

Trafford Local Plan: Supplementary Planning Document 7 (SPD 7) - Trafford Design Code

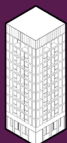


TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

September 2024

bw
BARNES
WALKER

Capita



Tall Buildings

Design codes for commercial, residential and mixed-use buildings six storeys and above

Introduction

In the right locations tall buildings can make an important contribution towards delivering new homes and high quality placemaking, often offering excellence in design and providing an opportunity to build to higher densities around public transport nodes. However, a poorly designed tall building can seriously harm the character and identity of a place and the value of important views.

Tall buildings break into the scale, rhythm and grain of the urban form in a way that other buildings do not. Principal failings with tall buildings are often a lack of understanding of context, a failure to demonstrate neighbourliness, the tendency to create too many single aspect apartments especially with a northerly aspect.

While the design decisions made in taller buildings differ from smaller scale proposals it is essential that these developments are imbued with the same approach to design quality, materiality and style set out elsewhere in this document.

For tall apartment buildings applicants must also refer to the 'Apartment' chapter and for tall non-residential or commercial buildings applicants must also refer to the 'Non-Residential and Commercial' chapter. This tall building chapter only focuses on the implications of height in the design of new development.

Tall buildings will not generally be considered appropriate other than in New Places - High Rise, High Density, where they should be delivered in accordance with the masterplan, parameter plans or design framework for the site. Some tall buildings may be appropriate in town centres, subject to site context and/or an approved masterplan.

Contents

[Location and Siting](#)

[Scale and Massing](#)

[Plan and Layout](#)

[Boundaries and Edges](#)

[Elevational Treatment](#)

Tall buildings will not generally be considered appropriate other than in New Places - High Rise, High Density. Reference should be made to any approved or adopted development plan, masterplan, parameter plans or design framework for the site in addition to this Code. Some tall buildings may be appropriate in town centres, subject to site context and/or an approved masterplan.

Recommended reading

[Historic England Advice Note 4 - Tall Buildings](#)

Location and Siting

The siting of tall buildings should be considered very carefully to ensure they do not adversely affect the existing townscape character or the setting of heritage assets and provide sufficient space between and around buildings to deliver an appropriate level of privacy and a landscape setting.

Locally important views, vistas and landmarks (ascertained through discussion with the Local Planning Authority) should be preserved and existing heritage assets given sufficient space around them in order to preserve their setting.

Tall building proposals should follow the established principles of group composition, such as noticeable stepping down in height around cluster edges and a balanced range of heights.

Codes

[Context](#)

[Siting](#)

[Views, vistas and landmarks](#)

TBLS 1 Context

A context character appraisal must be carried out at the outset to establish the suitability of the site to accommodate tall buildings. Tall buildings must be sited in a manner that ensures a coherent skyline is delivered.

Description

Well-designed places and buildings may draw inspiration from the site, its surroundings or a wider context. It is important that applicants complete an appropriate context character appraisal to establish the suitability of a site for a tall building and the appropriate baseline for the building's design. A context character appraisal should include consideration of:

- Existing views;
- Topography;

- Urban grain;
- Significant skyline;
- Scale and height;
- Streetscape;
- Landmark buildings;
- Constraints and opportunities;
- Impact on nearby heritage assets;
- Opportunities for enhancing the townscape.

Clusters of tall buildings are preferred to create a cohesive skyline. A new cluster of tall buildings should not be initiated without a masterplan.

Where proposed near existing tall building groups, new proposals should follow the established principles of group composition, such as noticeable stepping down in height around cluster edges and a balanced range of heights including mid-rise and low-rise elements where appropriate, to achieve an acceptable relationship with existing buildings.

Proposals for isolated tall buildings or tall buildings that sit in close proximity to mid-rise or low-rise buildings should similarly follow the established principle of stepping down in height, scale and grain to achieve an acceptable relationship with existing buildings.

In historic areas, designers must assess the established historic character of the area as part of the context character appraisal of the site.

Where tall buildings are proposed in town centres they must respect the context and height of the existing area.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Area Types:

- Tall buildings are not appropriate other than in New Places - High Rise, High Density or town centres, where they should be delivered in accordance with a masterplan, parameter plans or design framework for the site.

Documents required:

- Context character appraisal (may form part of the Design and Access Statement). An appraisal should include consideration of:
 - Existing views;

- Topography;
 - Urban grain;
 - Significant skyline;
 - Scale and height;
 - Streetscape;
 - Landmark buildings;
 - Constraints and opportunities;
 - Impact on nearby heritage assets;
 - Opportunities for enhancing the townscape
-

TBLS 2 Siting

Tall buildings must be designed around a landscape-led strategy and sited in a manner that allows sufficient space to be provided between buildings to create a positive identity and sense of place. Siting must also deliver appropriate provision of privacy and residential amenity, landscaped amenity space, public realm, circulation routes, tree planting and car parking.

Description

Landscape-led development by its nature delivers appropriate spacing between buildings allowing for well landscaped development including circulation routes, amenity space, public realm and tree planting.

Without appropriate spacing, tall buildings can appear cramped, over-dominant, indistinguishable from one another and at odds with the urban grain.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Area Types:

- In New Places – High Rise, High Density, tall buildings should only be delivered in accordance with this Code, any approved or adopted development plan, masterplan, parameter plans or design framework for the site.

Documents required:

- Site plan (including relationships to surrounding buildings)
 - Site Wide Landscape Strategy
 - Floor plans
 - Elevations
-

TBLS 3 Views, vistas and landmarks

Applicants must demonstrate that they have optimised opportunities to protect existing views, vistas and landmarks and created new views into and out of the development site.

Description

Tall buildings, by reason of their height, can harm the character and identity of a place and the value of important views by interrupting the scale, rhythm and grain of the urban form in a way that other buildings do not.

The siting of developments must protect and enhance any locally important views, vistas and landmarks (ascertained through discussion with the Local Planning Authority) into and out of development sites. The development must take the opportunity to create new views. The retention of sight lines to key views, vistas and landmarks help to aid wayfinding.

Compliance

Applicants should identify the key existing views, vistas and landmarks relevant to the application (with assistance through the pre-application process if necessary) and analyse the impact of the development upon them. Where a site is in or would affect the setting of a conservation area, the relevant views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal / Management Plan should be used as a minimum. Where a development affects the setting of a listed building, the impact of the development when seen against the roofscape of that building should also be considered as well as tandem and long-range views. Consideration should be given to changes in level which may produce unexpected views. Applicants must show, where relevant, what new views will be created in or through the development.

Area Types:

- In New Places – High Rise, High Density, tall buildings should be delivered in accordance with the masterplan, parameter plans or design framework for the site.

Documents required:

- TVIA in accordance with requirements in the Council's adopted Validation Checklist
 - Accurate visual representations in accordance with requirements set out in the Council's adopted Validation Checklist
-

Scale and massing

Tall building forms should be elegant and create positive features in the skyline. Their form, scale and massing must be carefully considered through detailed appraisal and testing including their visual impact on the setting, both individually and when part of a cluster.

Tall buildings must also consider their impact on the street environment and public spaces. Buildings that are too tall can visually overwhelm and cause unwanted side-effects, such as wind funnelling, overshadowing or trapping air pollution.

Codes

[Form](#)

[Composition](#)

[Daylight, sunlight, amenity and overshadowing](#)

[Wind microclimate](#)

TBSM 1 Form

Towers and point blocks must express elegance, proportionality and verticality, whilst slab or finger blocks must be narrow, seek to optimise dual aspect units and have a legible grid format that expresses verticality.

Description

When tall buildings are viewed from a distance, their building form should be distinctive and identifiable whilst maintaining a positive relationship with their surrounding context.

It is more successful to express the verticality of tall buildings using vertically proportioned grids or patterns. The shape and proportion of window openings should also correspond to the verticality of the building.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Context character appraisal
 - Facade design analysis
 - Elevation
 - Section drawings
-

TBSM 2 Composition

Tall buildings must comprise a base, middle and top. The ground floors of tall buildings must be well-designed and articulated to create a human scale and add interest at street level. The skypoint (top) must contribute positively to the character of the skyline, when viewed from different directions and distances.

Description

How a tall building meets the ground and sky is critical to its success. The standard architectural convention of a base, middle, top.

Tall buildings should be grounded, creating a sense of permanence and presence. This should be articulated through a regular, repeating bay rhythm or through a more solid elevation with emphasised openings. Double or triple height ground floor spaces should be created with active uses planned at strategic places to deliver a human scale and enliven the street at different times of the day. The quality of material, detailing, glazing and fenestration should articulate the street level interface as a distinct section of the building. This should integrate into the rest of the built environment. Particular consideration should be given to the materials and detail used at ground floor level where materials should enhance the street level experience and respond to the local context.

The middle section can make use of an elevational grid to respond to either residential or commercial uses which can be expressed as simple repetition or expressed bays.

Options to terminate the building to the skypoint (top) include elevation rhythm change, crown, hipped corners and decorative caps. Any rooftop plant should be integrated into the architecture to create a well-conceived silhouette.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Context character appraisal
- Facade design analysis
- Site plan
- Elevations
- Floor plans
- Section drawings
- TVIA as required by the Council's Validation Checklist

- Accurate Visual Representations as required by the Council's Validation Checklist
-

TBSM 3 Daylight, sunlight, amenity and overshadowing

The scale and form of the building must be designed to allow daylight and sunlight into amenity spaces and buildings.

Description

People like sunlight, it is seen as providing light and warmth, making spaces and rooms look bright and cheerful and also having a therapeutic health-giving effect.

Solar studies should be used to demonstrate that new development is in general compliance with the guidelines set out in the Building Research Establishment guidance in terms of the impacts of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing, including the two-hour sun on ground analysis.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Solar studies or Building Research Establishment compliant Daylight and Sunlight Assessment if required by the Council's adopted Validation Checklist
-

TBSM 4 Wind microclimate

Applicants must demonstrate that the design of tall buildings has taken into account the impact of their proposal on wind microclimate.

Description

The development of tall buildings can lead to wind microclimate impacts. These issues can impact on the safety and comfort of pedestrians as a result of wind speeds and wind tunnelling. Developments must be designed and assessed to ensure that no detrimental wind microclimate impacts arise as a result of developments.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Wind microclimate study in accordance with Council's adopted Validation Checklist

Elevation treatment

Alongside the building form, scale and massing, the inclusion of an appropriate facade treatment is integral to animating tall building elevations. Elevations should be visually interesting with rhythm and articulation, using formal elements such as fenestration patterns, recessed and projecting elements, balconies and terraces to provide life and animation to larger elevations.

Variation in facade treatment, materials and detailing is encouraged to provide visual breaks in the form, animating elements of the building effectively from all aspects.

Codes

[Articulation and architectural detailing](#)

[Materials](#)

[Entrance and lobby spaces](#)

TBET 1 Articulation and architectural detailing

Tall buildings must articulate building facades with projecting and recessed elements, architectural detailing to help break up the mass, and give the building depth, expression and visual interest.

Description

The articulation of building facades with projecting or recessed elements, fenestration patterns such as grouping floors and windows, window reveals, and balconies will soften larger building forms, break down the appearance of building mass and provide rhythm and visual interest. It is more successful to express the verticality of tall buildings using vertically proportioned grids or patterns. The shape and proportion of window openings should also correspond to the verticality of the building.

The incorporation of art or sculptural elements can create a unique image for the building or its context.

The night time appearance of a building must be considered. Lighting can assist the building to continue its function after dark (for example, landmark structures or sites which maintain their visual prominence through lighting) and can be used to create striking night time compositions.

The use of appropriate high-quality materials and appropriate architectural detailing, having regard to the site context and character of buildings in the local area will help to integrate tall buildings with their surroundings and ensure that they age well over time.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Context character appraisal
- Facade design analysis
- Floor plans
- Site plans
- Elevations
- Section drawings

TBET 2 Materials

The primary facing material for tall buildings must be brick, stone, other high-quality clay-based materials, or glass.

Description

A palette of traditional materials should be used as the primary facing material such as brick, stone, glass and terracotta. These materials are preferred because of their robustness and ability to endure. Cladding and other materials that weather poorly must be avoided. Material tone should vary, but be complementary across buildings. Glass can be used to add lightness, reflectivity and transparency which helps to reduce visual bulk and add elegance. Detailing can be delivered through the use of secondary materials.

Look for design cues in the immediate area to influence your choice of materials. Materials must make reference to the traditional colours, texture, bonding and brickwork used within the context of the site. Trafford's places are characterised by the use of common building materials. A study of the most appropriate type and use of local materials will result in a project that complements its local area.

Decorative features and patterns should be used effectively to provide interest to facades including windows and their surrounds. Look to the local area for design cues on how this can be achieved. Details can include alternative colours, materials, decorative bricks, textures or brick pointing and bonding.

The appearance of materials used in the façade should be seamless, where possible minimising the visual impact of vents and joints unless exaggerated as part of the elevation's composition.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Context character appraisal
- Facade design analysis
- Floorplans
- Site plans
- Elevations
- Section drawings

TBET 3 Entrances and lobby spaces

Entrance lobby spaces must be formed in the principal elevation; clearly articulated; well detailed; accessible from the main highway by foot; well-lit; integral to the overall architecture of the building; and, finished in robust materials.

Description

Entrances must be legible, safe, incorporate secure entry facilities and provide a clear transition between public and private areas. Use the building form to emphasise the entrance and use design features such as splays and recesses to create interest and shelter and invite people into the building. Building signage and numbering should be bespoke and integrated into the design of the building and entrance in robust and permanent materials.

Entrance lobby spaces should be a minimum of two storeys in height and provide a generous lobby at the principal ground floor entrance, so as not to feel cramped and to provide enough space for seating and conversation which does not compromise circulation space. Post boxes should be located in a convenient and secure location near the building's main entrance. They should ideally be integrated into the design of the entrance lobby.

Retail frontages, signing and lighting design should be fully integrated with the architecture of the building and be complementary between the retail units.

Compliance

Applicants should demonstrate in their submission how this element of the Code has been complied with.

Documents required:

- Facade design analysis
 - Site plan
 - Floor plans
 - Elevations
 - Section drawings
-