

What is Good Design for Marton Moss?

This is a summary of the Marton Moss Design Code report that was produced for the Neighbourhood Forum by planning consultants AECOM

A design code is a set of guidelines drawn up to help ensure new development is in keeping with the existing character of an area. The intention of the Marton Moss Design Code is for it to be reflected in a design policy in the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan.

The Design Code report takes account of how land uses have shaped the character of the Moss over the last 200 years or so, particularly market gardening. The local soils are fertile because they were formed as part of a wider mossland landscape across the South Fylde area that was subsequently drained with a network of dykes. These dykes formed the boundaries of fields and horticultural plots which were served by a series of lanes. Some of these roads have been widened and new routes added but many of the original lanes remain with a quieter rural character, unadopted as highways and lacking in roadside pavements. There is also a series of off-route public footpaths but some of these are obstructed with overgrown vegetation.

The Moss has a very flat landscape but clear views of this are often restricted by roadside trees and hedgerows. There are however several major tracts of open land that greatly contribute to the pastoral character of the local area, so much so that the Design Code report says these should be kept free of new development (see also Major Open Land Study report).

The most frequently used building materials are red brick and render with slate tile roofs for houses and bungalows fronted by boundary walls backed with hedges. Most dwellings are accessed directly from the road or lane although some short terraces of houses have rear parking. In-depth development involving culs-de-sac is not characteristic of the Moss.

The draft findings of the design work and options for future types of development were consulted on through the Neighbourhood Forum and the responses shaped the Design Code guidelines; these cover:

- Cul-de-sac layouts – not favoured in the Conservation Area and should only be short elsewhere
- Parking – how to best provide this off-street
- Landscape – protecting key open land
- Set backs, gardens and boundary treatments – walled, short front gardens are characteristic
- Public rights of way – to be kept open, and retained by new development
- Drainage – dykes to be protected and improved
- Materials – use of traditional types and colours but also allowing for exceptional designs
- Density and housing mix – normally only low densities except for short terraces
- Traffic calming – guidance on street design to deter traffic ‘rat running’

These guidelines are proposed to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, before the Plan is prepared there is an opportunity for local people and other interested parties to put forward other suggestions or to comment on the outcomes of this research within the six weeks set aside from when the report was published. The full report can be viewed on the Forum’s website www.martonmossforum.org and comments made using the form available there. The Forum can also be contacted via enquiries@martonmossforum.org or on 07739 517630.

Do you agree with the findings of the Design Code?

Do you disagree or wish to comment on it?