



Hertfordshire Development Quality Charter

Terms of Use

Introduction

The purpose of the Development Quality Charter is to achieve a new benchmark for high quality and sustainable development in Hertfordshire.

This is because the built environment is responsible for about 25% of greenhouse gas emissions, so one of the best things we can do is improve the construction, heating, cooling and powering of our homes and other buildings.

It is hoped that councils, council-owned development companies, housing associations, developers, landowners and others will voluntarily sign the Charter and commit to achieve the following pledges.

Design Pledges

- Developers must submit a design and access statement to demonstrate compliance with national and local planning policies, the National Model Design Code and local design codes.
- Major sites will submit a masterplan, which must be agreed in advance of or alongside a planning application.
- Major sites will be informed by community engagement and a design review panel as part of the pre-application and planning application process.
- Major sites must explain the long-term stewardship strategy for their development.
- Developers must incorporate environmental management systems, considerate construction, social value and construction skills development into their business models.
- All developments should achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain for at least 30 years, in accordance with the DEFRA toolkit.

Sustainability Pledge

- Developers must identify a sustainability standard that exceeds minimum current building regulations as part of their planning application and then use an industry-recognised process to demonstrate compliance with that standard upon completion of their development.

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Councils, developers and others who sign the Charter will be formally recognised on the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board (HIDB) website.

Once they are signed up, councils and developers can make reference to the Charter and use the Charter Mark as part of their corporate promotional material.

Developers should tell the relevant local planning authority that they have signed the Charter as part of pre-application engagement.

It is a matter for the developer and the relevant local planning authority to decide whether the proposed development is a 'major site'. The planning system sets the threshold at 10+ homes or 1,000+ sqm of floorspace, but some Local Plan policies set different standards. This will then determine whether a masterplan is necessary and the appropriate level of community engagement and design review panel input.

Developers should make reference to the Charter in their planning applications, and demonstrate how they intend to comply with all of its pledges.

In accordance with the sustainability pledge, developers should advise the local planning authority which industry standard they intend to use to rate the sustainability performance of their development.

It is hoped that the relevant local planning authority will treat the Charter as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications that commit to its pledges.

It is hoped that the relevant local planning authority will use planning conditions to reaffirm the design and sustainability pledges made as part of planning applications.

Once the development is complete, developers should use an industry-recognised process to demonstrate that they have exceeded building regulations. We encourage developers to use Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd or the St Albans / Watford shared building control service to confirm that this pledge has been achieved.

Developers should submit all of this information to the relevant local planning authority and HIDB.

Developments that comply with the Charter will be formally commended on the HIDB website.

Developments that comply with the Charter will be automatically put forward for the Hertfordshire Building Futures Awards. There will be a distinct award for schemes that comply with the Charter.