

BALDONS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

DESIGN GUIDE

Introductory Notes to **Draft C** (13-08-2017 for Public Consultation)

This draft Guide focuses on design and materials guidance specific to the Baldons. It is intended to supplement the South Oxfordshire Design Guide, and not to replace it.

The NP team received comments from SODC on this draft Design Guide on 10th August. Those comments will require discussion and working through, and may require further consultation with the Local Authority.

In the meantime – and based on NP team internal comments and suggestions - some sections of the Guide are subject to further work and/or clarification. This on-going work includes the following:

- How our Guide integrates with ***South Oxfordshire Design Guide*** 2016;
- Further definition of what factors contribute to ***high quality design*** and development in the Baldons;
- Relevant examples of high quality ***modern design***;
- Clarification of sections dealing with '***design exceptions***';
- More detail on ***contextual analysis*** of proposed development sites;
- Clarification on the Guide wording being '***prescriptive***' or '***proscriptive***';
- Completion of ***Appendix*** and references section at the end.

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1.00	INTRODUCTION	
1.01	Village Character	<i>The overall scale of residential development in the Baldons is modest with an open and spacious feel everywhere. The relationship of development with the surrounding open countryside is very important. There is an absence of high, dominant or crowded buildings and the vernacular and built form are generally simple and understated. See the Village Character Assessment VCA.</i>
1.02	Landscape Character	<i>Development in the Baldons is interconnected at all points with the surrounding countryside: resulting in a truly open and rural feel. See Landscape Character Assessment LCA.</i>
1.03	Development Sites	<i>The Baldons Neighbourhood Development Plan (NP) has identified 9 sites that are considered appropriate for small-scale residential development: for a total of 10 to 15 dwelling units. The sites vary in size and attributes and the their suitability for different types of housing vary accordingly. See Sustainability Appraisal (ref).</i>
1.04	Development limits	<i>No development will be allowed outside the preferred sites.</i>
1.05	Design guidance	<i>Any proposed new development in the Baldons shall be in compliance with this Design Guide. The Design Guide is intended to provide assistance and a useful framework for decision-making, setting out and building design for new development.</i>
1.06	Other Guidance	<i>In addition, all proposed development in the Baldons should take due note of, and be in compliance with, the following Planning and Design guidance documentation:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> • <i>National Planning Practice Guidance</i> • <i>South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011/Emerging</i> • <i>South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016</i>
1.07	Formal applications	<i>In most cases, those seeking development proposals will be required to submit formal planning applications to SODC as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For Town & Country Planning Permission.</i> • <i>Any proposal (for new or alterations works as opposed to like-for-like repairs) within the curtilage of a Listed Building will require Listed Building Consent.</i> • <i>Any proposal (for new or alterations works as opposed to like-for-like repairs) within one of the designated Conservation Areas will require Conservation Area Consent.</i> <i>There are other applications and consents that could be required and developers should check in advance with SODC Planning Department.</i>
1.08	Character Assessments	<i>The Village Character Assessment and the Landscape Character Assessments describe the context for all proposed new development and should inform its design, scope and scale in order to protect and maintain the identified existing character, including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Openness and countryside views</i> • <i>Informal and rural character</i> • <i>Close association with surrounding pastoral landscape</i> • <i>Small scale of vernacular and more recent development</i>
1.09	Complimentary character	<i>Proposals should compliment the existing village character and not detract from it.</i>

1.10	Basis of Guide	<p><i>The basis for the recommendations in this guide flow from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the Village Character Assessment</i> • <i>the Landscape Character Assessment</i> • <i>an analysis of the local architecture and vernacular building types</i> • <i>the identification of commonly used building materials and finishes</i> • <i>the pattern and scale of historic and recent development</i> • <i>an understanding of the typical setting of built development within the surrounding countryside</i>
1.11	Key factor	<p><i>Development which is of low density and modest in scale bulk and height points to a predominant factor being the relationship between the scale of building and the context of open landscape character.</i></p>
1.12	Guide format	<p><i>For all future development, this guide sets out the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>key issues related to scale and siting</i> • <i>a summary of residential development types – the grouping of buildings</i> • <i>recommendations relating to detached houses, terraced housing, extensions, conversions and replacement dwellings</i> • <i>design concept principles related to context</i> • <i>suggested design styles to draw on and indications of what to avoid</i> • <i>preferences for suitable commonly-used building materials</i> • <i>general guidance for decoration, landscaping, outbuildings and types of enclosure</i>
1.13	Reference	<p><i>Reference to the Design Guide should be made in the Design & Access Statement (which is a requirement for any planning application).</i></p>



	<p>5</p>  <p>view of Baldon Row</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>view of Little Baldon</p>
2.00	SCALE	
2.01	General	<i>Apart from a small number of larger buildings - that are mostly set back from the main through routes - development throughout the hamlets is notably modest and small-scale. Any new development should remain in character with this.</i>
2.02	Building size & bulk	<i>New development should be of comparable scale to surrounding buildings and designs should avoid appearing large and overbearing by comparison with adjoining properties.</i>
2.03	Shape, height & outline	<i>The outline and shape of any new development should reflect the existing vernacular and grouping of buildings. Designs should not tend to change the relationship of the built environment with the surrounding countryside. One-and-a-half to two storeys in height with traditionally pitched roofs is the norm. In both scale and height, proposed new buildings should be commensurate with adjacent buildings and should never be a storey height higher.</i>
2.04	Prominence	<i>New buildings should avoid being overly prominent - in terms of both physical bulk and design. They should be designed with appropriate consideration to the context of the site and adjacent existing buildings.</i>
3.00	SITING	
3.01	Infill & fitting in	<i>Infill development is appropriate for the development sites identified in the Baldons NP. New houses should sit comfortably with neighbouring properties and fit in happily within the village as a whole.</i>
3.02	Backland development	<i>Backland development and development on open green spaces do not comply with NP policy. New houses should not be sited behind other buildings. In order to maintain the village character new development should remain only one building deep.</i>
3.03	Development setting:	<i>The siting of any proposed new building(s) should be fully respectful the site that they will occupy and ensure the maintenance of the character of the village and its landscape surroundings. A landscape appraisal of the site should be undertaken - to inform the design that is proposed.</i>
3.04	Impact on village:	<i>The impact of proposed new building(s) on the village as a whole should be tested against the Village Character Assessment. New development should seek to promote designs that maintain or enhance that character and they should avoid any negative impact.</i>
3.05	Impact on neighbours:	<i>Proposed new buildings should not disadvantage neighbouring owners. Care should be taken to avoid undue overshadowing and obstruction of views from neighbours.</i>



5.00	EXTENSIONS	Concept principles:
5.01	Design clarity:	<i>Generally any extension should be subservient to main building.</i>
5.02	Scale:	<i>The design should avoid creating something out-of-scale with existing surroundings; the final arrangement should appear to be a 'natural' evolution of development.</i>
5.03	Materials:	<i>Designs should use sympathetic materials. Those materials may vary but the final extended building should have a clear harmony to it. An explanation as to choice of materials should be provided with the Design & Access Statement that would be required with a planning application.</i>






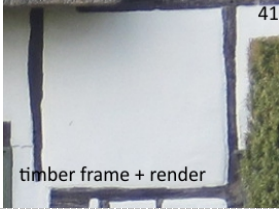










6.00	CONVERSIONS	Change-of-use principles:
6.01	Existing redundant building:	<i>For a conversion project to be feasible, there needs to be an existing redundant building of some architectural merit and in reasonable condition. An appraisal of the existing building needs to be provided including an explanation as to its redundancy. Most modern agricultural sheds would not provide an appropriate basis for conversion.</i>
6.02	Respect existing building:	<i>Respect the existing building is important. Insofar as the existing building is of architectural and vernacular merit, the feel and character of what exists should be retained. Important historic and architectural features should be retained and the origin and evolution of the building(s) should remain clear after the conversion.</i>
6.03	Retain the vernacular:	<i>The vernacular form of traditional farm buildings should be noted and used to inform the conversion design.</i>











7.00	REPLACEMENTS	Replacement dwellings:
7.01	Justification:	<i>The redundancy/loss of the existing building should be explained and justified.</i>
7.02	Design quality:	<i>For a complete replacement dwelling, the quality of the new design is paramount; it must represent a significant improvement over what currently exists. Supporting documentation should be provided by an appropriately qualified expert: historian, planner, architect, etc.</i>
8.00	DESIGN CONCEPT	Appropriate styles for new houses:
8.01	Rural dwelling house	<i>Rural ‘vernacular’ houses or cottages: detached, semi-detached, terraces or (in particular circumstances – see 4.06) clusters.</i>
8.02	Modern	<i>Simple modern houses or cottages: detached, semi-detached, terraces or clusters.</i>
8.03	Farm building	<i>Traditional farm building conversions: to form detached houses, and (in particular circumstances) clusters or courtyards.</i>
		What is important:
8.04	Design clarity	<i>The design principles for any proposed development should have a clear rationale and be in accordance with the guidance set out herein.</i>
8.05	Detailing	<i>The quality of materials & detailing is important to the design and resultant building. They should be consistent with the character of the village and faithful to the design concept for the proposals.</i>
8.06	Character	<i>New buildings should be designed to provide character, charm & interest. Consideration should be given as to how the existing building sits within the landscape and how this relationship reflects the character of the village. Any proposed development should have due regard for this relationship and should maintain the existing close affiliation with the wider rural landscape that is prevalent in the Neighbourhood Plan area.</i>
8.07	Landscape context	<i>Proposals should refer to Landscape Character Assessment and especially the “local landscape character” in the table referring to the various designated development sites.</i>
8.08	Balance	<i>Design proposals should respect the balance & scale of the site & village: the new building should ‘fit-in’ comfortably.</i>

	<p>15</p>  <p>village house example A</p>	<p>16</p>  <p>village house example B</p>
	<p>17</p>  <p>village house example C</p>	<p>18</p>  <p>simple modern house example A</p>
	<p>19</p>  <p>modern domestic architecture: brick & tile</p>	<p>20</p>  <p>farm building conversion</p>
	<p>Historic styles to draw on: (See illustrated examples: most of the images below are from the Baldons or nearby locations).</p>	
<p>8.09</p>	<p>Rural 18th & 19th century</p>	<p><i>Simple rural 18th & 19th century houses and cottages, especially from the Thames Valley, Cotswold and Chilterns areas.</i></p>
<p>8.10</p>	<p>Victorian</p>	<p><i>Small-scale rural Victorian domestic architecture is appropriate to draw on but not in its gothic or ecclesiastic forms.</i></p>
	<p>21</p>  <p>rural 18th century</p>	<p>22</p>  <p>19th century cottage</p>
<p>23</p>  <p>Victorian cottages</p>	<p>24</p>  <p>Arts & Crafts style</p>	

8.11	Arts & Crafts	<i>Arts & Crafts houses of the late 19th and early 20th century can provide a wide range of styles and materials that can inform designs for new houses.</i>		
8.12	Picturesque	<i>Picturesque architecture dating from the early 19th century can be an appropriate source of design ideas. Examples of 'cottage ornée' can be found at Blaize Hamlet near Bristol and dotted around many large estates throughout southern England.</i>		
8.13	Edwardian	<i>Simple rural Edwardian architecture is appropriate and can be useful to refer to.</i>		
8.14	1930's	<i>Houses from the 'Art Deco & Modernism' of the 1930's are also a useful design resource.</i>		
	 25 Arts & Crafts house	 26 Picturesque style	 27 Edwardian cottage	 28 1930's (non suburban)
8.15	Simple modern	<i>Simple modern design and construction is fully appropriate and there are many good examples locally. Turn End at Haddenham (1960's) is an interesting case in point.</i>		
8.16	Traditional farm vernacular	<i>In particular circumstances (dependent upon the site and layout) a design based around traditional farm building vernacular could be appropriate.</i>		
	 29 modern example	 30 modern timber-frame house	 31 farm building conversion	 32 small barn conversion
	To be avoided:			
8.17	Avoid ostentation	<i>Overly grand & ostentatious classical is not appropriate. Boars Hill can happily accommodate large one-off villas of many design styles but the character of the Baldons is quite different.</i>		
8.18	Avoid gaudiness	<i>Flamboyance & gaudiness (including extravagant modern) is not right for the Baldons; quiet and understated designs will fit in more happily.</i>		
8.19	Avoid period reproductions	<i>It is fine to use elements of established historic styles but pastiche 'period reproductions' are best avoided.</i>		
8.20	Avoid being too plain	<i>Designs should not be dull & too plain nor include muddled detailing. They should always have design integrity and interest.</i>		
	Design Exceptions:			
8.21	Design excellence	<i>Excellence of design and innovation is encouraged and will be considered.</i>		
8.22	Non compliance	<i>A proposal can be considered if it is an exceptional design of the highest quality in terms of its architecture and landscape design.</i>		
8.23	Village & landscape context	<i>Nevertheless, such a proposal would need to demonstrate that proper account has been taken of the characteristics of the local area as defined in the Village and Landscape Character Assessments.</i>		
8.24	Exceptional quality	<i>The exceptional quality or nature of any design exception should be truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting high standards of architecture and enhancing its immediate setting.</i>		
8.25	Justification & support	<i>Exception designs will require justification supported by expert opinion and accompanied by a detailed landscape scheme at application stage.</i>		

			(image 39 pending)	
9.14	Timber frame	<i>Timber frame & lime render (or boarded, or brick infilled) panels in simple 'modern' format can be used successfully here in the Baldons.</i>		
				
9.15	Timber cladding	<i>Timber boarding of various types is a suitable cladding materials: feather-edged or shiplap boards, waney edged boarding, thermally treated boarding, and many others are available. Timber supply should be as local as possible and always from certified renewable resources.</i>		
Roofing materials:				
9.16	Stone tiles	<i>Historically, natural 'Stonesfield' tiles have often been used locally but they are now difficult to come by and expensive. Good quality cement-based reproductions can be acceptable, subject to specification & detail.</i>		
				
9.17	Slates	<i>Welsh slates are suitable for extensions and outbuildings but not for large prime areas of roofing (where clay tiles are the norm).</i>		
9.18	Clay tiles	<i>Hand made clay tiles are encouraged and preferred. Some machine made (cement-based) tiles can also be acceptable, subject to design, specification & detail.</i>		
				
9.19	Pantiles	<i>Sometimes pantiles (terra cotta or cement-based) can be suitable for roofing, subject to design, specification & detail.</i>		

9.20	Thatch	<i>Combed wheat thatch is a common and traditional roofing material in this area but needs handling with due care and attention to detail and specification. Studies of the local vernacular suggest that thatch appears natural and best when cladding a low roof (no more than one-and-a-half storeys high) and can look out of place on any building of a full two storeys or more. Ridges and crests should be kept simple with no extravagant decorative features.</i>
9.21	Shingles	<i>Cedar or oak shingles can make a very pleasing roof but they are probably best for extensions and outbuildings rather than large areas of prime roofing.</i>
		
9.22	Sheet metal	<i>In certain circumstances sheet lead or aluminium roofing can work well but their highly visible use in the Baldons would need design justification.</i>
9.23	Rainwater goods	<i>Powder coated metal (cast iron or aluminium) rainwater downpipes and gutters are preferable to any form of plastic.</i>
	Doors & windows:	
9.24	Timber	<i>Painted or stained timber external doors & windows are preferred and encouraged.</i>
9.25	Metal	<i>Dependent upon design and specification details, good quality painted or powder-coated metal external doors and windows can also be acceptable.</i>
9.26	uPVC	<i>As noted above (see 9.07) uPVC windows are not encouraged.</i>
9.27	Glazing	<i>Leaded lights should only be used for buildings of appropriate style.</i>
10.00	DETAILED DESIGN	
	Roof design:	
10.01	Roof pitches	<i>Traditional pitched roofs are likely to fit best with the local vernacular and are therefore preferred. Dependent upon the particular site and design, other forms of roof may be appropriate but suitable justification and back up detail should be provided.</i>
		
10.02	Tiled roof details	<i>Ridges, crests, hips & valleys should follow the vernacular a for the roof material being used (tiles, slates etc).</i>
10.03	Dormers	<i>On most 'domestic' buildings, dormer windows can be quite suitable. There are many local forms of dormer and design proposals should seek to fit in accordingly. However, traditional farm outbuilding conversions should generally avoid having dormer windows as their inclusion can change the character of those buildings and muddle the architectural evolution of the building.</i>

	 <p>61 chimney example A</p>	 <p>62 modern brick chimney</p>	 <p>63 eaves example A</p>	 <p>64 eaves example B</p>
10.04	Chimneys	Facing brickwork would be normally expected on houses in the Baldons and is therefore encouraged. Occasionally, stone and render can be suitable. Traditional clay pots are also the norm here.		
	 <p>65 metal stove pipe</p>	 <p>66 conservation rooflight</p>	 <p>67 metal rainwater goods</p>	 <p>68 chimney pots</p>
10.05	Stove pipes	On farm building conversions, black-painted 'stove pipe' terminals can be more suitable; they are less likely to 'domesticate' the architectural character.		
10.06	Rooflights	Any large area of glass on a roof in the Baldons is likely to be at odds with the general roofscape pattern here. However, traditional rooflights can be quite appropriate; dark metal 'conservation' types of rooflight are preferable to normal 'velux' windows on prominent roof slopes.		
10.07	Leadwork	Traditional sheet metal (typically leadwork) flashing and abutment detailing is encouraged.		
10.08	Dishes & Aerials	Dishes and aerials should be kept away from principal elevations and off any silhouette rooflines.		
10.09	Solar panels	Wherever possible, solar panels should be located in hidden valleys and away from principal elevations of buildings.		
	External walling:			
10.10	Façades & elevations	The design as a whole - and the principal elevations in particular - should be clear and look like the sort of house or cottage that fits with the Village Character Assessment. Avoidance of very large areas of glazing to main façades is encouraged. If a particular design depends upon a lot of glazing, then it should be discretely screened from main public views by suitable evergreen landscaping – to mitigate against something visually out-of-keeping with (and harmful to) the local character.		
10.11	Porches	Porches and canopies should be in keeping with the general appearance and architecture of the house and their design and materials should avoid drawing too much attention to them.		
	Decorations:			
10.12	Colours	A restful and calm colour scheme is much preferable to anything gaudy or too bright: especially to all publically visible elevations.		
	Landscaping:			
10.13	Landscape scheme	A well thought through landscaping scheme should always accompany any new design proposals. Such a scheme should fully respect the character of the village and its landscape.		
10.14	Access	Adequate amenity space for pedestrian access and parking should be provided.		

10.15	Outbuildings	<i>As noted elsewhere, it is preferable for outline designs of any possible future outbuildings to be provided at the same time as the main proposals are submitted for consideration. Such details should include: parking areas; garages; bin storage; sheds & other garden buildings.</i>
10.16	Boundary enclosures	<i>Garden walls and fences should never block or severely obscure important views between houses and the surrounding countryside. There is therefore a preference against high solid walls and close-boarded fences.</i>
10.17	Fences & railings	<i>Open fencing and railings that allow the enjoyment of views are in general preferable to any form of solid enclosure.</i>
10.18	Hedges	<i>Hedges that form boundary enclosures should generally not be higher than 1.5 metres.</i>
10.19	Gates	<i>Solid 'security' gates are not encouraged.</i>



11.00	Appendix	<i>(provisional list)</i>
11.01	Baldons NP	<i>Baldons Neighbourhood Development Plan</i>
11.02	VCA	<i>Village Character Assessment</i>
11.03	LCA	<i>Landscape Character Assessment</i>
11.04	Sustainability	<i>Sustainability Appraisal</i>
11.05	Important Views	<i>NP Pre-submission Draft Fig 2.4 Key Views</i>
11.06	NPPF:	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
11.07	NPPG:	<i>National Planning Practice Guidance</i>
11.08	SO Local Plan:	<i>South Oxfordshire Local Plan</i>
11.09	Planning Permission:	<i>Town & Country Planning</i>
11.10	LBC:	<i>Listed Building Consent</i>
11.11	Conservation Area:	<i>Conservation Area Consent</i>
11.12	SO Design Guide:	<i>South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016</i>
11.13	Building for Life 12:	<i>Key points for the Baldons:</i>
		<i>5 Character Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?</i>
		<i>6 Working with the site and its context Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?</i>
		<i>12 External storage and amenity space Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?</i>