

DESIGN IN CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE: 5.00 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/residential_tcm3-2099.pdf

Note: bold text is in original CBC document.

Red text is extra-pertinent!

5.01 Introduction

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This Supplement addresses aspects of design with respect to individual houses, groups of houses in a street, and the environment immediately around the house, most notably private front and rear gardens.

5.02.01

The achievement of absolute visual privacy is not usually possible and is not necessarily desirable, as it would reduce social contact and could lead to a feeling of insecurity. In order to ensure visual privacy back to back distances will be enforced. In conventional suburban environments, a 'rule of thumb' of approximately **21 metres** distance between the rear of one **2 storey** property and the rear of another facing it (at first floor level in both instances), is an acceptable norm, but there may be circumstances where lower distances are acceptable.

5.02 Achieving Privacy through Design

p 2 5.02.02

Side and rear boundary treatment should be at least **1.8m** in height which will supplement this basic level of privacy.

p 3 5.02.03

Three storey dwellings and above heights would require an increase in distance if this basic standard was applied.

5.02.04

In higher density areas a more three-dimensional approach to achieving acceptable levels of privacy is required. Effective visual privacy can be achieved through:

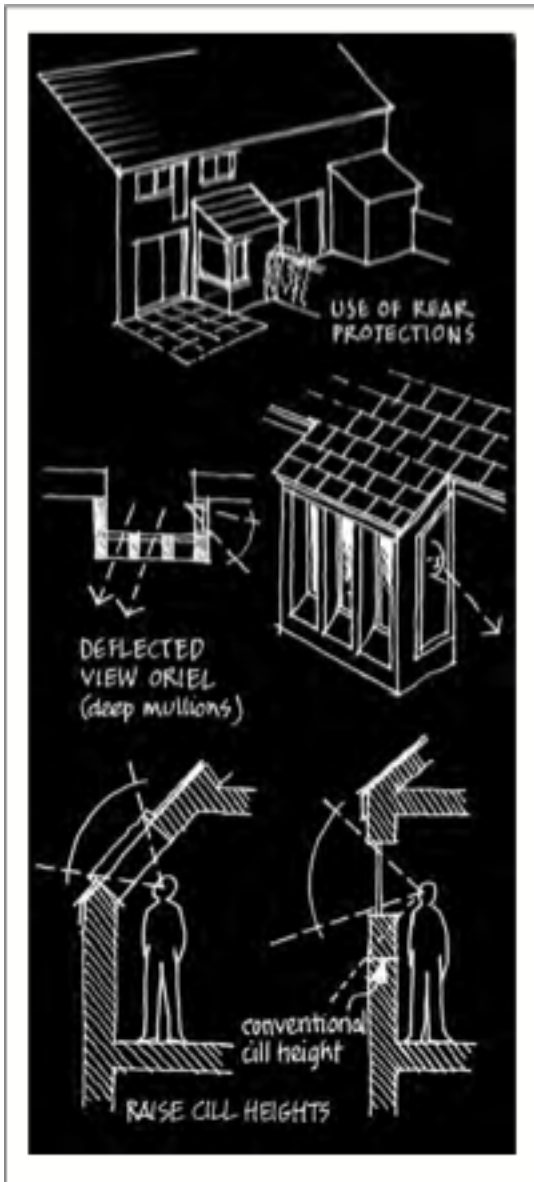
- The careful relationship of habitable rooms of a dwelling in relationship to others (either in the proposed scheme or existing neighbours)
- The relationship of one dwelling with another (e.g. at angles to each other)
- The height, size and shape of upper floor windows, compatible with providing means of escape (Building Regulations).
- The use of single aspect or internal courtyard housing units
- The design of screen walls and the specification of tree species to ensure privacy and colour

The use of garages, bicycle stores and other buildings requiring little or no outlook.

5.02.05 Traditional buildings and layouts found in Central Bedfordshire can provide some useful indications of established ways in which privacy at relatively high densities have been accomplished, for example the burgage plots in Ampthill and intimate groups of buildings in most small settlements, such as Tebworth, Ridgmont and Clophill.

5.02.06 Aural privacy is a necessity in an environment where domestic music systems

and vehicle noise can be a nuisance. 5.02.07 Density of wall construction, double or triple- glazing, and the absorbency of external materials (trees, planting and timber finishes) can all help to ameliorate the worst aspects of noise transmission.



Examples of protecting privacy to avoid looking down directly onto existing property – need as established:
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p 38 Adjacent Buildings
Behind 7 – 15 Barton Road proposes houses with ground level higher than the top of the upper storey window of number 11, which is overlooked, with an 8m garden on plan.

5.06 Gardens and Private Amenity Space

p 12 5.06.01

It is important for both children and adults to have access to some private or at least, semi- private outdoor space. In the case of non-flatted developments, this can most easily be provided in the form of a private enclosed garden. The provision of a garden also makes it easier to provide outside covered storage for items such as bicycles, garden tools, garden furniture and outdoor toys.

5.06.02

A private outdoor space is one which is not overlooked from the street or other public place.

5.06.03

In determining the appropriate garden size, consideration should be given to ensuring

that the privacy of the dwelling is not compromised through overlooking or overshadowing from adjoining properties. Where gardens include existing mature trees, gardens will need to be larger to provide space for trees.

5.06.04 (NOTE: CBC document bolds this)

The minimum depth for all rear gardens should be 10m to ensure both that suitable levels of privacy are maintained, and that reasonable sized gardens are created. Wider frontage properties will therefore tend to provide larger gardens. Rear gardens for three and four bedroom homes should ideally be about 100sqm but generally no less than 60sqm.

It is however accepted that garden size will vary according to property size with occupants of smaller homes that may have no children potentially wanting smaller gardens than those with larger homes having more children. The below table outlines a sliding scale for garden sizes based on size of property. These dimensions provide a modestly sized garden but in most cases can accommodate a sitting out area, clothes drying area, small shed and area of play as well as space to plant shrubs and small trees. To accommodate these items, they should not be awkwardly shaped or very narrow. For example, where a garden tapers to a narrow point and the plot size is not yet fixed, it will be necessary to compensate for the loss of area by extending the length of the garden. Similarly minimum areas should include side gardens to account for awkwardly shaped plots where the garden can't be lengthened.

Private garden requirements for houses

Ideally both the minimum area and minimum depth should be met. It is however recognised that in certain circumstances, such as infill sites, this may not be possible. In these cases one of the standards should be met as a minimum.

Private garden requirements for houses (reproduced here)

Number of bedrooms	Minimum areas (m ²) based on 5m width	Minimum depth (m)
2	50	10
3+	60	12

5.06.06

An individual private garden should preferably include an area which is not directly overlooked by other residents this is usually referred to as the 'patio area'.

5.10 Designing House types d. Three Storey Houses:

P 25 5.10.14

Generally the three storey house should be used in the higher density areas of a scheme, enclosing urban spaces. They can also be used successfully to front a formal avenue. Single groups of two or three can be used as corner elements or as accents in the street scene. It is unlikely that the whole or most of any scheme will be three storey, except in higher density in infill situations.

5.13 Infills and Backland Development

p 37 5.13.01

Much of the guidance within this supplement and in particular the Placemaking Principles Supplement relates to larger scale development involving the creation of new street networks and block structures. However, the principles of good urban design/placemaking are just as relevant to small-scale infill development whether it be small plots of vacant land or intensification of existing plots through redevelopment or by developing in the rear gardens of large houses.

5.13.02

Whilst there may be a general justification for this approach particularly in small villages where it may help retain or enhance the provision of facilities and shops, redevelopment should not take place at the expense or loss of the positive aspects of the character of the street scene, the area as a whole, **or the unacceptable loss of amenity of the original house on the plot, or its neighbours.** Any development should enhance the existing positive character

5.13.06 **Assessing Capacity**

The character of the streetscene, the adjacent residential area, the plot and the house should be appraised to assess the amount, layout and form of development which may be appropriate. ... (bungalows recommended for part of the site initially)

5.13.09 **The Adjacent Residential Area**

The character of the area in terms of continuity of frontage, setbacks, building types, landscape, privacy etc should be considered in the design and layout of new development. **Where a rear garden adjoins countryside, the existing character of the interface between the plot and the countryside should influence the amount of proposed development.**

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5.13.10

Adjacent Buildings

The scale/plot coverage, height, roofline, materials, fenestration and details should be noted and the proposed development should complement them. New development should: Avoid dominating adjacent buildings Respect privacy of adjacent buildings

5.13.11

The Site or Plot

Existing features on the site or plot, which contribute to area character, especially specimen trees, walls, ponds etc. should be considered as locally distinctive.

5.13.12

The setting and amenity of the adjacent house/ housing should be established. It is essential that the proposed development does not result in it being cramped or 'hemmed in' by new development. Access and parking should not dominate the scheme.

5.15 Checklist of Key Considerations

p 50

i Have you considered distances from neighbouring properties to achieve appropriate levels of privacy?

These may be less in 'infill' situations but the use of non-habitable rooms or screening could be considered.

vi Have you noted the new garden area and depth standards and left sufficient space on your layout?