

Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist:

Integrating into the Neighbourhood

Vision Theme

BfL 12 primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Branching Out

1 Connections Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?					The new and regenerated neighbourhoods of the Garden Town should be well-connected and integrated yet respectful neighbours to adjacent sites - encouraging movement by sustainable modes as a priority.
1a Where should vehicles come in and out of the development?					BfL 12 advice applies
1b Should there be pedestrian and cycle only routes into and through the development? If so, where should they go?					The Garden Town should have streets suitable for all modes of travel, but to encourage commuting and other essential journeys by active travel (cycling + walking) then specific direct routes may be considered, where these are safe, well-overlooked and lit.
1c Where should new streets be placed, could they be used to cross the development site and help create linkages across the scheme and into the existing neighbourhood and surrounding places?					The wider movement network within the context of the development site should be recognised and responded to in the layout of the Garden Town project.
1d How should the new development relate to existing development? What should happen at the edges of the development site?					The 'integration of town and country' is a crucial characteristic of the Garden Town. Private drives rarely provide an appropriate edge condition and Edge Lanes that are public and link together to provide continuous perimeter access and a positive recreational route for active travel are strongly endorsed. Developments that contribute to forming a new threshold or gateway into and out of Taunton alongside a major route will need to promote a strong visual quality.

Growing Quality Places

2 Facilities and Services Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?					Garden Towns should wherever possible reduce the need to travel long distances to gain access to essential everyday facilities. Full fibre broadband connectivity is required.
2a Are there enough facilities and services in the local area to support the development? If not, what is needed?					BfL 12 advice applies
2b Where are new facilities proposed: Are these facilities what the area needs?					BfL 12 advice applies
2c Are these new facilities located in the right place? If not, where should they go?					BfL 12 advice applies
2d Does the layout encourage walking, cycling or using public transport to reach them?					The networks for walking and cycling need to be explicitly considered/illustrated and well-conceived, reflecting the needs of local and longer-distance trips by these 'active-travel' modes. Networks that assure strong access to Taunton Town Centre, any new local centre, schools and other 'destinations' (such as employment sites + public transport stops) need to be provided.

Branching Out

3 Public transport Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?					Development form (layout and density) and transportation should be considered to be interdependent within the Garden Town.
3a What can the development do to encourage more people (both existing and new residents) to use public transport more often?					The location of stops needs to be fully integrated with the design approach to localised density and character of urban form in order to create a series of clear and legible 'places' within the neighbourhood where public transport can be readily accessed.
3b Where should new public transport stops be located?					Ideally, radial streets and paths would place stops in the centre of a strong local network of walking routes.

Growing Quality Places

4 Meeting local housing requirements Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?					The ambition for all Garden Town Communities is to create a good mix and broad range of good quality housing types / sizes in order to promote a mixed community which has a varied and diverse demography.
4a What types of homes, tenure and price range are needed in the area (for example, starter homes, family homes, or homes for those downsizing)?					Optical fibre broadband infrastructure should be provided. Homes shall include types that are suitable (possibly after minor adaptation) to provide good home-working conditions.
4b Is there a need for different types of home ownership (such as part buy or part rent) or rented properties to help people on lower incomes?					Garden Town neighbourhoods should have a range of tenures / ownerships that might encourage a diverse demographic amongst residents.
4c Are the different types and tenures spatially integrated to create a cohesive community?					The careful assembly of building groupings that combine different dwelling types within good architectural and urban compositional principles should be a key characteristic.

Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist: Creating a Place

Vision Theme

Bfl 12 primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Growing Quality Places	5 Character Does the scheme create a place with a locally-inspired or otherwise distinctive character?				The primary generator of appropriate character will be a sensitive understanding and response to the underlying landscape character of the site.
	5a How can the development be designed to have a local or distinctive identity?				Analysis and appraisal of positive examples of vernacular / local buildings should inform the architectural approach, which may therefore be grounded but innovative. Urban form should, similarly, be created that has reference to some key characteristics drawn from the surrounding context but respond to contemporary lifestyle demands/needs.
	5b Are there any distinctive characteristics within the area, such as building shapes, styles, colours and materials or the character of streets and spaces that the development should draw inspirations from?				Anonymous national housetypes and standard palettes of materials / details are not supported - simple, honest, well-constructed buildings should be aimed for. Modest patterns and textures which are derived from the constructional techniques employed are endorsed. Architectural design should pursue and share common proportions and be well-ordered, with elements (doors / windows / porches / etc) that clearly celebrate human scale and occupation.
Growing Quality Places	6 Working with the Site and its Context Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimate?				See 5 above - it is vital that the key characteristics and assets are recognised and celebrated.
	6a Are there any views into and from the site that need to be carefully considered?				Long distance impacts on views from Quantocks and Blackdown Hills, as AONB, are very important considerations.
	6b Are there any existing trees, hedgerows or other features, such as streams that need to be carefully designed into the development?				Retained vegetation and other ecological assets need to be able to be carefully maintained - inclusion within the layout as rear private boundaries to gardens will not normally be acceptable.
	6c Should the development keep any existing building(s) on the site? If so, how could they be used?				Bfl 12 advice applies
Growing Quality	7 Creating well-defined Streets and Spaces Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?				New Garden Town Neighbourhoods should have layouts that allow for the inclusion of significant building groupings which are memorable as 'set piece' compositions within the general arrangement.
	7a Are buildings and landscaping schemes used to create enclosed streets and spaces?				Bfl 12 advice applies
	7b Do buildings turn corners well?				House types fulfilling this role need to be specifically designed - standard types merely adapted will rarely be acceptable.
	7c Do all fronts of buildings, including front doors and habitable rooms face the street?				Bfl 12 advice applies
Growing Quality	8 Easy to find your way around Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?				The Garden Town should have excellent legibility.
	8a Will the development be easy to find your way around? If not, what could be done to make it easier to find your way around?				Bfl 12 advice applies
	8b Are there any obvious landmarks?				Specimen trees, when mature (not just significant buildings) can provide good focal incidents within the layout.
	8c Are the routes between places clear and direct?				Bfl 12 advice applies

Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist: Street + Home

Vision Theme

Bfl 12 primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Growing Quality Places	9 Streets for All Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?				In the Garden Town, the place quality of streets will be as equally important as their movement function.
	9a Are streets pedestrian friendly and are they designed to encourage cars to drive slower and more carefully?				The design principles of Manual for Streets 1 + 2 shall be fully applied - pedestrians and cycles should always take priority and the 'place quality' of streets should be fully considered alongside their functionality.
	9b Are streets designed in such a way that they can be used as social spaces, such as places for children to play safely or for neighbours to converse?				Doorstep play and other informal stimulation for younger children to interact with the street environment should be provided within the public realm, in addition to formal play provision elsewhere. Threshold spaces and boundary conditions mediating between the private and public realm and engaging with the approach to smaller groups of dwellings should be included to promote social interaction between neighbours/residents.
Growing Quality Places	10 Car parking Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well-integrated so that it does not dominate the street?				The relationship between the public realm / main pedestrian route and the individual front door to each dwelling shall not be impeded or hidden from view by vehicles.
	10a Is there enough parking for residents and visitors?				Electric car-charging must be provided for each dwelling / allocated space and ducting should be installed to allow visitor spaces in the public realm to be retro-fitted with a supply, if not immediately provided. Car-charging at local centres and other public 'destinations' should be provided.
	10b Is parking positioned close to people's homes?				Bfl 12 advice applies
	10c Are parking courtyards small in size (generally no more than five properties should use a parking courtyard) and are they well overlooked by neighbouring properties?				Parking Courts are not generally supported in any form and should only be used in exceptional circumstances, Parking Squares may be an acceptable alternative in certain locations.
	10d Are garages well positioned so that they do not dominate the street scene?				Bfl 12 advice applies
Growing our Town Greener	11 Public and Private Spaces Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?				The quality of public, shared and private open space are a key determinant of the character of the Garden Town. In general terms, the use of public art/craft dispersed throughout the public realm is endorsed rather than a few major interventions in specific locations.
	11a What types of open space should be provided within the development?				The inclusion of open swales, rain gardens and other sustainable urban drainage features should be celebrated as part of the public realm and landscape design. Allotments should be located in order to promote maximum use and be well-integrated with the urban layout, not located in an inaccessible distant position on the edge of the site. Opportunities for informal edible landscaping / micro-allotments should be provided as part of private threshold spaces and within the public realm wherever possible.
	11b Is there a need for play facilities for children and teenagers? If so, is this the right place or should the developer contribute towards and existing facility in the area that could be made better?				The Garden Town will provide strong and appropriate provision for all age groups. Doorstep play for young children should be integrated within the design of the public realm.
	11c How will they be looked after?				Management arrangements that have the capacity, over time, to involve and empower the future residents are strongly endorsed.
Growing Quality	12 External Storage and Amenity Space Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?				Secure cycle storage is best located in close proximity to the front / approach to the dwelling. Cycle stores in rear gardens will not be adequate to strongly promote cycle use.
	12a Is storage for bins and recycling items fully integrated, so that these items are less likely to be left on the street?				Where storage solutions are proposed in rear gardens then specific attention needs to be paid to the layout of the front curtilage of those dwellings in order to deter their use as alternative casual storage, wherever possible. Well-designed enclosures at the front of dwellings are endorsed and certainly necessary in terraced typologies with limited access to rear amenity space.

Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist:

Climate + Planet Positive

Vision Theme

TGT primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Growing our Town

13. Building with Nature					
Have the Core Standards been met?					This is essential as a base standard
Have the Wellbeing Standards been met?					Accessibility to good quality greenspace is a key characteristic of the Garden Town.
Have the Water Standards been met?					Water quality within the landscape of the Garden Town should be excellent.
Have the Wildlife Standards been met?					Bio-diversity increases are an essential theme

Growing our Town Greener

14. Energy Conservation + Carbon Reduction					
Is energy demand minimised across the development?					Garden Town project are expected to significantly reduce energy consumption
Does the development achieve a carbon reduction improvement of at least 19% over Part L of the Building Regulations 2013?					Garden Town projects are expected to be consistently performing better than the national standards for carbon reduction.
Is energy demand minimised within the buildings?					A 'fabric first' strategy for energy conservation is strongly encouraged including 'passiv-haus' standards where appropriate.

Growing our Town Greener

15. Renewable Energy					
Are opportunities for site-wide energy solutions being effectively harnessed?					Where reasonable and opportunities exist for site-wide energy solutions (e.g low carbon heat networks, private wire renewable energy generation etc.) then these should be explored and pursued unless more effective and viable solutions exist.
Does the development maximise opportunities to meet energy demands from renewable or low carbon sources?					Any remaining carbon reduction requirements should be met by on-site renewable or low carbon energy generation (e.g. roof-mounted solar PV panels).
Does the development perform as expected?					Post-occupancy evaluation and monitoring is expected.

Growing our Town

16. Resources + Resilience					
Is there evidence of recycled / locally-sourced materials being used?					Specifications should fully explore whether alternative low-environmental impact options are available without reducing build quality.
Can rainwater be actively conserved?					The Garden Town should attempt to be self-sufficient in terms of water used for irrigation / gardening purposes.
Has whole life-cycle material performance influenced the specification?					Robust and resilient / durable materials are encouraged, or where these have a limited lifespan, that they can be obtained from renewable sources.
Are systems in place to minimise landfill waste during construction?					The process of construction should be carefully controlled to be as efficient in resource use as possible and may include off-site construction techniques, MMC, etc.