



castlepoint

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Residential Design Guidance

Supplementary Planning Document

Ratified 14th November 2012

Effective from 1st January 2013

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1.0 Preparing the Residential Design Guidance

- 1.1 The Residential Design Guidance (RDG) has been prepared following extensive research and analysis of empirical evidence.
- 1.2 Public consultation was undertaken for a period of 10 weeks from the 22nd June 2012 to 31st August 2012. 3 public workshops and an agents workshop were also undertaken during this period.
- 1.3 The responses received have been analysed and the RDG amended where appropriate.
- 1.4 The outcomes of the public consultation and the revised RDG were presented to the Council's Place and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 24th October 2012. The Committee noted the consultation responses and recommended that the Council's Cabinet adopt the revised Residential Design Guidance as a Supplementary Planning Document, effective from 1st January 2013.
- 1.5 The revised Residential Design Guidance was presented to the Council's Cabinet meeting on 14th November 2012.
- 1.6 The Council ratified the Residential Design Guidance on 14th November 2012 to be effective from 1st January 2013.

2.0 Executive Summary

- 2.1 This guidance has been produced to provide advice on the design of residential development, both in respect of new build development and extensions or alterations to existing residential properties.
- 2.2 It is important to be aware at the outset of what will be required for all forms of residential development so that the design guidance can be incorporated into the development process.
- 2.3 The guidance has been prepared as part of Castle Point's ongoing review and update of its planning policies.
- 2.4 This guidance will be used by the Council to assess proposals by being part of its statutory documents.
- 2.5 This document first looks at national policy guidance on design, then the relevant policies in the Development Plan Documents (DPD), which set out how and when development should take account of this guidance.
- 2.6 It then looks at the individual subject headings under which different design guidance may arise and details the basis of any relevant calculations. It also includes a number of examples and illustrations for additional guidance.
- 2.7 The guidance will give advice concerning:
- Plot Size (RDG1)
 - Space Around Dwellings (RDG2)
 - Building Lines (RDG3)
 - Corner Plots (RDG4)
 - Privacy & Living Conditions (RDG5)
 - Amenity Space (RDG6)
 - Roof Development (RDG7)
 - Detailing (RDG8)
 - Energy & Water Efficiency & Renewable Energy (RDG9)
 - Enclosure & Boundary Treatment (RDG10)
 - Landscaping (RDG11)
 - Parking & Access (RDG12)
 - Refuse & Recycling Storage (RDG13)
 - Design Review (RDG14)
 - Design Codes (RDG15)
 - Liveable Homes (RDG16)

3.0 Introduction

- 3.1 Castle Point forms part of the Thames Gateway South Essex sub-region with the neighbouring boroughs of Basildon, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock, and is one of the East of England key growth areas. It is also part of the wider Thames Gateway Initiative, a Government priority for economic regeneration that is Europe's largest such area.
- 3.2 In dealing with planning applications, Local Planning Authorities consider each one on its merits and reach a decision based on whether the application accords with the relevant DPD, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where applications do not meet these requirements, they may be refused, but in some instances they may be considered acceptable through the use of planning conditions and/or planning obligations.
- 3.3 This guidance has been produced in the context of the existing legislative framework set out in the relevant Acts, Circulars and Government Guidance documents.
- 3.4 This guidance replaces Appendix 12 of the Castle Point Borough Council Adopted Local Plan 1998, and it will form part of the New Castle Point Local Plan as it passes through its consultation processes.
- 3.5 This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Adopted Essex County Council's Urban Place Supplement (UPS) when considering applications for new development for sites within or adjacent to a town centre, and when producing design rationales, particularly for larger schemes.

4.0 Policy Context

National Policy Guidance

Localism Act

- 4.1 The Localism Act received Royal Assent on 15th November 2011. It gives new rights to communities and individuals, making it easier for them to get things done and achieve their ambitions for the place where they live. More freedom is also given to Local Authorities to enable them to do creative and innovative work in order to meet local people's needs.
- 4.2 The Act introduces a new right for communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan. Neighbourhood planning will allow communities, residents, employees and business, to come together through a local parish council or neighbourhood forum and say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should go, and what they should look like, setting a vision for the area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, of which there are three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment. One of the core land-use principles identified in the Framework is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 4.4 The Framework identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development, it is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Planning policies should ensure that development creates safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.
- 4.5 It requires local and neighbourhood plans to develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. These should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.
- 4.6 It states that local planning authorities should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. However design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or details and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

- 4.7 Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 4.8 It further advises that Local Planning Authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design. They should also when appropriate refer major projects for national design review. Early engagement on design produces the greatest benefits. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the recommendations from the design review panel.
- 4.9 The Framework states that greater weight is to be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 4.10 The Framework expects applicants to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably.

By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice

- 4.11 By Design is a guide to promoting higher standards in urban design. It advises that careful assessment of places, well-drafted policies, well-designed proposals, robust decision-making and a collaborative approach are needed throughout the country if better places are to be created.
- 4.12 It states that a clear framework provided by development plans and supplementary guidance, delivered consistently through development control can successfully influence the outcomes of the design process and the places created. 'By Design' sets out seven objectives of urban design, as listed below:
- Character / Identity – A place that has its own character and identity
 - Continuity / Enclosure - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished/demarked
 - Quality of the Public Realm - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
 - Ease of Movement / Permeability - A place that is easy to get to and move through
 - Legibility - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand, with landmarks, gateways and focal points
 - Adaptability / Robustness - A place that can change easily
 - Diversity / Variety - A place with variety and choice

- 4.13 These should be used to inform and evolve the detailed elements of the design of development.
- 4.14 It advises that these objectives demonstrate the fundamental principles that are common to good urban design and provides guidance on how these might be applied.

Better Places to Live by Design

- 4.15 This document focuses on the attributes that underlie well-designed, successful residential environments.
- 4.16 It challenges local authorities and developers to think more imaginatively about design and layout, and highlights that the presence of local authority and highway standards have created the palette of standard house types and layout forms which have been developed to meet the requirements, but has resulted in residential environments that lack any real quality or distinctive sense of place ('anywhere, everywhere' forms of development).
- 4.17 The document states that local authorities should review critically the standards they apply to new development, encourage more efficient use of land, require a better, and more appropriate mix of dwelling size, type and affordability in new development, and ensure that planning applications demonstrate how they have taken into account the need for good urban design. It also makes it clear that poor design will be rejected.
- 4.18 The document expands on the seven urban design objectives highlighted in 'By Design', by identifying the aspects of the built form in more detail, as set out below. These should be used to inform and evolve the detailed elements of the design of development.
- Layout: Urban Structure
 - Layout: Urban Grain
 - Landscape
 - Density & Mix
 - Scale: Height
 - Scale: Massing
 - Appearance: Details
 - Appearance: Materials

Building for Life 12 (CABE 2012)

- 4.19 'Building for Life' is the industry standard, endorsed by Government, for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. It provides 12 questions setting out the vision of what housing developments should be: attractive, functional and sustainable. The questions are designed to aid local planning authorities in assessing the quality of proposed and completed development; and in the preparation of local design policies. The questions are grouped into three categories, headed 'Integrating into the neighbourhood', 'Creating a place', and 'Streets & Home'. The overall assessment is scored out of 12 and is based on a 'traffic light' system (red, amber, green).

Manual for Streets

- 4.20 This document advises on the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new residential streets, as well as existing residential streets subject to re-design, and echoes much of the design guidance described above.
- 4.21 It advises that streets should not be designed just to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles. It is important that designers place a high priority on meeting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, so that growth in these modes of travel is encouraged. It refocuses on the function of residential streets, giving clear guidance on how to achieve well-designed streets and spaces that serve the community in a range of ways. It considers that streets should have a sense of local distinctiveness and sensitivity in design.

Development Plans

Essex County Council

- 4.22 Essex County Council has published the Essex Design Guide most recently in 2005 and the Essex Urban Place Supplement in 2007. These documents set out Supplementary Planning Guidance to achieving the aims of requiring all new development to be well designed and compatible with its surroundings.
- 4.23 They cover detailed elements of design such as establishing distinct character throughout developments, but at the same time creating variety and diversity, through changes in density, layout, form, detailing, and materials. With the introduction of the Urban Place Supplement the evaluation of larger development sites is given more consideration. Furthermore it advocates the use of context appraisals to inform the design of the development.

The Essex Design Initiative

- 4.24 The Essex Design Initiative (EDI) is part of Essex County Council's Place Services, which promotes excellence in design for new development, and supports place-making across Essex. The team provides design services, planning and design guidance, and Design Review.
- 4.25 The Essex Design Review Panel supports the delivery of high quality development that meets the needs of existing and future communities in Essex. The Panelists are drawn from a range of built environment professions and provide an independent view on development schemes across Essex and how they may be improved.

Secured By Design

- 4.26 Secured By Design is a Police Initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment.

Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan

- 4.27 The Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan was adopted in November 1998.
- 4.28 Policy EC2 of the Local Plan requires a high standard of design in relation to new buildings, and extensions and alterations to existing buildings. Regard should be had to a number of criteria for all development, which shall be appropriate to its setting and which should not harm the character of its surroundings. Regard should also be taken of the appearance and treatment of spaces around buildings, and the need to ensure all modes of movement are safe and convenient.
- 4.29 Policy H17 of the Local Plan sets out that in assessing the design aspects of proposals for housing development, the Local Planning Authority will have regard to its adopted design guidelines in Appendices 4 (car parking standards) and 12 (design and layout guidelines for housing).
- 4.30 Appendix 12 sets out in prescriptive detail the space standards for residential development, providing dimensional criteria for a number of aspects of development including amenity, privacy, projections, and space around buildings.
- 4.31 The Council's existing residential space standards as set out in Appendix 12 were adopted in 1998, and were developed to ensure that the new development reflected and integrated with the existing character of the Borough. As a result a similar form of development has developed across the Borough, which is fairly low density and of similar design.
- 4.32 Development has historically been small scale primarily, limited to infill within the existing built up area. Some larger scale forms of development have taken place since the adoption of the current space standards. These have been required to apply the existing standards, creating the same forms of development found in the Borough, and as a result have not taken the opportunities to provide exceptional or diverse forms of development, or add distinctive character within the Borough.
- 4.33 The current residential design standards are very prescriptive and do not now reflect the current national guidance and best practice on such matters. In seeking compliance with the Council's standards, some aspects of best practice are difficult to achieve.

5.0 Detailed Guidance

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The Residential Design Guidance (RDG) aims to produce a higher standard of residential development throughout the Borough. In order for residential development to achieve this, it needs to be informed by its surroundings, a sound basis for such consideration are the 7 objectives of Urban Design set out in By Design, and the 8 aspects of development form set out in Better Places to Live.
- 5.1.2 The RDG does not set prescriptive standards, but instead seeks to introduce a more flexible and proportionate approach to design, which allows development to be sensitive to its surroundings, whilst allowing for innovation and creativity.
- 5.1.3 All planning applications for residential development must clearly demonstrate how Government urban design objectives and aspects of development form, including any future amendments, revisions or changes, as well as the relevant policies contained within the RDG, have been considered. This must be clearly set out in Design and Access Statements and/or planning statements and/or a planning rationale, which ever is appropriate, accompanying all planning applications.
- 5.1.4 It is acknowledged that some forms of residential development can be undertaken as Permitted Development, however the Local Authority would encourage consideration be given to the principles of good design and the guidance set out in this document when undertaking such forms of development.

5.2 Definitions

Throughout this guidance:

- 5.2.1 **‘Dwelling’** refers to an individual dwelling or buildings containing residential development, such as flats or specialist residential development such as sheltered accommodation, nursing or care homes, or special needs units.
- 5.2.2 **‘Residential development’** refers to new dwellings, replacement/rebuild dwellings, and extensions or alterations to existing dwellings.
- 5.2.3 **‘New dwelling’** refers to new build of a dwelling on a vacant site, or replacement/rebuild of an existing dwelling on the same site.
- 5.2.4 **‘Large scale development’** refers to development comprises 200 or more dwellings or a site area of 4 hectares or more.

5.3 **Plot Size**

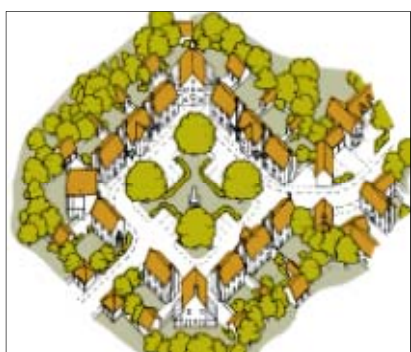
- 5.3.1 Plot sizes provide a useful guide to the character of an area. Consideration of this character allows the successful integration of development into an existing built area. The introduction of flexibility in the design of development, can however introduce variety and interest into a streetscene, and facilitate the provision of a range of dwelling types and sizes. This can be particularly important when developing new large scale residential schemes.
- 5.3.2 For such schemes an indigenous character may not exist, and where there is no clearly discernible character, a new one would need to be created.
- 5.3.3 The layout of development can take a wide variety of forms, including streets, squares, courts, mews, circuses, avenues, boulevards and lanes. The plot sizes and dwellings contained within them reflect the character of the specific layout, with the size of dwellings and the plot size often proportionate to each other.



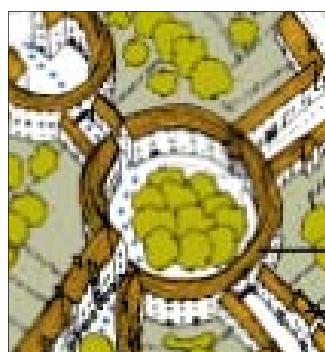
Residential boulevard
Source: Bing Maps



Residential mews & courtyard
Source: Bing Maps



Residential square
Source: Essex Design Guide



Residential circus
Source: Essex Design Guide

- 5.3.4 Traditionally the emphasis has been to consider the width of a plot as the primary concern when developing layouts for new developments. Minimum plot widths do not result in a mixed layout of development or a range of densities, and are frequently unachievable for smaller dwellings such as semi-detached and terraced dwellings.

- 5.3.5 Greater emphasis should be given to the need for development to create a varied character, particularly in respect of new large scale developments. Reflecting the plot widths of a surrounding area is important for development proposed within the existing built environment.



Adherence to minimum plot width and standard layout - detached dwellings

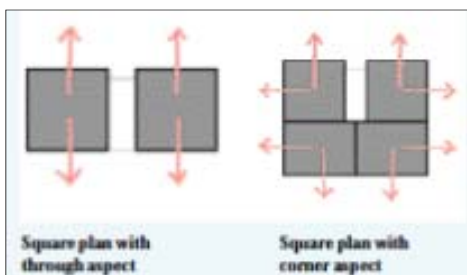
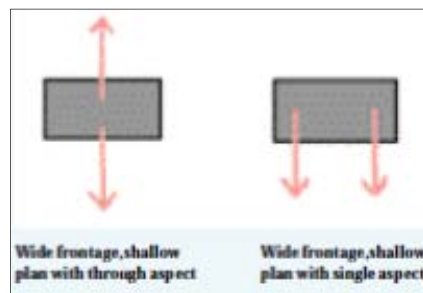
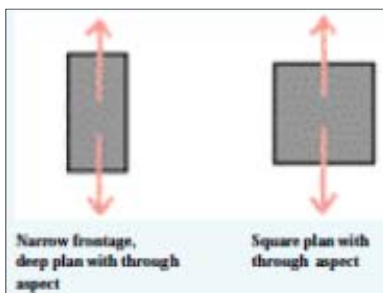
Source: Ordnance Survey (LA077461)



Flexible plot widths and layout - terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings

Ordnance Survey (LA077461)

- 5.3.6 The depth of plots is also an important influence on defining the character of an area, and should not be seen in isolation from plot widths. A variety of depths is more easily achieved within larger development sites, where a new character can be created. Within the existing built up area consideration of the surrounding area is of importance in order to ensure the impact on adjoining neighbours is minimised.
- 5.3.7 As a result of variety in plot sizes, dwelling footprints can be diverse. The consideration of footprints is important in creating an appropriate layout for a development and can facilitate a mix of dwellings which may be narrow, wide, deep or shallow, and have single or multiple aspects.



Source: Better Places to Live By Design

- 5.3.8 Dwelling depths can also have a critical impact on design, requiring consideration of the need for artificial lighting and ventilation. In some instances it would be preferable to orientate a dwelling so that its long side faces onto the street, to create the most suitable living conditions for occupiers, and to present a varied streetscape.
- 5.3.9 It should be noted that the size of plots and the dwellings contained within them are not only guided by the surrounding character, but also by the need to provide suitable levels of amenity space, privacy, and space around the dwelling. Regard is therefore required in relation to the guidance contained within this document in respect of these matters.

RDG1 - Plot Size

Within the existing built up area the plot sizes for all new development should be informed by the prevailing character of plot sizes.

Where there is a distinct character of development which creates an exceptionally strong pattern, development must not result in a disruption to this pattern.

Where there is no clear pattern of plot sizes, the size of the plot should be proportionate to the size of the dwelling occupying it. This should be informed by having regard to the guidance set out in RDG2, RDG3, RDG4, RDG5 and RDG6.

For new large scale developments a different character, with varying plot sizes, can be created, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

5.4 **Space Around Dwellings**

5.4.1 Space around individual dwellings, as well as around buildings containing residential development, such as flats, and sheltered and care accommodation, serves to provide a setting and ensures that they do not dominate their neighbours or create obtrusive or unattractive features in the streetscene. Such space can also provide a buffer from the activities of neighbouring public areas, such as the street or parking or servicing areas, as well as from neighbouring developments.

5.4.2 The extension of dwellings close to or up to boundaries can produce a 'terraced' effect, due to the loss of the visual gap between adjacent dwellings, and/or the creation of a large single mass on a plot can often be visually dominant in the streetscene.



Large single mass

Source: Ordnance Survey (LA077461)

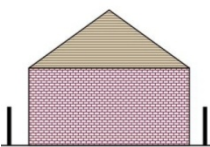


Terraced dwellings

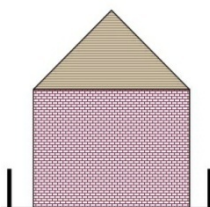


Potential for 'terracing'

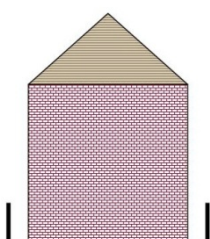
5.4.3 The perception of space can also be diminished as the height of buildings increase. It is therefore important to consider the height of dwellings in combination with the spaces around them. Taller dwellings may require more space than smaller dwellings in order to ensure they are provided with an appropriate setting.'



Single storey dwelling

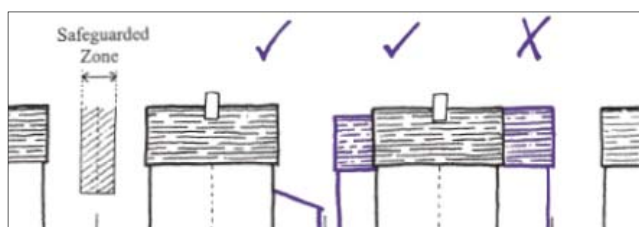


Two storey dwelling

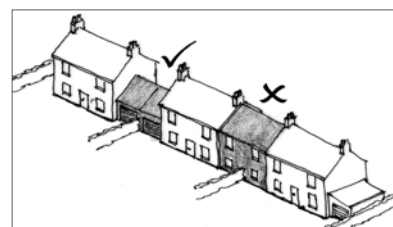


Three storey dwelling

Source: Castle Point Borough Council (CPBC)



Source: Colchester Borough Council



Source: Uttlesford District Council

- 5.4.4 Different areas may have varied densities and layouts of development, which is often reflected in the amount of space provided around dwellings. As a result flexibility is required to ensure all types of development are provided with appropriate space around them, informed by their context. Town centre or Conservation Area locations often have a far tighter urban grain than a suburban area, and those areas outside the urban area are often characterised by much more spacious forms of development.



Town Centre



Conservation Area



Urban area

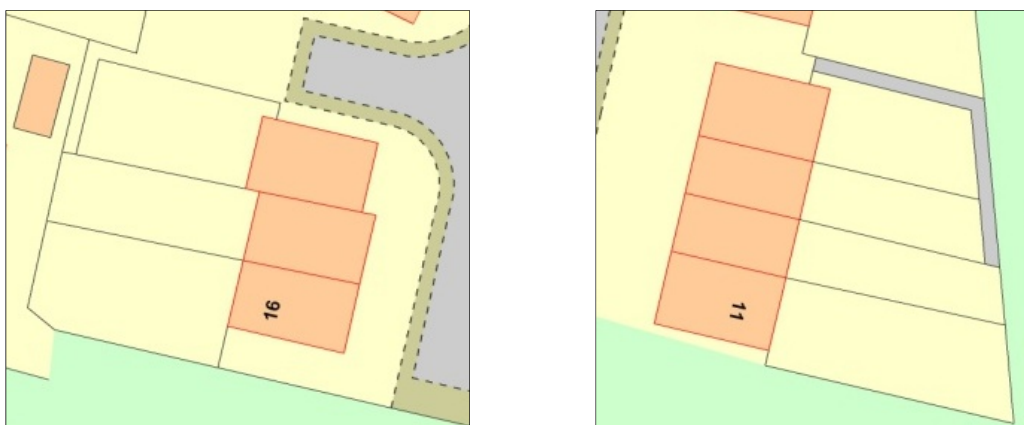
Source: Ordnance Survey (LA077461)



Outside of urban area

- 5.4.5 The limited space found around dwellings in town centres and Conservation Areas would not normally be appropriate outside of the urban area, and the more spacious pattern of development found outside the urban area would be unlikely to be considered appropriately in town centres or Conservation Areas.

- 5.4.6 Larger dwellings, rows of terraced dwellings, or buildings containing residential development often demand a greater degree of space around them, in order to achieve an appropriate setting and to ensure they do not detrimentally dominate the public realm. Smaller properties may require less space. A proportionate scale reflective of the size of the dwelling and the size of the plot may be the best method to achieve this.
- 5.4.7 However consideration should also be given to potential thresholds in relation to minimum and maximum requirements in some cases, in order to avoid the creation of unduly restrictive or expansive forms of development. Furthermore consideration should be had to the neighbouring development. Public open space or other areas of land such as parking areas can serve as an adequate buffer/setting. In such circumstances it may be appropriate for the new development to provide less space around it.
- 5.4.8 As a guide the Council would expect to see at least 1m between properties and the boundary, and space equivalent to 25% of the width of properties for buildings containing flats and specialist residential development, such as sheltered accommodation, nursing or care homes and special needs units, or individual dwellings having a similar scale or character to such buildings.
- 5.4.9 It is also important to provide sufficient space to allow individual dwellings to have access to the rear of the property externally, in order to undertake maintenance to the dwelling, take receipt of deliveries, and potentially transport refuse and recycling. This is often seen as difficult to achieve, particularly for terraced properties, however careful design can achieve a suitable layout, as illustrated below. Such forms of access should however have consideration to safety and security, and measures such as gated entry points, lighting and alternative boundary treatment should be sought. Guidance suggests that a space of 1m is adequate to provide access to the rear of properties.



Rear access to plots containing terraced dwellings
Source: Ordnance Survey (LA077461)

- 5.4.10 It should be noted that the provision of space around dwellings is not only guided by the size and height of the dwelling and the surrounding character, but also by the need to provide and reflect building lines, levels of amenity space and privacy. Regard is therefore required of the guidance contained within this document in respect of these matters.

RDG2 - Space Around Dwellings

The space around all new development should be informed by the prevailing character of space around dwellings. Where there is a distinct character of development which creates an exceptionally strong pattern, development must not result in a disruption to this pattern.

In forms of development where there is no clear pattern of development the space around a dwelling should be proportionate to the size of the dwelling. It should seek to provide at least 1m between the properties and the boundary. In the case of buildings containing flats and specialist residential development, such as sheltered accommodation, nursing or care homes and special needs units, or individual dwellings having a similar scale and character to such buildings, a space equivalent to 25% of the width of properties should be provided.

Where dwellings are located adjacent to public open space and other areas of land which serve as a buffer to development, or the prevailing pattern of development requires a tighter urban grain, less space may be considered appropriate. Such cases must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

For new large scale developments a different character, with varying degrees of space around dwellings, can be created, however this is expected to be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

The provision of space around buildings should also be informed by the guidance set out in RDG1, RDG3, RDG4, RDG5 and RDG6.

In all appropriate cases an adequate external access should be provided to the rear of dwellings.

5.5 **Building Lines**

- 5.5.1 Space around individual dwellings as well as around buildings containing residential development, such as flats and sheltered and care accommodation, is often formed by the building lines created by these structures.
- 5.5.2 The setback of dwellings from the street, both on primary and return frontages, is a key consideration in terms of defining the character of the street, determining the degree of privacy given to ground floor rooms, and accommodating the storage and service requirements of the properties.
- 5.5.3 Such space can provide a buffer from the activities of neighbouring public areas, such as the street or parking or servicing areas, as well as from neighbouring developments.
- 5.5.4 Within existing built up areas it is important that the setting of a development is satisfactory and reflects the general characteristics of the street or area in which it is situated, and that the relationship of new development to the adjoining built form and public space is considered.
- 5.5.5 For larger development sites there is the opportunity to create a townscape character which will itself set the acceptable building lines for that form of development. Quite different standards for building lines may be acceptable to those where new development is required to integrate into an existing developed area. These can also allow for a variation in character throughout a new development.
- 5.5.6 Dwellings which follow a continuous building line provide a level of continuity to the streetscape, and in certain instances create distinct patterns of development. In such circumstances consideration should be given to preserving or enhancing these building lines.



Strong uninterrupted building line
Source: Essex Design Guide



Strong staggered building line

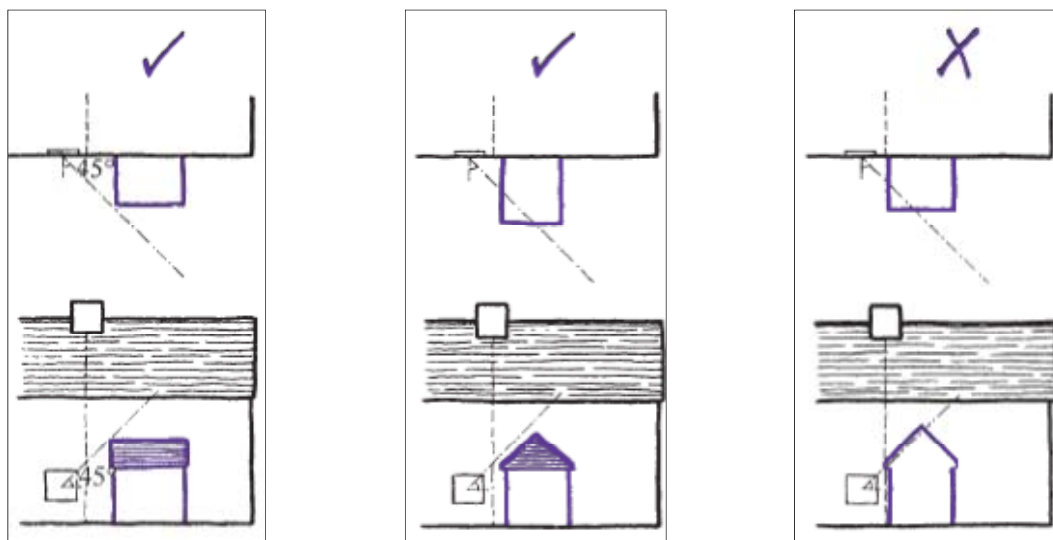


Strong building line with 'interest' elements
Source: Essex Design Guide

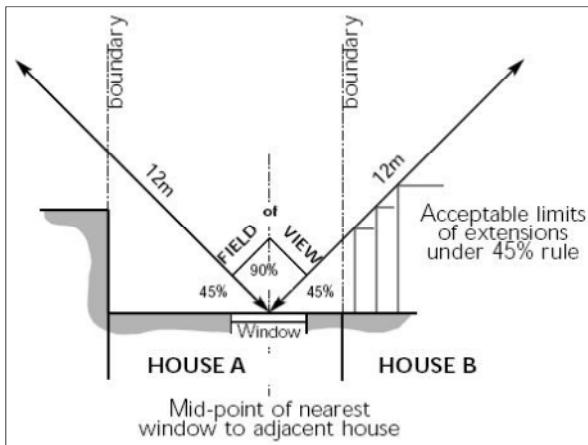


Broken building line
Ordnance Survey (LA077461)

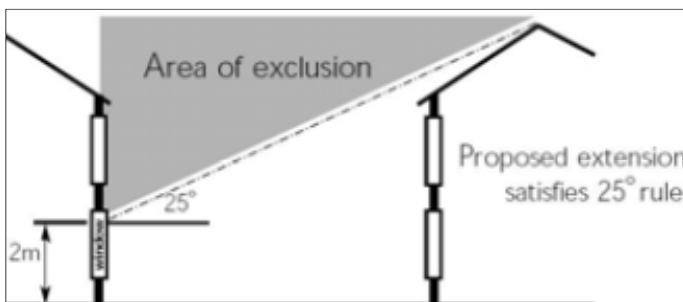
- 5.5.7 However, projections such as bay and bow windows, canopies, and entrances can add valuable emphasis and interest to the streetscene, particularly when well designed, without undermining the principle of continuity. Furthermore the provision of small setbacks can be used to soften the impact dwellings and the public realm have on each other, and can provide usable, attractive space for pedestrians, as well as areas to accommodate interface elements such as bin storage, cycle storage, external lighting, meter boxes, service entries and inspection boxes. These elements need to be considered and designed as an integral part of the overall scheme. If the elements are hardly noticeable then the design is successful.
- 5.5.8 Dwellings can often be adversely affected by new development which extends significantly beyond walls of neighbouring dwellings, creating an oppressive and overdominant feature. Traditionally this has been considered mainly to the rear of properties, however it is important to recognise that this can occur to any part of a property.
- 5.5.9 Consideration of the extent to which development projects beyond walls of adjoining properties ensures that any adverse impacts of such development are minimised.
- 5.5.10 Prescriptive guidance provides a baseline of evidence to assess such forms of development, however it is also important to evaluate each case on its own individual merits. This can be achieved by having consideration of the forms of the surrounding development, plot size, distance from boundaries, orientation, height, materials, colours, boundary treatment, topography, and which rooms neighbouring windows serve, and at what floor level. Such methods build upon the tests set out in Building Research Establishment (BRE) Site Layout for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice. A number of examples of such methods are set out below.



Source: Colchester Borough Council



Source: Wychavon District Council

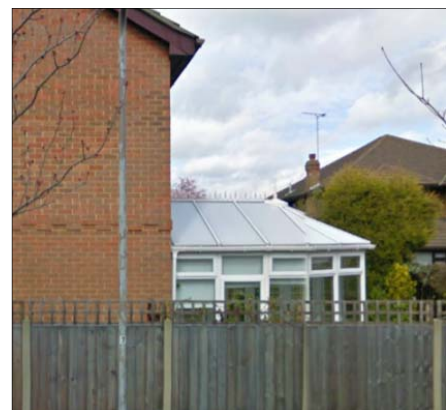


Source: Wychavon District Council

5.5.11 For example, a conservatory is commonly constructed of clear or translucent materials, which allows light to pass through, thus reducing the impact of such a projection. As a result such forms of development may be able to extend further than those with more robust flank walls. A flat roofed rear extension may also be able to extend further than might normally be considered acceptable in other situations, if it is screened from neighbouring properties by robust boundary treatment of the same height.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

5.5.12 It should be noted that building lines are not only guided by the surrounding character, but also by the size of plots and the dwellings contained within them, and the need to provide suitable levels of amenity space, privacy, and space around the dwelling. Regard is therefore required to be had in relation to the guidance contained within this document in respect of these matters.

RDG3 - Building Lines

Within the existing built up area all new development should be informed by the prevailing building lines to the public realm it faces, however it must not repeat poor forms of development. Where there is a distinct pattern of development which creates an exceptionally strong building line, development must not result in a disruption to this pattern.

For new large scale developments a different character, with varying building lines, can be created, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

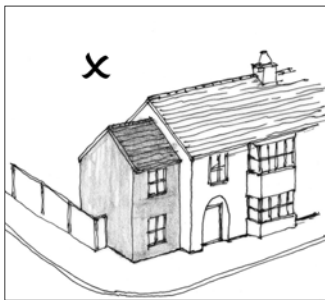
In all cases projections into building lines which face the public realm must make a positive contribution to the streetscape, and must be of a design, material, scale, roof pitch and detailing which integrates with or complements primarily the dwelling, but also those present in the surrounding streetscene.

Development which would result in excessive overshadowing or dominance to any elevation of an adjoining property will be refused.

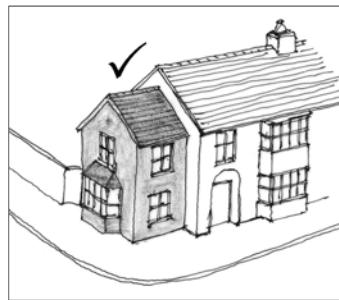
The provision of building lines should also be informed by the guidance set out in RDG1, RDG2, RDG4, RDG5 and RDG6.

5.6 **Corner Plots**

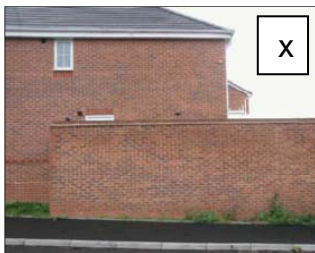
- 5.6.1 Corner plots are provided with plot boundaries which are not adjacent to other plot boundaries, and tend to be adjacent to roads, footpaths or open space. Commonly dwellings on corner plots have at least two frontages and tend to be visually prominent in the streetscene and public realm.
- 5.6.2 Generally, dwellings on corner plots tend to provide elevations with no fenestration or detailing, creating bland and featureless facades. Return frontages frequently include side gardens, which may be heavily enclosed by boundary treatment, often of substantial and poor quality materials, resulting in a poor appearance. Such areas can have limited opportunity for surveillance and can become a focus of anti-social behaviour.



Source: Uttlesford District Council



Source: Uttlesford District Council



Source: CABE - Simpler and Better – Housing Design in Everyone's Interest



- 5.6.3 Well designed corners can enhance legibility by creating visual interest, provide points of orientation, and contribute to a distinct identity. Increasing the height of dwellings and/or introducing detailing or a change in design can emphasise their importance. Furthermore including fenestration in return frontages introduces surveillance to the public realm and adds interest into the streetscene.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

- 5.6.4 Many standard dwelling types used by housing developers are rarely able to do this. More tailored designs will be required or new types devised, which enable dwellings to turn corners appropriately, limiting the length of visible garden screening, and improving the forms of enclosure that are to be provided.



Good example of addressing layout of corner plots
Source: Ordnance Survey LA077461

RDG4 - Corner Plots

Development on corner plots should be designed to turn corners.

All new or replacement dwellings on corner plots, and extensions or alterations to such dwellings, should provide active frontages to all elevations that face the public realm.

All elevations that face the public realm must be provided with articulation and fenestration at all floor levels, and should provide good levels of natural surveillance. Blank elevations in these locations are unlikely to be acceptable.

Corner plots should be designed to limit the length of high level garden screening, particularly along return frontages. Where limited forms of enclosure are required this must be in accordance with the guidance set out in RDG10.

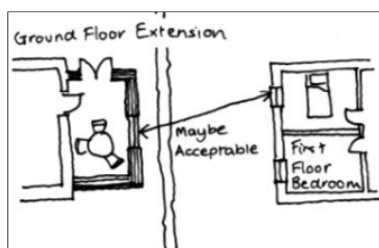
Within the existing built up area development on corner plots should be informed by the prevailing character of the area and surrounding forms of development, however it must not repeat poor forms of development.

For new large scale developments a different character can be created, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

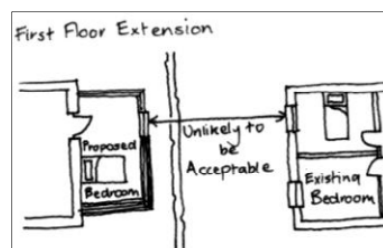
In all appropriate cases opportunities should be taken to create feature dwellings at corner locations, which enhance legibility.

5.7 **Privacy & Living Conditions**

- 5.7.1 Privacy is an important design objective in ensuring that residents feel at ease within their home. Natural surveillance is one of the keys to creating a sense of safety and security. However it is important also to ensure that dwellings have reasonable outlooks and do not produce an overbearing impact on each other. Privacy can relate to both visibility into and from windows, as well as amenity space.
- 5.7.2 It is acknowledged that prescriptive standards, which set out minimum separation distances between habitable rooms, can frustrate the creation of attractive residential environments by denying the ability to provide privacy through careful design. However it is important to ensure that appropriate levels of privacy and living conditions are achieved on all sites. This is best achieved by setting a threshold as a starting point.
- 5.7.3 A distance of 9m has previously been accepted as providing appropriately levels of privacy for windows at first floor level (2 storey). It is considered that this is still an appropriate threshold for development within the Borough.
- 5.7.4 Windows at higher levels have the potential to provide wider views for the occupants, given their elevated position, and as such may demand a greater degree of separation, than lower level windows.
- 5.7.5 A distance of 15m has previously been accepted for windows at second floor level (3 storey) and 18m for third floor or above (4th storey or above). It is considered that this is still an appropriate threshold for development within the Borough.
- 5.7.6 Careful design can secure the objective of privacy rather than physical separation alone, and as such a reduced distance from windows may be appropriate in certain circumstances. Variation in plot depths can allow greater flexibility in separation distances. This can be influenced by additional storeys to a dwelling, or a variation in ground levels, usually dictated by changes in topography.



Source: Uttlesford District Council



Source: Essex Design Guide

- 5.7.7 The reduction in the distances between windows and boundaries and the use of single aspect dwellings can decrease or eliminate gaps and blank walls when dwellings turn corners. In such cases careful consideration of layout is required to ensure acceptable internal living conditions are also provided and maintained.



1. Above eye level windows
2. Above eye level screening
3. Bathroom or landings
4. Living rooms
5. Any distance to meet minimum garden area and sunlight/daylight requirements
6. Bedroom
7. Principal window
8. Above eye level windows
9. Privacy sensitive elevation
10. Less than 25m
11. No windows
12. Acceptable provided no unsatisfactory overshadowing
13. Privacy sensitive elevation

Source: Essex Design Guide

- 5.7.8 Street design can also influence the relationship between facing windows. With a varied building line, oblique views can be created, avoiding direct overlooking, and thus allowing dwellings to be located closer together. This can also be achieved by careful orientation of primary and secondary windows, and controlling the provision of further windows at a later date.
- 5.7.9 Rooms needing less privacy, such as living rooms and kitchens can be orientated to face the public areas of development, with bedrooms and bathrooms which require more privacy being located facing the more private areas of the development.
- 5.7.10 Primary windows such as those serving lounges, kitchens and bedrooms are more appropriately located in the principal elevations of the dwelling, and secondary windows, such as those serving bathrooms, en-suites, staircases and landings are more appropriately located on the subordinate elevations, such as flanking side walls of dwellings. Corner plots provide the opportunity to be more flexibility with the orientation of windows, with normally more than one principal elevation overlooking public areas.

- 5.7.11 Traditionally privacy has dealt with windows mainly located in the rear and front elevations and roofscapes of dwellings, however consideration of windows in all elevations is important. This was highlighted by the introduction within Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008, which has a requirement that upper floor windows located in a side wall or roof slope of a dwelling must be obscure glazed and non-opening to a height of 1.7m above the floor level of the room. This is particularly important when such windows can afford views of private areas of neighbouring properties.



Source: Uttlesford District Council



Source: CPBC

- 5.7.12 In respect of windows contained within the roof of dwellings/buildings these are also viewed the same as windows in elevations. However rooflights are traditionally set at an angle from the walls and sit higher in the roof, usually resulting in these being located above head height in the rooms they serve, thus alleviating any issues arising from overlooking. Furthermore the amount of light transmitted into a room by a roof light is much greater than that of a window of a similar size, thus providing adequate living conditions for occupiers.

- 5.7.13 Windows should also be designed in relation to the function of the room they serve. For example generously sized windows for living rooms overlooking streets or gardens, and frosted windows for bathrooms. This ensures that adequate levels of living conditions are provided and maintained for existing and future occupiers.



Large dual aspect windows
Source: Swan Housing Group



Obscure glazed window
Source: CPBC

- 5.7.14 It is essential that all development has acceptable levels of natural daylight and ventilation to all habitable rooms. The planning of internal space integrally with external space can produce and enrich the sense of quality and distinct identity both within the dwelling and of the neighbourhood as a whole. The lack of distinctiveness and quality which characterises many modern housing schemes can often be attributed to the design of layout forms, and the application of standard housing types in a manner which fails to consider the relationships between internal and external spaces. Consideration of the living conditions created by development is therefore important.
- 5.7.15 One of the main contributions to poor internal living conditions for occupiers, is the provision of high level, fixed shut, or obscured glazed windows, or combinations of these. They lead to rooms with limited or no natural light or ventilation, and do not provide suitable living conditions for occupiers. These types of windows are only considered appropriate for rooms which are not occupied for any significant length of time, and/or require a high degree of privacy, such as landings, staircases, bathrooms, and en-suites. It is considered that the necessity for such measures can often be designed out as described earlier.
- 5.7.16 Guidance and best practice provides details on appropriate measures to ensure adequate light and ventilation to rooms. Such details include those provided by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) which consider that glazing should be a minimum of 10% of the floorspace of the room it serves in order to ensure adequate natural light into a room, and that glazing of a minimum of 5% of a room's floorspace should be capable of being opened in order to ensure adequate ventilation for the room.
- 5.7.17 Consideration of the ability and opportunity of the occupier of a dwelling to provide effective and appropriate screening, natural or man-made, is also an important factor when evaluating privacy matters. However the impact of such screening, in respect of loss of daylight and sunlight, and potential overbearing effect to adjoining residents is also a consideration.
- 5.7.18 With regard to the communal forms of residential development, such as flats, sheltered and care accommodation, ground floor windows are often in close proximity to shared areas of space such as amenity and parking areas. The privacy of these can be protected by private yards and gardens, clearly defined from the shared space, by means of enclosure or by raising or lowering the ground level.
- 5.7.19 Another example is to raise the internal floor level of such units. However the impact of raising levels may have implications for privacy. This consideration is also relevant for sites which have changes in level due to the topography of the site and surroundings, or properties that may have to be raised in height to satisfy flood risk implications.
- 5.7.20 Care is also required in protecting the privacy of communal areas of amenity space and in ensuring that unacceptable overlooking does not occur into or from such areas, particularly roof gardens and balconies. In this respect edges of amenity space above ground level can be treated in the same manner as windows.

RDG5 – Privacy & Living Conditions

Within the existing built up area all new development should be informed by the prevailing character created by the built form, the nature of boundary features, and changes in topography. Where there is a distinct character of development which creates an exceptionally strong pattern, development must not result in a disruption to this pattern.

Primary windows should be located on the principal elevations of dwellings, these include flank walls on corner dwellings. All windows should be designed and be of a size which provides for adequate natural light and ventilation to enter the room they serve.

The provision of high level, fixed shut or obscure glazed windows or screening, or any combination thereof, should be restricted to secondary windows serving rooms or areas which are not occupied for any length of time and/or require a high degree of privacy, or provide secondary light and/or ventilation to a room.

For all development above ground floor level a distance of 9m shall be provided between windows, edge of balconies or raised amenity space and the boundary it directly faces at first floor level, 15m at second floor level and 18m at third floor level or above, unless site circumstances dictate otherwise. In such circumstances, considerations such as those set out below, will be taken into account.

Where dwellings are located adjacent to public open space and other areas of land which serve as a buffer to development, or the prevailing pattern of development requires a tighter urban grain, reducing the distance between the window and boundary may be considered appropriate. Such cases must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

If the design/layout of a development does not result in direct views between primary windows a reduced distance between windows and boundaries may be considered appropriate. Such cases must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

For new large scale developments a different character, with varying degrees of privacy, can be created, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

The consideration of privacy levels should also be informed by the guidance set out in RDG1, RDG2, RDG3, RDG4 and RDG6.

5.8 **Amenity space**

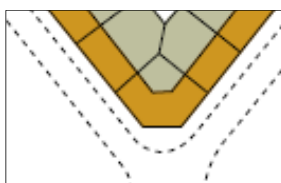
- 5.8.1 Amenity areas provide a range of functions, such as sitting out, play space, drying, gardening, bulky storage, such as lawn mowers and bicycles, and the storage of refuse and recycling. They also cater for a variety of occupiers across age, disability and ethnicity, as well as size, such as single, multiple and family households. Amenity space can take many forms, including gardens, courtyards, terraces, and balconies, with provision being on a private, semi-private or communal basis.



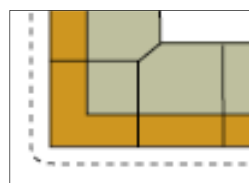
Source: Swan Housing Group Urban Place Supplement

Housing Design Awards

- 5.8.2 The size of the dwelling and the characteristics of the development, the site and its context, as well as the type of occupier, can affect the requirement for amenity space. For example smaller dwellings tend to have less habitable rooms and lower occupancy rates than larger dwellings, and consequently have less requirement for amenity space. The age structure and possible physical disabilities of occupants of nursing and care homes, tends to result in less active residents, who have less need for play areas and space for drying, but may have more need for other facilities such as seating. Such reductions in activity levels can result in the requirement for a lesser provision of amenity space. The provision of amenity space should not therefore only concentrate on quantity, but should have an emphasis on ensuring quality and suitability.
- 5.8.3 It is also clear from Government guidance that where residential development is within immediate proximity of a substantial area of public open space, of high quality, to which there is safe and convenient access, a reduction in amenity space may be appropriate. Furthermore where dwellings form a clear beneficial role in the layout of a development, such as turning a corner, reducing or eliminating gaps and blank walls, restoring the existing urban form, or creating an important design/townscape feature, less amenity space may be acceptable.



Design feature reduces amenity space
Source: Essex Design Guide



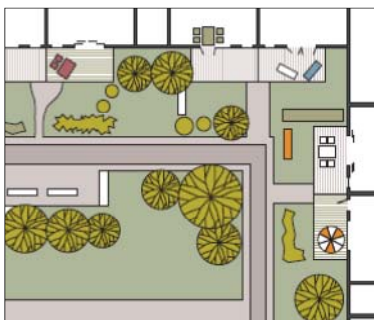
Reduced amenity - dwelling turning corner

- 5.8.4 It is also acknowledged that more compact forms of development may necessitate a change to smaller amenity areas, and the potential change in emphasis from the provision of allocated amenity space to the provision of public or communal space. This can be particularly relevant to development located within town centres or Conservation Areas.
- 5.8.5 The nature and scale of amenity space is therefore most appropriately considered as commensurate with the amount of living accommodation, and suitable to the location of the development, its function and its occupiers. Setting a threshold for amenity space which directly relates to the number of habitable rooms would achieve this. Habitable rooms do not include bathrooms, en-suites and utility rooms.
- 5.8.6 However setting a threshold for amenity space relative to the amount of living accommodation can have implications, such as wide frontage dwellings providing shallow garden depths, which may have implications for privacy, as well as narrow frontage dwellings providing long thin amenity areas, which are impractical to use.



- 5.8.7 This can be mitigated to some degree when considering other guidance contained in this document, relating to matters such as plot width and privacy.
- 5.8.8 Amenity space also needs to consider the potential increase in the size of a dwelling throughout its lifetime, as well as the provision of residential garden structures commonly associated with amenity space, such as sheds and greenhouses, and the storage of refuse and recycling receptacles. In some cases the removal of Permitted Development Rights for such development may be appropriate, to ensure an adequate amenity space is retained.
- 5.8.9 Upon establishing the appropriate amount of amenity space for a development, consideration should be given to the location, demarcation and functional requirements of such space, and its impact on privacy both for the occupiers and the neighbouring residents. This varies depending on the occupiers and location of development, however all amenity space should be of a useable size, appropriate to the occupier and the functions it must cater for.

- 5.8.10 Individual households more commonly have private amenity space, comprising an area of space suitably enclosed and screened from neighbouring properties and the public realm. Whilst privacy should be a principal matter when providing amenity space for such dwellings, consideration should also be given to its orientation in respect of receiving good levels of daylight throughout the day, and ensuring that the presence of enclosures and screening do not dominate the amenity space or undermine the quality of adjacent public space. Furthermore the amenity space should not be awkwardly shaped or steeply sloping.
- 5.8.11 It is important that family dwellings include enough space to accommodate a safe outdoor area for children to play in. All dwellings should have space for the occupiers to be able to sit out, as well as the flexibility to cater for personalisation and a variety of occupiers throughout the lifetime of the dwelling.
- 5.8.12 Flats are more commonly served by communal areas of amenity space, either at ground level or in the form of roof terraces. However private and semi-private space can also be accommodated, particularly for ground floor units, as well as the provision of balconies for units above ground floor level.
- 5.8.13 Such developments which are capable of accommodating children should include areas of dedicated play space, as well as areas for sitting and relaxing, whilst those occupied by less active residents, such as sheltered accommodation or nursing homes should be less formal, but include seating and detailed landscape features, such as trees and planter beds.
- 5.8.14 All communal amenity areas should be flexible to accommodate a variety of users, with the provision of a combination of hard and soft landscaping, which can aid in adding visual interest and providing versatility of use. Communal amenity space should not be significantly overshadowed, steeply sloping or awkwardly spaced. Access to such space should be safe and convenient for all occupiers, and there should be a clear distinction between private, communal, and public space. It should be suitably separated from parking and servicing areas.



Source: Urban Place Supplement



Source: Bing Maps

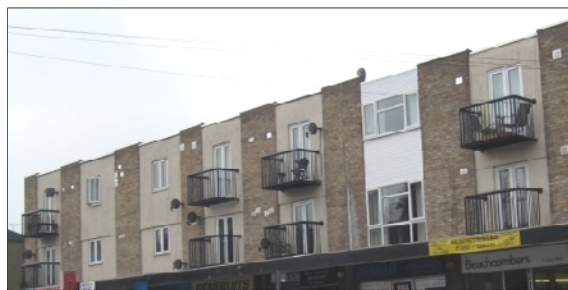


Source: Bing Maps

- 5.8.15 The success of communal amenity areas is as much about the design of schemes, as it is about their on-going maintenance and management. Clearly defined maintenance and management regimes from the outset can ensure mechanisms for ensuring the continued and successful use of such areas. These are best secured through the planning process in the form of planning conditions, Unilateral Undertakings or Section 106 Legal Agreements.
- 5.8.16 The provision of balconies is a common and effective means of providing supplementary amenity space for occupiers who only have access to a communal amenity space or publically accessible open space. Furthermore they often provide the sole amenity space for smaller dwellings, particularly flats, which are more likely to attract persons who have no wish for any private outdoor amenity space. They take many shapes and forms, however they should be of sufficient size to permit outside sitting and dining, and capable of accommodating limited outside storage and drying. The use of balconies and the activities taking place on them are commonly visible in the streetscene, often resulting in a cluttered and unattractive appearance to properties. The choice of design and materials for the balconies and their screening is therefore important.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

- 5.8.17 Amenity space provided above ground level, including in the form of balconies and raised terraces, can give rise to increased overlooking and potential loss of privacy. The edges of such forms of development must be treated in the same manner as windows above ground floor level. Regard is therefore required to the guidance contained within this document in respect of privacy.

RDG6 – Amenity Space

Amenity space should cater for all the outdoor needs of all occupiers. It must be a useable shape, provide safe and convenient access for all, be orientated to provide good levels of daylight throughout the day, and should not be steeply sloping.

All amenity space should be clearly distinguishable from public space and should be suitably screened, from public activities, parking and servicing areas, and neighbouring developments, both to control privacy levels, and potential noise and disturbance. Such screening should be of high quality design and materials, informed by the guidance contained within RDG10, and should not dominate the amenity space or public realm.

The landscaping of communal amenity space must be designed having regard to the guidance contained in RDG11.

Communal amenity space should be appropriately maintained and managed, secured through the use of appropriate planning conditions or planning obligations.

All residential development involving individual dwellings should be provided with at least 15m² of amenity space per habitable room. Where three or less habitable rooms are provided the minimum amenity space should be 50m².

All buildings containing general residential development and containing specialist residential development should be provided with 8m² of amenity space per habitable room, either privately or communally. Where three or less habitable rooms are provided the minimum amenity space should be 25m². The provision of a balcony of at least 5m² can be included in this requirement.

In order for balconies to be considered as amenity space they must be a minimum of 1.5m deep and have a useable floor area of at least 5m². Balconies which are visible in the public realm must be provided with screening which obscures views of the use of the balconies. Such screening should be informed by the guidance contained in RDG10 relating to enclosure and boundary treatment.

In cases where there is safe and convenient access to high quality public open space, which is within the immediate proximity of the site, or where the development would result in a beneficial impact on the layout of a scheme, particularly in larger developments, less amenity space may be considered appropriate. Such cases must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

The provision of all forms of amenity space should have regard to privacy as contained in RDG5 of the guidance.

The provision of all forms of amenity space should be informed by the guidance set out in RDG1, RDG2, RDG3 and RDG4.

5.9 **Roof Development**

- 5.9.1 A number of properties are originally constructed to accommodate habitable space, which creates a distinct character. They are usually well proportioned and the roof elements appear as integrated features to the dwelling.



Source: CPBC



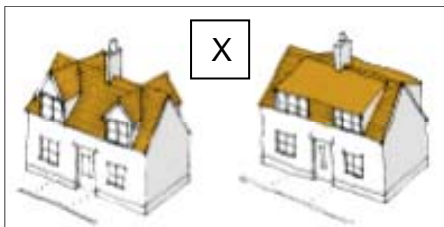
Source: CPBC



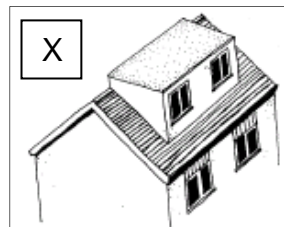
Source: CPBC

- 5.9.2 Extending habitable areas into the roof space of dwellings which were not designed to accommodate such space has become a popular and cost effective method of increasing living accommodation, particularly in single storey dwellings. This takes many forms including, dormer windows, hip to gable constructions and roof lights.

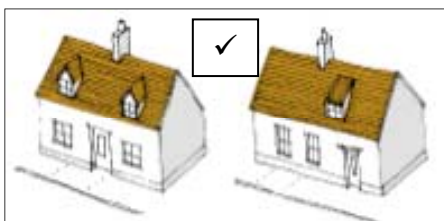
- 5.9.3 A dormer is a structural element of a dwelling which protrudes from the plane of a sloping roof surface and provides a window in its vertical plane. Its primary purpose should be to provide additional light to the roof space, not additional head room. It is expected to be an ancillary feature to a roof slope, not an extension.



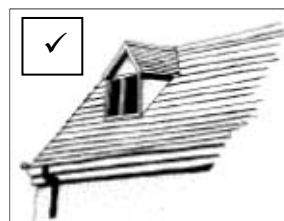
Source: Essex Design Guide



Source: Uttlesford District



Source: Essex Design Guide



Source: Uttlesford District



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

- 5.9.4 Rooflights are traditionally located in the roof of a dwelling set above head height in the rooms they serve. This allows for a much greater amount of light to enter these rooms than from conventional windows located on the elevations of dwellings. The unnecessary proliferation of rooflights can lead to unattractive and unbalanced roofscapes. This can be further exacerbated when provided on roof slopes at the same time as dormer windows. Rooflights should only be used sparingly and should not be used in conjunction with dormers on the same roof plane.
- 5.9.5 Given that many dwellings were not intended to be extended into the roofspace, the undertaking of such works can result in the creation of unattractive and overdominant forms of development, and the destruction of the proportions, balance and symmetry of dwellings. This is in regard to both the roof structures and fenestration. This is further exacerbated in some cases when differing sized and designed dormers or roof lights are provided to any one roof plane.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

- 5.9.6 Large flat roofed dormers are particularly popular in some parts of the borough and are considered for the most part to be unattractive features. Pitched roof dormers are more attractive and should be encouraged. However it is acknowledged that some properties are provided with flat roofed dormers as an integral part of their design and the provision of pitched roofs in such instances would be alien features.
- 5.9.7 The construction of extensions and alterations to dwellings and the construction of new or replacement dwellings can also result in excessively top heavy roofs, or roofs that appear prominent or dominant in the streetscene. Furthermore the design of the roof may not be compatible with the roofscape of the host dwelling or those within the surrounding area.
- 5.9.8 In order for such development to successfully integrate with the existing dwelling or into the surrounding streetscene, the roof of a dwelling needs to be proportionate to the dwelling, and be in keeping with those surrounding it.
- 5.9.9 This is particularly important when considering extensions to pairs or groups of dwellings. In such cases it is important that the roofscape of the dwelling is maintained. This is usually achieved by effectively stretching the dwelling, retaining the roofscape and pattern of fenestration.



Source: CPBC

Good retention of roofscape and pattern of fenestration

RDG7 – Roof Development

The roof design of any development should be compatible primarily with the dwelling, but should also be informed by the prevailing character of the area and surrounding forms of roof development. For new large scale developments a different character can be created, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale. Roof development must not repeat poor forms of development, unless it would rectify an unbalanced or unsymmetrical pair or group of dwellings.

The roof of a dwelling, either built as new or extended or altered, should be proportionate to the remainder of the dwelling. It must not be top heavy, or appear prominent or dominant.

Dormers should be an ancillary feature on the roofscape and must not dominate the roofscape. They must be provided with substantial roof verges above, below and to the sides. Dormers projecting above the ridge line or beyond a roofline, e.g. hip, will be refused.

Front and side dormers, and rear dormers which are visible in the streetscene, should have pitched roofs, unless the original design feature of the dwelling indicates otherwise, or it would rectify an unbalanced or unsymmetrical pair or group of dwellings.

Proposals for any form of roof development which results in the detrimental disruption or loss of symmetry to a pair or group of dwellings, both in respect of the roof planes and/or roofscape, will be refused.

The provision of dormers and rooflights should not normally be provided on the same roof plane, unless the character and style of the dwelling and its roof can accommodate the combination of these features without harm to its appearance.

Fenestration should be aligned both vertically and horizontally, in roof planes and dwelling elevations, particularly when integrating new development with existing dwellings. Consideration should also be given to ensuring that fenestration is balanced and proportionate on sloping sites.

The materials used for all roof development should integrate with or complement primarily the dwelling, but also those present in the surrounding streetscene.

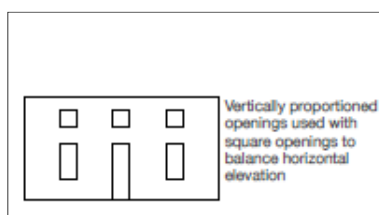
5.10 Detailing

5.10.1 Dwellings are composed of a variety of building elements, such as doors, windows, porches, roof structures, lighting, chimneys, flues and ventilation, gutters, pipes and other rainwater goods, balconies, ironmongery, flashing and decorative features. External services, such as meter boxes, television systems, and more recently renewable energy installations, also contribute to the fabric of dwellings.

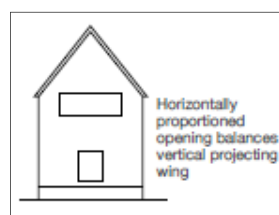
5.10.2 All of these detailing elements form an integral part of dwellings, and should be designed into any build from the outset. They should not be seen just as an 'add-on' to a dwelling. They play a key role in determining the quality of the dwelling, and it is vital to consider these elements both in isolation and together. If the elements are hardly noticeable then the design is successful.

5.10.3 The quality of a dwelling can be compromised by poor attention to detail, and poorly located and/or designed detailing or services can dominate dwellings and negatively affect the proportion and balance, resulting in a significant detrimental impact on an individual dwelling, pair, or group of dwellings, and the character of the area as a whole.

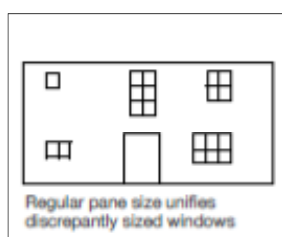
5.10.4 In order to contribute successfully the detailed elements of a dwelling need to be well designed and arranged in a coherent and legible way which is consistent with the overall architectural approach.



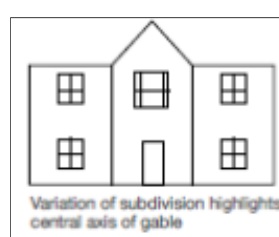
Source: Essex Design Guide



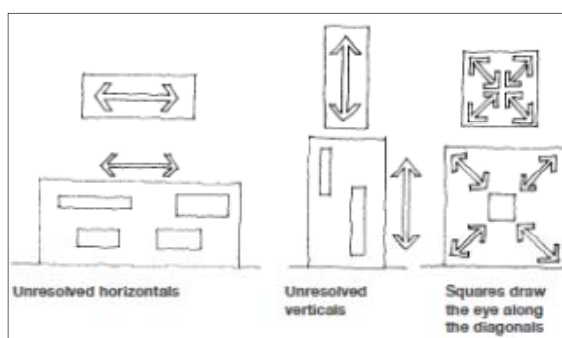
Source: Essex Design Guide



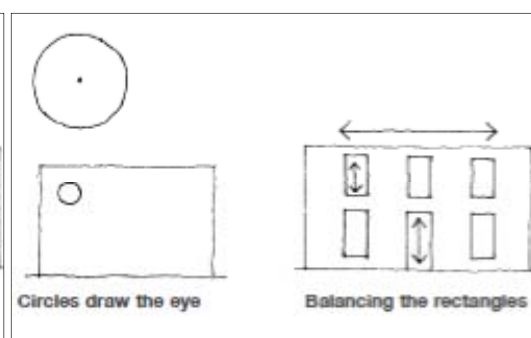
Source: Essex Design Guide



Source: Essex Design Guide

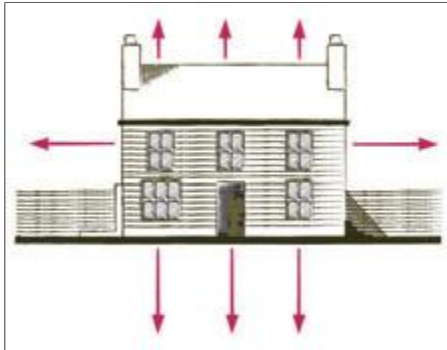


Source: Essex Design Guide



Source: Essex Design Guide

- 5.10.5 The provision of such detailing can when designed appropriately, add interest, life, and vitality to the public realm. Such examples include frequent doors and windows to avoid the provision of blank walls, vertical and horizontal rhythm, and the articulation of facades with projections such as bays and canopies, and recesses.



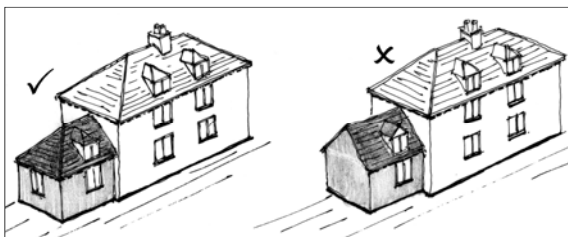
Source: Better Places to Live By Design



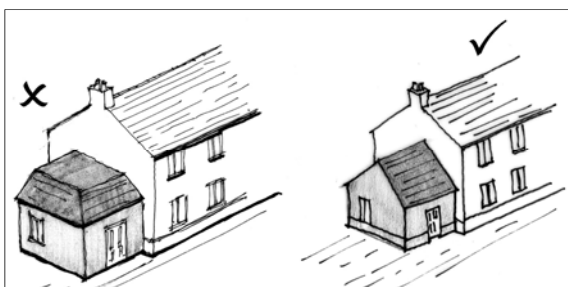
Source: CPBC

- 5.10.6 The construction of extensions and alterations to dwellings can also have an impact on the detailed elements of a dwelling. Such detailing can result in a detrimental impact on the balance, symmetry and proportions of a dwelling. This is often exacerbated by the inclusion of roof forms which are not compatible with the original or existing roofscape.

- 5.10.7 One such form of development is the provision of flat roofs to extensions and alterations to dwellings which do not have flat roofs as part of their overall design concept. Pitched roofs reflective of the host dwellings roofscape will ensure that extensions and alterations are viewed as an integral part of any dwelling. Obvious exceptions are where the host dwelling is flat roofed or where there are specific design elements of a dwelling that feature a flat roof, such as a group of dwellings with flat roofed porches or canopies.



Source: Uttlesford District Council



Source: Uttlesford District Council

RDG8 – Detailing

The provision of detailing elements for all developments must be consistent with the overall architectural approach of the dwelling, and their design and siting should be an integral part of the dwelling. They must not result in prominent, dominant, alien or incongruous features which detract from the visual appearance of the dwelling or the public realm. Services should be sited conveniently for external use.

The design of all development should result in well proportioned and balanced properties. Fenestration should be aligned both vertically and horizontally, particularly when integrating new development with existing dwellings. Consideration should also be given to ensuring that fenestration is balanced and proportionate on sloping sites.

The materials used for detailing elements should integrate with or complement primarily the dwelling, but also those present in the surrounding streetscene.

All extensions visible in the streetscene, must have a pitched roof where the existing dwelling has one, and reflect the roofscape of the host dwelling, unless it is reflecting a specific design feature of the dwelling or surrounding area.

Such development should also be informed by having regard to the other guidance set out in this document.

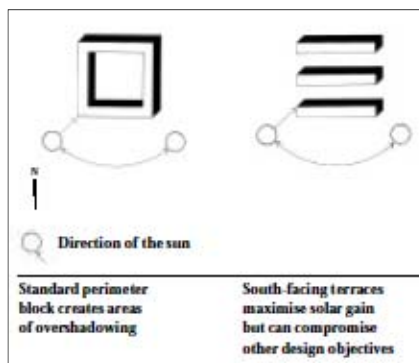
5.11 **Energy & Water Efficiency & Renewable Energy**

5.11.1 The reduction of energy consumption and increased energy and water efficiency are important considerations in any new development. This can be incorporated into the construction of new residential properties, or extensions and/or alterations to existing residential properties.

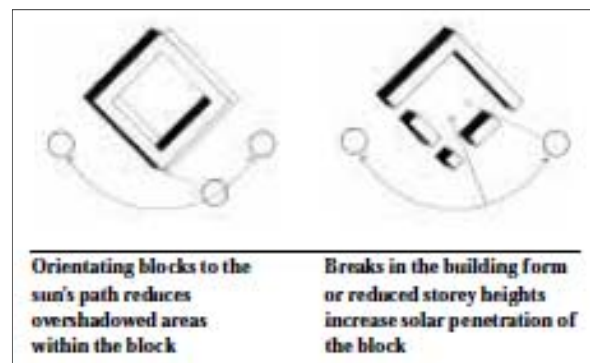
5.11.2 The installation of on-site renewable energy sources is also an important consideration in the designing of residential development, both in the form of new build or extensions and/or alterations to existing properties.

5.11.3 Energy and water efficiency, and the installation of on-site renewable, is best achieved through careful design and orientation of development. In order that it is successfully integrated into development, it is essential that this is considered from the outset.

5.11.4 The orientation of dwellings in relation to the sun is important, not only in respect of the arrangement of gardens and principal habitable rooms, but also in influencing the potential to reduce energy requirements within the home, and maximising the potential energy production from renewable sources.



Source: Better Places to Live By Design

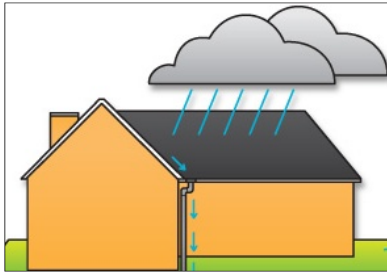


Source: Better Places to Live By Design

5.11.5 Careful orientation of streets and the arrangement of dwellings within them, can provide good opportunities for solar gain and daylight penetration to habitable rooms, while at the same time addressing other key principles of good urban design.

5.11.6 For example designing for daylighting, in the form of appropriately located and sized windows, reduces the need for artificial lighting, and designing for passive solar gain reduces the need for internal space heating. The provision of windows allows for natural surveillance to take place and gives the opportunity to articulate elevations, removing the all too common blank flank walls found in many parts of the Borough.

5.11.7 Furthermore designing roofs to slope in directions which enable the optimum capture of rainwater, allows for the maximum re-use of such water, in the form of rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling schemes thus creating more water efficient forms of development. The use of green roofs on dwellings and the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) as part of the design and landscaping process further ensure that water efficiency can be achieved for all forms of residential development.



Source: Civil Engineer Group

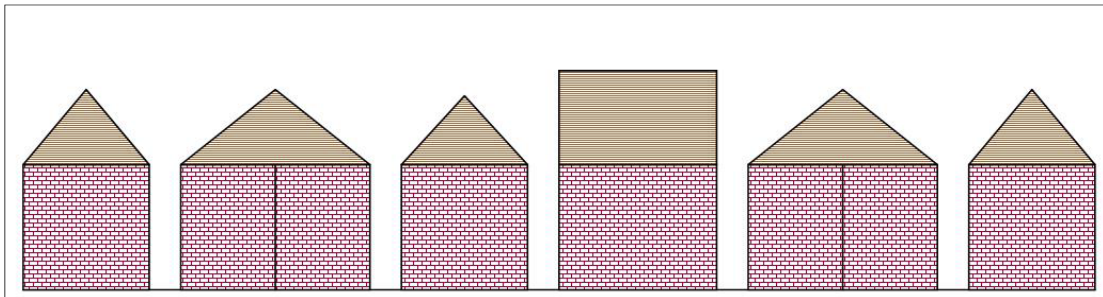


Example of a green roof

Source: Urban Place Supplement

5.11.8 When designing for renewable energy sources and energy and water efficiency it is important to consider the visual impact they may have on the public realm and the host dwelling, in order that they successfully integrate. Furthermore there is a balance to be reached between optimum energy efficiency and residential amenity and urban design considerations.

5.11.9 For example a dwelling which is orientated to achieve the maximum energy and water efficiency and optimise the use of renewable energy, may not reflect the prevailing layout in a street, such as a change in the pattern of roof slope or introduction of a green roof, and could result in a form of development which would be out of character with the area and result in visual detriment. The addition of inappropriately sized or located windows to an existing dwelling could disrupt a well balanced appearance in terms of architectural design and fenestration layout.



Source: CPBC



Good & bad solar panel locations
Source: Solar Savings

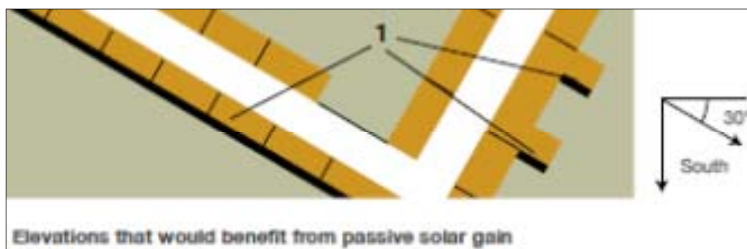
- 5.11.10 The installation of renewable energy sources and some water efficiency measures are best achieved from the outset of the development. These technologies are more difficult and expensive to retro-fit. The provision of such installations on existing dwellings after construction can result in prominent structures and alien features in the streetscene which detract from the appearance of the dwelling. Furthermore the efficiency of such sources can be reduced by existing obstructions, such as mature trees and tall buildings.



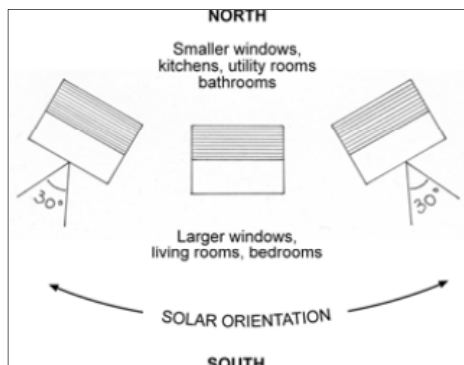
Installation of solar panels during construction phase

Source: Planet Solar

- 5.11.11 Considering the layout of development from the outset can reduce or eliminate these issues. For example providing taller dwellings away from lower dwellings, or to the north of a site, providing parking and garaging to the north of houses, and bungalows and well spaced detached houses to the south of sites, as well as providing suitable vegetation in appropriate locations, can improve conditions for solar gain and reduce wind shadow for wind turbines. It should be noted that any window orientated within 30° of south can benefit from solar gain. Providing roof designs and landscaping layouts can improve the ability of water to be efficiently reused.



Source: Essex Design Guide



Source: Wychavon District Council

5.11.12 Depending on the size and nature of the development, the potential for maximising energy and water efficiency and renewable energy will vary. It is therefore important that each development can clearly demonstrate how they will achieve such measures. This should be in a format appropriate to the size and nature of the development and form part of any planning application submission.

5.11.13 Advice and guidance can be found from a number of sources, including Code for Sustainable Homes, which sets out standards for design and construction of sustainable homes and provides minimum standards for energy and water efficiency.

RDG9 – Energy & Water Efficiency & Renewable Energy

The design of all development should incorporate measures for achieving high levels of energy and water efficiency. Development is expected to demonstrate how its design, siting and layout has maximised the opportunities for solar gain, daylight penetration, and the re-use/recycling of water, and where appropriate, how its construction has followed nationally agreed principles for sustainable dwellings.

The design and siting of energy and water efficiency measures and renewable energy systems must not result in prominent, dominant, alien or incongruous features which detract from the visual appearance of the dwelling or the public realm.

Regard should be taken to the guidance contained in RDG8.

5.12 **Enclosure & Boundary Treatment**

5.12.1 Clearly indicating the extent of ownership of space around a dwelling defines the boundary between public, semi-private, and private space. This can be achieved through a change in surface materials between such spaces or through the construction of means of enclosure. In both cases they are visible in the public realm, however it is the means of enclosure which are more readily visible.

5.12.2 The provision of means of enclosure to a property can take many forms such as walls, fences, railings, gates, vegetation and screening to balconies or elevated amenity space. The provision of appropriate and visually attractive boundary treatment is therefore fundamental in creating an attractive public realm.

5.12.3 Throughout the Borough there is a mix of forms of enclosure, much of which is unattractive in appearance, of poor quality, and does little to enhance the quality of the public realm. There is often little or no consistency across areas with regard to the design and quality of the enclosure.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

5.12.4 Furthermore many properties provide no means of enclosure, some informally, and others formally as part of 'open plan' estates, which has lead, in some cases, to confusion between public and private space, and an unattractive environment. Private activities can spill out onto the public highway, and public activities can encroach onto private gardens and land creating settings for dwellings.

5.12.5 Return frontages to dwellings on corner plots, which often include the flank of gardens can often be a concern. These are generally heavily enclosed by boundary treatment which is often significant in height and of poor quality and visual appearance. Such areas have limited natural surveillance and can become a focus for anti-social behaviour.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

5.12.6 For any form of enclosure, consideration of scale, form and character of the existing means of enclosure and that of the surrounding area is an important factor. However repetition of existing poor forms of enclosure should not be accepted. In order to provide and maintain a high quality public realm, the materials and treatments used for enclosure also need to be of a high quality. Where it is necessary to provide more robust means of enclosure planting can aid in the softening of their impact.

RDG10 – Enclosure & Boundary Treatment

For all development public and private space should be clearly defined. This is expected to take the form of a physical means of enclosure and/or change in surface material.

The means of enclosure and surface material should be informed by the prevailing character of the area and surrounding forms of enclosure, both in terms of materials and positioning, however it must not repeat poor forms of development.

Any means of enclosure should not dominate the public realm.

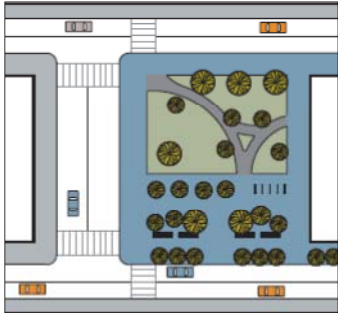
For new large scale developments a different character can be created, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

In all cases the means of enclosure and surface treatment must be of high quality materials, appropriate in terms of appearance and ongoing maintenance to the location, full details of which must form part of any application. Regard should also be had to the guidance contained in RDG6.

Where more robust means of enclosure is required in exceptional circumstances, its visual impact should be minimised by the provision of appropriate landscaping. Such landscaping should be informed by the guidance contained in RDG11.

5.13 **Landscaping**

5.13.1 Landscaping can be described in both hard and soft terms and takes a variety of forms. Soft landscaping is the more traditionally considered form, which generally includes natural elements such as planting and water. Hard landscaping is generally associated with man-made elements such as paving, furniture, and potential public art. Schemes can include either soft or hard landscaping, or a combination of the two.



Source: Urban Place Supplement



Source: CPBC

5.13.2 Good landscape design can complement and enhance development, however if the quality of landscape design is poor it can detract from the development, as well as the existing and surrounding environment.



Source: CPBC



Source: Bing Maps

5.13.3 Landscaping can be used to create a setting for a development or for amenity purposes. The scope of control of landscaping is best confined to the communal areas associated with flats, sheltered and nursing residential schemes, or the public realm associated with large scale residential schemes. Landscaping of individual dwellings is a matter of personal choice and may often be limited in nature given the constraints of some sites.

5.13.4 Consideration of the location of any landscaping is important. Soft landscaping is often provided in narrow strips and/or in areas with limited daylight/sunlight, which are not suitable environments for vegetation to thrive and survive. Furthermore the appropriateness of the growth habits of vegetation in certain locations, with regard to its immediate and eventual and/or long term impacts on its surroundings, is also an important consideration. For example fast growing shrubs would not be suitable in areas which are required to provide visibility splays or natural surveillance, and evergreen trees would not be suitable in more confined areas where light may be limited or restricted. Furthermore defensible planting, such as spiny or thorny species, can aid in the security of development.

5.13.5 The selection of species is also important. Suitable native species should be the primary choice for schemes, however consideration should also be given to climatic conditions. Often trees and/or planting are provided in areas where the climatic conditions are not suitable for certain species, this is particularly the case in proximity to roads and along the coastline. Such landscaping ought to comply with current best practice, such as BS4428:1989 Code of Practice for General landscape Operations and BS5837:2005 Trees in relation to construction, and any subsequent revisions.

5.13.6 With regard to hard landscaping the impact on the public and private realm is also important. The location of furniture and public art succeeds when integrated into an area, rather than being an afterthought which may be seen as obtrusive or alien features, or which may act as an obstruction. Such features should be safeguarded against anti-social behaviour, such as graffiti and vandalism.



Source: Urban Place Supplement



Source: Urban Place Supplement

5.13.7 The potential for ecological value of landscaping is also an important consideration of schemes. The existing features on and surrounding development sites, as well as those introduced, may have the capability to promote biodiversity.

5.13.8 The use of green roofs on dwellings and the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), as part of the design and landscaping process for all forms of residential development, can ensure that water efficiency can be achieved.

5.13.9 Furthermore landscaping forms part of the green infrastructure network which provides multi-functional benefits.

5.13.10 The success of landscaping is as much about the design of schemes, as it is about the on-going maintenance and management. Clearly defined maintenance and management regimes from the outset can ensure mechanisms for ensuring the health and longevity of the landscaping, the spaces it occupies, and its continued use. These are best secured through the planning process in the form of planning conditions, Unilateral Undertakings or Section 106 Legal Agreements.

RDG11 - Landscaping

All schemes for flats or specialist residential development such as sheltered accommodation, nursing or care homes, or special needs units should be provided with soft and/or hard landscaping, suitable for the type of accommodation provided, and should be set out in a landscaping scheme.

The public realm contained within large scale residential development should be set out in a landscaping scheme.

Landscaping schemes are expected to include planting plans, identifying plant species, type, sizes, numbers, densities, planting regime and aftercare.

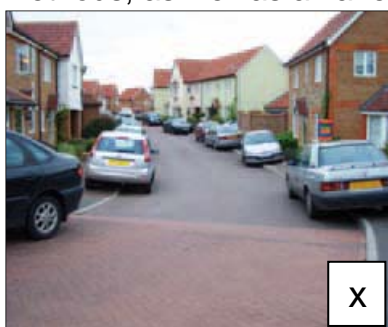
Landscaping schemes are expected to include native species suitable to the location and climatic conditions, of promoting biodiversity, and appropriate in respect of growth habits.

Landscaping schemes should seek to incorporate SuDS in appropriate circumstances.

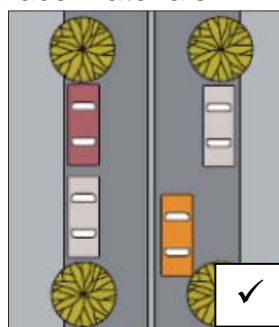
The maintenance and management of landscaping areas should be set out in a landscaping scheme and will be secured through the use of appropriate planning conditions or planning obligations.

5.14 **Parking & Access**

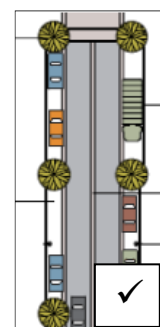
- 5.14.1 Vehicle owners have the desire to view their vehicle from their property, typically resulting in a vehicle-dominated environment with vehicles in front of dwellings, either in front gardens or on the highway. This creates an unattractive public realm and can undermine the relationship between the dwelling and the street.
- 5.14.2 The successful integration of parking, for cars, motorcycles and bicycles, can be achieved by providing it in locations which are reasonably convenient, which limit opportunities for vehicle-related crime and anti-social behaviour, but which are most importantly visually inconspicuous.
- 5.14.3 Dedicating parking spaces to individual dwellings can provide the required security for the occupiers, but it does not necessarily provide the same flexibility towards variation in vehicle ownership as communal arrangements do, such as when households or occupiers change. In some cases not all parking spaces need to be allocated, and a combination of allocated and unallocated communal parking can often be the most appropriate solution, forming an integral part of overall site layout. This usually works best for new large scale residential schemes.
- 5.14.4 Parking can be provided in a variety of forms for both residents and visitors, and in respect of the nature of the development, such as individual infill or comprehensive schemes. The appropriate level of parking for the various types of residential development is set out in the adopted car parking standards.
- 5.14.5 On street parking is a historical form of parking provision, it is well overlooked and is efficient, both in terms of the amount of space required for parking and in providing for a variation in vehicle ownership. It can also have a traffic calming effect and can help in the separation of pedestrians from other traffic. It can be provided parallel to or angled from the kerb. It is now most appropriately planned as part of comprehensive schemes which include other forms of parking rather than on an ad-hoc basis within an existing street.
- 5.14.6 Often the provision of on street parking can lead to a 'line of steel' and it is important to ensure that such provision does not dominate the streetscene. The visual impact of on street parking can be minimised by breaking it up into small groups and creating separation by kerb build-outs, street furniture and/or planting. Demarcation of parking can also be achieved through these methods, as well as a variety of surface materials.



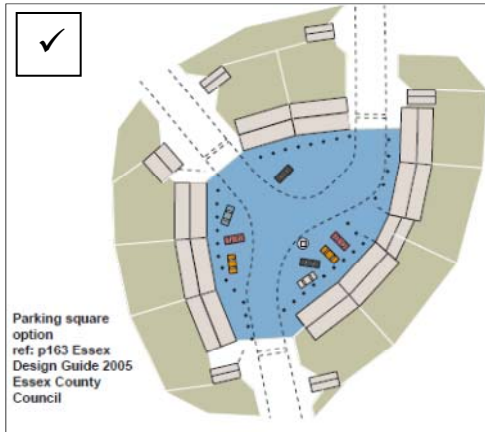
Source: Essex County Council



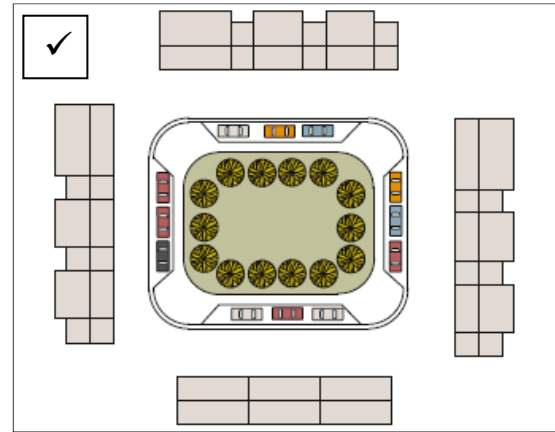
Source: Urban Place Supplement



- 5.14.7 A less traditional arrangement of on street parking can take the form of parking squares. These are hard landscaped public urban spaces where parking is allowed to take place in either a formal or informal manner. The siting of trees, planting and street furniture can be used to informally manage the parking and reduce the visual impact. Unlike traditional parking or garage courts, located to the rear of properties, often isolated from dwellings, with limited overlooking, parking squares are located to the front of dwellings with good natural surveillance and accessibility.



Source: Essex Design Guide



Source: Essex County Council
Parking Standards

- 5.14.8 In-curtilage parking is one of the most popular choices for parking, however it can have some of the most significant impacts on the public realm. Vehicles are located to the front of properties and in many cases the whole of the plot frontage is utilised by vehicles, eliminating any opportunities for landscaping to provide natural relief from the built development.



Source: CPBC



Source: CPBC

- 5.14.9 Various parking arrangements can be achieved to mitigate the impact of accommodating vehicles within plots. The simplest is to locate a garage or carport alongside the dwelling set back from the building lines, or underneath the upper storeys of a dwelling. Successful schemes appropriately integrate these elements with the new or existing dwelling, so as not to result in an alien or obtrusive feature. This approach also allows for the provision and/or retention of landscaping and boundary treatment.

5.14.10 Covered parking such as undercroft, basement or underground parking can be considered the optimum parking solution, particularly for developments within the urban area, as it enables flexibility over site layout and facilitates the creation of attractive and useful external spaces, and does not result in a vehicle dominated public realm. However consideration should be given to the visual impact larger areas of undercroft parking could have on the streetscene, with long blank elevations screening the parking behind it. The introduction of openings, such as windows or grilles, not only provide articulation to such elevations, but provide essential natural surveillance to areas which can be susceptible to crime and anti-social behaviour.

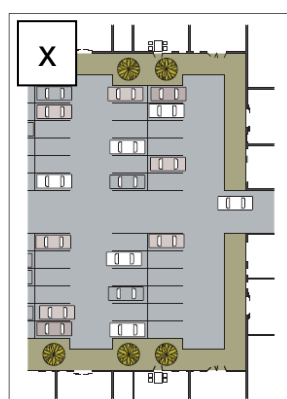


Source: Urban Place Supplement



Source: CPBC

5.14.11 Communal parking in garage and parking courts has gained a bad reputation with regard to attracting crime and anti-social behaviour. This is frequently due to poor design, with limited or no natural surveillance, with the areas being isolated from dwellings, usually to the rear of properties.

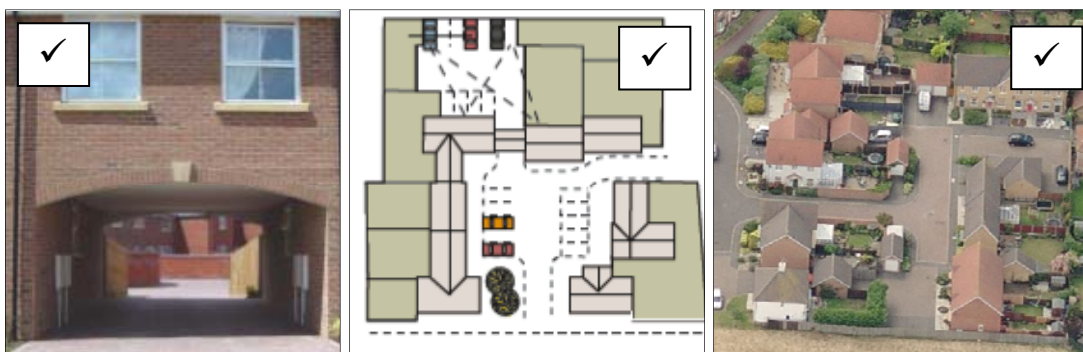


Source: Urban Place Supplement



Source: CPBC

5.14.12 However such space can work well if it exhibits a number of characteristics, such as being a place which has vehicles parked in it rather than a car park. This is achieved by the area being overlooked by adjoining houses both in respect of the space itself and its access, most effectively by the provision of a limited number of dwellings which have their primary access onto such courts. The number of parking spaces within such courtyards is also a guiding factor in ensuring the successful use of such areas. Limiting the numbers creates a less vehicle dominated area and the fragmentation of such areas by hard and soft landscaping can create a better sense of space. If parking in such formations is attractive, convenient and safe to use, it is likely to be successful.



Source: Safer Places (ODPM), Urban Place Supplement, Bing Maps

5.14.13 It is important to consider the practicalities of utilising parking spaces, such as walking round a vehicle, unloading and loading a vehicle, and cleaning or repairing a vehicle, be it an open or enclosed space. Planning for these activities at an early stage is essential. Furthermore consideration of the location and orientation of parking spaces in respect of accessing dwellings and vehicles is important. All too often parking spaces are found in such close proximity to dwellings or boundaries that they impede access or make it difficult to use, thus deterring their use. It is also important to consider the siting of parking in respect of the impact on residential amenity, particularly when considering the location of parking for flatted development.

5.14.14 Access to developments is in the first instance guided by the requirements of the Highway Authority in respect of satisfying the adoptable standards, where such accesses join the public highway. Access, servicing and turning facilities within sites need to be catered for in a safe and convenient manner for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, for all forms of residential development. Furthermore these are facilities best sited sensitively in respect of residential amenity. The incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), as part of the design can ensure that water efficiency and suitable surface water drainage can be achieved.

RDG12 - Parking & Access

The provision of all forms of parking must not dominate the public realm. All parking provision should be sited so as not to have an adverse impact on visual or residential amenity.

All forms of surface level parking, and all entrances and exits from all forms of covered parking should be located so as to be afforded a suitable level of natural surveillance.

All forms of parking should allow for space to move around vehicles facilitating access for loading and unloading, cleaning and repair of vehicles.

Access to all forms of development must be safe and convenient for all users, and the design, size, orientation and location of parking spaces should enable the spaces to be utilised conveniently and must not deter vehicles from using them. The size and layout of all forms of parking should reflect current adopted vehicle parking standards.

A high quality standard of materials should be used for the surface treatment of all parking spaces and the markings of such spaces. Where planting is incorporated into parking schemes, the species should be suitable to the location and climatic conditions, and have appropriate growth habits.

On street parking within comprehensive schemes should be provided in small groupings and is expected to be integrated into the public realm using a variety of measures including kerb build-outs, street furniture and planting.

Where enclosed ground level parking is provided as part of a dwelling all elevations that face the public realm must have articulation and fenestration. Such detailing should reflect or complement the overall architectural concept of the dwelling. Blank elevations in these locations will be refused.

Communal parking areas can be provided in formal or informal layouts, however they must be integrated with the overall design of the scheme. Such areas must incorporate elements of suitable landscaping. Where rear parking courts are provided these should seek to limit the number of spaces, and provide for a higher degree of accessibility for both pedestrians and vehicles.

Where the provision of in-curtilage surface parking for individual dwellings is visible in the public realm it should be interspersed and mitigated with suitable landscaping and boundary treatment.

Where the provision of in-curtilage parking for individual dwellings is contained within the dwelling in the form of garages (semi-integral or integral), carports and recesses, they should be an integral part of the dwelling and must be consistent with the overall architectural approach of the dwelling. It should result in well proportioned and balanced properties, and where fenestration is provided it should be aligned both vertically and horizontally, particularly when integrating new development with existing dwellings.

Where the provision of in-curtilage parking for individual dwellings takes the form of free standing structures, including garages, they must make a positive contribution to the streetscape, and must be of a design, material, scale, roof pitch and detailing which integrates with or complements primarily the dwelling, but also those present in the surrounding streetscene.

The materials used for built parking elements should integrate with or complement primarily the dwelling, but also those present in the surrounding streetscene. Parking provision should seek to incorporate SuDS in appropriate circumstances.

Access, servicing and turning facilities, for all forms of residential development, need to be catered for in a safe and convenient manner, for all users, including pedestrians and motorists. Such facilities should be sensitively sited in respect of residential amenity.

5.15 **Refuse & Recycling Storage**

5.15.1 In order to provide and maintain an attractive and healthy setting for all dwellings, it is essential that adequate, safe and convenient storage facilities for both general waste and recyclables are provided. The design and location of such facilities is fundamental to achieving this.

5.15.2 The consideration of waste storage has traditionally focused on communal areas for receptacles, such as bins, sacks and boxes, resulting from new residential developments containing flats, sheltered and special needs, and nursing homes. However the provision of waste storage, both internally and externally, is equally important for new individual dwellings, or extensions and/or alterations to existing dwellings, particularly where such development may result in the loss of existing facilities. Furthermore in some instances it may be more practical to provide communal facilities for properties, such as small groups of terraced dwellings, or small mews or cul-de-sac forms of development, where this would result in a better visual appearance to the streetscene than a proliferation of individual receptacles. This is also more practical for the refuse collectors.

5.15.3 It is important that the requirements for waste storage are considered before the detailed design work for development is undertaken in order to ensure that suitable provision can be made. If not planned appropriately receptacles can be left out on public footways or to the front of dwellings resulting in obstructions and eyesores, and a visually poor public realm.



Source: Simpler and Better
– Housing Design in Everyone's Interest CABE



Source: Google Maps

5.15.4 Minimising the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, and minimising noise and disturbance to residents is an important factor in designing such areas.

5.15.5 Waste storage areas are best located within or attached to dwellings, either in the form of a room, or an enclosure which appears as an integral part of the dwelling, such as an extension or projection. These forms of storage provide the best security and design solution.

5.15.6 If storage is unable to be accommodated in such a manner, it can be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling. The success of such buildings is in the design and materials used, and their location and screening.

5.15.7 The design and materials of a storage building will integrate if it is constructed of a style and of materials that match or complement those of the dwelling which it will serve. Such buildings are also required to be ventilated, with a paved impervious floor, which has the ability to be washed down and drained away into a suitable system for receiving potentially polluted effluent.



Source: Swan Housing Group

5.15.8 For waste storage buildings to be successfully used they need to be conveniently accessible for both occupiers of dwellings and waste collectors. Occupiers should not be expected to carry refuse and recycling over unreasonable distances or inclines. There should be room around the waste receptacles to access them, including lifting the lids and placing items in them.

5.15.9 In respect of waste collectors, storage buildings need to be of a size which allows each receptacle to be removed independently, with clear, flat, unobstructed access to and from the building. Waste collectors require the distances for wheeling of bins or collection of bags to be kept to a minimum between the waste storage point and the collection point, where the vehicles are able to be parked and waste collected.

5.15.10 Current guidance suggests that 30m is the limit for occupiers and 10m is the limit for waste collectors.

5.15.11 All developments require safe and convenient access for collection vehicles, or suitable on road stopping, with the access roads and highways being constructed of materials able to withstand the weight of the collection vehicles. Preferably suitable turning facilities should be provided within all developments, in order to prevent the need for collection vehicles to reverse. However, where there is a necessity to reverse, this should be limited to short distances only, and the route must allow clear visibility, free from sharp turns and obstacles.

RDG13 – Refuse & Recycling Storage

All forms of residential development must be provided with safe, adequate and suitable means of refuse and recycling storage to cater for all occupiers. Development which results in the loss of existing refuse and recycling facilities will not be acceptable, unless adequate replacement is provided.

The provision of refuse and recycling facilities contained within the dwelling or attached to the dwelling should be an integral part of the property and must be consistent with the overall architectural approach of the dwelling. Such facilities should result in well proportioned and balanced properties, and where fenestration is provided it should be aligned both vertically and horizontally, particularly when integrating new development with existing dwellings.

The provision of refuse and recycling facilities taking the form of free standing structures must make a positive contribution to the streetscape, and must be of a design, material, scale, roof pitch and detailing which integrates with or complements primarily the dwelling, but also those present in the surrounding streetscene.

All communal waste collection points and waste storage facilities should be provided with suitable landscaping and screening, informed by the guidance contained in RDG10 and RDG11.

Residents should not have to transport refuse and recycling unreasonable distances from their dwelling to the communal waste collection points or storage facilities. Such areas should also be accessible for waste collectors from the point at which refuse vehicles can receive the waste.

Access to and from waste collection points and storage facilities must be clear, flat and unobstructed. Any roads or service areas should be constructed to a standard which is able to withstand the weight of refuse vehicles.

Storage facilities should be provided with adequate space to allow for waste receptacles to be removed and emptied independently of each other, should provide adequate space to navigate round the receptacles, and should be of adequate height internally to allow for lids to be opened for filling.

Any waste storage facilities should provide for adequate ventilation internally and should incorporate measures to control the emission of smells externally. Such facilities should also be designed to incorporate security measures to ensure protection from vandalism and vermin.

5.16 Design Review

- 5.16.1 A number of Local Authorities do not have in house specialists to fully and adequately assess the detailed design of development, particularly large scale forms of development. As a result they use independent design advisory panels to help them assess the design aspects of planning applications. The Panels can operate at a local, regional or national level, and panellists are usually drawn from a range of built environment professions.
- 5.16.2 Their skills and experience can be more fully utilised by being involved at an early stage in the planning process. This involves early engagement with the developer and the Local Authority.
- 5.16.3 Undertaking a design review is likely to result in potential changes being recommended for schemes. However a good scheme, underpinned by a clear rationale for the design decisions made, is more likely to benefit from a positive review when submitted for planning approval.
- 5.16.4 Schemes which are seen at the earliest possible stage of the development process are most likely to result in successful outcomes, in the form of high quality integrated design. A multiple review process, incorporating both pre-application and formal planning application stages, allows for a scheme to evolve and progress to the most suitable, and best possible, result for a site. Design reviews best form part of the pre-application process prior to the formal submission of a planning application.

RDG14 - Design Review

Applicants are encouraged to engage in a relevant Design Review process where appropriate. This should initially form part of the pre-application process, with further review panels throughout the formal planning application process if required.

5.17 **Design Codes**

5.17.1 It is important to ensure that larger sites are developed in a comprehensive manner in respect of design. Such sites are commonly undertaken in phases, by a number of different developers, which can lead to developers imposing their own style of design. This may not be consistent with the overall character of the site, and can result in radical changes in character across a scheme, which may not be acceptable.

5.17.2 Design codes are a distinct form of design guidance comprising a set of written and illustrative rules that establish the two and three dimensional design elements of a particular development or area, and how these elements relate to one another without establishing the overall outcome.

5.17.3 Design codes are focused around the design characteristics that are considered important to achieve, and they establish the 'must have' design elements to run through the scheme and within specific 'character' areas. In so doing, codes help to provide continuity in quality and consistency over time.



Urban
Boulevard

Source: Upton Design Code



Neighbourhood
Spine



Neighbourhood
General



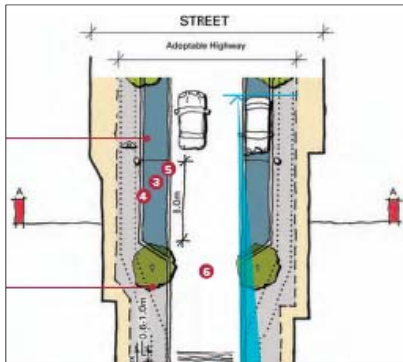
Neighbourhood
Edge

5.17.4 Such design elements can include architectural standards and styles, building types, landmarks, vistas and focal points, specific street character, massing, scale, layout roofscape, materials, landscaping and open spaces.

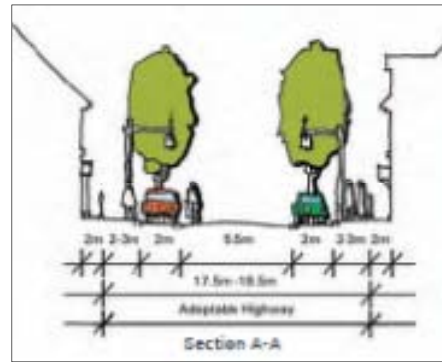
5.17.5 They need to be based upon a specific design vision for a site or an area, but can be tailored to reflect local needs and circumstances, which results in a transparent, streamlined and collaborative approach.



Typical building context in a Design Code
Source: Upton Design Code



Typical street layout in a Design Code
Source: Upton Design Code



Typical street layout in a Design Code
Source: Upton Design Code

5.17.6 Design codes are a valuable tool in assisting planners, designers and developers to respond to policy context, and can be integrated into the planning, design and development processes that shape the built environment. Furthermore they provide clarity over what constitutes acceptable design quality for a particular site or area.

5.17.7 Design codes can play a major role in delivering better quality development. They also have a significant role to play in delivering a more certain design and development process and, if properly managed, can provide the focus around which stakeholders can integrate their activities, delivering in the process a more coordinated and consensus driven approach.

RDG15 – Design Codes

Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Local Planning Authority at an early stage in the design process in order to develop appropriate design codes.

All large scale residential schemes must be accompanied by a detailed design rationale and design code.

5.18 **Liveable Homes**

- 5.18.1 Space is an important factor when choosing a home, however in the current climate many of the newly constructed dwellings are not considered to be large enough.
- 5.18.2 Housing standards have frequently been used to shape the quality of new dwellings since the late 19th Century, with space standards historically being a common feature for publically funded housing. More recently the focus has shifted towards the external elements of schemes, such as appearance and form, rather than the internal layout and space of dwellings.
- 5.18.3 Joseph Rowntree Foundations studies from 1994 and 2004 have indicated that housebuilders are constructing smaller homes. In 1994 92% of one bedroomed dwellings could comfortably accommodate two people, with 8% accommodating one person. However in 2004 only 80% of properties could comfortably accommodate two people, with an increase to 20% of one bedroom dwellings that were only fit for one person.
- 5.18.4 At its basic level the space in a home impacts on how and where people prepare and eat food, deal with household waste and recycling, and store possessions. It also impacts on how the living space looks and feels to inhabit, what furniture can be used and the activities it enables, whether people can socialise with guests or other members of the household, how much privacy people have for studying, working, relaxing or leisure, and whether there is room for additional changes to the environment if changes in circumstances or health occur.
- 5.18.5 A lack of space can therefore impact on the basic lifestyle needs of occupiers. In extreme cases the lack of adequate space for a household can also have significant impacts on health and family relationships.
- 5.18.6 The Parker Morris Committee report Homes for Today & Tomorrow of 1961 shifted emphasis towards designing homes to concentrate on satisfying the requirements of the families that are likely to live in them, rather than focusing on working out a pattern of room areas that comply with standards as was the case of the 1919 and 1944 Committees. A table of recommended standards for floor space was devised dictating the square feet needed room by room according to the number of people to live within the home, the furniture and activities to be undertaken in the rooms and the number of storeys within the home, rather than number of bedrooms.
- 5.18.7 Whilst lifestyles, and the associated furniture, possessions and activities may have evolved since the 1960's it is clear that there is scope for similar standards to apply to development now and in the future.
- 5.18.8 The Parker Morris standards were removed by Government in the 1980's on the basis that the market would provide the right type and size of homes. However research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) indicates that dwellings are getting smaller.

5.18.9 New minimum space requirements based on daily activities and the space needed for them have recently been produced by the Greater London Authority (GLA) set out in The London Plan 2011. These took a functional approach to calculate the minimum space required for each room (based on occupancy) to meet the Lifetime Home Standard, which comprises a set of 16 criteria relating to room and circulation space, and to accommodate a basic inventory of furniture that is commonly required in particular rooms relative to occupancy, as well as allowing adequate access and activity space.

The GLA standards are set out in the table below.

	Dwelling Type (bedroom / persons-bed spaces)	Gross Internal Floor Area (sqm)
Flats	1 person	37
	1 bedroom 2 person	50
	2 bedroom 3 person	61
	2 bedroom 4 person	70
	3 bedroom 4 person	74
	3 bedroom 5 person	86
	3 bedroom 6 person	95
	4 bedroom 5 person	90
	4 bedroom 6 person	99
2 storey houses	2 bedroom 4 person	83
	3 bedroom 4 person	87
	3 bedroom 5 person	96
	4 bedroom 5 person	100
	4 bedroom 6 person	107
3 storey houses	3 bedroom 5 person	102
	4 bedroom 5 person	106
	4 bedroom 6 person	113
	For dwellings designed for more than 6 people	10m ² added for each additional person

Source: The London Plan 2011 (GLA)

Floor area (m ²) by housing type	1B 2P (Flat)	2B 3P (Flat or Bungalow)	2B 3P (2-storey house)	2B 4P (Flat or Bungalow)	2B 4P (2-storey house)	3B 5P (Flat or Bungalow)	3B 5P (2-storey house)	3B 5P (3-storey house)	4B 6P (Flat or Bungalow)	4B 6P (2-storey house)	4B 6P (3-storey house)
Draft Replacement London Plan Policy 3.5 (2009)	50	61	x	70	83	86	96	102	99	107	113
Parker Morris, Homes for Today & Tomorrow (1961) ¹¹⁷	45	60	x	73	79	82	89	98	89	97	102
HCA proposed national standards (2010)	48	61	71	70	80	86	96	102	99	108	114
Housing Corporation - ranges from HQI v4 (2008)	45-50	57-67	57-67	67-75	67-75	75-85	82-85	85-95	85-95	95-100	100-105
English Partnerships Quality Standards (2007)	51	66	66	77	77	93	93	93	106	106	106
NHF Standards and Quality in Development (2008)	50	61	x	70	82	86	96	102	x	108	114
Mid Sussex District Council, Dwelling Space Standards SPD (2009)	51	66	77	66	77	93	93	93	111	111	111
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Housing Standards SPG (2002)	44.5	57	x	57	x	70	72-74.5	x	80.5	82-85	94
London Borough of Southwark Residential Design Standards SPD (2008)	45	60	x	60	x	75	x	x	90	x	x
Dublin City Development Plan (2007)	55	80-90	80-90	80-90	80-90	100	100	100	x	x	x

Source: Housing Design Standards Evidence Base – July 2010 - GLA

5.18.10 It is noted that using floor space in square metres is often difficult to visualise, RIBA suggest that space is best expressed in terms of a floor plan indicating how furniture can fit in a room. They have produced a list indicating how floor space translates into equivalent furniture or a room, as well as some floor plans clearly showing where the additional space is utilised. These are illustrated below.

Space in sqm	Equivalent furniture or room ^[4]
0.5	Coffee table A coffee table is about 0.5 sqm
1	Writing Desk or Dressing Table Space for a desk and chair for 1 person: 1.3 sqm Space for a dressing table and stool: 1.3 sqm
2	Three seat sofa Space for a 3 seat sofa and room in front for feet: 2.1 sqm
3	Single Bed Space for a single bed and a bedside table: 2.9 sqm
5	Double Bed Space for a double bed and two bedside tables: 4.8 sqm
6	Kitchen A galley kitchen adequate for a household with up to 3 people: 5.5 sqm
8	Single bedroom A main bedroom adequate for one person: 8 sqm
9	Dining kitchen for 2 people or a dining table for 4 people A dining kitchen adequate for a 2 person household: 9 sqm Space for a dining table, seats and circulation space for 4 people: ^[4] 8.4 sqm
11	Double bedroom or a dining table for 6 people A main bedroom adequate for two people: 11 sqm Space for a dining table, seats and circulation space for 6 people: 10.23 sqm
14	Living room A living room with a dining area for a 2 person household: 14 sqm

Source: The Case for Space – The size of England's New Homes – RIBA





Source: The Case for Space – The size of England's New Homes – RIBA

- 5.18.11 As well as the consideration of physical internal space, it is important that rooms provide suitable living conditions in terms of environment. This relates to the provision of adequate natural daylight and ventilation for all habitable rooms.
- 5.18.12 One of the main contributions to poor internal living conditions for occupiers, is the provision of high level, fixed shut, or obscured glazed windows, or combinations of these. They lead to rooms with limited or no natural light or ventilation, and do not provide suitable living conditions for occupiers. These types of windows are only considered appropriate for rooms which are not occupied for any significant length of time, and/or require a high degree of privacy, such as landings, staircases, bathrooms, and en-suites.
- 5.18.13 More generally with regard to daylight, windows should be designed to suit the room they serve, such as generously sized windows for living spaces, ensuring good natural light and the potential for views, including from a seated position, and obscure glazed windows for bathrooms, ensuring good levels of privacy for the occupiers.
- 5.18.14 With regard to ventilation there should be at least one opening light in each habitable room, which is both approachable and usable by a wide range of people, including those with restricted movement and reach.

5.18.15 These measures are in line with the criteria set out in the Lifetime Homes Standard. The Building Research Establishment also provide detailed advice on enabling good levels of daylight and sunlight for new and existing properties, as well as ventilation for properties.

RDG16 – Liveable Homes

All new dwellings should provide appropriate internal space and circulation, which reflect the character of the surrounding area, but also reflect current best practice, examples of which are set out in the supporting text.

All new dwellings should meet the existing and future needs of occupiers over their lifetime without the need for extensive alteration or adaption.

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