

2.1 MIXED COMMUNITIES

2.1.1 MIXED-USE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Support local living through the creation of high quality, high density, mixed use and walkable communities.

City Plan 2030 Policies

Env 26 – Housing Density

Env 33 - Amenity

Housing Policies (Hou 1 – 7)

NPF4 Policies

Policy 14 - Design, quality, and place

Policy 16 - Quality homes

Development should be designed to support local living and embed a ‘place-based’ approach to the creation of high quality, high density, mixed use and walkable communities, linked by better active travel and public transport infrastructure, green and blue networks and bringing community services closer to homes

Housing-led Mixed Use

City Plan 2030 allocates a range of housing-led mixed-use sites within the urban area to support the living well locally approach and to ensure there is enough land to meet the city’s housing needs set out by the housing land requirement.

The mix of uses must:

- allow for the delivery of mainstream housing which provides the numbers set out in Table 2 and Table 15 of City Plan 2030 and achieves an appropriate mix of unit size and typology
- be appropriate to a residential environment and enable high standards of residential amenity
- support local living - see [“1.5.2 Living Well Locally” on page 53](#)
- respond sensitively to the site context, including adjacent uses, key views, landscape and townscape character and the green-blue network
- achieve the development principles set out in City Plan 2030 site-specific place policies and [City Plan Appendix D](#)

Where there is a failure to meet the Council’s expectations in relation to these factors, this would indicate that the proposed mix of uses and/or the quantum of development may not be acceptable. Where a proposal represents piecemeal development on part of an allocated site, the applicant is required to submit an indicative masterplan that demonstrates how policy objectives for the wider site could be met.



Supporting Mixed-Use Neighbourhoods - The mix of uses and high density at Quartermile supports a vibrant and walkable environment.

Purpose Built Homes to Rent

The private rental sector continues to be a key provider of homes throughout the city. Purpose-built accommodation to rent, also referred to as Build to Rent (BTR), can offer rapid delivery of high-quality, professionally managed homes under single ownership with shared facilities. BTR may also include the conversion of existing buildings that can accommodate this housing model.

BTR developments are generally characterised by:

- Single ownership and professional on-site management;

- Self-contained units that are let separately;
- High quality amenities for communal use;
- Longer tenancies offered with defined in-tenancy rent reviews; and
- A property manager who is part of an accredited Ombudsman Scheme and a member of a recognised professional body.

BTR developments are considered a strand of mainstream housing. Relevant policies and guidance apply including those relating to affordable housing, floorspace standards, daylighting, dual aspect, amenity, open space, and parking.



Purpose Built Homes to Rent - These buildings in Fountainbridge have been designed to provide homes for rental.

Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

PBSA provides managed communal accommodation. Provided at an appropriate scale in the correct circumstances it can contribute towards mixed communities. Where student accommodation is proposed on larger sites Policy Hou 5 requires that 50% of the site is developed for general housing. Affordable housing Policy Hou 2 will apply.

Further guidance is provided in the [City of Edinburgh Council's Student Accommodation guidance](#).

Accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Gypsy/Travellers are a distinct ethnic group, with their own culture, lifestyle, and accommodation needs. Sites are used by Gypsy/Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities in different ways. There is no single, appropriate design for sites.

[Scottish Government Interim Site Design Guide](#) sets out key considerations for the design of public sites.

In addition to the requirements set out in the Site Design Guide new and refurbished public sites should meet [Minimum Standards](#) set by the Scottish Government.

Self-build homes

Self-build housing is where an individual or group of individuals commissions or is personally involved in the design and construction of a dwelling that is intended to be their main residence. Self-build allows homes to be designed to suit the needs of the occupier and can add to the diversity of homes. Their development is encouraged. The Council hold a register of people with an interest in self-build housing.

2.1.2 HOUSING MIX, SIZE AND TENURE

- Provide a mix of homes that meets the needs of a range of household types and sizes, including families, older people and disabled people.
- Design new homes to be inclusive, accessible, and adaptable.
- Provide a design and layout that is tenure neutral.
- Provide future residents with adequate space for healthy living.

City Plan 2030 Policies

Env 26 – Housing Density

Env 33 - Amenity

Housing Policies (Hou 1 – 7)

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Policy 14 - Design, quality, and place.

Policy 16 - Quality homes



Providing a mix of housing options - This mix of flats, colony houses and townhouses at Ropeworks, Leith accommodates a diverse range of household sizes and tenures.

Well-designed neighbourhoods provide a variety and choice of homes to suit all needs and ages. This includes people who require affordable housing or other rented homes, families, older people, students, and people with physical disabilities or mental health needs.

Neighbourhoods also benefit when key community facilities are located within safe, convenient walking distance of homes. Please refer to [Chapter “1.5.2 Living Well Locally” on page 53](#) for guidance on meeting this requirement.

Edinburgh’s population is ageing, and the number of single households is increasing. There is net migration

out of the city by families. These demographic changes impact on the supply, size, type, and accessibility of housing required.

Mix of dwelling type and size

A mix of unit sizes and housing types creates diverse communities. This mix should respond to differing needs, immediate site conditions and citywide objectives.

For some sites City Plan sets out Place Policies and Development Principles ([City Plan 2030 Appendix D](#)) which include requirements for design, density and location of housing within developments.

Development of sites should make optimum use of land. Housing types such as flats, colonies, four in a block, terraces, mews houses and townhouses can make for more efficient land use than detached or semi-detached housing. These can provide a range of sizes including larger dwellings suitable for families. [See Chapter “2.2.1 Density” on page 74](#)

For building conversions, it is accepted that the existing building may provide limitations on the mix of housing that can be provided on site.

Inclusive, accessible, and adaptable homes

Housing in its design and form should provide for different needs and circumstances. People have various housing needs, and these will change through a lifetime therefore homes should be designed to be as adaptable as possible.

Consideration should be given to the accessibility of homes from the surroundings, within the home and to any outdoor space. Scottish Government Housing for Varying Needs Design Guide, which is currently being updated, provides a design benchmark in this regard. It is a key reference document for the affordable housing sector and should be used as best practice across the housing sector.

Key elements:

- Step free access on ground floor properties
- Wider door openings
- Adequate circulation area inside entrance door
- Passages of sufficient width
- Bathrooms which can adapt into wet rooms
- Stairs with the potential to take a stair lift and allowance for the possible installation of a through floor lift.

Scottish building standards also include provisions to ensure all new homes are accessible and inclusive. These requirements apply to all new homes, irrespective of tenure, and those created through conversion. These should be addressed at the planning application stage. A new Accessible Homes Standard is proposed for implementation through changes to building standards from 2025-26.

Developers are encouraged to provide adaptations which facilitate independent living. e.g., lower /adapted kitchen units, level access showers/wet rooms either as part of the basic design or as available options.

Communal lift access allows flats at any floor level to have a step-free entrance. Where lifts are provided, they should meet the criteria set out in Housing for Varying Needs.

Affordable housing

Affordable housing will be required as part of market proposals for developments of 12 or more units in line with the Council's affordable housing policy. Requirements are set out in the [Council's Affordable Housing Guidance](#).

Consideration of affordable housing provision should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity to enable the appropriate layouts, mix and affordable housing tenure to be identified. Applicants should engage with the Council and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) at an early stage to agree the appropriate approach. An affordable housing statement should be submitted with the planning application.

Tenure neutral design

No one should be disadvantaged because of the tenure of their homes. There should be no segregation or difference in quality between tenures by siting, accessibility, environmental conditions, external facade, or materials.

Homes of all tenures should be represented in equally attractive and beneficial locations. Shared open or play spaces should be accessible to all residents around them, regardless of tenure.

Affordable rented housing should be well integrated with housing for sale. Large groupings of the same tenure type should be avoided.

Where a site is predominantly for market housing, it is expected that affordable housing should be provided in the same housing type. If the design is for houses for sale, the affordable dwellings should also be houses. Where it is not possible to deliver the same housing type, alternative types of the same physical scale should be used. For example, colonies and four-in-a-block flats may integrate reasonably well with two-storey houses.

Housing for Families

Families vary in composition. Some families' needs can be met within 2-bedroom homes. To meet the needs of larger families in developments of 12 units or more, 20% of the total number of homes should have:

- a minimum internal floor area of 91m²
- three or more bedrooms
- good levels of storage
- direct access to private garden, from either ground or first floor (this could be via private external stairs).



Incorporating family housing - The inclusion of townhouses in this development on McDonald Place provides a good option for families.

Housing for Older and disabled people

The needs of many older people can be met by general housing. Older people's main need in the design of their home is that it allows them to live independently as long as possible.

Homes for older people can include retirement villages, care homes, extra-care housing, sheltered housing, independent living and age-restricted general market housing.

Homes for older people should be provided in locations where there is reasonable access to facilities in terms of access to public transport, health care, shopping and other community facilities. They should provide for a range of mobilities including those whose physical disability permits them to walk with or without the use of walking aids and occasional use of a wheelchair.

Dwellings provided specifically for older people should follow the Housing for Varying Needs standards or successor guidance which relate to this specific group.

Wheelchair accessible housing

There is an identified need for wheelchair accessible housing in Edinburgh. The Council has an established target of 10% of all social rented homes being wheelchair accessible. The role of market housing in providing wheelchair accessible housing is recognized by Scottish Government. Local Authorities are required to set all tenure wheelchair housing targets. An Accessible Housing Study has informed a cross-tenure wheelchair accessible homes target of 7% annually for all completions. Provision of wheelchair accessible housing in the market sector will increase choice for households by providing suitable accommodation for both wheelchair users and general needs.

It is accepted that there may be circumstances where it is not possible or desirable to provide wheelchair accessible housing. The suitability of the site should be considered regarding convenient access in terms of distance, gradient and public transport to reach facilities needed for independent day-to-day living.

Wheelchair accessible housing should, as a minimum, comply with the design criteria indicated as a 'basic' requirement for wheelchair users as outlined in [Housing for Varying Needs: A Design Guide](#) (see column 'B' in 'Summary of Design Criteria') or any successor guidance. It should also include the design criteria indicated as 'desirable' wherever possible (see column 'D' in 'Summary of Design Criteria').

Space Standards for general housing

Dwellings should as a minimum provide the following gross internal floor areas:

36m² Studio dwelling;

52m² One bedroom dwelling;

66m² Two bedroom dwelling;

81m² Three bedroom dwelling; and

91m² Dwellings with 3 or more bedrooms and enhanced storage suitable for larger families.

Rooms should be of a size and shape that when furnished they allow space for circulation and access to furniture, windows, heating appliances etc. Additional space over and above the minimum is encouraged, in particular provision within the layout to accommodate a desk for home working.

This could be within the main living area, a larger bedroom or other space within the dwelling.

The minimum floor area for studios is lower than that for one-bedroom flats since the relatively larger single open plan space found in studios compensates for having a smaller space overall. It is expected that studios will be designed to be very space efficient.

Internal storage

Storage is an important factor in ensuring that people have enough space to enjoy their homes. At least 5% of the net floor area should be provided as dedicated storage cupboards in addition to any kitchen storage or

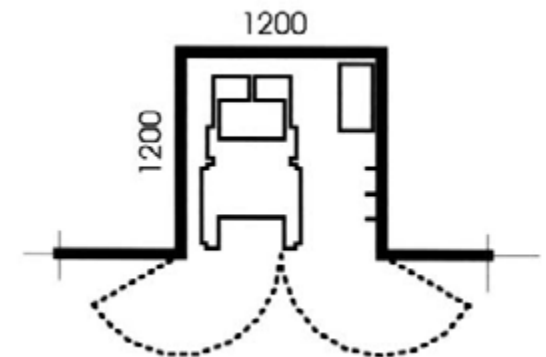
wardrobes. In all dwellings there should be adequate and easily accessible storage for:

- outdoor clothes (beside entrance door)
- cleaning and other household equipment (vacuum cleaner, mop, ironing board, etc.)
- linen
- general storage
- in family houses a pram
- special items such as baby equipment or aids for older or disabled people
- at least three 55 litre storage boxes for recycling.

Any cupboard providing space for water cylinders or tanks, or bedroom wardrobe space, is additional to these storage needs.

All storage should be easily accessible to someone with impaired mobility.

Within individual units, developers are encouraged to meet optional, enhanced storage requirements set out in [Scottish Building Standard 7.1](#), including storage that could accommodate a pram, bicycle, or electric wheelchair.



Cupboard to take a wheelchair or pram - The above diagram indicates the dimensions required for a cupboard to accommodate a wheelchair or pram (Source: House for Varying Needs).