



Housing & Design

DRAFT PLANNING POLICY HEADINGS

INTRODUCTION

The parish of Cranbrook & Sissinghurst lies at the heart of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), characterised by dispersed historic settlements of farmsteads and hamlets and late medieval villages.

It has resulted in a unique character of built environment developed in harmony with the landscape. This rich heritage needs to be protected and learnt from. It provides an important model for future development that has been lost in recent years.

Developments over the past seven decades have not followed the model of organic growth nor paid any regards to heritage. Mass housing estates of often low quality and poor architectural merit have been permitted in response to a growing population. National housing targets and borough allocations threaten the further degradation of landscape and town settings if current planning and building trends are continued.

The challenge for Cranbrook and Sissinghurst is to develop housing policies that learn from the past whilst serving the needs of the future.

This document lays out draft policy intent and headings designed to deliver the housing needs of the parish in ways that respect heritage and tradition, innovate for the future, is based on the highest quality of design, efficiency and appearance to enhance the built environment.

The historic settlement pattern in the parish is the foundation of the planning policy and is parish specific.



LOCAL HOUSING & DESIGN

The parish has a current population of some 7450 people. The last census (2011) projected the population in the borough to rise by 16.2% over 10 years with a rise of some 1.5 percent, per annum in the parish indicating a rise to 9350 or so by 2033. When considering the likely impact on population associated with current and future TWBC housing targets of some 1000 homes for the parish the figure is estimated to rise to around 11,750 by 2033¹. The number of dwellings would rise by 33 percent by 2033.

In the Parish there are some 3000 households² of which 65% are owned, 20% are social rented and 11% private rented. The housing stock comprises 33% detached, 35% semi-detached, 21% terraced and 12% flats/maisonettes/apartments. Proposed TWBC housing targets for the parish by 2033^{rep}

The average cost³ of a detached house is £816,000, semi-detached, £435,000 and terraced, £308,000. The average house price in 2107 was £534,000, whereas the average earnings for workers in the Parish was £28.2k per annum (a ratio of 19:1 compared to the national figure of 12:1) making the Parish one of the most unaffordable areas in the country for local people.

The market is split with two thirds of buyers coming from outside the Parish largely seeking 4+bedroom properties in the £700,000 to £1.5 million range, whereas local buyers are seeking smaller properties in the £200,000 to £500,000. Smaller properties are needed for people at both ends of life, by young single workers and growing families and by the elderly seeking to downsize.

The highest demand is for 3 to 4+ bedroom homes, which exceeds the demand for 1 to 2-bedroom properties by 9:1. Demand outstrips supply for both housing and rented accommodation by 2:1.

¹ Based on current average population of 2.4 people per household in the Parish, 2011 census.

² Extrapolated from 2011 census data

³ Source: Right Move, August 2017



The options available for families and individuals on low to no income are limited due to the high cost of both market and rented housing and where demand exceed supply. Generally, low-income households are living in social rented housing owned by housing associations or on waiting lists. The parish has a significant stock of social housing representing 20 percent of total households. Of this 77 percent is for 1 and 2-bedroom properties and 23 percent for 3 to 4-bedrooms. Those on relatively higher incomes are renting from the private rented sector, which varies in quality and cost. The demand for 1-bedroom social housing is highest by single people over the age of 65 and for 2-berooms by young adults aged 18-24. The availability of 3 to 4-bedroom social housing is very limited representing only 6 percent of a total social housing stock of 118 dwellings⁴ serving some 1,000 applicants. The number registered for social housing appears to have dropped slightly in recent years.

An independent Housing Needs Assessment by AECOM concluded that there is a need for 610 homes by 2033 and recommended that 50% of which should be one and two-bedroom homes as the demand for four bed houses and larger is already well catered for in the parish, whereas there is a high demand for affordable homes*. Thus, the proportion sought by the plan is for approximately 300 affordable 1-2 bed homes.

*[*Affordable housing is defined in accordance with the one included in the draft revised NPPF 2018. For details see **Appendix 4**. Simply put, it is housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market. This includes housing for rent at 20% below local market rents, starter homes and other routes to home ownership including, shared ownership, equity loans and rent to buy.]*

4 TWBC Housing Allocations Officer 2018



HOUSING & DESIGN THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The draft policy intent and supporting actions are designed to address identified threats and exploit opportunities to deliver housing of exceptional quality and utility for all who wish to live and work in the parish. Spatial strategy is at the core of policy, site allocation and delivery of developments.

Threats:

- imposition of mass, executive housing estates of poor design and quality that exacerbate demographic extremes
- irreversible deleterious impact on landscape and environment - specifically the incorporation of TWBC target of an additional 780 homes by 2033 over and above the current allocation of 250 without the development of large scale executive housing estates
- urban sprawl and loss of green space and identity of historic settlements
- loss of economic opportunities from the conversion of historic farm buildings into dwellings when not matched by replacement facilities
- stress on already overstretched infrastructure
- degradation of quality of setting and views from uncontrolled, poorly designed infill buildings
- new housing stock that is largely unaffordable to workers and young families and unsuitable to downsizers.

Opportunities:

- address social exclusion and integrate communities
- avoid the mistakes of the past (e.g., Frythe estate, largest cul-de-sac in Europe) and proposed schemes (e.g., Brick Kiln 180 houses)
- provide alternative model to meet the need for housing based on historic, farmstead and hamlet development in keeping with landscape
- incorporate small-scale, sustainable developments within rural and urban brownfield sites
- adapt and extend existing farmsteads/buildings to mixed use (housing and small business use)



- provide truly affordable, sustainable housing (including social housing) of high design standards in keeping with town and/or landscape settings
- rectify the mistakes of the past through high quality redevelopment of existing poorly built assets
- revitalise the connection between town and landscape using local resources (timber, stone, brick, tiles)
- improve connectivity across the parish making sensitive use of ancient track ways.

POLICY INTENT

1. Provide a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of a growing population from first home to down-sizing in ways that:
 - integrates the community and addresses social exclusion by creating communities through sustainable place making
 - respect and reflect the rich architectural heritage of the parish and its AONB landscape
 - cater for the needs of specific groups, e.g., young family starter homes, downsizing opportunities, creating good office mix
 - prevent urban sprawl by retaining green spaces and avoiding coalescence of settlements
 - avoid loss of green amenities e.g., play areas
 - build up to but not beyond the capacity of the parish to absorb new housing to prevent deleterious impact on town and landscape
 - retain green infrastructure – wildlife corridors, habitats etc.
2. Meet the demand for affordable housing to enable all who work in parish but who are unable to afford to do so to live locally.
3. Ensure high design standards in terms of:
 - aesthetics sensitive to and in keeping with town and/or landscape settings
 - water and energy efficiency (comply with CSPC Eco Design Code, including Passive House standard)
 - use of local trades/apprenticeships and resources in construction, e.g., green landscaping; timber, stone, clay bricks and tiles



4. Ensure the design of new housing schemes maintain the historic farmstead model of development by being small scale, sensitive and dispersed on the landscape.
5. Prioritise and optimise the use of brown field sites for new housing development that seek to enhance and improve previously developed.
6. Rectify the mistakes of the past through high quality redevelopment of existing poorly built assets.

HOUSING & DESIGN POLICIES

These policies aim to provide a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of a growing population from first home to down-sizing. New developments should provide enough affordable housing to enable all who work in the parish to live locally, while delivering high quality designs. The plan aims to rectify the mistakes of the past through quality redevelopment of existing poorly built assets.



HOUSING & DESIGN DRAFT POLICY FRAMEWORK

DRAFT POLICY HEADINGS	NDP OBJECTIVE	POLICY INTENT
<p>HD01 Subdivision of Housing Applications for the sub-division of large houses, farm buildings and heritage structures into smaller multiple-unit housing, which can demonstrate that they are of a high design standard in keeping with town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>1 Provide a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of a growing population</p> <p>Enable owners to achieve additional value from their home without having to move. Create new dwellings that add to net housing stock, increase density, and maximise use of existing developed sites. Mitigate the impact of sprawling extensions of little architectural merit. Provide downsizing opportunities. Provide opportunities for ‘self-finish’ and self-build’ homes, as well as innovative hybrid housing that can respond to modern lifestyles.</p>
<p>HD02 Extensions Applications to extend dwellings in rural or suburban areas, which can demonstrate that they are of a high design standard in keeping with town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Ensure future housing mix caters for specific groups</p> <p>Encourage developments that respect and reflect the rich architectural heritage of the parish and its AONB landscape and that prevent urban sprawl by retaining green spaces and avoiding coalescence of settlement.</p>
<p>HD03 Accessible Homes Applications for accessible homes suitable for the elderly and disabled, which can demonstrate that they are of a high design standard in keeping with town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 6</p>	
<p>HD04 Inter-generational Living Applications that enable inter-generational living will be supported.</p>	<p>2 3 6</p>	
<p>HD05 Alternative Construction Solutions Alternative construction solutions such as self-build, co-housing and other community-led housing schemes will be supported.</p>	<p>2 3 6</p>	<p>2 Meet the demand for affordable housing*</p> <p>Enable all who work in the Parish but who are unable to afford to live locally to be able to do so (by for example, but not limited to, renting, self-</p>

<p>HD06 Affordability & Sustainability Planning applications for the development of affordable* sustainable housing schemes, which can demonstrate that they are of a high design standard in keeping with town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 6</p>	<p>completing, part-ownership or purchase).</p>
<p>HD07 Large Scale Housing (see Appendix 4 for definition) Applications by developers for large scale housing scheme, which can demonstrate that they meet high design standards and guarantee to deliver a 50% affordable homes component of equally high ‘tenure blind’ design, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 6</p>	<p>Identify and allocate suitable sites and support planning applications for affordable*, sustainable housing schemes of high design standards in keeping with town and/or landscape settings. [*Affordable housing is defined in Appendix 4.]</p>
<p>HD08 Conversions Planning applications for the conversion of under-utilised space into affordable* residential use, and which can demonstrate that they are of a high design standard in keeping with town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>3 Ensure high design standards in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aesthetics sensitive to and in keeping with town and/or landscape • water and energy efficiency (comply with CS Eco Design Code) • use of local trades and resources <p>in order to leave a positive architectural legacy and to add to the positive character of the parish.</p>
<p>HD09 Small Scale Housing (see Appendix 4 for definition) Planning applications for small scale schemes, which can clearly demonstrate a sensitivity to and understanding of the characteristics of their built and natural environment and that comply with CSPC Eco-design Guide, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3</p>	
<p>HD10 Farmstead Housing Planning applications for housing</p>		<p>4 Ensure the design of new housing schemes maintain the historic farmstead model</p>

<p>schemes based on the farmstead model, which can demonstrate that they meet high design standards and guarantee to deliver a 50% affordable homes component of equally high 'tenure blind' design, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	
<p>HD11 Farm Conversions Planning applications for the redevelopment of redundant farm buildings into homes, which can demonstrate that designs are of a high design standard in keeping and that comply with CSPC Eco-design Guide for new buildings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<p>5 Prioritise and optimise the use of brown field sites</p>
<p>HD12 Infill Sites Applications for the development of infill sites, which can demonstrate that designs are of a higher quality and density than the current stock and that comply with CSPC Eco-design Guide for new buildings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>6 Rectify the mistakes of the past through high quality redevelopment of existing poorly built assets</p>
<p>HD13 Regeneration Applications for the regeneration of existing housing stock, which can demonstrate that designs are of a higher quality and density than the current stock and that comply with CSPC Eco-design Guide for new buildings, will be supported.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Enable rural workers to live in close proximity to their place of work.</p>
<p>HD14 Rural Exception Sites Applications for development outside agreed allocations and away from the LBD will only be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are small scale, in response to local need, that they respect &</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 8</p>	



enhance the distinct historic landscape character and that designs are compliant with CSPC Eco-Design Guide for new buildings.		
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NOTES

It is recognised that most of the policies under Housing & Design cross-relate to other policy areas such as Landscape, Heritage, Business & Employment etc. Any repetition serves to emphasise the importance of the policies.

The draft Policies for Housing & Design policy headings are to be supplemented with Guidance Notes detailing the requirements that all applicants for planning permission will need to meet for their applications to be considered. Guidance Notes are detailed in Appendix 1.

This document is self-contained in terms of Policy intent and Policies for Housing & Design. The Policies have been related to the overall NDP Objectives as shown in column 2 in the table above. The NDP Objectives are detailed in Appendix 2.



APPENDIX 1

A1 Guidance Notes

A1.1 Requirements of applicants for planning permission

1. All developers will be required to engage and fully consult with the community and all relevant stakeholders (e.g., AONB) at the pre-application stage to enable the development of a shared vision.
2. 'Design and Access' statements will be required in support of all planning applications.
3. New buildings must comply with CSPC Eco Design Code for new buildings.
4. Major developers must contribute to prioritised community projects (106/CILs) within the parish
5. All new developments proposals involving infill sites within LBD will require the developer to erect spatial volume markers (as per the Swiss model) to enable neighbours to understand and respond to spatial and visual impact.
6. All new development proposals will be required to comply with Design Guidance Notes.



A1.2 Design Guide

All planning applications must demonstrate that they incorporate the following considerations:

- **Sensitive to context:** housing schemes from single dwellings to large scale developments must demonstrate clearly a sensitivity to and understanding of the characteristics of their built and natural environment.
- **Quality of design:** the design, form, layout and detail of new development must be of the highest design standards, informed by heritage but not limited to traditional style. Outstanding and thoughtful modern or contemporary architecture incorporating leading-edge technology is encouraged. Exterior finishes to be in accordance with the High Weald AONB colouration study chart.
- **Quality of construction:** the build quality and material usage to be of the highest standard, to conform to the CSPC Eco Design Code and make use of locally resourced timber, stone, brick and clay tiles.
- **Layout:** new developments should incorporate access routes and footpaths within the layout that reflect historic character of the Parish and the High Wealth AONB and which facilitate sustainable modes of transport such as but not limited to walking, cycling, and electric vehicles.
- **Integration:** new buildings should be well integrated into site and become part of a unified and interrelated composition, both with other buildings on site and with existing buildings adjacent to the site.
- **Locality:** new buildings are to be based on local needs, use local construction material and reflect local building traditions. Materials to be obtained from local sustainable sources, for example timber cladding, clay bricks and tiles.
- **Tradition:** styles and materials that relate to those found in the parish will be encouraged. Well-maintained hedges more suited to the parish's green setting than fences will be favoured.
- **Amenity:** green spaces of appropriate scale and quality within new developments will be encouraged.



- **Evolution:** the building of new developments to be phased gradually over time to avoid rapid large-scale development and to enable the parallel development of necessary infrastructure.
- **Extension:** house extensions are to be sympathetic with style of the host house and use similar materials and fenestration.
- **Density:** the density of new developments should be in character with the surrounding area, respect the rural nature of the parish and be designed to give an impression of spaciousness with opportunity for green landscape between buildings.
- **Lighting:** consideration should be given for the need for lighting, and where it is deemed essential, efforts should be made to seek to minimise its impact in the landscape through choice of light sources and control of light spillage. Lighting should only be installed in areas of need, such as alongside pedestrian routes in and around built areas of the parish. Areas adjacent to the open countryside should be left unlit to avoid light pollution.
- **Ecological enhancement:** new developments should seek for ecological enhancement to the immediate area, such as provision for birds and bats to be incorporated into new buildings.
- **Resource efficiency:** measures to help conserve water and energy in new buildings will be encouraged. The reuse and recycling of building materials will be encouraged, as will the use of locally sourced timber and other materials in construction.

The Design Guide and supporting Policies seek to encourage innovation in design, modern or contemporary architecture. Such designs are applicable across the parish on individual sites for single dwellings, small scale and large-scale developments when done in sympathy with their town and/or landscape setting.



APPENDIX 2

NDP Vision and Objectives

Vision

*A parish celebrating and enhancing its heritage,
while delivering a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable community.*

Objectives

1. To ensure that development respects and enhances the distinct historic character of the built environment and rural landscape.
2. To support mixed, tenure-blind development that delivers sustainable, quality, housing and business facilities to meet local needs and promote social cohesion.
3. To encourage development of the highest architectural and energy efficient design and maximises the use of local resources in meeting community and business needs.
4. To encourage development that regenerates urban and rural brownfield sites.
5. To ensure rural development is reflects the historic settlement pattern.
6. To support the delivery of community health and education infrastructure necessary for a growing population.



7. To encourage access and movement networks that promote well-being, increase safety and protect the environment.
8. To support and encourage a diversity of land use that protects and enhances the environment and grows the economy.
9. To support the development of infrastructure and schemes that encourage tourism.

APPENDIX 3

Projects

3.1 Likely development projects in Cranbrook

- 3.1.1 Continue to engage and consult with Cranbrook School and High Weald Academy in the production of design frameworks and masterplans for their respective sites.
- 3.1.2 Seek/continue engagement with residents & promoters of sites likely to be allocated.

3.2 Likely development projects in Sissinghurst

- 3.2.1 Continue engagement with residents and promoter of land at Frittenden Road.
- 3.2.2 Identify clear design preference for land behind Street behind St George's Institute
- 3.2.3 Support a mixed-use development of light industrial, small scale residential and community use at Collins Farm – should the site come forward for consideration. Establish masterplan and associate design principles with the develop to maximise benefit to the community.

3.3. Likely development projects in Colliers Green

- 3.3.1 Continue to engage with Colliers Green School and local residents to establish what scale and type of development, if any, is desired.

3.4 Likely development projects at Hartley

- 3.4.1 Seek engagement with residents and promoters of sites likely to be allocated.



ACTION: Establish rural development zones in which ultra-high design standards will be mandated.

ACTION: Define heritage zones of the future in which developers must demonstrate a long-term commitment to the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment.

APPENDIX 4

Glossary of Terms

4.1 Affordable housing⁵

Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions:
 - a. the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including any service charges)
 - b. the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and

⁵ House of Commons Library Briefing Paper Number 07747, 19 March 2018: What is affordable housing? By Wendy Wilson and Cassie Barton



- c. it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute at the time of plan preparation or decision-making. Income restrictions should be used to limit a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those who have maximum household incomes of £80,000 a year or less
- c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

4.2 Small-scale development

Village / hamlet	1-5 homes
Town / other*	1-10 homes

4.3 Medium-scale development

Village / hamlet	6-10 homes
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Town / other* 11-49 homes

4.4 Large-scale development

Village / hamlet 10+ homes
Town / other* 50+ homes

(* Other - brown or greenfield sites)

4.5 Accessible/Lifetime Homes

Accessible homes, sometimes referred to as Lifetime homes, are ones that are designed with features that cater for young families with children, people with injuries as well as seniors and people living with disabilities. They incorporate design features make homes easier to access, navigate and live in over the lifetimes of their occupants and include:

- a safe continuous and step-free path of travel from the street entrance and / or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level
- at least one, level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling



- internal doors (870mm) and corridors (1000mm) that facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces, including wheelchair access
- a toilet on the ground (or entry) level that provides easy access (1200mm clearance in front of WC)
- a bathroom and shower that provides easy access with a larger, 'step-free' shower recess
- reinforced walls around the toilet, shower and bath to support the safe installation of grab rails at a later date.

Full details can be found in the Lifetime Homes Guide at: www.habinteg.org.uk/lifetime-homes-design-guide

APPENDIX 5

Eco-design Guide

Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council NDP promotes the:

- highest standards of eco-design and construction in refurbishments and new developments
- use of local resources in construction



- environmental enhancement of development sites, including biodiversity restoration and carbon offsetting through tree planting.

The Eco-design Guide is provided as a guide to home owners, builders and developers when designing refurbishments, extensions, new buildings and developments. The energy efficiency aspect of the Eco-design Guide is based on the internationally recognised PassivHaus Standard (www.passivhaustrust.org.uk) for energy efficient, healthy, comfortable buildings. The standard is more stringent in terms of energy efficiency than current UK building regulations. Construction costs are on average 5% higher but benefits are accrued through a 15% premium on market value over conventional buildings and energy running costs are typically 90% less, providing lifetime savings.

The standard is widely accepted by self-builders, local authorities and housing associations. To comply with the standard buildings must meet the following criteria:

- 1. space heating energy demand** does not to exceed 15 kWh per square meter of net living space (treated floor area) per year or 10 W per square meter peak demand
- 2. renewable primary energy demand** (total energy used for all domestic applications - heating, hot water and domestic electricity) does not exceed 60 kWh per square meter of treated floor area per year
- 3. airtightness**, a maximum of 0.6 air changes per hour at 50 Pascals pressure as verified by an onsite pressure test
- 4. thermal comfort** is met for all living areas during winter as well as in summer, with not more than 10% of the hours each year over 25 °C.

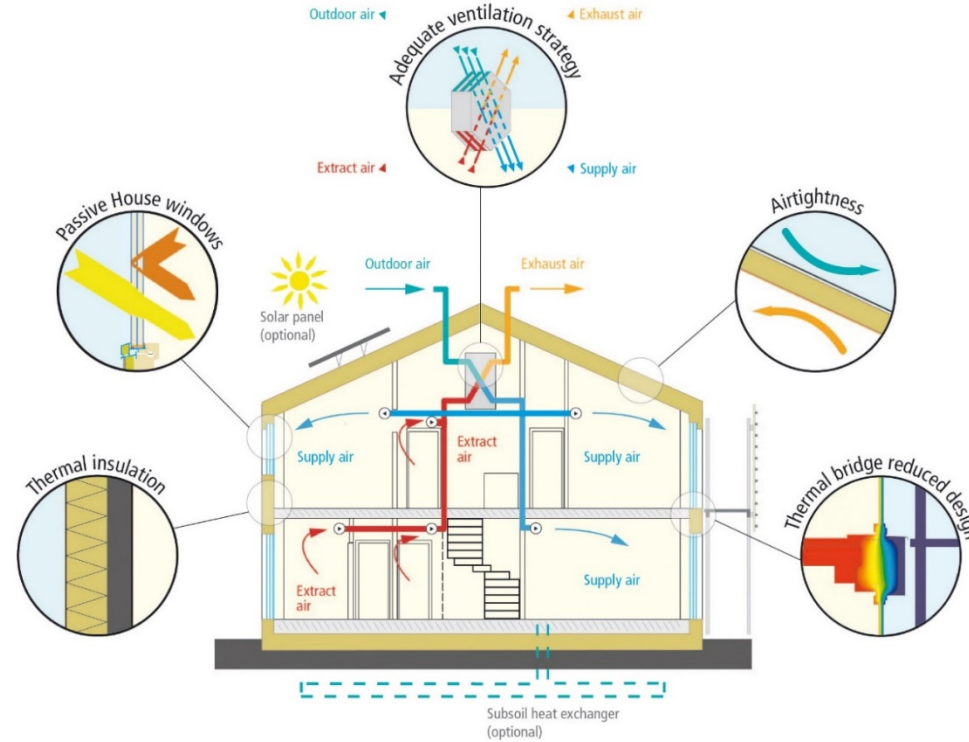
The above criteria are achieved through intelligent design and a combination of:

- **low air infiltration enough to** provide very high air quality without unnecessarily cooling
- **high thermal insulation of the opaque envelope of the building** (\leq U-value of 0.15 W/m²K), **low heat transfer glazing** (\leq U-value of 0.80 W/m²K) **and absence of thermal bridges**
- **passive solar collection** by having most of the glazing to the south and designing windows with high solar heat-gain coefficients



- **mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR)** system that provides high quality ventilation while recovering over 80% of the heat from outgoing air.

FIGURE 1: PassivHaus design elements



Other considerations

Other energy efficiency and environmentally friendly measures are advocated including:



- **wood burner heating systems** with balanced flue chimneys to conserve energy and make use of a cheap, plentiful and local carbon dioxide neutral fuel – for when the PassivHaus standard is not adopted in full
- **rainwater recycling** to minimise water consumption
- **energy and water efficient appliances** such as washing machines and shower heads
- **local materials** such as timber, bricks, tiles, stone and natural insulation from local suppliers to reduce delivery miles, support local enterprise and help fit with vernacular aesthetics
- **electric vehicle charging points** to encourage zero emission mobility
- **composting areas**
- **outdoor clothes airers**
- **environmental enhancement of development sites** (see NDP Design Guidance) and carbon offsetting by tree planting, where applicable.