



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Directorate for Planning and
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Your ref: 11527/A3/AB/SH
Our ref: P/PPA/240/194

14 June 2007

Dear Sirs

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997: SECTION 47 AND
SCHEDULE 4
PLANNING APPEAL BY BELLWAY HOMES: LAND TO THE EAST OF 44 RODEL
DRIVE, POLMONT**

1. I refer to your client's appeal, which I have been appointed to determine, against the refusal of outline planning permission by Falkirk Council for the development of land for housing purposes. I held a hearing into the appeal and made an accompanied inspection of the appeal site and the surrounding area on 17 April 2007. For the reasons given in this letter I have decided to dismiss your appeal.
2. The appeal site is a roughly rectangular area of land about 2 hectares in extent within a residential part of Polmont bounded by houses in Culduie Circle, Portree Crescent and Skye Drive. It appears to have originally been grassland but has been extensively invaded by scrub and brambles, and there are some young trees.
3. The application for planning permission proposes the residential development of the remaining grassland areas, largely on the southern and eastern part of the site, with the balance of the land owned by your client being brought under management with the intention of habitat enhancement and use for leisure and recreation purposes. A legal agreement is proposed to secure this. Access to the site would be by an eastward extension of Rodel Drive.
4. Planning permission was refused because the proposed development would involve part of a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation; would result in built development in a Skyline Protection Area; would adversely affect the recreational and amenity value of the surrounding area and set a precedent for further loss of open space; and would thus conflict with policies ENV.3 of the Falkirk Structure Plan and POL 8.6 and POL 9.3 of the Polmont and District Local Plan. Since the application had not been accompanied by a comprehensive landscape assessment it would also be contrary to Policy EQ22 of the Falkirk Council Local Plan (Finalised Draft). It was accepted at the hearing that this last reason for refusal has now been satisfied.

5. The development plan comprises the Falkirk Structure Plan and the Polmont and District Local Plan. The Policies, Proposals and Opportunities Map accompanying the local plan indicates the appeal site as falling within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, an area for Skyline Protection and a Major Open Space. These are governed by policies POL.8.5, POL.8.6 and POL.9.3 respectively. SINC designations are also protected by Policy ENV 3 of the structure plan, while Policy COM 6(1) of the structure plan also protects open spaces. Other local plan policies of relevance are POL 3.1 which directs new development towards allocated sites and indicates that other brownfield within the urban limits will be considered favourably, and POL 9.4 which refers to the improvement of open space.

6. The Finalised Falkirk Local Plan was due to go on public deposit on 20 April 2007. Policy SC2 supports housing development where the site comprises urban open space whose loss can be justified in terms of Policy SC12, and this in turn requires there to be no adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area, particularly through the loss of open space planned as an integral part of a development, and in the case of recreational open space that it is demonstrably surplus to requirements and its release will be compensated for by other qualitative improvements elsewhere. The area should also not be of significant ecological value and connectivity within the overall open space network should not be threatened.

7. **On your client's behalf** you argued that this part of the SINC is of low ecological and nature conservation value, a fact recognised by Scottish Natural Heritage who had indicated that they were content with the proposal to develop the land subject to conditions which your client would comply with, involving the safeguarding and protecting of the remainder of the SINC. The part of the site proposed for development did not merit inclusion in the SINC, and its location did not affect the overall quality of the resource. Development of land to the south, previously owned by the Council and sold by them, had divided the SINC into two distinct parts, destroying important wildlife linkages. Habitat opportunity was in decline with the spread of scrub, which would lead inevitably to sycamore-dominated woodland. The loss of this part of the SINC to development would be mitigated by improvements and protection elsewhere. Development for housing would increase biological diversity, since it was recognised that domestic gardens would offer improved ecological value compared to its present state. Since the development of the land would only be contrary to policy if there were adverse impacts on the SINC, the response of SNH gave assurance that the appellant's proposal was in accord with policy, and it was not necessary to show overriding reasons in favour of the land's development, which would accord with PAN 60 and NPPG 14.

8. You pointed out that it was accepted by the Council that the loss of open space which this proposal would represent would not be significant in numerical terms, there being more than sufficient space in the locality. The value of the remaining open space would be enhanced and protected in perpetuity, and no harm to the amenity of neighbouring property would be caused. The land was not used for active recreation other than walking and the exercising of dogs, and those activities could continue. The opportunity would be created for both your client's adjoining land and other overgrown land in the vicinity to be opened up.

9. You accepted that there might be some minor potential skyline effect caused by development, but this could be minimised by siting and by the restriction of dwellings to single storey at sensitive points so that the integrity of the ridge would not be threatened. Development must be seen in the context of existing skyline development on adjoining sites and the urbanised nature of the surroundings. The emerging local plan no longer applied skyline protection to the area.

10. SEPA had no objections to the proposal, and the police would find the development beneficial in reducing the undesirable use of the present open space and making it better supervised through overlooking.

11. On behalf of your clients a letter had been sent to the Council confirming the company's willingness to enter into an agreement as part of any planning permission preventing development on the remainder of the site, or to dispose of the land to the Council at no cost.

12. The Finalised Falkirk Local Plan was a material consideration. The proposal would not offend against policies EQ24, which related to SINC's, or SC2 which dealt with windfall housing provision. SC 12 related to the development of open space, and the proposal would accord with the criteria of that policy.

13. **The Council** indicated that the SINC was designated for its informal recreational value as opposed to its particular quality or the existence of rare or individual species of importance. Its importance lay therefore in its overall contribution to the recreational and educational needs of the area. Within urban environments SINC's provided opportunities for biodiversity, education and recreation which would be reduced by the loss of the appeal site. SNH in their consultation response had not supported the proposal, but had said that it did not demonstrate that the proposal would avoid, reduce and mitigate for the loss of biodiversity landscape and open space interests. There was no need for housing locally which justified this development on a protected site.

14. Skyline protection was a specific policy of the local plan, and the appellant had provided no evidence to illustrate that there would be no impact on the skyline. While no similar policy was included in the emerging Falkirk Local Plan, other policies, namely SC12 and EQ 24 provided sufficient protection.

15. The appeal site formed part of a larger designated area of open space protected by Policy COM.6 of the structure plan and Policy POL 9.3 of the adopted local plan. Policy SC12 of the Finalised Falkirk Local Plan contained criteria which applied in situations where the loss of open space would be permitted. The proposal would not meet these criteria as the more open part of the site would be removed leaving the more heavily treed and overgrown areas. While it was accepted that there was sufficient open space in the locality, the generous provision in the locality was a particular feature, breaking up the mass of housing on Polmont Hill and providing a recreational resource. Although not of particular ecological merit it had value as part of a larger natural heritage area. The replacement of open natural footpaths by footpaths through a housing development would be a retrograde step.

16. **Mr D R Simpson**, a local resident, attended the hearing and drew attention to his written objection to the proposal in which he urged Falkirk Council to maintain their policies of skyline protection and of the identification of the site as a SINC.

17. **Written submissions** from 27 local addresses had been received by the Council at application stage which also opposed the proposed development.

CONCLUSIONS

18. Section 25 of the Act requires the determination in this case to be made in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. I consider, based on what I heard at the hearing and from my inspection of the appeal site and the written submissions, that the issues to be determined are whether the proposal is consistent with the relevant provisions of the development plan and, if not, whether an exception to these provisions is justified by other material considerations.

19. The fact that the appeal site is subject to three separate land allocations in the local plan, each intended to protect from development the wider area of which this forms a part in my view represents a significant statement of intent in the adopted plan. I deal first with the question of loss of public open space. There is no doubt that the development of this site would still leave Polmont with an ample sufficiency of public open space. The housing developments on Polmont Hill are

generously provided. The appeal site is part of a larger swathe of open space which separates developed areas. Its intrinsic value has been diminished by lack of maintenance and the invasion of scrub but it still provides a valuable breathing space within the suburban area of Polmont and an opportunity for exercise and recreation for nearby residents. Notably, the remaining open grassed part of the open space in this locality lies on the area of the appeal site which your clients propose to develop, and would thus be lost. The local plan contains Policy 9.4 aimed at the enhancement of areas of open space, and I support your view that the implementation of these policies should be pursued.

20. Removing areas for development from the open space in order to secure protection or enhancement of the remainder is, in the circumstances of this case, not an appropriate solution. Policy SC12 of the emerging local plan envisages the development of genuinely surplus open space where, among other things, it does not form part of a planned area of open space provided as part of an adjacent development. I accept that this area was not laid out in conjunction with other housing areas, but given its protection in the adopted local plan I do not consider that it can be described as available for development. It is part of an area which has been retained as open space for amenity and informal recreational purposes, even though it may not have been well maintained as such. Since in my view its release for development would not accord with Policy SC12, it would also not comprise an acceptable windfall site under policy SC2. I have concluded that the proposal would adversely affect the recreational value of the area, even taking account of the overall standard of provision, and would thus conflict with policy POL 9.3 of the adopted plan.

21. Policy POL 8.3 says that development likely to adversely affect SINC's will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site or feature and there are no reasonable alternative means of meeting the development need. There is no doubt that the appeal site falls within a SINC identified in the adopted local plan.

22. The Council accepted your evidence as to the low nature conservation interest of those parts of the site proposed for development. The drawing of boundaries for protecting locally sensitive areas is bound to result in the enclosure of areas of differing quality, but that is not in my view a sufficient reason for permitting development of the lower quality areas.

23. You referred to correspondence from SNH dated 29 June 2004, reiterated to you in December 2006, as indicating support for your proposal, and representing a shift in their stance compared to earlier responses. In that letter SNH indicated that their objection was maintained unless a number of conditions were attached to any planning permission. They stated that the purpose of these conditions was to protect and safeguard the long term future of the remaining area of South Polmont SINC. They did not suggest in that letter that the boundary of the SINC was incorrectly drawn, or should be changed or the designation rescinded in respect of this part of the site. My reading of the letter suggests to me that they were reacting to a particular development proposal, and attempting to ensure that any harm to the SINC was minimised and mitigated.

24. SNH's position was also predicated on the ability of the Council to ensure that development at this location did not set a precedent for future SINC sites throughout Falkirk. It is undoubtedly the case that no formal precedent would be set by permitting this development, since each future proposal would have to be treated on its merits in the light of prevailing policy and material considerations. However it is easy to see how similar arguments might be created for the release of other areas, on the basis that a development of a small area of land of poorer ecological quality could be exchanged for the improvement of other, potentially higher quality areas. While I note that your commitment would protect the remaining land within your ownership, other land lies within the SINC and of course there are SINC's elsewhere in Falkirk. There is thus a risk of the weakening of the protection for areas designated in the adopted local plan. You said in evidence that your own

survey did not reveal any SINC's of similar features, but it seems to me that in view of the implications for wider policy the question of whether SINC boundaries have been appropriately and consistently drawn throughout the plan area is a matter most appropriately addressed in the context of a local plan, as is any re-drawing of the boundary which might be thought to be necessary in the light of new ecological information.

25. The advantages for the remainder of the land owned by the appellant of additional landscaping and a better maintenance regime, would be outweighed by the disadvantage of having built and permanent development on part of a site which the local plan says should be protected. In any event, the remainder of the SINC outside your client's ownership would remain in its present state. I have concluded that the loss of the appeal site from the SINC as a whole would in itself amount to an adverse impact on the SINC. There are accepted to be no reasons of housing need to justify development of this site.

26. In addition to conflict with policy POL 8.5 there would be conflict with POL 8.6. The local plan included this site within an area where a presumption against development should be exercised in order to protect the skyline. A presumption is a strong expression of policy, and though I recognise that it is inevitably a blunt instrument for controlling landscape impacts, the appeal proposal would conflict with that presumption, and thus with the local plan. I accept that any further intrusion into the skyline beyond that which has already taken place as a result of surrounding development might be minimised by strict controls over the heights of dwellings and their floor levels, and by landscaping measures, and this was borne out by my site inspection.

27. When the objections to the current local plan were considered at an inquiry, in response to an objection which proposed a similar development to that now before me, the reporter recommended that this site should be considered for inclusion as a combined housing and landscaped open space allocation in a review of the plan if a need for additional housing was identified. I note that the emerging local plan has not identified such a need in relation to this site, and in that plan it is intended to provide a similar level of protection for the appeal site, though without specific skyline protection. It will be for a local plan inquiry to examine whether that remains an appropriate stance if relevant objections have been made.

28. I have concluded that in the present circumstances while the development of this site would realise a number of benefits, these do not outweigh the conflict with the adopted development plan. I have taken account of all the other matters raised, including the favourable views of the police, but find none that outweigh the considerations on which my decision is based. In exercise of the powers delegated to me I therefore dismiss your appeal and refuse to grant outline planning permission.

29. This decision is final, subject to the right of any aggrieved person to apply to the Court of Session within 6 weeks of the date of this letter, as conferred by sections 237 and 239 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997; on any such application the Court may quash the decision if satisfied that it is not within the powers of the Act or that the applicant's interests have been substantially prejudiced by a failure to comply with any requirement of the Act or of the Tribunals and Inquiries Act 1992 or of any orders, regulations or rules made under these Acts.

30. A copy of this letter has been sent to Falkirk Council and to Mr Simpson.

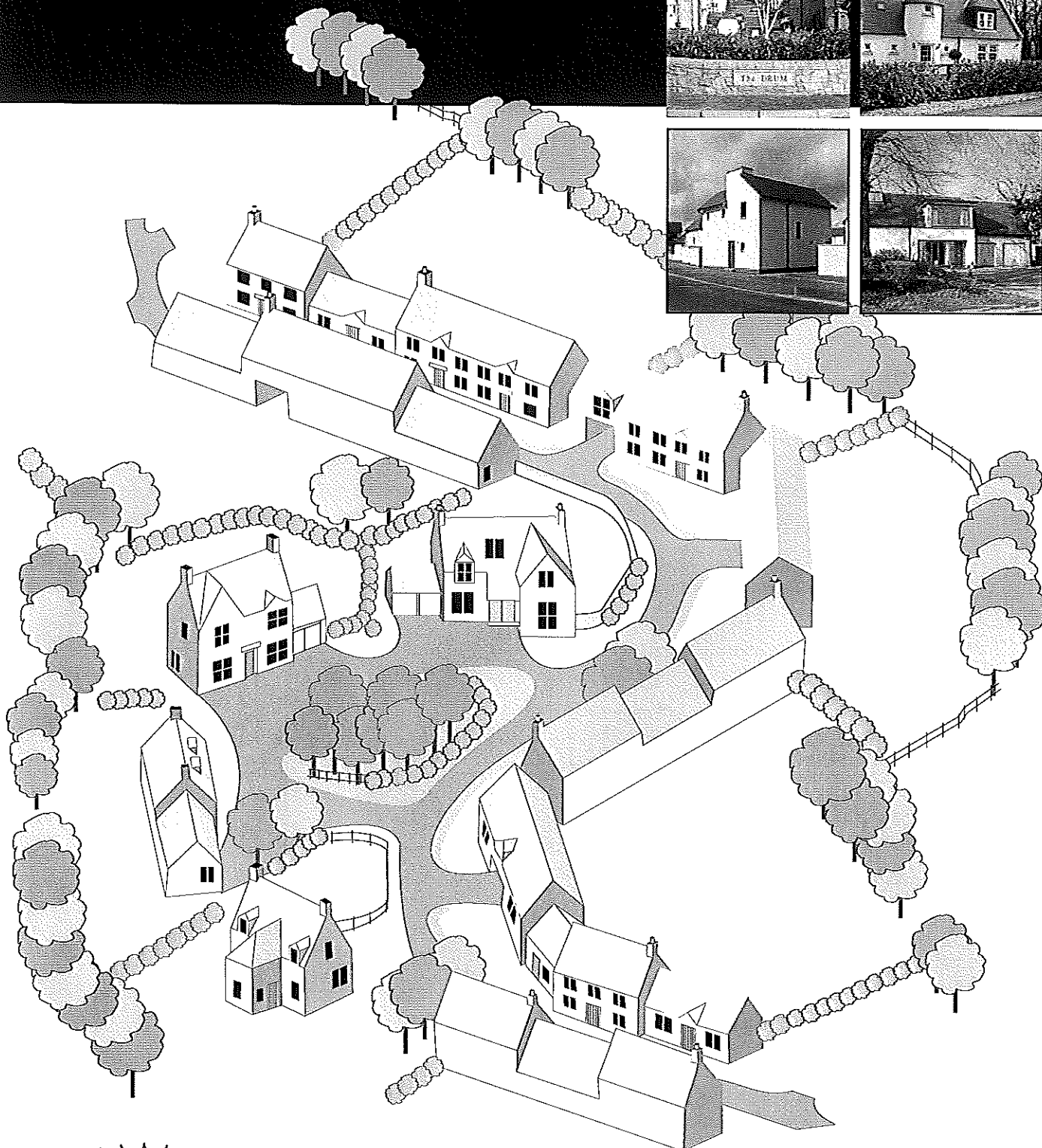
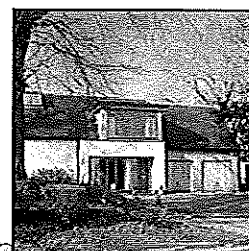
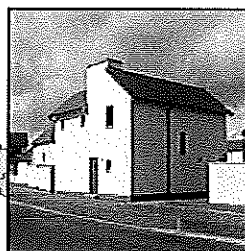
Yours faithfully

This is the version issued to parties on 14 June 2007

M J CULSHAW
Deputy Chief Reporter

Housing Layout and Design

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Foreword



A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "David Alexander". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and last name "Alexander" clearly legible.

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.

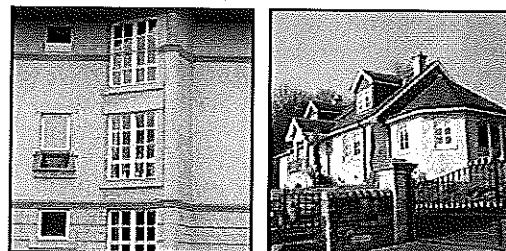
February 2007

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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.

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. Fussiness 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

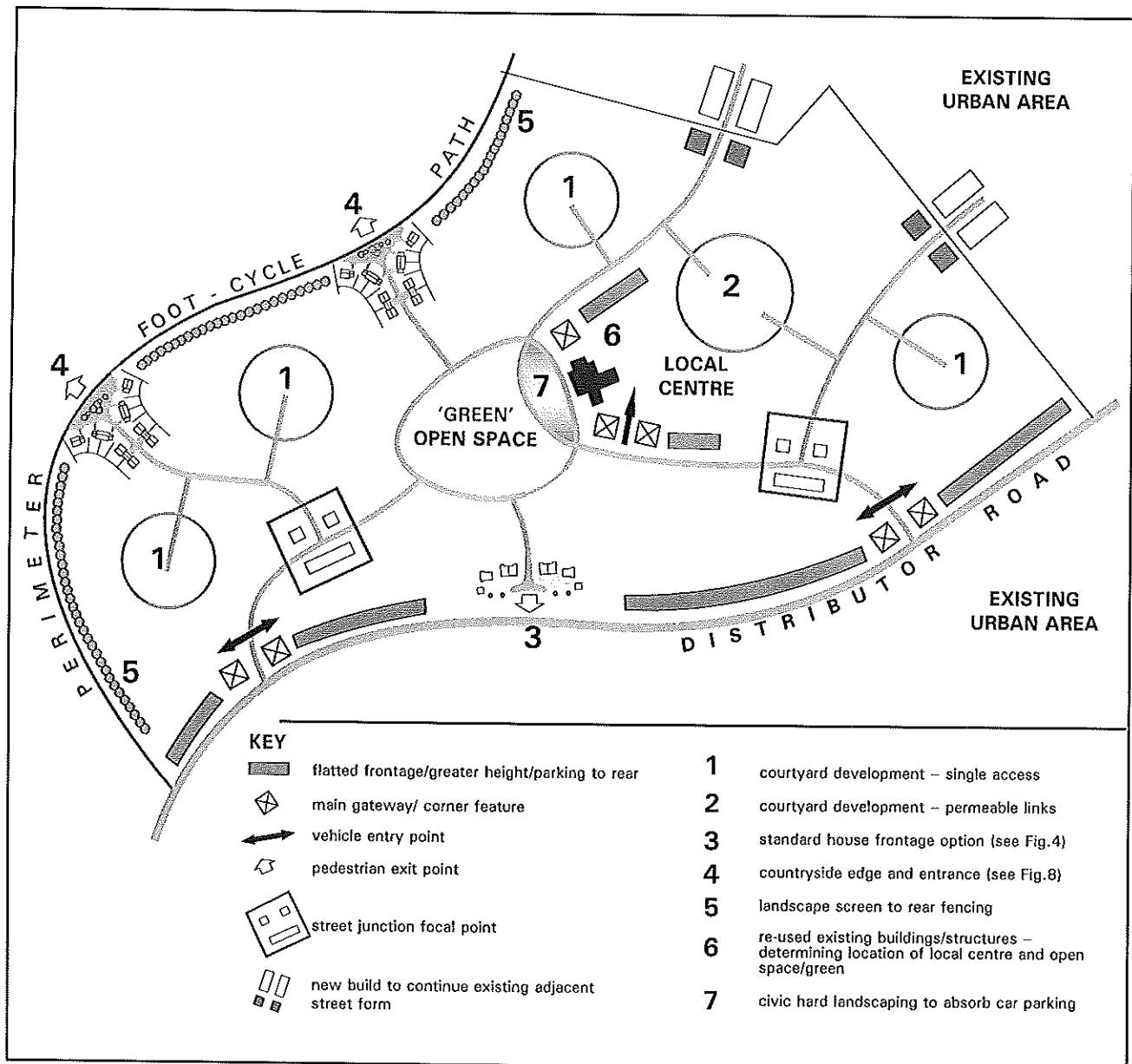


Figure 1 : CONTEXT AND PLANNING - TOWN EXTENSION SITE

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.

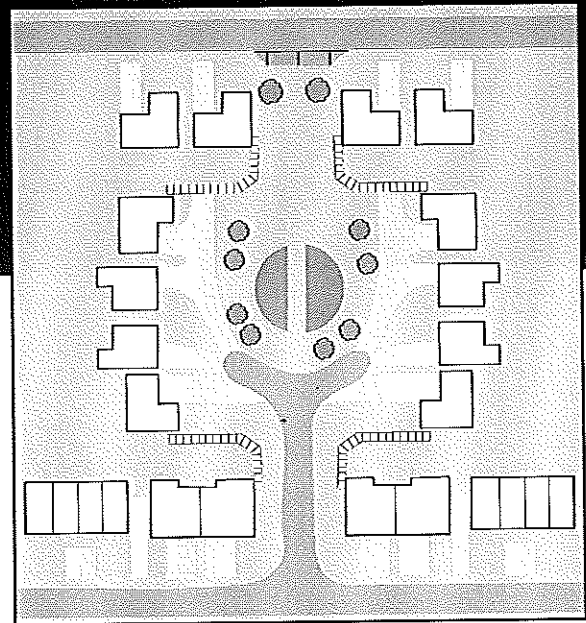


Figure 2 : STREET AND COURTYARD SPACE

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

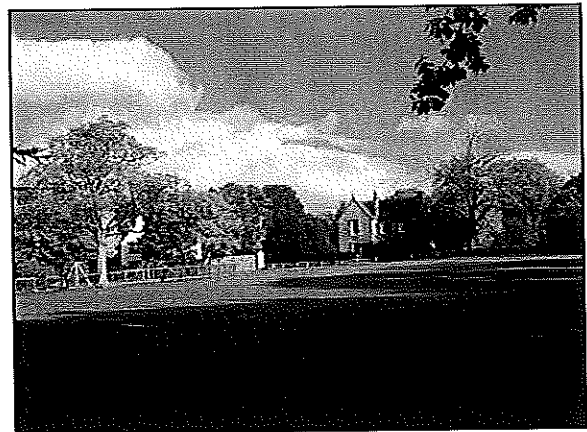


Figure 3 HOUSING AROUND PICTURESQUE OPEN SPACE

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

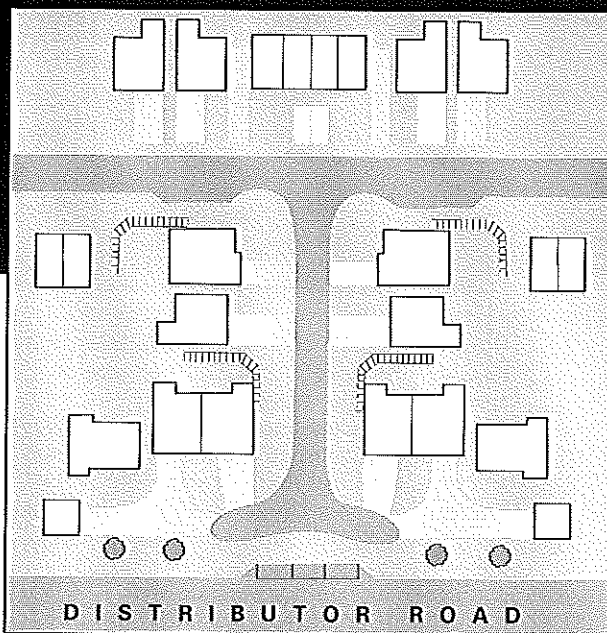


Figure 4 : DISTRIBUTOR ROAD FRONTAGE OPTION

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:

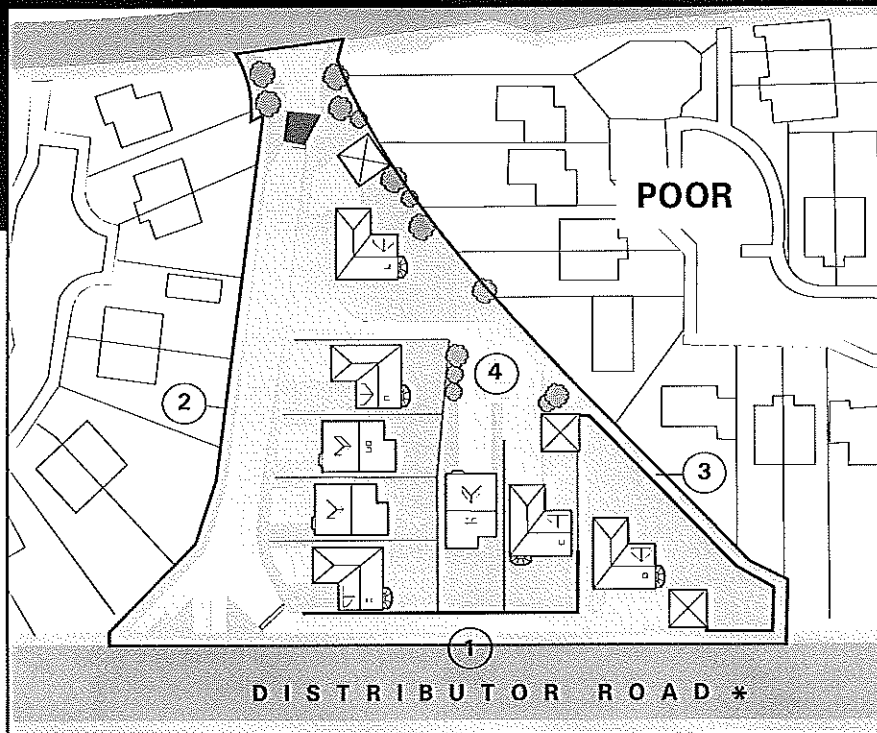
- a parallel secondary road giving direct vehicle access to the housing frontage.
- parallel driveways served off both sides of a cul-de-sac turning head connecting back to the internal loop road, in the normal way capable of providing a 6-house frontage, but less visually intrusive and wasteful of space 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.

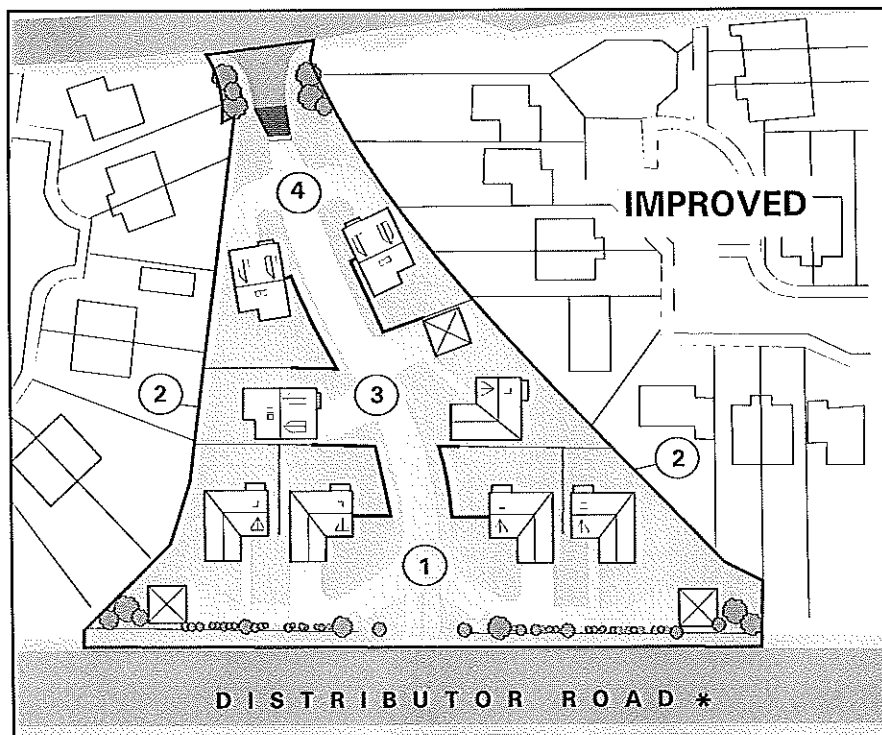
This convention should be applied to a flatted frontage in any location except where the urban design context requires the building itself to be on the heel of the pavement.

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

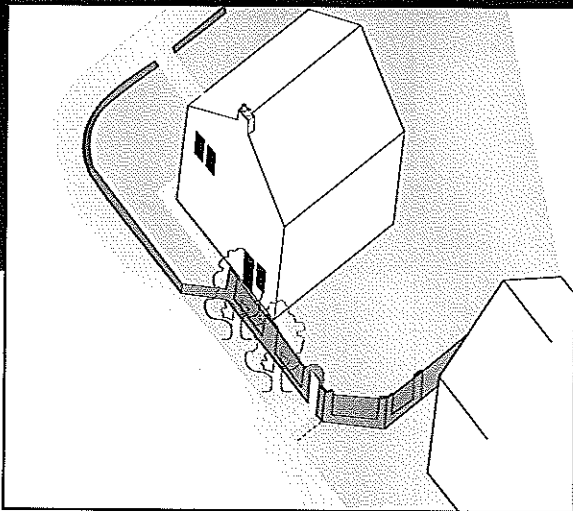


Figure 7 : CORNER GABLE TREATMENT

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.

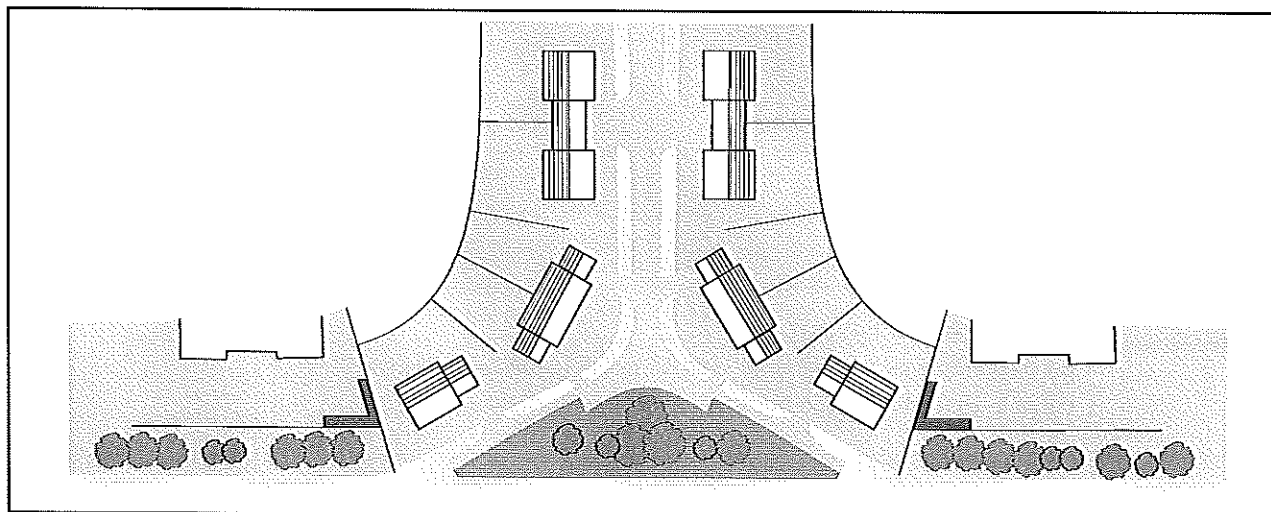


Figure 8 : COUNTRYSIDE EDGE/ENTRANCE

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



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.

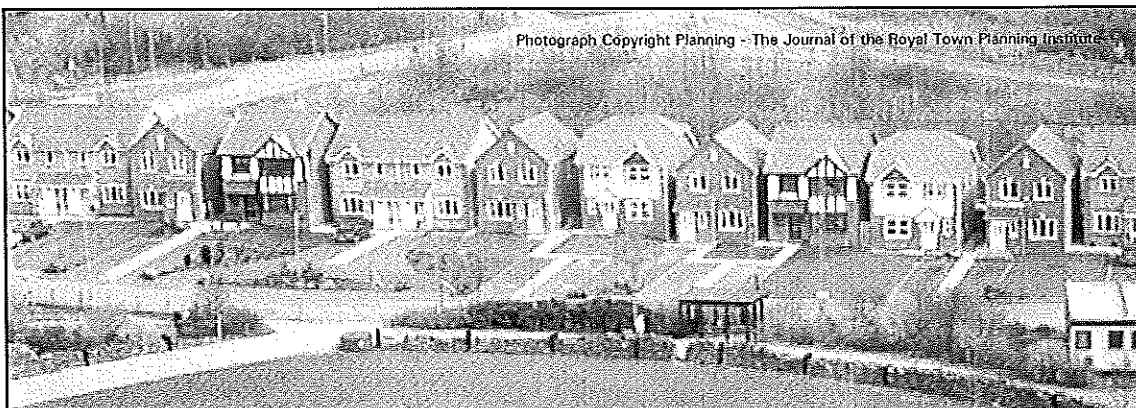


Figure 9 : UNSATISFACTORY SUBURBAN HOUSE LAYOUT

Detachment and distinctiveness from one another but no "place"

Estate Layout

Models for House Grouping

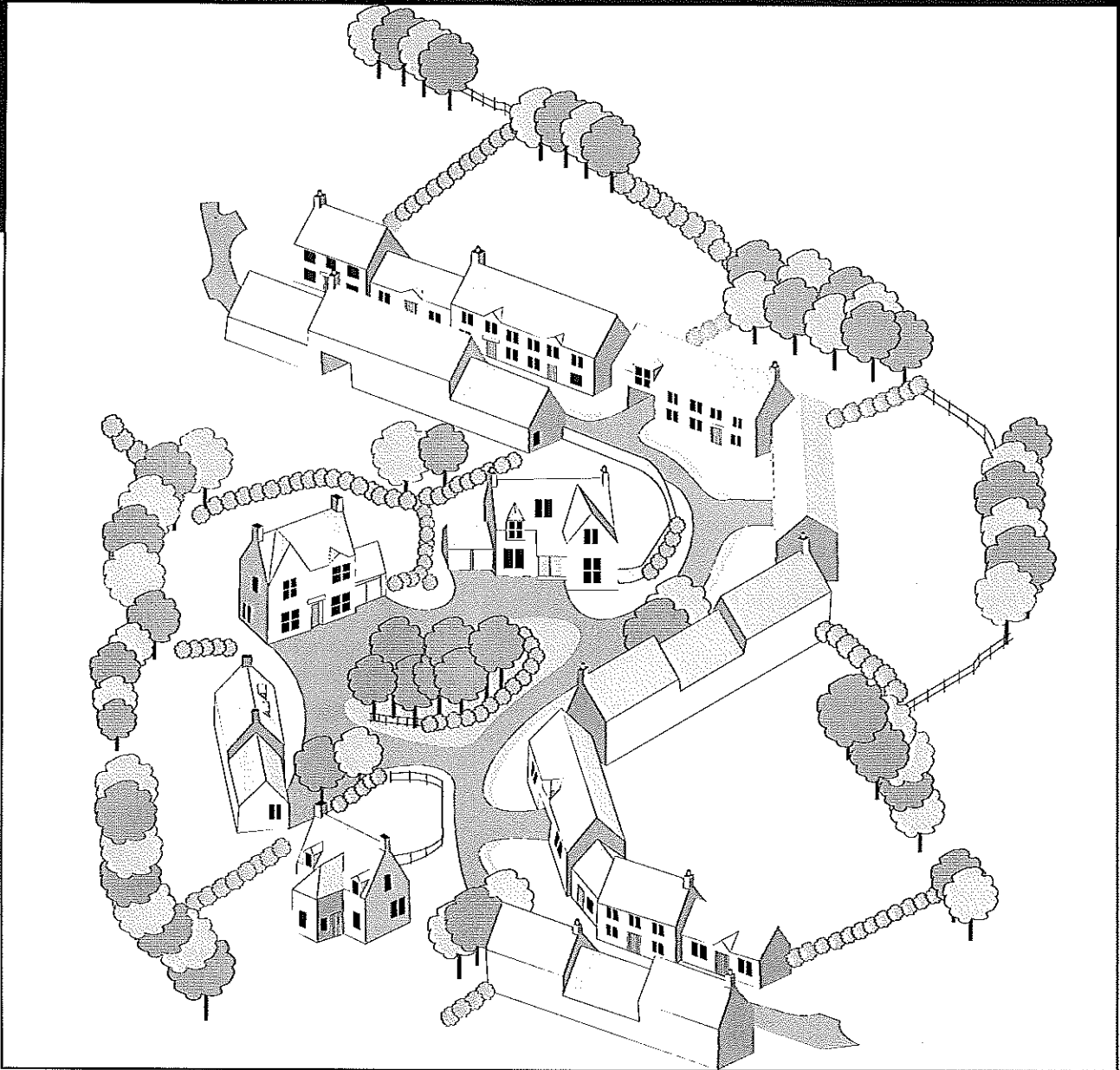


Figure 10 "URBAN" & "RURAL" HOUSE MODELS

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

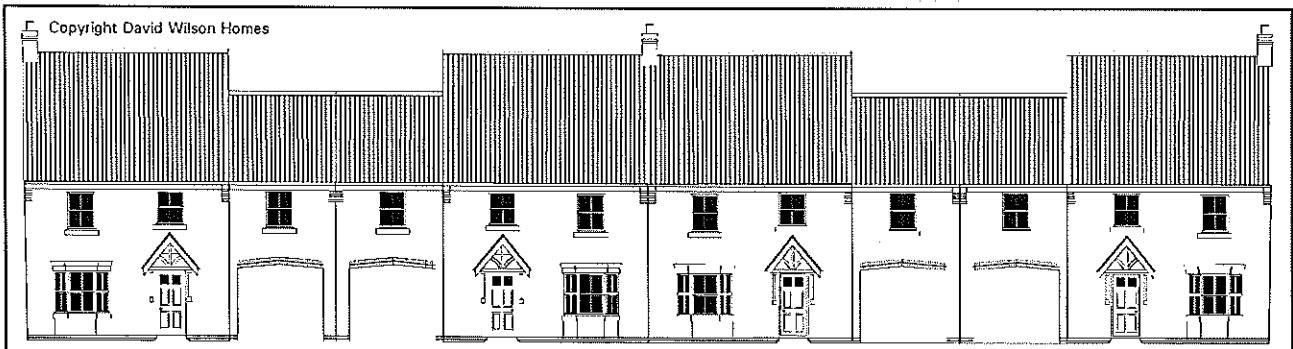


Figure 11 "URBAN" MODEL : TERRACE HOUSING

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

Estate Layout

Models for House Grouping



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

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.

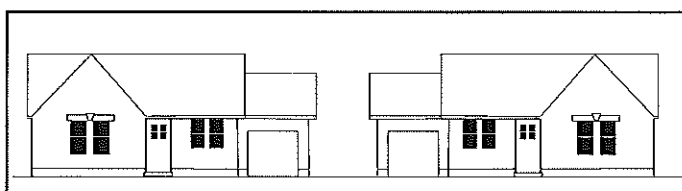


Figure 13 "URBAN" MODEL : DETACHED HOUSING
Twinning and visual linkage can give appearance of terrace.

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.



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.

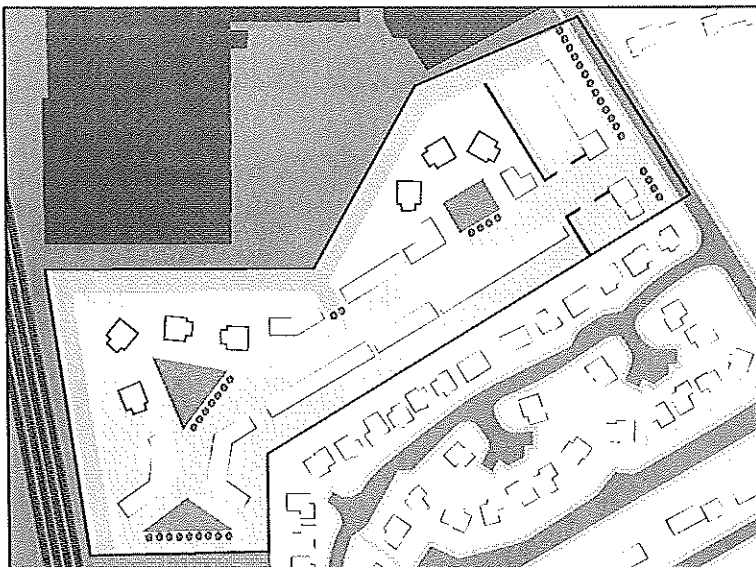


Figure 15 : DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSE GROUPING MODELS

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

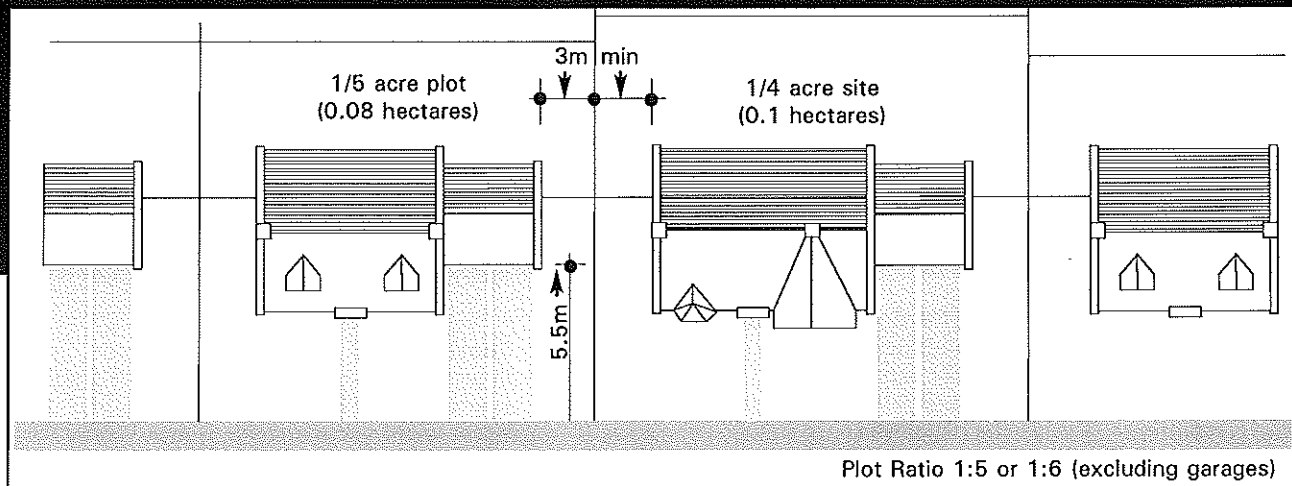


Figure 16: "RURAL" MODEL ARCADIAN / INDIVIDUAL PLOTS

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.

Estate Layout

Street Design and Roads Standards

2.6 Street Design and Road Standards

Road Hierarchy and Parking Standards

All roads, footpaths and car parking areas intended for adoption by Falkirk Council must conform to "Design Guidelines and Construction Standards for Roads in the Falkirk Area". This sets out standards for the road hierarchy of distributor road (individual direct vehicle access prohibited), general access road, minor access road and cul-de-sac (a shared surface permitted for max 20 units). Parking is required at the rate of one space for a house less than 3 bedrooms and 2 spaces for larger houses. Visitor parking is at the rate of 1 per 4 houses.

Street Widths

In addition to achieving more intimate spaces (see para. 2.3. Built Edge), narrowing the street width will encourage slower vehicle movements. This is more feasible where (i) car parking is to the rear, accessed to the side of the house or through a pend allowing the house frontage to move forward, (ii) there remains an acceptable distance between windows on either side of the street or (iii) habitable rooms are not directly opposite one another.

PEND ACCESS: Where this serves an approved parking provision to the rear, missives must ensure that the entrance remains open and is not enclosed as a garage.

WINDOW TO WINDOW DISTANCES: The general standard applied is that "habitable" rooms (living rooms, bedrooms) must be 18m. apart if directly opposite. Thus, in order to achieve the appropriately narrowed street, such openings must not be directly opposite but may be angled from each other.

Turning Heads/Visitor Spaces

Road geometry should fit tidily with the housing layout and avoid a turning head leg or end-on visitor parking bay intruding into a front garden. The "Y" turning head and lay-by parking are preferred.

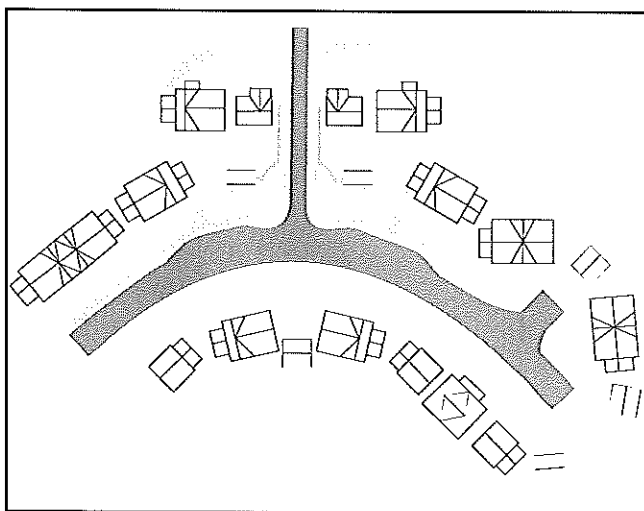


Figure 17 HOUSING LAYOUT & ROAD COMPOSITION

Geometrical harmony and symmetry are the important design tools.

Estate Layout

Street Design and Roads Standards

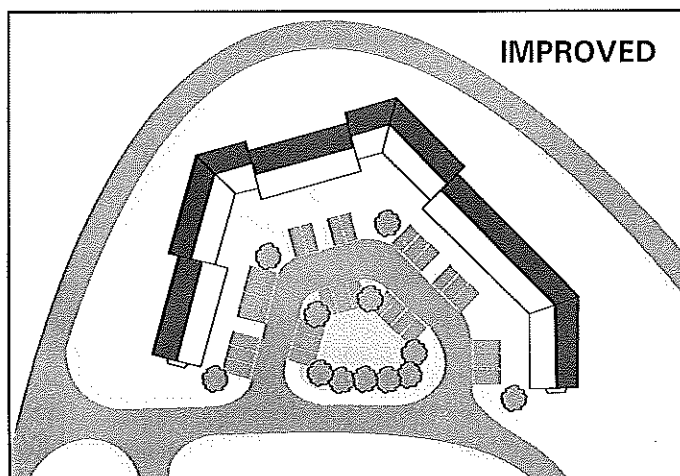
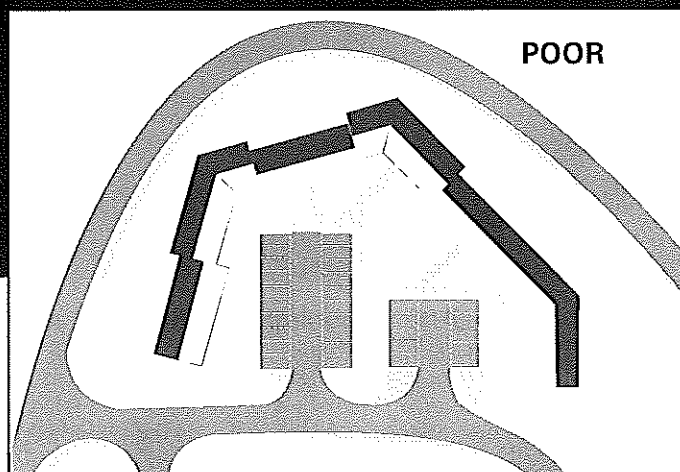


Figure 18 GROUPED PARKING SPACES (e.g. for flats)
Civic place not parking lot.

Grouped Parking Spaces

These should take the form of a traditional courtyard or square, not a parking lot, and should look attractive when empty and be easily supervised from the adjacent housing, street or courtyard.

Refuse Collection

Housing developers should be aware of the current 3-bin collection system and allow flexibility of design for future adaptations of the system.

SUDS Ponds

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) require ponds whose purpose is to retain rainwater from a developed and hard surfaced area so that it can be dispersed into the drainage system at a rate no greater than would be required if the land had remained a greenfield. Para 2.1 **Site Characteristics and Constraints** notes that these and any other water courses and features should be designed integrally with the open space framework within any housing development. This should determine the location of any SUDS pond to achieve its potential as public amenity and focal point, i.e. at the front of houses for best surveillance, safety and maintenance. In general they should be positioned adjacent to, but not be part of, any water course on the site.



Figure 19 HOUSING AS PART OF LOCAL CENTRE

Contemporary, traditional patterns, 24 hour life.

Estate Layout

Other Planning Considerations

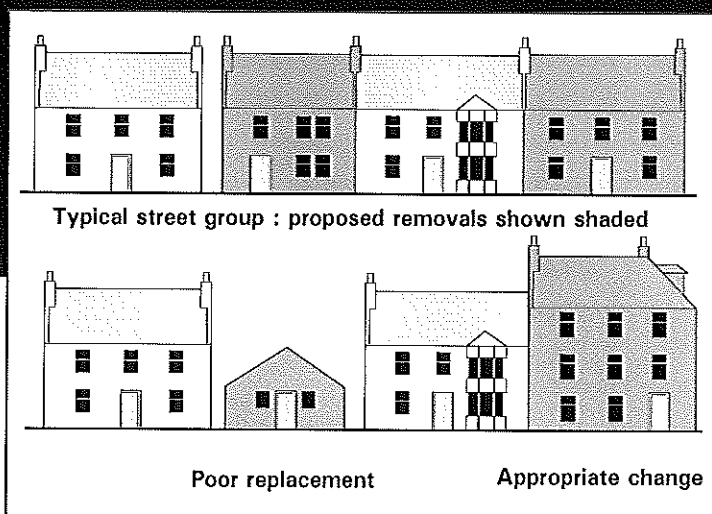


Figure 20 INFILL DEVELOPMENT
Replacing buildings in street

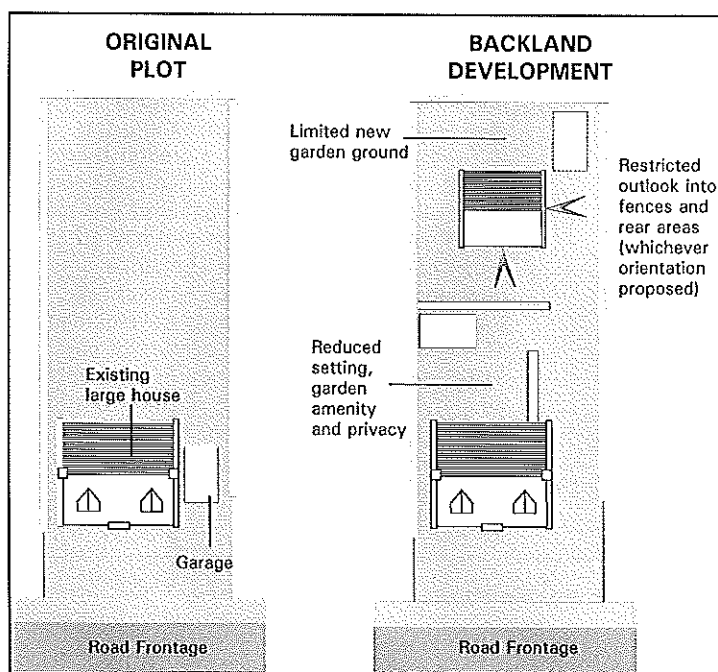


Figure 21 BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT LIMITATIONS
NB. Development may be given consideration where designed in mews or minor outbuilding form with

2.7 Other Planning Considerations

Infill Development

Where there is a gap site, whether in an urban terrace or within a looser group of buildings, it is important to achieve a harmonious "fit" of new with existing. This should pay attention to the adjacent building line, height, scale, window and other door arrangements, proportions and detailed decoration and materials.

Tandem and Backland Development

Tandem development is a form of infill development where one or more houses are proposed within a large garden to the side of a house fronting a road. Backland development is, similarly, located within a large garden but to the rear, with no road frontage.

There will be a general presumption against both of these types of development within large gardens where the concerns are as follows:

- The visual setting and continued dominance of the original house.
- The amenity and size of the resulting private gardens (min. 9 m. length must remain)
- The front outlook from the resulting houses (a particular problem for backland development where the plot may be entirely enclosed with fencing)

The following development forms may be given some consideration:

- Tandem: where the existing garden creates an inappropriate gap which the new development will sympathetically fill
- Backland: a small scale mews type development to the rear with a shared vehicle entrance from the street (preferred to one or more houses plots with separate accesses)

NB Separate plot development in a front garden to an existing house will generally be presumed against.

Estate Layout

Other Planning Considerations



Sloping Ground

Buildings should integrate with the slope and major underbuilding which creates extensive areas of blank walls will not be acceptable. Housing may be placed parallel with the contours but care should be taken to avoid too regimented an effect from a distance. Consideration should also be given to split-level houses. If the sloped arrangement reveals gable ends, window openings should be added where no conflict of privacy exists.

Rear gardens designed to be as level as is possible on a sloping site may result in steeper slopes linking one level area to the next. In pure landscaping terms it may seem more attractive to create a continuous planted strip across the sloping area, fenced off from the private gardens. However such an arrangement will require to resolve potential problems relating to public maintenance, fly-tipping (adjoining properties included) and social nuisance. It may therefore be preferable to include these steeper slopes as extensions to the private gardens rather than as public or community land. A developer may consider stabilising and planting these slopes even if they are intended to be in private ownership.

Roofscape is an important consideration on a steeply sloping site.

Overshadowing

In order to minimise the possibility of a shadow being cast across the window of an adjacent house or garden, any extension should not project from the rear building line beyond either:

- a line drawn at a 45° angle from the midpoint of the nearest ground floor window of the adjoining house, on the rear building line or
- a maximum of 3.5 metres from the rear building line of the house.

Open Space Standards

The consultation draft **Scottish Planning Policy 11: Physical Activity and Open Space** sets out minimum standards for new residential developments. Essentially, for developments with over 10 units, public open space should be provided as follows (in addition to any private garden ground):

60m² total open space per household to include:

40m² divided between parks, sports areas, allotments, green corridors, semi-natural space and civic space, as set out in the development plan.

20m² of informal play/ recreation space and equipped play areas.

The purpose designed open space activity areas or facilities referred to in para 2.2 **Public Space Framework** will generally be required in larger new housing areas. However some such facilities, e.g. sports pitches, athletics tracks or even a fully equipped play facility, have certain critical dimensions which may not be appropriate for certain smaller housing developments of over 10 units. In this case a developer may be required to contribute to their provision off-site by way of a planning agreement.

Estate Layout

Security for Properties and Public Places

2.8 Security for Properties and Public Places

The Guidance Note seeks to apply the principles of "Safe by Design". Whilst acknowledging the need for individual houses to be adequately secured, the greater concern is to ensure that public streets and spaces are as safe as can be. This is to be achieved as follows:

- clearly defining and differentiating public, semi-public and private space by the design of appropriate boundaries and entrances.
- maximising opportunities for surveillance from the houses.
- arranging the framework of public routes and spaces to encourage greater use by the general public thus reducing opportunities for nuisance activities.

The following is a compilation of the specific measures identified in the Guidance Note which should foster the desired "defensible" environment:

- public areas fronted by buildings (with doors and windows) rather than by high screen fences
- the prohibition of footpath linkages to the rear of houses which can be threatening to legitimate users, conceal criminal activity and provide unsupervised escape routes
- the creation of "permeable" through routes for pedestrian and vehicular traffic to encourage greater usage and thereby better protect the housing environment
- the provision, off the main routes, of smaller culs-de-sac/courtyards, with "gateway" entrances which will maximise potential communal surveillance opportunities and discourage trespass.
- a structure of focal point buildings which makes the area more "legible" (or easily comprehended), enhances civic status, signals a robust, defensible environment and securely absorbs non-housing neighbourhood uses, e.g. shops.



2.9 Sustainable Design

Sustainability is a broad concept which has to do with the good stewardship of the earth's physical and natural resources to ensure the continued health of its plant and animal life.

PAN 44 advises, that ".... early attention should be paid to the orientation, siting, spacing and shape of individual buildings and group of buildings to exploit the available sun, arrange the greater protection from wind and to create an energy efficient envelope". SPP 3 expects developers to bring forward proposals which ".... create a sheltered micro climate capable of making outdoor environments more habitable".

This Guidance Note can be seen to support the principles of sustainability in the following respects:

- Conservation: Retention of natural and man-made features on any site avoids further depletion of earth resources and reduces energy consumption in the production or erection of new structures and features.
- Public space framework: a well organised pattern of spaces and streets should ensure the right balance of green areas as well as creating meaningful, direct, linkages and encouraging a people and cycle friendly environment. An appropriately stimulating built environment will also assist with aspects of human psychology e.g. the restful qualities of the intimate enclosed space or, conversely, the long panoramic vista. This may assist in reducing some health costs.
- Grouping Patterns: denser and more carefully assembled house groupings are more energy efficient (although the negative effects of overshadowing from taller and conjoined buildings should be avoided).

In addition, the sustainable benefits of natural daylight and thermal insulation can be improved by appropriate orientation of the housing in association with the accompanying protective landscaping i.e.:

- Main living areas within a house, conservatories and rear gardens should be orientated to face south or south-west for daylight and solar energy benefits. Private, non habitable rooms (kitchens, bathrooms, stairs and utility rooms) and garages should therefore face north. However since rear gardens are generally considered less acceptable on road edges, innovative solutions may be required to compensate e.g. through and through living areas.
- Main entry points should, where possible, be located away from cold north winds and to a lesser extent, from prevailing southerly winds. However preference for main doors on the street frontage will be the critical factor in determining location for reasons of natural surveillance and legibility.
- Supplementary protection of the building envelopes from adverse climatic conditions and a more comfortable environment outside can be achieved by including planting and shelter belts, earth mounding and walls. Deciduous trees are better located to the south of the housing units to give summer shading and winter sunlight with evergreens to the north to give shelter from any occasional north winds.

The specific design and construction of houses also requires to be sustainable, e.g. achieving a balance between window openings and insulation, solar panels etc. to maximise energy efficiency. This is largely beyond the scope of this Guidance Note. (refer paras 1.1 and 1.5)

Architectural Form and Aesthetics

Basic Approaches and Design Advice

3.1 Basic Approach

Advice has already been provided on appropriate house grouping and street patterns to enclose and enhance a framework of public space. This is now complimented by guidance on housing shape and elevational treatment.

Most contemporary house designers, whether serving the volume builder or kit-manufacturer, still aspire to a classical or vernacular tradition of which the pitched roof, rectilinear planned house forms the basic element in any layout. However designs are often poor copies of the traditional house without proper understanding of the principles informing its design. The guidance aims to address this concern, especially to assist the less well qualified designer. More "modern" flat roofed or abstractly designed buildings will be assessed on their own merits.

3.2 Design Advice

Guidance based on the traditional house form, elevation and finishes is as follows:

- The main roof ridge should be parallel to the adjacent roadway.
- Roof pitches should create symmetrical gables and be no less than 45° on a street frontage
- The arrangement of openings should ensure that the gable geometry is reinforced rather than deformed i.e.
 - Main frontage gable absorbing necessarily larger windows in symmetrical arrangement around central axis.
 - Lesser side gable with fewer, smaller windows allowing a more informal, asymmetric arrangement. Wholly blank gables fronting a public street will generally not be permitted e.g. on a corner.
- Adjacent twinned gables will allow for a more asymmetrical pattern of openings.
- Hipped roofs are generally less favoured and never acceptable when mixed randomly with straight gables at close quarters. They may be given more sympathetic consideration in a more formal layout, on the same building line, or widely enough spaced so that the visual relationship with the neighbouring property is immaterial. They are also acceptable as a single storey extension to a straight gabled house and to the rear.

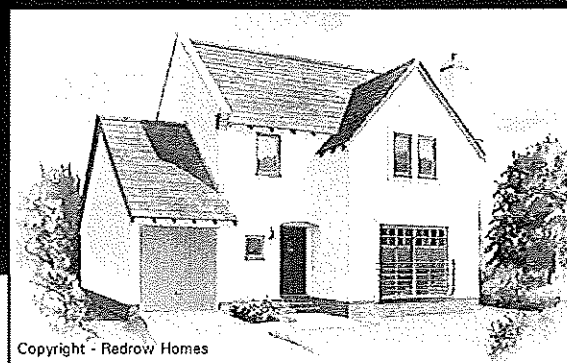


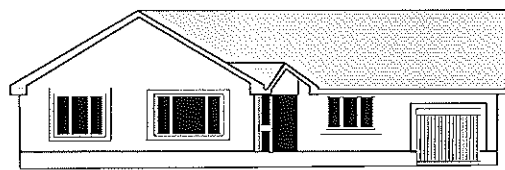
Figure 22 VOLUME BUILDER HOUSE TYPE

Well considered

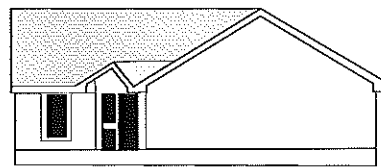
- All openings should have vertical proportions.
- Main entrance doors should create a focal point on the front elevation. Doors on a gable end generally appear less satisfactory but may be acceptable where formally located and in balance with the window arrangement.
- Forward projections i.e. porches, garages etc. will only be permitted where they are integrated into a continuous streetscape, avoiding an abrupt visual effect. Garages are best set to the side of the house, and behind the building line, rather than dominating the front façade of a detached house.
- High screen fences between houses and extending towards the road should terminate behind the building line.
- Dormer windows may project from the wallhead or roof but must be of traditional small scale proportions and mainly glazed.
- Over elaborate combinations of external wall finishes are to be avoided and any prominent gable ends should preferably be in a single material. A horizontal subdivision at first floor level should therefore be avoided. Render, stone (or a modern understated ashlar type block) should dominate, with brick restricted to base courses and for additional decoration. An all-masonry finish is more appropriate in tightly grouped urban housing.
- Window and door styles must demonstrate local authenticity, painted or stained timber being preferred. Fussy or UPVC "period" designs are to be avoided.
- Roofs should be finished in slate or a modern "look alike" equivalent with a shallow leading edge. Eaves and verge detailing should be as close to a simple line as possible. A skew or clipped convention is preferred to deep barge boarding.
- Chimneys or similar vertical roof features will be encouraged (e.g. for ventilation).

Building Form & Elevational Composition

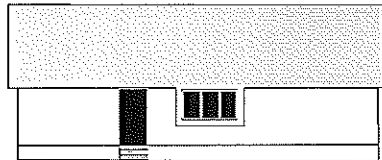
Examples of poor design improved through planning advice



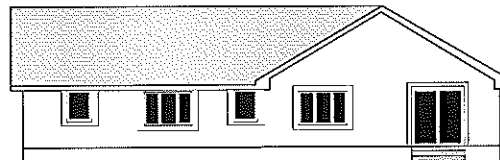
front



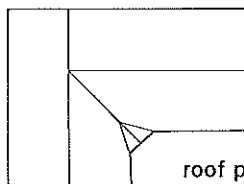
side 1



side 2



back

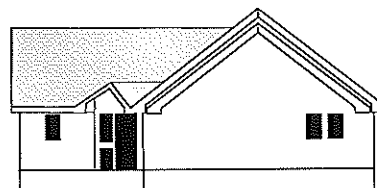


roof plan

POOR



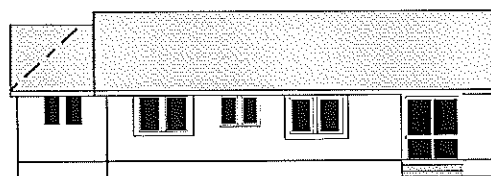
front



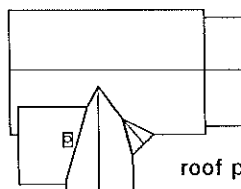
side 1



side 2



back



roof plan

IMPROVED

Figure 23 HOUSE DESIGN MODIFICATION A : BLAND ORIGINAL

Main ridge parallel with frontage and continuous, steeper roof pitch, formal gable contains primary front room, vertical proportion, tripartite elevation and set back garage "extension".