

Streets and Roads

This section explores how well connected spaces can be created through permeable networks within developments and good signage. This section focuses on street and road design, giving consideration for how we should aim to design permeable layouts that link well to the existing transport, walking and cycle networks both inside and outside of the development.

It gives consideration for how utilities should be installed across the development including where to best locate services in areas such as shared surface streets or public open space, and advisory settings for components found on streets or roads.

This section also identifies types of road layout, speed limits and access considerations, lighting and parking information that should be provided to users of the space.

This document should be read in conjunction with the **Highways Technical Manual** which provides specific technical guidance on how to build a layout in compliance with Essex Highways and Manual for Streets standards.

Key Messages

- Design permeable layouts that connect well with existing walking, cycling and passenger transport networks within and outside of the development.
- Consider the Healthy Streets ‘whole-street’ approach, including how to encourage active travel among all demographic groups.
- Prioritise (in order), walking, cycling and public transport desire-lines access, which maximise sustainable access between settlements and to key local movement generators.
- High-quality communal spaces should be provided with supporting facilities which encourage activity by users and should be co-located within the layouts of new developments.
- Unnecessary through traffic should not be attracted to new residential areas. The layout and attractiveness of the environment should be such as to discourage the use of the car for local trips and encourage walking and cycling.
- Design for future adaptation of spaces, enabling them to accommodate changes in the way we use streets and transport.
- Future technology infrastructure, such as smart street lights, street furniture, cycle parking and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, must be planned now and integrated successfully into new streets and spaces
- Provision and type of ground surface materials should be considered from the outset of any new development, and an approach taken to enable the development to strike the right balance between meeting the needs of users and addressing the technical requirements of highways.

- Materials should respond to and complement the specific built/landscape settings, with greater place-making emphasis in sensitive locations such as relating to conservation areas, protected landscapes and strategic open space.
- Good workmanship begins with good design, and to be effective it must be carried through all stages of a project; that is, through the specification, detailing, implementation and site supervision to the maintenance regime. It must also be supported by the allocation of adequate resources such as skilled labour, time and funding.

Key Questions

- Does the layout promote a coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive network of walking and cycling routes?
- Does the layout promote the co-location and concentration of key retail, community and open-space uses?
- Are the walking and cycling routes and bus waiting areas within the layout safe, well-lit, overlooked, welcoming and attractive, well-maintained, durable, clearly signposted and supported by appropriate shelter, seating and resting points?
- Is secure and covered residential cycle storage provided in a prominent location which encourages cycle use over car use?
- Have private communal spaces been designed to encourage a range of activities for all genders, ages, cultures and abilities?
- Do the streets and spaces provide flexibility and allow for future changes in how they are used?
- Has consideration been given to how future utilities and technological infrastructure can be accommodated without detriment to the public realm?