North Tyneside Design Code:

Houses

North Tyneside Council

Well-designed new houses should be attractive, functional and sustainable. They should make a positive contribution to local character and help create safe, appealing neighbourhoods. Internally, new homes should support comfortable, healthy and sustainable living.

The design codes in this section apply to the erection of any new house, including infill developments and houses within larger residential schemes. Where more than one new house is proposed, the design codes within the Residential Sites section must also be considered.

Objectives

a) Positively respond to, and enhance, the local character of the area.
b) Provide high quality accommodation for future occupiers, including both internal and external spaces.
c) Protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
d) Provide good connections to existing communities, facilities and public transport.
e) Support the creation of healthy neighbourhoods.

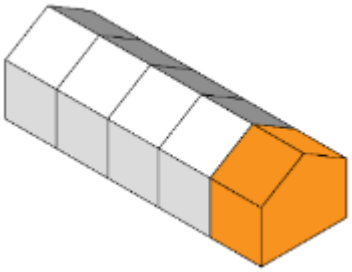
New houses will be considered well designed where the following design codes are met. Any deviation must be supported by clear evidence demonstrating why an alternative approach is more appropriate for the specific site. Precedent alone is not a valid justification. Planning applications are assessed on their own merits against current planning policy and adopted guidance, both of which may change over time.

H 1 House type

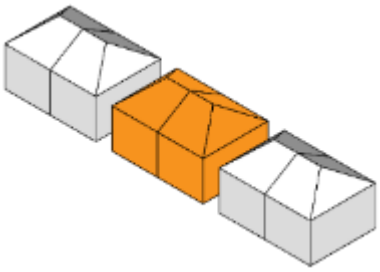
House types should respond positively to the surrounding context and contribute to a coherent street character.

On smaller sites or within established areas, the prevailing house types and form should inform the design of new development. Where the surrounding context is varied or lacks a clear pattern, a wider range of house types may be appropriate.

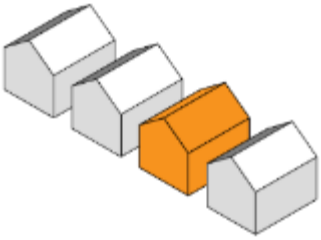
In accessible and well-connected locations, or as part of larger developments, a broader mix of house types will be supported to respond to site opportunities and identified housing needs, provided that the overall design remains coherent and integrates successfully with its surroundings.



New end of terraced house



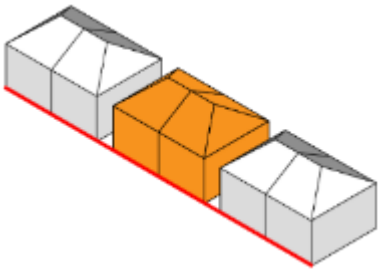
New semi-detached houses



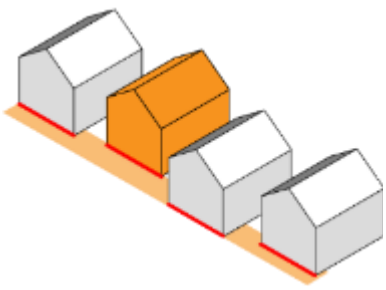
New detached house

H 2 Building line

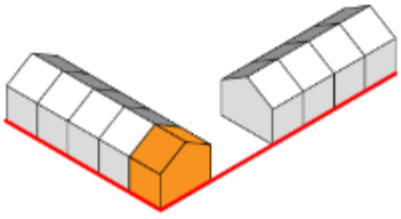
The setback of a new house should be informed by the predominant building line along the street.



Clear building line



Varied building line



Corner building line

H 3 Site topography

Proposals should respond positively to the site's topography. Where more than one house is proposed on a sloping site, the design should step the development up or down the street frontage through variations in building height, entrance levels and roof forms. This should be achieved in a manner that also facilitates appropriate access arrangements, including the provision of level or gently sloping approaches to principal entrances where practicable. The positioning of entrance doors and relationship to the street should take account of site levels, ensuring sufficient space for safe and convenient access.

New houses respond to existing site levels. This creates visual interest and helps maintain a positive relationship with the street.

H 4 Local character

The design should complement the architectural style and character of the area, drawing on any commonly occurring local features where these are present and clearly identifiable.

Examples of local character

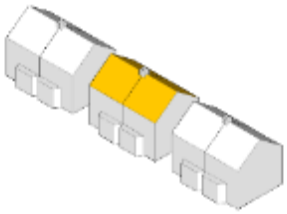
Single-height bay windows, Wallsend.

Horizontally proportioned windows, Wideopen.

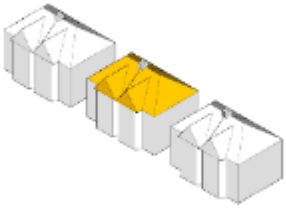
Curved bay windows with feature gables, Whitley Bay.

H 5 Roof type

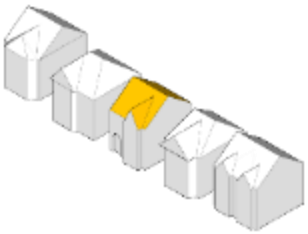
Roof types should reflect the predominant roof style in the surrounding area or street, where this is clearly defined. Where the roofscape is mixed or evolving, there is greater scope for variation.



Gable roofs



Hipped roofs



Mixed roofs

Examples of local roof types

Consistent hipped roof form across the street, Tynemouth.

Uniform pitched slate roofs defining local character, North Shields.

Consistent gable roof form across the street, Killingworth.

H 6 Entrance design and access

Houses should have a clear and well-defined entrance. Any canopy, overhang or recess should complement the overall design. Entrances should provide step-free access from the principal point of approach to the dwelling.

Projecting canopy

Projecting canopy over recessed entrance

Recessed entrance forms corner feature of house

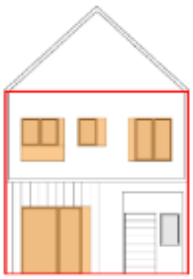
Entrance Canopy

Recessed entrance

Overhang entrance

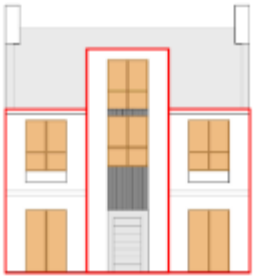
H 7 Window size and design

Window openings should typically form a substantial proportion of the front elevation and should be sufficient to provide visual interest, active frontages and appropriate levels of daylight, while remaining consistent with Building Regulations requirements.



Square surrounds relate to the square façade.

Rectangular horizontal windows relate to the wide elevation.



Vertical windows reference the different forms of the elevation.

Small window openings relative to wall area, limiting daylight and activity.

Well-proportioned window openings relative to wall area, supporting active and well-lit frontages.

H 8 Architectural features and detailing

Architectural features and detailing should be incorporated on the principal elevation to add visual interest. This may be achieved through projecting or recessed elements, including the careful design of windows and doors. Other

forms of high-quality detailing, such as material variation, fenestration rhythm, lintels, string courses, or door surrounds, should also be used, particularly where these respond to local character.

Recessed central element creating depth to the elevation.

Repeating projecting bay windows adding visual interest.

Projecting entrances and upper-level window features.

Examples of traditional architectural detailing

Brick header and arch detailing.

Decorative brick courses and detailing.

Stone cills, headers and quoins.

Examples of contemporary architectural detailing

Feature brickwork patterns .

Timber cladding.

Louvres and screens.

H 9 Quality of accommodation

New houses must provide well-designed accommodation that is appropriately sized, accessible, and offers a good outlook, with rooms of suitable shape and layout. Main habitable rooms should receive adequate daylight, have an outlook that provides a reasonable sense of openness and avoids undue overlooking of blank walls or poorly designed spaces, and ensure suitable levels of privacy. Habitable rooms include living areas, kitchens and bedrooms.

H 10 Front boundary treatments

Front boundary treatments should be appropriate to the appearance, style and scale of the house and respond positively to the immediate street scene and local character. Boundary treatments vary across the borough, reflecting differences in context, density and development pattern.

Typical boundary treatments may include, depending on local character:

a) Low brick or stone walls and/or metal railings in more tightly developed or urban contexts.

b) Low brick or stone walls, often combined with hedges, in lower-density or suburban contexts.

c) Hedges or low timber fences in rural or semi-rural contexts.

H 11 Rear boundary treatments

Where rear boundaries face the public realm, a feature brick or stone wall must be provided. This may incorporate timber panels and brick piers to the upper section. When timber panels are used, they should be close boarded or feather edge to maintain privacy. The spacing between brick piers should not exceed 2 metres.

Brick wall with piers.

Brick wall with half height timber panel.

H 12 Corner buildings

Corner buildings should provide active frontages, with habitable room windows addressing both streets to enhance the quality of the built environment and provide natural surveillance. Habitable rooms include living areas, kitchens and bedrooms. The design of corner buildings should ensure that the extent, proportion and specification of glazing on all elevations is appropriate to achieve high standards of energy efficiency and overall building performance.

Corner buildings provide active frontages with habitable room windows addressing both streets.

H 13 Building materials

The choice of building materials must complement the common materials used in the street or local area. The extent to which these materials are incorporated will depend on the architectural style and the prominence of different materials in the site context. Where a range of local materials is present, there is greater scope for variation. Different materials can also be used to highlight specific architectural features.

Local materials

Red brick with consistent tone, Cullercoats.

Dark red brick typical of local character, Benton.

Buff brick reflecting local material palette, North Shields.

Light-coloured brick, Tynemouth.

Variegated red brick creating visual texture, North Shields.

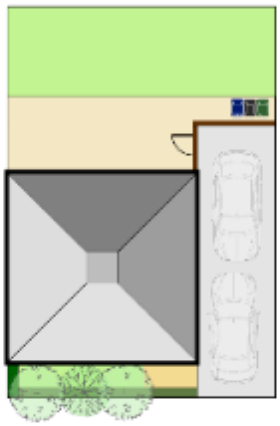
Roughcast render common in Monkseaton.

H 14 Car parking

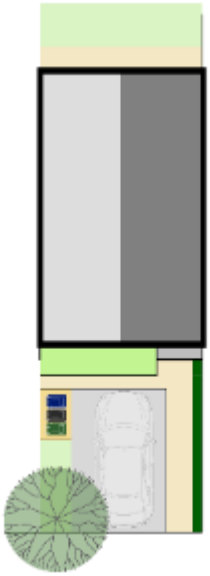
Car parking should be located where it is safe, secure, accessible and well used. A range of parking solutions should be provided across development sites to respond to context, site layout, and housing density.

Parking arrangements should be designed to minimise the visual dominance of vehicles in the street scene. Parking to the side, in courtyards, or within the frontage may all be appropriate, provided they are well integrated and do not detract from the character of the area.

Where parking is located to the front of properties, sufficient space should be retained for landscape planting, an unobstructed path to the entrance, and access to bin storage where required. Continuous areas of hardstanding should be minimised; as a guide, uninterrupted hardstanding should typically not exceed approximately 6–7 metres in width and should be broken up by planting, unless an alternative approach is clearly justified by the site context.



Parking to side of house with small front garden.



Parking to front of house with landscaping.

H 15 Garage design

Garages should not dominate the front elevation of the house and should be designed to complement the architecture of the dwelling. The width of the garage door should not exceed 50% of the width of the front elevation. Detached garages should be positioned at least 1 metre behind the main building line. The visual dominance of integral garages should be reduced through appropriate architectural features and detailing.

Integrated garage.

Detached garage set behind the building line.

H 16 Garages and house layout

Dwellings should be designed to provide adequate internal living space from the outset, without reliance on the future conversion of garages. Where garages are integrated into the dwelling, the overall layout should be carefully designed so that the relationship between living accommodation and garage space supports a high standard of residential amenity.

H 17 Electric vehicle charge point

Electric vehicle charge points should be located on a side elevation to minimise visual impact. For terraced homes or where this is not practicable,

an alternative discreet location will be acceptable. Charge points and parking spaces should be arranged to ensure that vehicles can be connected safely and conveniently, without obstructing access routes or footways.

Electric vehicle charge point positioned on the side elevation.

H 18 External features

External features (including air source heat pumps, utility meter boxes, electric charging points, soil pipes, extractor vents and flues) should be sited away from public elevations except where the layout of terraced houses makes this impracticable. These features should either be colour-matched to the surface they are fixed to or appropriately screened.

Where kitchens face the street, vents and flues should be placed on side elevations for detached and semi-detached homes. For terraced homes, vents and flues should, where possible, be routed to the rear or exhausted through the roof.

All vents, flues and extracts should be positioned to avoid causing nuisance to neighbouring properties and should not discharge directly towards or over site boundaries where this would result in an unacceptable impact.

Examples of utility meter boxes

The utility meter is not colour-matched to the building and is positioned on the front elevation, causing it to stand out and detract from the overall appearance.

The utility meter is colour-matched to the building material and located on the side elevation, making it more discreet.

Examples of air source heat pump screen

Air source heat pump visible on elevation with limited screening.

Air source heat pump enclosed with louvred screening to reduce visual impact.

H 19 Solar Panels

Where proposed, solar panels should be sensitively integrated into the design of buildings to minimise visual impact while supporting low-carbon energy. Panels should be located on less prominent roof slopes where possible, follow the pitch of the roof, and be arranged in a coherent, proportionate and, where appropriate, symmetrical layout. Installations should avoid dominating key architectural features or harming the character of the building or surrounding area, particularly in conservation areas.

Roof-mounted solar panels integrated into the roof pitch and positioned to minimise visual impact on the building and streetscape.

H 20 Security

Side gates must be provided to restrict unauthorised access to rear gardens. Gates should be of robust construction, match the height of the adjoining boundary fence, and incorporate a secure, lockable mechanism.

H 21 Wheeled bins

The storage location for three 240-litre wheeled bins and a food waste bin must be shown on a site plan. Bin stores should be located within rear gardens wherever feasible, positioned away from windows and doors, and served by a level area of hardstanding to allow easy movement.

For terraced homes where rear storage is not practical and bins need to be located at the front of the property, they should be contained within well-designed, purpose-built enclosures that are fully integrated into the street scene to avoid harm to visual quality.

Location of wheeled bins to front and rear of property.

H 22 Nationally Described Space Standards

Planning drawings must demonstrate compliance with the Nationally Described Space Standards, including:

a) Gross Internal Area (GIA) for each dwelling.
b) Key room dimensions, particularly for bedrooms and principal living spaces.
c) Indicative furniture layouts to demonstrate the functionality and usability of rooms, where this is not readily apparent from floor areas, dimensions or standard layouts.

Drawings should be sufficiently detailed to show that rooms are of adequate size, shape and layout, with appropriate circulation space, door swings and window positions.

Checklist

The Design Code is a key consideration when planning applications are assessed. The Design Code Compliance Checklist is a simple tool to help applicants explain how their proposals respond to these requirements. While completing the checklist is not mandatory, submitting it with your application can make the process clearer, quicker and more robust.

Why complete the checklist?

- It clearly shows how your proposal meets the Design Code.
- It reduces the likelihood of follow-up questions from the Council.
- It helps avoid delays in the determination of your application.
- It strengthens your case if an application is refused and appealed.

Submitting a completed checklist at the point of application is the simplest way to demonstrate compliance with the Design Code and support a timely decision.

Code number and title	Key points to address	Applicant Response
H 1 – House type	Respond to context; reflect or justify mix of types	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 2 – Building line	Setback informed by predominant street line	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 3 – Site topography	Design responds to levels; stepped form where needed	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 4 – Local character	Complement architectural style and local features	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 5 – Roof type	Reflect predominant or justify variation	☐ Yes ☐ No

H 6 – Entrance design and access	Clear entrance; step-free access	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 7 – Window size and design	Appropriate proportions, daylight, visual interest	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 8 – Architectural features and detailing	Provide visual interest and quality detailing	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 9 – Quality of accommodation	Adequate size, outlook, daylight, privacy	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 10 – Front boundary treatments	Respond to character and context	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 11 – Rear boundary treatments	Provide suitable walls/fencing where visible	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 12 – Corner buildings	Active frontages to both streets	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 13 – Building materials	Complement local materials	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 14 – Car parking	Well integrated; minimise visual dominance	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 15 – Garage design	Not dominate frontage; siting and proportions	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 16 – Garages and house layout	Adequate living space; not reliant on conversion	☐ Yes ☐ No

H 17 – Electric vehicle charge point	Discreet siting; safe access	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 18 – External features	Sited away or screened; minimise visual impact	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 19 – Solar Panels	Integrated sensitively into roof design	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 20 – Security	Provide secure side gates	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 21 – Wheeled bins	Provide appropriate storage location	☐ Yes ☐ No
H 22 – Nationally Described Space Standards	Demonstrate compliance in drawings	☐ Yes ☐ No
Further information in support of your answers		

North Tyneside Design Code

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