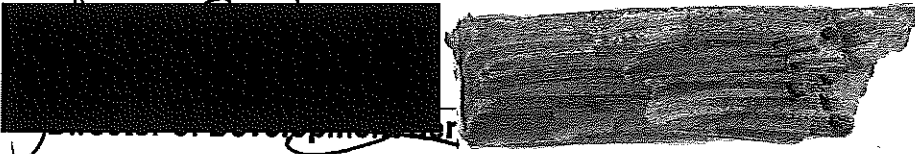


Informative:

1. For the avoidance of doubt, the plan(s) to which this decision refer(s) bear our online reference number(s) 01, 02 and 03A.



9/12/11
Date

Contact Officer : Stephen McClure
(Planning Officer) 01324 504702

Reference No. P/11/0706/FUL



Falkirk Council

Please note: this permission does not carry with it any necessary consent or approval for the proposed development under any other statutory enactments.

**Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts as Amended
Issued under a Statutory Scheme of Delegation.**

Refusal of Planning Permission

Agent

Hardie Associates
F.A.O. Colin Hardie
78 Hopetoun Street
Bathgate
EH48 4PD

Applicant

Mr I Robertson
C/o 78 Hopetoun Street
Bathgate
EH48 4PD

This Notice refers to your application registered on 2 November 2011 for permission in respect of the following development:-

Development Erection of Dwellinghouse at
Location Land To The West Of Woodgrove, Falkirk,

The application was determined under Delegated Powers. Please see the attached guidance notes for further information, including how to request a review of the decision.

In respect of applications submitted on or after 1 January 2010, Falkirk Council does not issue paper plans. Plans referred to in the informatives below can be viewed online at <http://eplanning.falkirk.gov.uk/online/applicationDetails.do?action=showSummary&caseNo=P/11/0706/FUL>. In accordance with the plans submitted or referred in the attached informatives as relative hereto, Falkirk Council, in exercise of its powers under the above legislation, hereby

Refuses Detailed Planning Permission

The Council has made this decision for the following

Reason(s):

1. The proposal does not accord with the terms of Policy EQ19 - Countryside and Policy SC3 - Housing Development in the Countryside. It has not been demonstrated that the proposed dwelling would require a countryside location or that the site would constitute an appropriate infill development.

2. The access to the site from the B8028 Blackbraes Road is not suitable to serve any additional dwellings due to the layout and lack of visibility. Additional vehicular and pedestrian traffic would be detrimental to road safety.

Informatives:-

1. For the avoidance of doubt, the plan(s) to which this decision refer(s) bear our online reference number(s) 01, 02 and 03A.

16 December 2011



Director of Development Services

FILE COPY

Environmental Quality

Countryside

- 3.56 Although perceived to be mainly urban in character, the Falkirk Council area has an extensive and varied countryside, the quality of which has a major influence on the image of the area. It is an environment where people live, work, and visit for recreation and tourism, and which is subject to increasing development pressures for housing, business and infrastructure.
- 3.57 Structure Plan Policy ENV.1 sets out a policy approach of restricting development in the countryside unless a countryside location is essential or the activity is an appropriate form of agricultural diversification.
- 3.58 Within this context, Policy EQ19 defines the countryside by reference to a system of Urban and Village Limits, and establishes the overall policy approach to development within it, cross-referring to the other policies listed in Table 3.3 which give guidance on specific uses in the countryside. The objective is to encourage bone fide rural economic activity, whilst resisting sporadic development which would compromise the open character of the countryside. It will also encourage development to locate, where possible, within the rural villages, in order to sustain their vitality. It should be noted that in two of the areas identified for Special Initiatives for Residential-led Regeneration (SIRRs)- Banknock and Whitecross - the Urban/Village Limit is a provisional one pending redefinition of the urban area through the relevant development framework or masterplan.
- 3.59 Policy EQ19 also sets out design considerations which will be particularly relevant to the satisfactory integration of development into a countryside setting, and requires compliance with the 'Design Guide for Buildings in the Rural Area'. Reference should also be made, where appropriate, to PAN 36: Siting and Design of New Housing in the Countryside and PAN 39: Farm and Forestry Buildings.

3.60

EQ19 COUNTRYSIDE

- (1) The Urban and Village Limits represent the desirable limit to the expansion of settlements for the period of the Local Plan. Land outwith these boundaries is designated as countryside and will be subject to the detailed policies for specific uses indicated in Table 3.3. Development proposals in the countryside for uses not covered by these policies will only be permitted where:
- it can be demonstrated that they require a countryside location;
 - they constitute appropriate infill development; or
 - they utilise suitable existing buildings.
- (2) In circumstances where development meets the relevant countryside policy criteria, the scale, siting and design of development will be strictly controlled to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the character of the countryside. In particular:
- the siting should be unobtrusive, making use of natural features to integrate development into the landform and avoiding skylines;
 - building design should be sympathetic to vernacular building styles and comply with the design principles contained within the Council's 'Design Guide for Buildings in the Rural Areas'; and
 - boundary and curtilage treatments should be sympathetic to the rural area, with a preference for stone walling and hedging using native species.

3.61 Table 3.3 Detailed Policies for Specific Uses in the Countryside

Housing	SC3	Housing Development in the Countryside
Business	EP5	Business and Industrial Development in the Countryside
Leisure and Tourism	EP16	Leisure and Tourism Development in the Countryside
Minerals	EQ31- 39	Mineral Policies
Waste Management	ST17	Landfill
Facilities	ST18	Waste Management Facilities
Telecommunications	ST13	Telecommunications Development
and Infrastructure	ST14	Pipelines
	ST15	Overhead Power Lines
Renewable Energy	ST20	Renewable Energy Development
Development	ST21	Wind Energy
Gypsy/Travellers' Sites	SC4A	Gypsy/Traveller Sites

Windfall Housing Development within the Urban and Village Limits

- 4.10 In addition to the housing proposals identified specifically in the Local Plan, other housing development within the Urban or Village Limits will be supported where it meets the criteria set out in Policy SC2. Such windfall development will generally be on brownfield sites and will assist in meeting the general objective of recycling redundant land and minimising take up of greenfield sites. However, sites must meet requirements in terms of accessibility, amenity and infrastructure availability. An estimate of the output from windfall sites has been built into the housing land requirement calculation, and monitoring will take place to check the actual output against the estimate.

4.11

SC2 WINDFALL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE URBAN/VILLAGE LIMIT

Housing development within the Urban and Village Limits, in addition to proposals identified within the Local Plan, will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- (1) The site is a brownfield one, or comprises urban open space whose loss can be justified in terms of Policy SC12;
- (2) The proposed housing use is compatible with neighbouring uses and a satisfactory level of residential amenity can be achieved;
- (3) The site enjoys good accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling to shopping, recreational and other community facilities;
- (4) Existing physical infrastructure, such as roads and drainage, water supply, sewage capacity, and community facilities, such as education and healthcare, have the capacity to accommodate the increase in use associated with the proposed development, or can be upgraded through appropriate developer contributions as required by Policy SC11;
- (5) In the case of small gap sites and sub-divided plots, Policy SC8 is satisfied; and
- (6) There is no conflict with any other Local Plan policy or proposal.

Housing in the Countryside

- 4.12 There is continuing pressure for the development of individual houses or groups of houses in the countryside. Structure Plan Policy ENV.1 and Local Plan Policy EQ19 set out the broad approach of restricting new development in the countryside unless a countryside location is required. Policy SC3 contains detailed criteria for assessing the acceptability of proposals. In general, housing will be permitted where it is required to support a genuine rural economic activity. Further opportunities will arise from the rehabilitation of redundant properties and from appropriate infill sites.

4.13

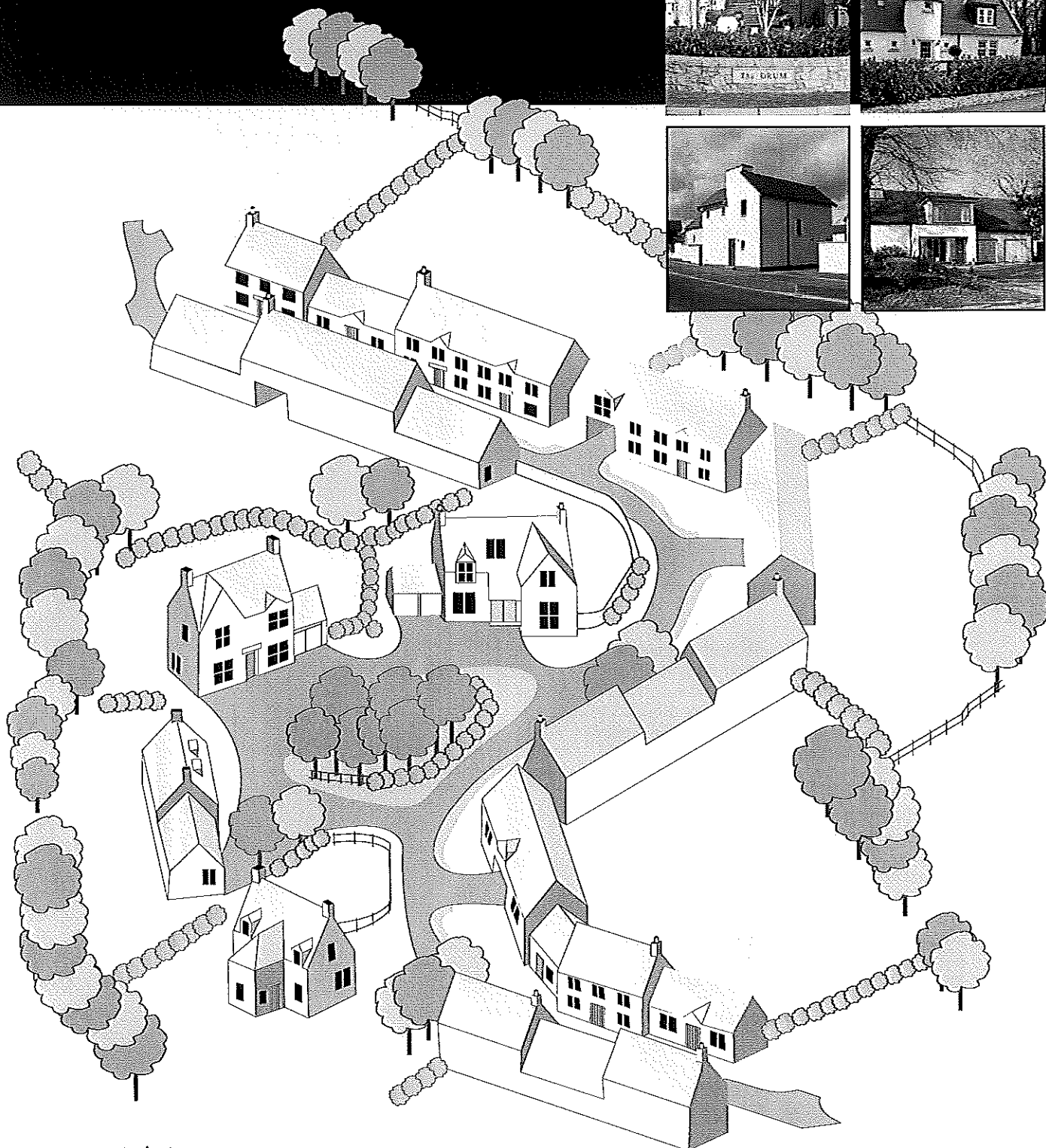
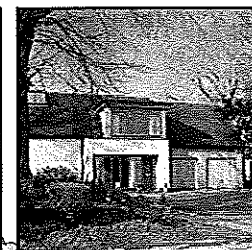
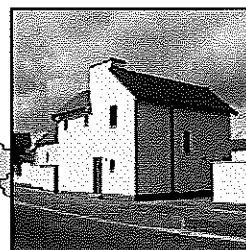
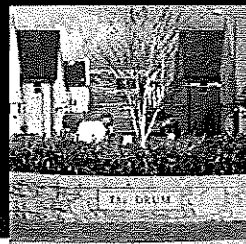
SC3 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Housing development in the countryside will only be permitted in the following circumstances:

- (1) Housing essential to the pursuance of agriculture, horticulture or forestry, or the management of a business for which a countryside location is essential. In these instances, the applicant must demonstrate all of the following:
 - The operational need for the additional house in association with the business;
 - That no existing dwelling which might have served that need has been sold or otherwise alienated from the holding;
 - That there are no reasonable opportunities for reusing or converting redundant buildings rather than building a new dwellinghouse; and
 - That the business as a whole is capable of providing the main source of income for the occupant;
- (2) Proposals involving the rehabilitation of former residential properties, or the conversion of farm and other buildings to residential use, where all of the following criteria are met:
 - The building, by virtue of its existing character, makes a positive contribution to the rural landscape;
 - The building is in a reasonable state of repair, still stands substantially intact and is capable of beneficial restoration, as verified by a report and certificate from a qualified structural engineer;
 - The restored or converted building is of comparable scale and character to the original building; and
 - In the case of former non-residential buildings, the building is no longer required for the purpose for which it was built; or
- (3) Appropriate infill opportunities within the envelope of an existing group of residential buildings, where the development would not result in ribbon, backland or sporadic development, and the proposal satisfies Policy SC8.

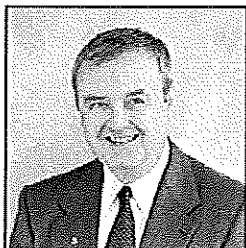
Housing Layout and Design

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Foreword



David Alexander

Welcome to this supplementary planning guidance note on Housing Layout and Design. It is one of a suite of such guides promoting development quality in the built environment and taking forward the Council's commitment to sustainable development as set out in the Development Plan.

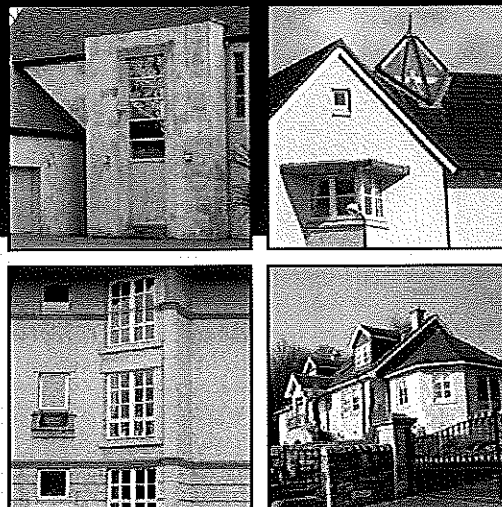
Falkirk Council has set ambitious targets for continued sustainable housing growth. If well designed, new housing can be more sustainable, make a substantial contribution to a sense of place and improve the visual image of towns and settlements within the Falkirk area.

Although the guide will be of interest to all house builders, it is primarily intended to assist volume house builders achieve the necessary high standards of design acceptable to Falkirk Council. The advice addresses the architectural treatment of house design but, importantly, focuses on layout and the spaces between buildings to ensure the creation of quality urban settings for all our communities.

The Council commends the advice set out in this guide.

February 2007

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Introduction

1.1 What is the Basic Issue?

New housing is much in demand today. This is driven by a number of factors e.g. size of accommodation, modern amenities, detachment from neighbours, closeness to countryside, distance from urban squalor and changing family and social patterns.

Areas of new housing are a very prominent form of current urban development. The quality of design applied to such development therefore requires to be of a very high standard in order to enhance the good character and appearance of our towns and villages.

The Guidance Note aims to provide advice on how a high standard of design can be achieved in estate layout and house architecture. Ultimately the quality resulting will be reflected in house sale prices. Other means of measuring design quality would be whether a housing estate might merit statutory protection in the future, the "conservation area test", or whether it would be attractive to visitors, the "postcard test".

Within the Falkirk and surrounding area new housing developments are generally taking place within two classic location types i.e. URBAN and SUB-URBAN sites.

URBAN:

town centre infill sites or "brownfield" land, perhaps where a former industrial use once operated, sometimes further out but still surrounded by the existing town.

Within a town centre, conservation concerns and greater civic pride tend to ensure that housing infill solutions are more one-off, appropriately more dense and engaging of better designers.

Outwith a town centre, however, there can be a greater tendency for volume house builders to apply the same layout principles to larger brownfield or redevelopment sites as to new suburban sites. Whereas the introduction of more affluent lifestyles into modest, perhaps run-down areas may have benefits, the townscape and social cohesion of an area can be prejudiced where an open suburban image is imposed. It is therefore important that housing development in such areas is designed to fit as seamlessly as possible into the existing urban "grain". This Guidance Note provides design conventions, patterns and models to assist in achieving this.

SUB-URBAN:

greenfield sites at the edge of a town traditionally characterised by dormitory developments of detached and semi detached housing with limited public facilities.

The design of sub-urban housing is probably the greatest concern to central and local government (see para.1.5) and especially informs this Guidance Note. Although it would appear to meet the demand criteria noted at the start of this section, the resulting housing estate designs generally fail either the "postcard" or "conservation area" tests. Despite the use of many different house types and changes in materials the image of "sameness" remains. Similarly, although detachment of one house from another characterises suburbia, there is the continuing impression that many of them are too close to one another.

Whereas this Guidance Note is predominantly concerned about the design of housing estates, it does not ignore the fact that the absence of shops and community facilities is partly responsible for the poor image of suburbia. Concerns about the commercial viability of and the potential source of nuisance from sometimes isolated amenities can discourage their inclusion in a housing area where not part of an appropriately scaled urban centre designed in from the start. The need for mixed-use development appropriately located in relation to natural focal points and primary road edges, is therefore noted.

Sustainability

It is important that the layout and design of public open space, together with the buildings set within or around it, support a sustainable environment i.e. the earth's resources protected and a healthy environment enhanced to ensure the continuity of life. Para.2.9 sets out the contribution of the Guidance Note to this. Specifically the advice will be applied in conjunction with the council's adopted Sustainable Falkirk Strategy and the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Sustainable Design currently in preparation.

Introduction

1.2 Who is the guidance for?

This Guidance Note is primarily intended to assist volume house builders and their design agents although guidance on plotted, backland and infill development may be of interest to smaller builders, architects and private individuals who may also wish to appraise a neighbouring proposal.

1.3 What general planning advice can be found pre-application?

House builders should seek the advice of the Development Management Officer for the local area for information on planning and other permissions, neighbour notification, fees, timescale and any further queries relating to this Guidance Note (see **USEFUL CONTACTS**). The submission of preliminary sketches would be useful to forestall any major redesign at a future date, with its consequences for wasted time and money.

1.4 Where will the guidance be most strictly applied?

This Guidance Note will be applied generally to all housing proposals seeking Planning Permission but especially to development relating to the following:

- Conservation Areas and the setting of Listed Buildings
- Areas of Townscape Value: as identified in Local Plan policy EQ13
- Major road edges: buildings should create frontage with no screen fencing
- Major urban edges: views of any development from the countryside should be attractive
- Canalside, riverbank, waterside or foreshore edges
- Countryside sites
- Sites requiring a Design Statement as per the Council's **Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Design Statements**.

1.5 What is the National and Local Plan policy background?

The current quality of housing design is a matter of concern to central and local government from the cultural, economic and environmental point of view as well as the merely aesthetic.

Following the earlier Planning Advice Note 44 (Fitting New Housing into the Landscape) and 46 (Planning for Crime Prevention) the Scottish Executive published its key design document 'Designing Places' in 2001 dealing with all aspects of urban design. There then followed further design PANs i.e.

- PAN 67 Housing Quality
- PAN 65 Planning & Open Space
- PAN 68 Design Statements
- PAN 76 New Residential Streets
- PAN 77 Designing Safer Places
- PAN 78 Inclusive Design

Current local authority policy documents also place strong emphasis on design quality and the need to raise standards i.e.

Structure Plan

- Policy ENV 7 - Quality of Development

Local Plan

- EQ3 Townscape Design
- EQ4 Landscape Design
- EQ5 Design & Community Safety
- SC 6 Housing Density and Amenity
- SC13 Open Space and Play Provision in New Residential Development

Other

- Sustainable Falkirk Strategy
- Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Design Statements
- Biodiversity and Development
- Trees and Development *
- Public Open Space and New Development *
- Sustainable Design *

* in preparation

Introduction

1.6 Will the guidance interfere with the Housing Market?

There is no doubt that central and local government planning policies already impact on the freedom of the housing market, for reasons of good town planning and the protection of the environment e.g. restricting development within the most lucrative rural areas outwith the urban limit. However, in the main, housebuilders have adapted to such policies and the profitable redevelopment of degraded brownfield sites within towns is testament to this. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that developers could be similarly flexible and innovative in response to the setting of design standards on housing layout for similar planning reasons.

Most current housing estates consist of uniformly detached and minimally spaced houses. Maximising the number of houses on the site on this basis would appear to be the accepted market approach today. Whilst this guide does not dispute that a site should be developed to its full capacity it considers that the most appropriate form and configuration of development will emerge from a careful urban design analysis of any site rather than from standardised marketing and house spacing factors. Accordingly, joined street enclosure will be promoted in combination and contrasting with truly detached, landscape dominated Arcadian-type houses all as an alternative to the sameness of the suburban model. These of course are the models which created our best traditional town and village settings which the volume builder aspires to emulate and where a strong housing market clearly continues to exist.

The guidance provided should bring to a developer a number of areas where specific savings can be made. The concern with well organised public space to avoid wastage may allow the prudent housebuilder to achieve a denser development where appropriate. The emphasis on grouping and patterning of housing to create character, rather than deriving this from contrasting house designs and finishes, should simplify the building production process. Finally the architectural style promoted, whilst honouring traditional principles of form, composition, vertical proportions and the balance of solid-to-void, seeks a contemporary interpretation of these free from over expensive elaboration. Fussy period imitations will not be generally welcomed.

1.7 How is the design guidance set out?

The design guidance progresses from the broad principles of estate layout to the more detailed aspects of architectural form and aesthetics.

The section on Estate Layout sets down the elements of the public space framework; primary edges, building heights and focal points being the additional urban design aspects relating to this.

The guidance then identifies two alternative house grouping models i.e.

- (i) joined housing enclosing space and
- (ii) detached housing enclosed by space.

This then leads to guidance on appropriate locations for these different models with building height and focal points as associated drivers.

The latter part of the section on Estate Layout section deals with more technical aspects e.g. road design, sloping land, security for public places and individual properties and energy efficiency and climate considerations. Since the guide is aimed at estate layout it only touches incidentally on housing forms at a town scale. However it does incorporate advice on minor developments in backland and gap sites.

Para. 3.1/2 Architectural Form and Aesthetics provides a brief discussion of design principles followed by a simple checklist of design conventions based on the traditional principles of building composition.

Introduction

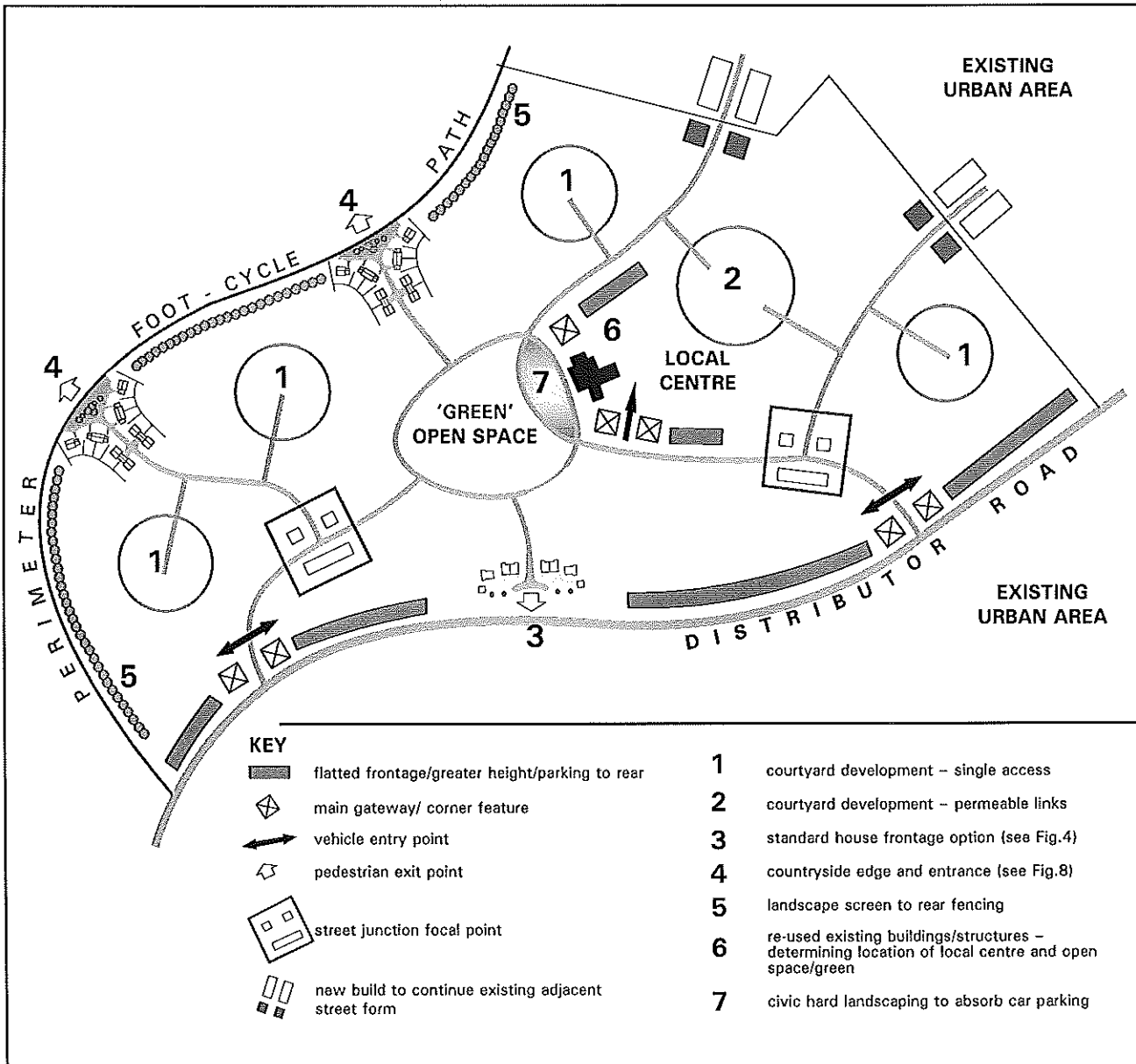


Figure 1 CONTEXT AND PLANNING - TOWN EXTENSION SITE

Feature retention, physical constraints, framework of route linkages and open space, entrances, built edges, corners and focal points.
Building frontages, with direct pedestrian entrance, preferred alongside all public streets and spaces.

Estate Layout

Site Characteristics and Constraints

2.1 Site Characteristics and Constraints

The essential uniqueness of any new housing development will emerge in the first place from its relationship to and retention of its immediate context, both the physical and the visual elements. This immediate quality may also be critical to the marketing of the development where real heritage and amenity are considered more desirable than imported versions.

Physical: elements will include existing landform and landscape, especially tree groupings. Water courses, streams, ponds or canals have in the past been considered a source of danger or problem, covered over or fenced off. Today they are accepted as a potential amenity to any development and should be acknowledged as such from the start. These water elements will set the framework for the addition of sustainable drainage (SUDS) ponds at the site planning stage and be the key to the location of public open space and biodiversity provision. Man-made structures on the site should also be appraised for retention and restoration as they can assist in giving a new development a unique identity, e.g. stone walls, industrial archaeology, vernacular farm buildings.

Visual: Whilst clearly, by its very nature, building development will reduce the extent of openness and views into and out of the site, especially attractive spaces and vistas should be identified at the outset for protection and enhancement. The visual character of structures and buildings within and adjacent to the site should be noted for the new architectural character to relate to. Adjacent street forms should be continued into the new site to create natural visual linkages.

Utilities and ground conditions: A utility wayleave across the site which cannot be moved should be identified to ensure that it will lie within new public areas, avoiding private gardens and backland areas. Similarly poor ground conditions, whether for reasons of mineral subsidence or water logging, should create open space features e.g. village greens and community wetlands in any new development.

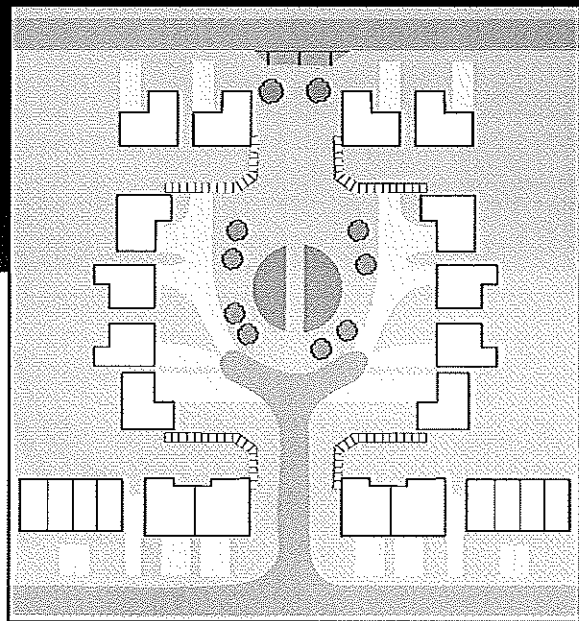


Figure 2 : STREET AND COURTYARD SPACE

Contained and symmetrical space, unified frontage design, surveillance, integrated and discreet road geometry

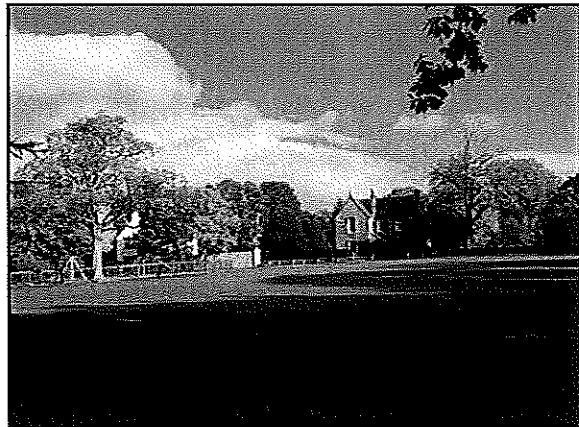


Figure 3 : HOUSING AROUND PICTURESQUE OPEN SPACE

Estate Layout

Public Space Framework



2.2 Public Space Framework

It is important that the design of a housing layout should be based around a unified framework of public open spaces linked by streets or footpaths with main entrances on the outside. This structure should result from a linkage of the entrance points across the site following existing routes where possible. The most important open spaces are best located at junctions of such routes. This public space framework will also include the retained elements identified in the previous section i.e. landform and landscape, water courses, wayleaves etc. It is important that the principles of good public space should apply equally to street spaces as to designated "greens" or landscaped areas of civic or special community status.

New Entrances: Whilst access points into any site should be located to continue existing public routes from shops, bus stops and other local facilities, some new entrance locations may be required. The actual location of an entry along a frontage is very important. Where junction standards allow, an entrance should avoid being located at either end of a street frontage i.e. immediately adjacent to the adjoining site, because of the following disadvantages:

- (i) a proper gateway design is not achieved, denying the benefits of natural surveillance and legibility.
- (ii) the exposed side boundary to the site is more difficult to soften visually, or maintain in the future and will create an unattractive outlook for the housing.

In the case of a site with a countryside edge access points should be provided at appropriate points (see para 2.3 **Countryside Edges**).

Routes: The Council's road guidelines identify a road hierarchy consisting of main distributor roads, general and minor access loops and cul-de-sacs which this Guidance Note requires to be limited in length i.e. "short".

Internal linkages should be as direct as possible, not tortuous or circuitous. There should be no barriers between adjacent public spaces.

However a gentle curving of the roadway may be allowed to give a continuous closure of space and create visual interest.

As a general rule a new footpath or cycleway must not be located to the rear of the houses and should instead form a component part of the roadway hierarchy referred to. This should ensure best natural surveillance and use of public space, discourage nuisance activities and avoid the poor appearance and maintenance problems associated with exposed rear screen fencing.

Clearly there will be instances where such "remote" footpaths or cycleways already exist along the perimeter of a site. Advice on the treatment of such in terms of access and frontage is provided under para 2.3 **Built Edges**.

Public Open Space: All new housing proposals over 10 units should consider the provision of amenity public open space within the development, located to take account of existing site characteristics e.g. vista opportunities, existing landscaped areas of quality, water courses and utility wayleaves and proposed junctions of throughroutes.

The well appointed open space area, taking the form of a "village green", accessible from an enclosing housing frontage, is generally preferred to the "gap site" set between buildings on a street frontage. This is to ensure that pressure to develop the site for building development in the future is minimised. Such a principle should apply even where purpose designed open space activity areas or facilities are planned, the area being sufficiently large to absorb high fences etc. within a landscape framework.

Where possible, roadways should not be continuous around public open spaces to allow at least one point of car free access from the housing opposite. The design of any planting should avoid creating screened areas which might conceal criminal or anti-social behaviour.

Dimensional standards for passive and active open space are set out in para. 2.7. **Other Planning Considerations.**

Estate Layout

Built Edges

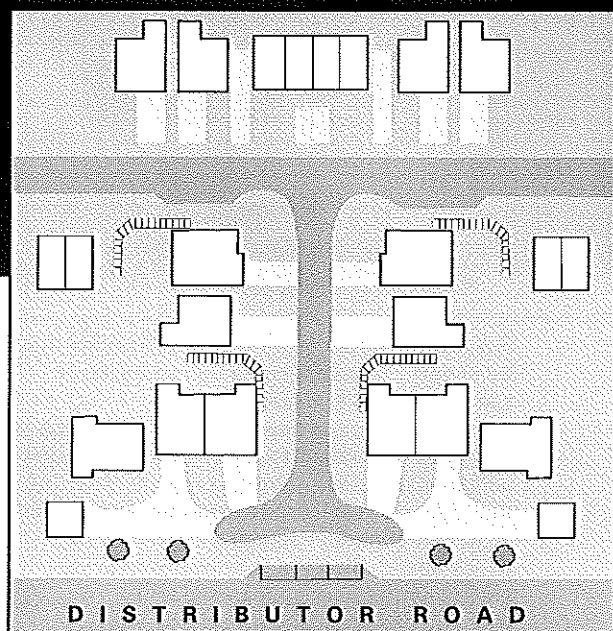


Figure 4 DISTRIBUTOR ROAD FRONTAGE OPTION

6 house "terrace" served from rear access
cul-de-sac and regulation 2 house driveways



Figure 5 UNSATISFACTORY MAIN ROAD FRONTAGE

Screen fencing and bland rear elevations

2.3 Built Edges

General Edges: The edges of all public streets and landscaped amenity areas should preferably be defined by continuous building frontages with main door entrances. This will improve the appearance, surveillance and use of public space as well as avoiding the problem relating to exposed fencing, referred to above.

Narrowing the gap between the street edges will provide an interesting visual contrast with the more open greens or squares.

Corners: these should preferably be closed off by building to create visual focal points and enhanced surveillance at the junction. Special corner house units will be encouraged with formal front elevations onto both streets, thus ensuring a minimum of exposed high garden enclosure.

Distributor Road Edges: A formal frontage of typical house and garage units is more difficult to achieve alongside a distributor road because road standards do not permit individual direct vehicular access from it. This means that a standard housing development will tend to turn its back to the road behind a stockade fence. The following are options for achieving an acceptable frontage configuration on a distributor road:

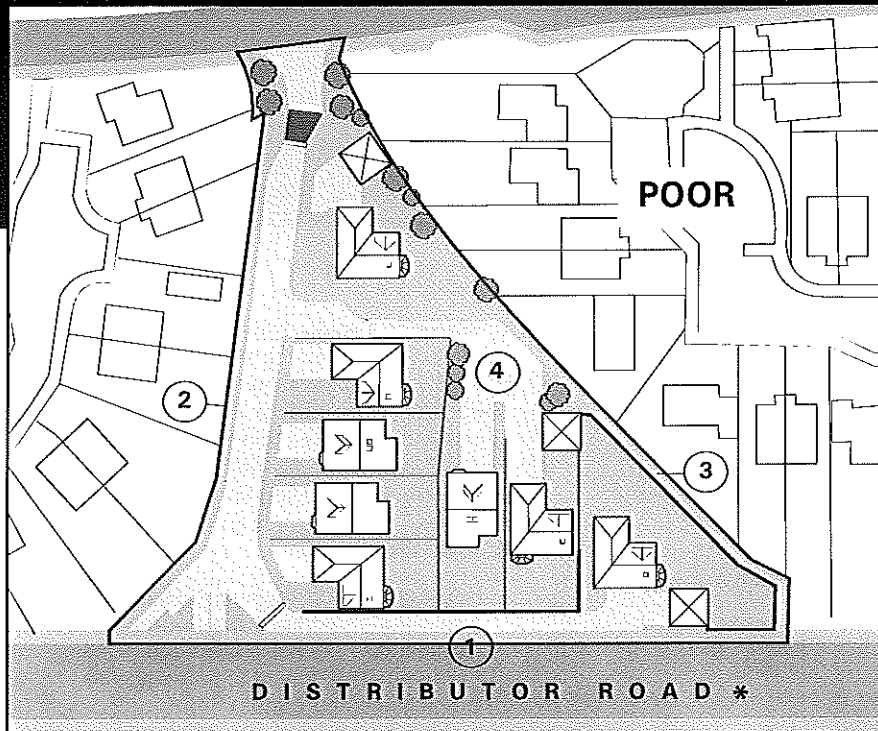
- a parallel secondary road giving direct vehicle access to the housing frontage.
- parallel driveways served off both sides of a cul-de-sac turning head connecting back to the internal loop road, in the normal way capable of providing a 6-house frontage, but less visually intrusive and wasteful of space than a full width secondary road.
- flatted development with front doors onto the roadway and parking concealed to the rear.

Where front gardens line a distributor road, the heel of the pavement should be defined by a low robust enclosure (e.g. a plinth and/or a railing), preferably reinforced by avenue planting.

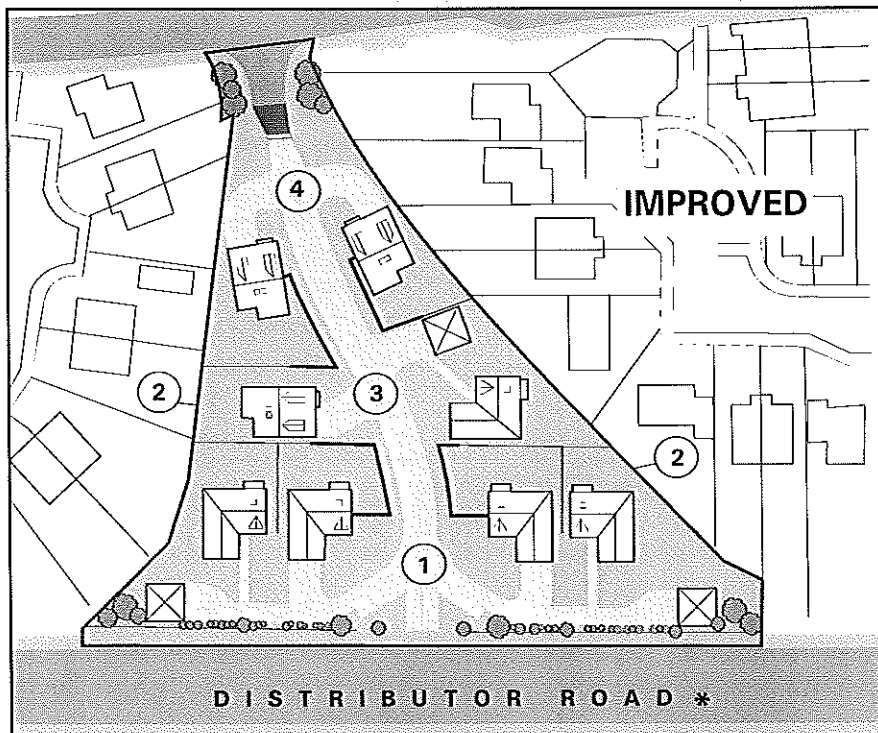
This convention should be applied to a flatted frontage in any location except where the urban design context requires the building itself to be on the heel of the pavement.

Estate Layout

Built Edges



- ① Unstructured fenced road frontage/ wasteful, convoluted driveway link
- ② Exposed fenced boundary: poor outlook from houses / ambiguous maintenance responsibilities
- ③ Hidden, unsafe footpath link
- ④ Backland development: poor outlook/ security



- ① Formal structured building frontage to distributor road
- ② Edges closed off from public view/ private maintenance responsibility
- ③ Centralized shared vehicle/ footpath route (right of way): better surveillance
- ④ Defined gateway into development

Figure 6 : IMPROVING SITE LAYOUT

Building Frontage, entrances, linked/permeable routes, surveillance, outlook, aesthetic quality, boundary edge and maintenance

* direct vehicle access to individual properties prohibited

Estate Layout

Built Edges

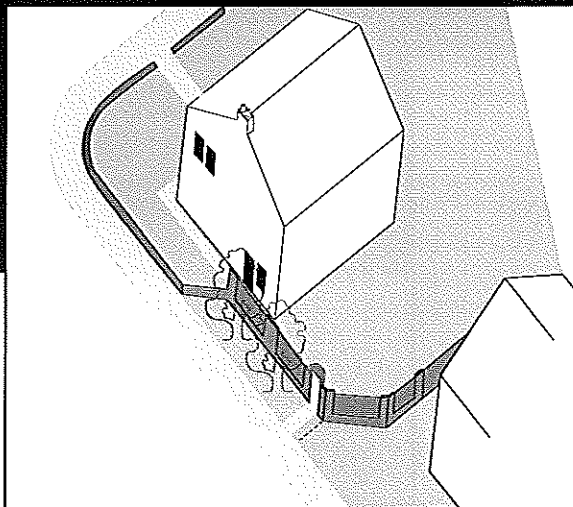


Figure 7 : CORNER GABLE TREATMENT

Image, window openings, garden enclosure, surveillance, access, security.

Exposed Fenced Edges: Where it becomes absolutely essential that a private rear garden enclosure is exposed to a roadway or open space, consideration should be given to the following combination of measures to improve the appearance of such an edge:

- formal window arrangements on both street elevations of corner houses or end gable with windows onto lesser road
- a high profile architectural treatment to the garden enclosure (e.g. walls or fenced panels framed by low plinths and piers) with additional landscaped softening, if necessary
- the same quality of treatment to the rear house elevations as for the main frontages
- formal private entrances to the rear gardens from the public street.

Countryside Edges: New housing developments adjoining the countryside generally have high fencing defining the boundary. These have a stark external appearance and the countryside edge, hidden and inaccessible from the housing, can be vulnerable to fly-tipping and other nuisance activities. The following options are offered to address the situation:

- Housing fronting the countryside and accessing a perimeter road or driveway arrangement (as per a Distributor Road frontage). This would improve access, surveillance and outlook from the houses and provide a more attractive town edge.
- Where the costs of a single fronted roadway are prohibitive, a fenced edge may be conceded where it is broken at regular intervals by well designed building and landscape "gateways" accessed from a perimeter footpath. An additional edge of planting between fence and footway would help to soften any appearance of starkness.

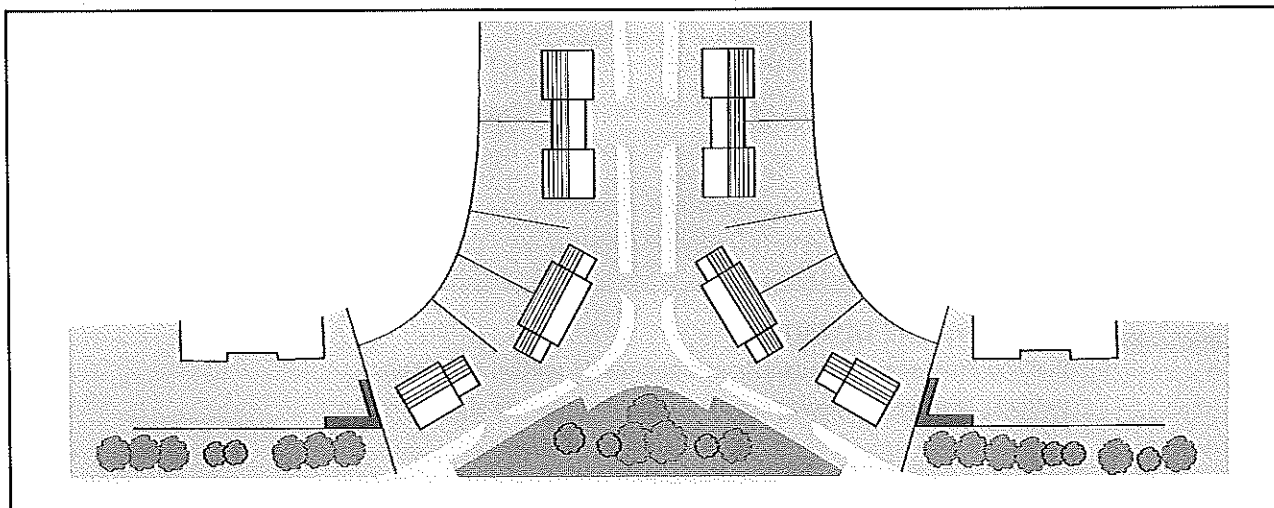


Figure 8 : COUNTRYSIDE EDGE/ENTRANCE

Access/linkage, surveillance, buffer, visual appearance, vitality and use.

Estate Layout

Models for House Grouping



2.4 Models for House Grouping

The Issue

A well integrated framework of spaces and associated built edges to those spaces has the potential to give to a housing estate the desirable sense of place and connection. However this can be compromised by an unsatisfactory spacing or scale configuration to the housing units which form the edges to the public spaces.

This is unfortunately the case with many volume builder housing estates today where the layout is determined by 2 related aspirations for an idealised private home i.e.

- detachment from its neighbour
- distinctive from it in appearance

In the main, contemporary housing estates seek to implement this ideal while at the same time maximising the number of houses on the site. The result is that a minimum separation of standard detached houses dictates the density i.e. 1.0m. from the side boundary between houses and 18m. front and rear (determined by the minimum distance required between the windows to habitable rooms). Similarly visual distinction is sought by placing different house types next to each other on the street, sometimes only differentiated by nominal changes in features and finishes.

The problem with this grouping pattern is that houses appear too close together and can have a claustrophobic effect on the street. The elevational differences tend to create visual conflict rather than the attractive variety intended. The true character of the house, as illustrated on the marketing brochure is significantly diminished. Conversely the houses remain too far apart and poorly related to achieve an appropriate "town" streetscape or to mark a focal point.

Tried and tested grouping models:

To address the above concerns developers are encouraged to adopt one or both of the following models for house grouping i.e.

"URBAN" MODEL - Terrace/ Joined Form - enclosing space:

The elevation generally follows a continuous building line and the elevation is made up of repeating house designs or a differentiated but harmonious overall design.

"RURAL" MODEL - Arcadian/Detached Form - enclosed by space:

Houses are sufficiently well spaced to be potentially dominated by landscaping, allowing significant differences in the character and appearance of each plot.

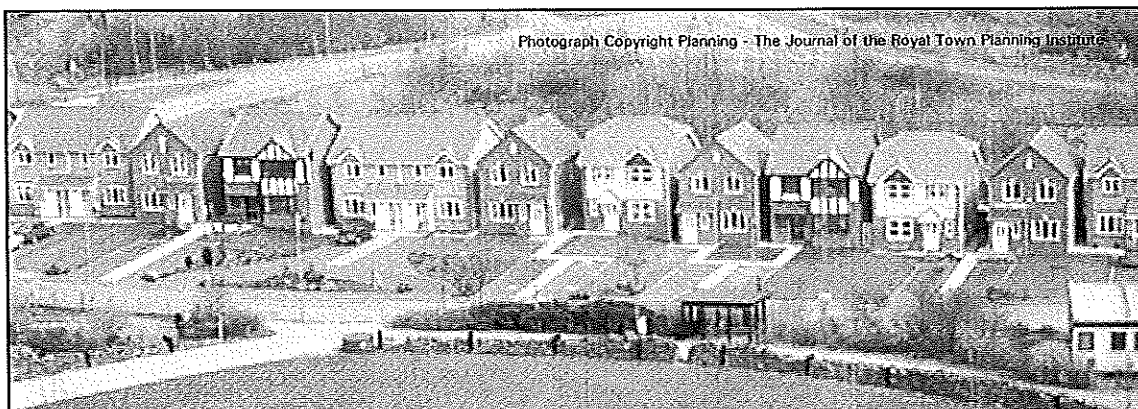


Figure 9: UNSATISFACTORY SUBURBAN HOUSE LAYOUT

Detachment and distinctiveness from one another but no "place"

Estate Layout

Models for House Grouping

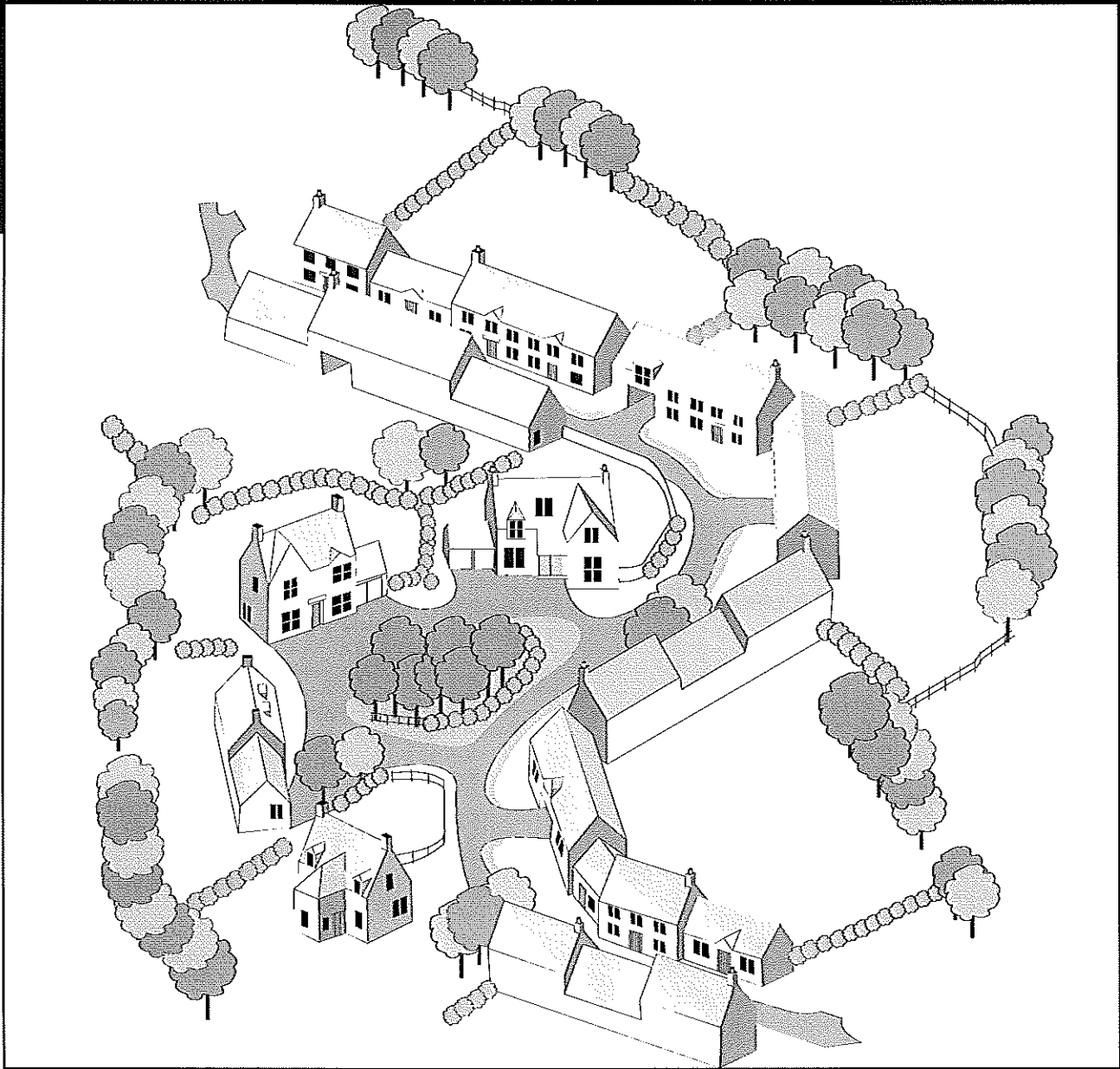


Figure 10 "URBAN" & "RURAL" HOUSE MODELS

Shown in appropriate relationship to each other and to location of open space.

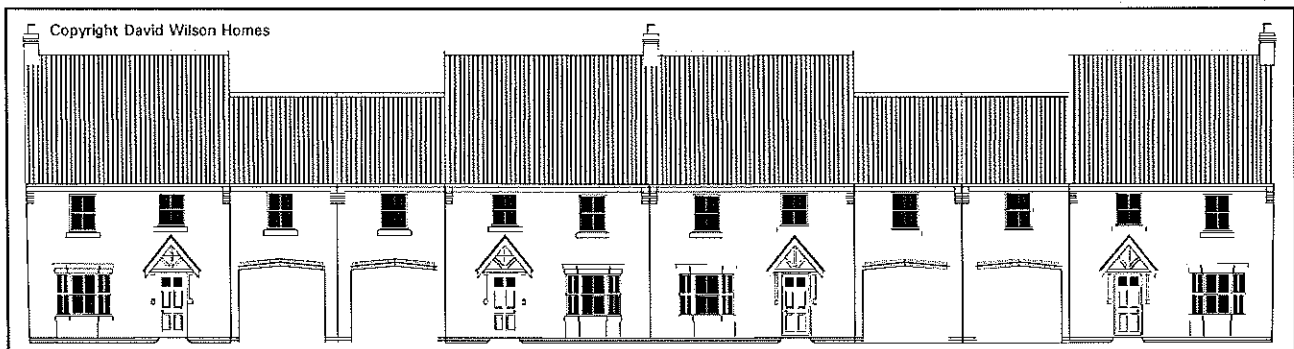


Figure 11 "URBAN" MODEL : TERRACE HOUSING

Pend access - potential for street narrowing concealing private cars and assisting individual identity.

Estate Layout

Models for House Grouping

The urban model would ideally be in a joined or terraced form, other benefits of which being higher density and energy efficiency. Pend accesses within a terrace will conceal car parking as well as providing a greater sense of detachment and allowing the development to be closer to the street.

However, the standard layout of minimally detached houses may also be made more acceptable where a more formal configuration is proposed to ensure the visual continuity of the street frontage. Grouping matching house types together in a symmetrical arrangement will assist this, especially where a single finished floor level is used throughout.

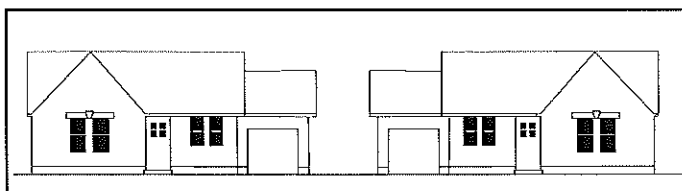


Figure 13 "URBAN" MODEL : DETACHED HOUSING

Twinning and visual linkage can give appearance of terrace.



Figure 12 "URBAN" MODEL : TERRACE HOUSING
Illustration of built development

Consideration should be given to limiting the number of main gables on a street frontage to avoid a cluttered appearance.

Straight gabled buildings will always be necessary to achieve visual continuity and should not be mixed with hipped roofs on a street frontage except where houses are sufficiently widely spaced, following the rural model. Similarly the composition of roof and wall finishes should reinforce rather than disintegrate the formal street configuration.

For the widely spaced rural model plot sizes should be no less than 1/6th acre and the ratio of ground floor (minus garage) to overall plot should be between 1:5 and 1:6. Critically the dimension between the house and the side boundary should be no less than 3.5 m. which will allow a vehicle to pass alongside. A random scattering of detached houses would be appropriate at this density.

POOR



IMPROVED



Figure 14 "URBAN" MODEL : MODIFYING SUBURBAN MODEL

reduce house types from 4 to 3, hand twin and group, structure material palette ; variety remains but focus and visual continuity is enhanced.

Estate Layout

Distribution of House Grouping Models

2.5 Distribution of House Grouping Models

All new housing developments should adopt combinations of the "urban" and "rural" housing grouping models identified above. Estates consisting entirely of minimally detached houses will not normally be acceptable.

It is important nevertheless that the models are not located arbitrarily or separately zoned but are related appropriately to the centre or edge of a town and to the framework of public routes, spaces, entrances and edges at the local site level.

Town

Denser "urban" forms are generally most appropriate in more traditional town centre areas and on former industrial sites within the town, at least where immediately adjacent to denser built up areas. However this model will also be appropriate in any new development where there is a need for an urban focus, perhaps adjoining a local centre which includes shopping and community facilities. Conversely, the more widely spaced "rural" model should not be precluded from the more historic urban areas e.g. within a site bounded by Victorian villas.

Site

The established lines and orientation of the built frontages to the Public Space Framework should provide a template for the distribution of the 2 housing grouping models identified.

The urban model can create the more formal visual impact appropriate to the more important, busier routes where it is also able to provide a noise barrier to more informal areas to the rear. Main gateway entrances to a site or to a minor cul-de-sac/ courtyard space as well as corners and other focal points are also appropriate locations for this model. Formal continuous built enclosure can sometimes be the preferred character for the frontage to an important public space or "village green". Flatted accommodation with limited private amenity space may benefit from such a location. Denser linked forms are also appropriate in discreet mews courtyard locations.

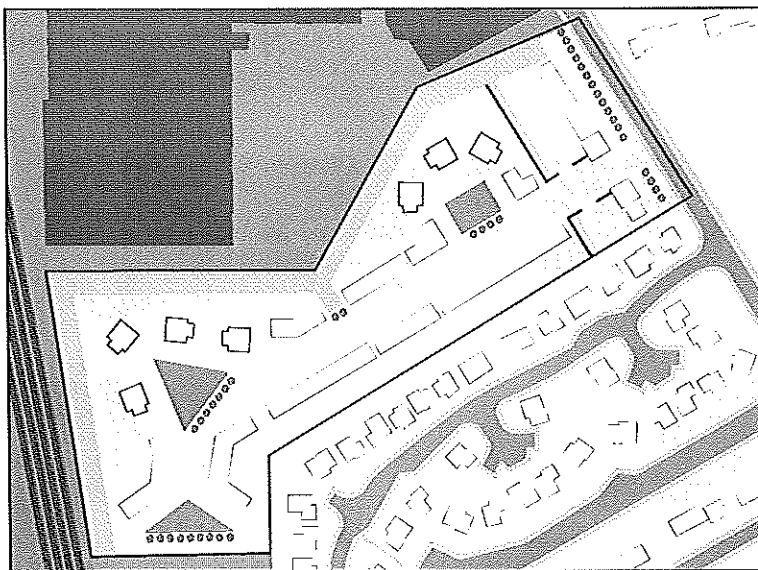


Figure 15 : DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSE GROUPING MODELS

Flatted option along main road, internally site shape determines location of open space and, in turn differentiation of urban and rural house models.

Estate Layout

Distribution of House Grouping Models

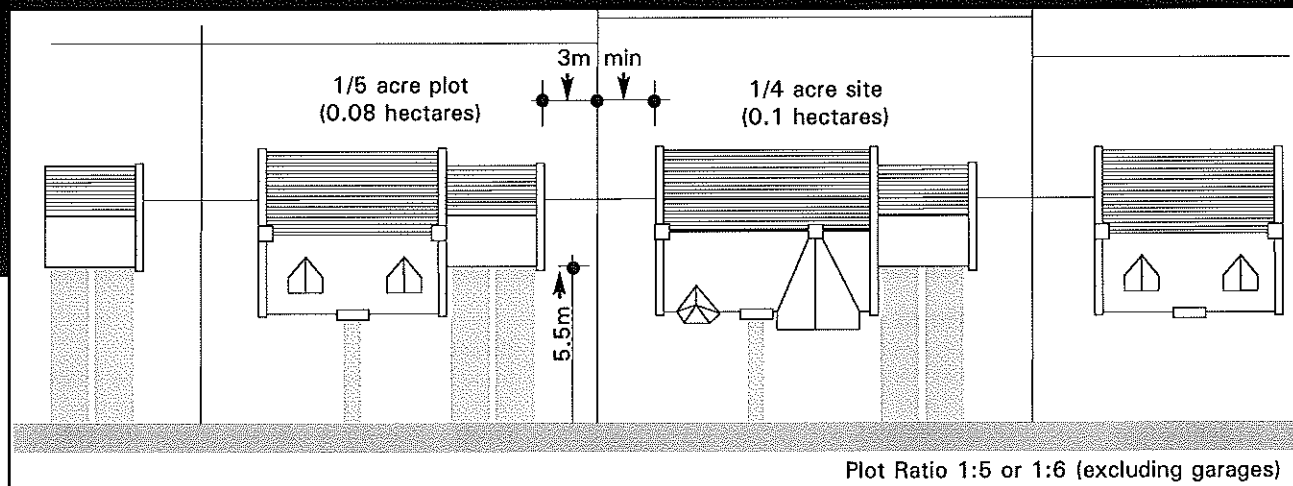


Figure 16 - "RURAL" MODEL ARCADIAN / INDIVIDUAL PLOTS

Minimum dimensions - enhance visual differences

The rural model is most appropriately located within a discrete courtyard or cul-de sac and, indeed, it is in this context that large self-build type plots are best located, preferably the lesser component of any development site. On a general access road, fewer, more widely spaced, houses will result in a quieter, less trafficked street. This model would be equally acceptable to define the edge to a village green where it might continue the parkland character of the open space. In this circumstance the fewer but more prestigious houses may afford better control and foster a higher standard of maintenance for the enclosed green. This model can also provide an attractive main road frontage where a landscape character is sought.

Building Height

Options for greater height should naturally accompany the urban housing model. Where two storey housing predominates, primary edges, entrance points, and corner junctions offer the opportunity for combinations of 2½ or 3 storey buildings or, at inner town locations, even greater height. Increased storey height at focal points will assist in establishing a general sense and understanding of the place.

In the case of flatted development, storey height may be restricted according to the quality of the greenery in the enclosed court or associated car parking area.

Density

The Council's Local Plan provides indicative house numbers for certain identified sites. Otherwise housing densities will be subject to the general guidance provided in paras 2.4 and 2.5 in terms of : public open space and roads, private garden ground, daylighting and privacy and house grouping models and the location of each type.