grain and orientation of development and for the established plot widths, set-backs and hard and soft landscaping of the existing streetscape. Where large scale developments are permitted in accordance with Camden's policies and the other policies in this Plan, with buildings that are higher than the established scale of the area, intermediate-scale blocks should be used to ease the transition between smaller and larger scale buildings where appropriate.
- 3.30 It goes almost without saying that good quality design requires good quality materials. Policy **DC3(f)** seeks to facilitate the integration of new development into the existing context by ensuring that the materials will complement those in the immediate area.
- 3.31 Good design also requires the consideration from the outset of requirements for adequate amenity and service areas. Camden's policies and other policies in this Plan address minimum requirements for some amenity and service areas, for example for bike storage (see Camden Local Plan policy T1 (Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport) and Policy TS2(b) below). The aim of Policy **DC3(g)** is to ensure that, where those minimum requirements are met, the space allocated to these functions is adequate to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape. A recent development of housing over a restaurant in the Area, for example, has included insufficient space for bicycles and waste, leading to unsightly solutions for these facilities. Policy DC3(g) seeks to ensure that such issues are avoided by adequate design.
- 3.32 Policy **DC3(h)** addresses good design in the context of the Neighbourhood Centres. These Centres are part of the characteristic pattern which makes Dartmouth Park what it is, but each also has its own character, which is described in Chapter 6. It is important to note that DC3(h) refers not just to historic shop and pub facades, but to the whole grouping of frontages that are part of the essential character of our local centres. DC3(h) seeks to ensure that development in these Centres will contribute positively to that character.
- 3.33 While development appropriate to one Centre may not fit another, we would expect that in all cases development that would result in blocked windows or lengthy blank facades should be avoided. Several issues arise here. A particularly difficult one is the increasing use of solid external security shutters. These are perceived by some as having an important role in combating an increasing incidence of vandalism and damage to our local shops. However, they can create a forbidding atmosphere and

are prone to graffiti. Their use should therefore be resisted, and the use of internal or transparent shutters or other security measures should be encouraged instead. For the same reasons, blinds, membranes or advertisements that block windows are strongly discouraged; attractive window displays which increase transparency not only will improve security but will contribute positively to the character of the Area. Another important issue to be addressed by good design is the accessibility of shops to all, including those with limited mobility. New or altered shops which do not provide access to everyone will be resisted.

- 3.34 The character of the Area should also be maintained through the preservation and enhancement of specific heritage features in the street scene; the Conservation Area Appraisal (Appraisal Appendix 6) gives a list of such heritage features.
- 3.35 It should be noted that policies in Chapter 7, especially ES1 on preserving and enhancing the green and open feel of the area and ES4 on measures which increase energy efficiency, are complementary to the design policies in this chapter, and development proposals should be guided by all.