



## 02 What is Designing Walsall?



Where does Designing Walsall fit into the planning system?



How will we use Designing Walsall?



Who is Designing Walsall for?



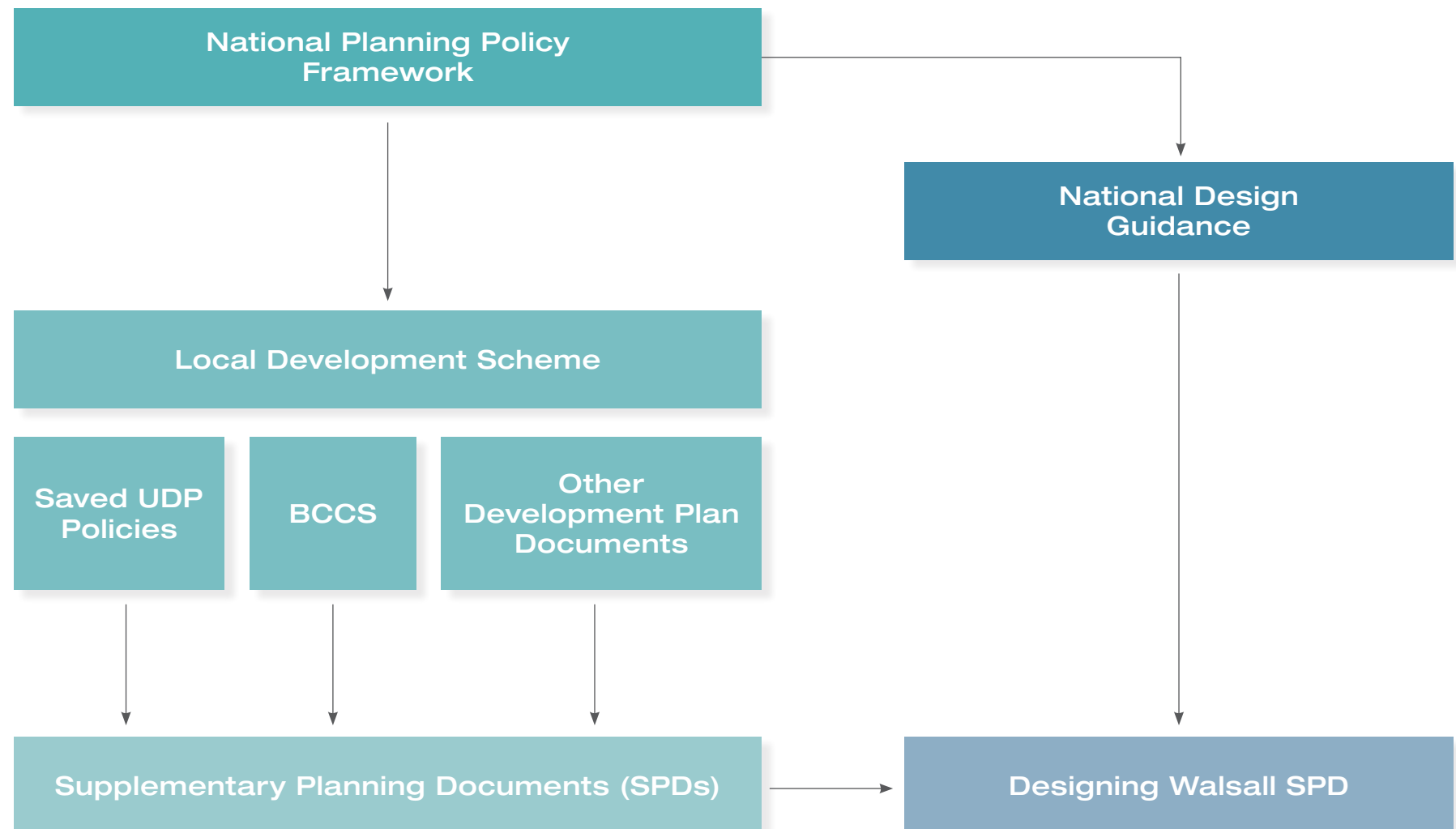


# What is Designing Walsall?

**Walsall is its people. It is the vision of people that create the way forward towards an exciting future and it is the lives of people that shape a borough of which we can all be proud.**

This document has a simple aim. It wants Walsall to be a better place to live, work and play for everyone. Designing the borough in the way we all want it to be, by building comfortable homes, safe and attractive streets, thriving markets and shops and peaceful parks and green landscape, needs us all to demand excellence from the people who shape our environment and design and build our buildings and spaces and for us all to take responsibility for looking after those places that are important to us.

Figure 1: Where does Designing Walsall fit into the planning system?



Designing Walsall is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that has been prepared to specifically support “saved” policies ENV32, ENV33 and ENV34 in the Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2005 which relate to urban design, landscape design and public art respectively. This SPD also supports policies CSP4, ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 in the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 which relate to place making, historic character and local distinctiveness, design quality and canals respectively. It aims to deliver the following element of the Black Country Vision set out in the BCCS:

“Environmental Transformation:

*We will create a step change in the image and environmental quality of the Black Country to underpin social and economic transformation and help meet the challenges of growth. This will involve delivering high quality, liveable and distinctive places which respect and make the most of the existing diversity of the Black Country’s natural and built environment, particularly its canals, open spaces, and industrial, architectural and geological heritage. Transformation, and in particular delivery of a high quality, multifunctional green space network, will be supported by Environmental Infrastructure Guidance.”*

Designing Walsall will be used together with other local policy documents to guide the design of Walsall’s buildings and spaces. The BCCS and UDP contains policies aimed at promoting a high quality environment and high standards of urban and landscape design throughout the Borough (see Appendices B and C). The Council also has an adopted Local Development Order (LDO) which relates to land in Darlaston comprising of part of the Black Country Enterprise Zone along with additional land in the immediate vicinity. The conditions set out in the LDO (Schedule 4.1 and 4.2) seek to secure high quality sustainable design; to ensure development is of an appropriate mass, scale and form for its location and; reduce developments’ effects in terms of climate change and protecting residential amenity within the LDO area. All new developments are also expected to comply with national planning policy.

## Expanding on BCCS and UDP Policy

The key BCCS and UDP urban and landscape design policies that Designing Walsall SPD supports are as follows:

### BCCS

CSP4: Place Making  
ENV2: Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness  
ENV3: Design Quality  
ENV4: Canals

### UDP

ENV32: Design and Development Proposals  
ENV33: Landscape Design  
ENV34: Public Art

The full text of these policies is reproduced in Appendix B, and the complete BCCS and UDP Written Statement and Proposals Map are available on the Council’s website at: [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk). The tables in Appendix C explain how the guidance in this SPD supports these policies and the relationships with other BCCS and UDP policies.

The content of Designing Walsall has also been shaped by public consultation that took place during autumn 2006 and consultation on update revisions during February and March 2013. Listening to and working with people who live, work and play in Walsall has provided valuable insights into what local people think about the design of new buildings and spaces and how this affects their local environment and what people’s aspirations are for the future of the borough.

Walsall Council wants to work closely with local people, professionals and partner organisations who share our aspirations for an attractive, safe, vibrant and prosperous Walsall.

Designing Walsall is the basis on which the design of our buildings and spaces will be considered during the development control process in such a way as to meet the themes encompassed in the BCCS and UDP (Figure 2).



**Figure 2: How Designing Walsall will deliver the vision, sustainability principles and spatial objectives of the BCCS and the objectives of relevant “saved” UDP policies through urban design**

### The two over-arching themes of the BCCS and UDP

Sustainable Development	Environmental Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providing convenient and sustainable links between centres, communities and employment areas</li> <li>■ Bring about the scale of change necessary to achieve growth and regeneration in the most sustainable manner</li> <li>■ Making prudent and efficient use of finite and non-renewable resources</li> <li>■ Ensuring development minimises climate change impacts and is ‘climate change-proofed’ by mitigating and adapting to predicted changes</li> <li>■ Protecting and enhancing valuable/valued parts of Walsall’s natural and built environment</li> <li>■ Creating a network of cohesive, healthy and prosperous sustainable communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A network of vibrant and attractive town, district and local centres</li> <li>■ A high quality environment fit for the future</li> <li>■ Promoting a positive image of Walsall and encouraging a sense of pride in the borough</li> <li>■ Investing in Walsall’s future – buildings and spaces that are fit for purpose and will stand the test of time</li> <li>■ Maintaining the overall quality of areas where the environment is already good and improving the parts of the borough where it is less good</li> <li>■ Creating attractive new places where people will want to live, work and visit</li> <li>■ Responding positively to the historic environment through sympathetic, yet bold and confident, contemporary design.</li> </ul>

### The 10 urban design policies in Designing Walsall

Sustainability	Safe and welcoming Places	Character	Continuity	Ease of movement
simultaneously meeting environmental, economic and community needs without compromising the needs of future generations	creating places that feel safe, secure and welcoming for everyone	a place with its own identity	a place defined by buildings, structures and landscape that relate to past and future development	a place that is easy to get to and safe to move through
Legibility	Diversity	Adaptability	High quality public realm	Well designed sustainable buildings
a place that has a clear image and identity and is easy to understand	a place that offers a mix of activities to the widest range of possible users	a space that can easily change over time and respond to new uses without harming existing quality	creating durable places with attractive environmental quality	creating a comfortable, adaptable and sustainable built environment

### Putting the policies and vision of Designing Walsall into practice to meet the key themes of the BCCS and UDP

Connections	Urban Spaces	Waterways	Buildings	Homes
Skyline	Townscape	Green Landscape and Open Spaces		Arts, Creativity and the Community





Victorian Arcade, Walsall



# How will we use Designing Walsall?

## This SPD:

- Offers guidance on how to design buildings and places that will relate well to Walsall
- Will build on local distinctiveness and sense of place
- Will be the initial point of reference for design advice for all scale and type of development in urban, suburban and rural environments

## The structure of Designing Walsall is:

- **Introduction**  
Walsall's commitment to high quality design
- **National Design Guidance**  
Establishing the framework for urban design that will be applied to new developments across the borough
- **Designing in Walsall: The Vision**  
Design principles specific to Walsall about the type and quality of development we want to see across the whole borough
- **Urban Design Policies in the Walsall Context**  
Policies for assessing new development in Walsall
- **Local Character Guidance**  
Character profiles of local areas across Walsall borough and important design principles to guide design in these areas

## Where is more advice available?

The Council's officers also welcome enquiries from developers, whether by telephone, letter, email or in person. The Council operates a Development Team for major development proposals, as exemplified in Manual for Streets, to provide comprehensive pre-application advice on all development issues including achieving a high quality of design for new development.

## The wider planning spectrum

Design is a fundamental and often overarching principle of planning as it touches on all other aspects of development management and policy. Issues of transportation, parking, greenbelt, housing, ecology, environmental contamination and other topics all benefit from separate detailed policy and guidance of their own and whilst touched on in this design document, are not discussed in depth as they are addressed within the wider Development Plan.

Rural legible signage







Bradford Street



# Who is this document for?

**Designing Walsall is for any person or groups of people proposing new developments or changes to buildings and spaces and any other interested parties, for example:**

- Investors and developers in Walsall
- Design teams: architects, planners, landscape architects, engineers, agents and surveyors
- Local planning authority
- Project delivery organisations
- Project appraisers (responsible for assessing and scoring applications)
- Local communities (affected by proposed projects in their neighbourhood)
- Special interest groups (nature conservation, disability access, local heritage)
- Artists

## How will it be used?

- As a reference source by people with a particular interest in development and regeneration
- To engage developers at the earliest stage to ensure suitable development and encourage only the best and appropriate distinctive design for Walsall
- As a working tool to facilitate discussion between developers and the Council
- By the Councils Development Management team to assess planning applications
- To promote high quality design in Walsall for its people
- To complement other objectives set out by Walsall Council

Walsall Arboretum

