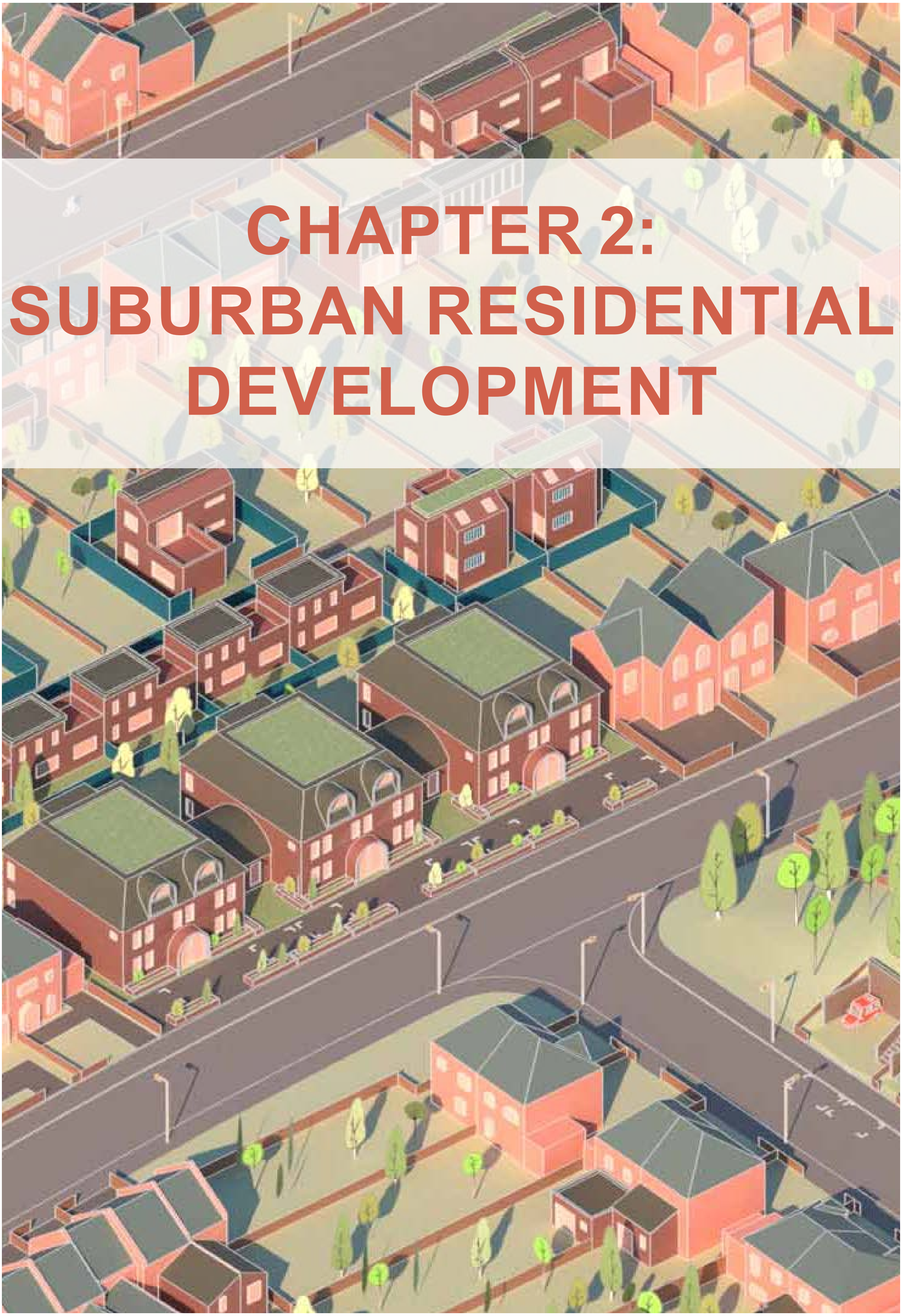
CHAPTER 2: SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCTION

2.1 SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1 This section of the SPD is relevant to the delivery of new homes through conversion or redevelopment of existing properties or new housing built in rear gardens and back lands.

2.1.2 The Croydon Local Plan has identified that some existing residential areas have the capacity to accommodate growth without significant change to its character. In these locations, to accommodate the target for additional homes in the suburbs, new residential units may be created through the interventions described in Figures 2.1a – 2.1e.

2.1.3 These approaches to development are set out in Table 6.4 of the Croydon Local Plan and the supporting text. The guidance set out in this section responds to Policies DM10.1 – DM10.10 of the Croydon Local Plan regarding design and density, including ensuring growth is accommodated without significant change to the character of an area.

CONVERSION

Figure 2.1a: The conversion or subdivision of a large buildings into multiple dwellings without any major alterations to the size of the building.

ADDITION

Figure 2.1b: A rooftop addition to an existing development that provides new homes.

IN-FILL INCLUDING PLOT SUBDIVISION

Figure 2.1c: The filling of gaps and left over spaces between existing properties in a scheme by Peter Barber Architects. Infilling may also include the subdivision of large plots of land into smaller parcels with a layout that complements the existing urban pattern. (Photo: Morley von Sternberg)

REAR GARDEN DEVELOPMENT

Figure 2.1d: The construction of new buildings in rear gardens of existing properties in a design by Dallas–Pierce–Quintero that builds along the boundary wall. (Photo: David Butler)

REGENERATION

Figure 2.1e: The replacement of the existing buildings (including the replacement of detached or semi-detached houses with flats) with a development that increases the density and massing. The proposal alongside was designed by Proctor & Matthews Architects.

2.2 OVERARCHING DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES FOR SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

2.2.1 Developments in suburban locations seeking to deliver new homes will be expected to meet the overarching development principles below which support the strategic objectives and Strategic Policies SP2 and SP4 of the Croydon Local Plan:

- Provide the right mix of homes in the right location
- Improve or positively contribute to local character
- Minimise impact on neighbouring amenity as far as possible
- Safeguard for future development of neighbouring sites
- Embody environmentally sustainable development.

Figure 2.2a: Back land development providing family homes on a site to the rear of properties on Church Road, Upper Norwood.

OPTIMISING SITES

2.3 DELIVERING THE RIGHT HOMES

HOUSING MIX & DEVELOPMENT TYPE

2.3.1 Croydon requires, in Policy SP2.1 of the Croydon Local Plan, a mix of homes to cater to the evolving and growing population, and while many suburban sites present opportunities to deliver a mix of homes, the need to provide and protect family sized homes is set out in Policy DM1.1 of the Croydon Local Plan.

2.3.2 Policy SP2.7 sets a strategic target of 30% of new homes to have three or more bedrooms with Policy DM1 establishing how this will be achieved on specific sites of 10 or more units. Developments on sites under 10 units are also encouraged to deliver homes with three or more bedrooms. In some cases this is potentially at the expense of delivering a larger quantity of smaller 1 or 2 bedroom units if the site specifics are such.

2.3.3 Developments should be designed to ensure that family sized units:

- Where located above ground level, demonstrate the site constraints which prevent ground floor family sized units.
- Where located above ground level, include a directly accessible balcony or terrace, as well as access to shared outdoor amenity space with grassed areas appropriate for play. This shared outdoor amenity space should be easily accessible from the indoor communal space of a development (Refer to Section 2.34 for guidance).

2.3.4 Table 6.5 of the Croydon Local Plan lists the suitable development of various local character types in the borough. Development should be in accordance with Policy DM10 and Table 6.5 of the Croydon Local Plan.

EFFICIENT USE OF SITES

2.3.5 Development proposals should be designed to:

- Ensure they make the best use of the site. This may include the provision of higher density housing such as terraced houses and flats, rather than detached houses; and
- Where possible, seek to combine sites to create a larger development potential (Refer to Section 2.4 for guidance).

2.3.6 The Local Planning Authority will not support proposals which are considered to be an under-provision of a site. Applicants must not intentionally circumvent the affordable housing provision of the Croydon Local Plan by delivering 9 unit schemes where the site can accommodate the delivery of 10 or more units. A development proposal that seeks to deliver a scheme that could form part of a larger potential development on the same or adjoining land will be assessed as an application for the greater development potential.

2.4 ADJOINING SITES AND COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT

COMBINING SITES

2.4.1 Where sites present the potential to be developed to achieve comprehensive development in conjunction with neighbouring plots, development proposals should seek to bring sites forward collaboratively.

2.4.2 By bringing neighbouring sites forward for development together, proposals have the opportunity to:

- Optimise the development potential of sites to provide more homes. The footprint of a development that spans two (2) sites is typically larger than the combined footprint of two (2) separate developments on neighbouring sites, providing an uplift in the potential number of homes. This may be achieved through additional heights and/or larger floorplates (Refer to Figure 2.4a).
- Reduce overhead and construction costs.
- Create a more holistic approach to development in the area, allowing a more resolved approach to character, issues of overlooking, site access and servicing.

2.4.3 Where combining sites would result in building across existing street-facing plot boundaries applicants should refer to Section 2.15 to avoid creating over-bearing developments that disrupt the rhythm of a street.

PROTECTING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

2.4.4 Development proposals must not prejudice the development potential of neighbouring sites, specifically in regards to access (Refer to Section 2.29 for guidance), daylight, sunlight and overlooking (Refer to Section 2.9 for guidance). Where applicable, proposals may be required to demonstrate how a potential development on a neighbouring site may come forward following the development of their site.

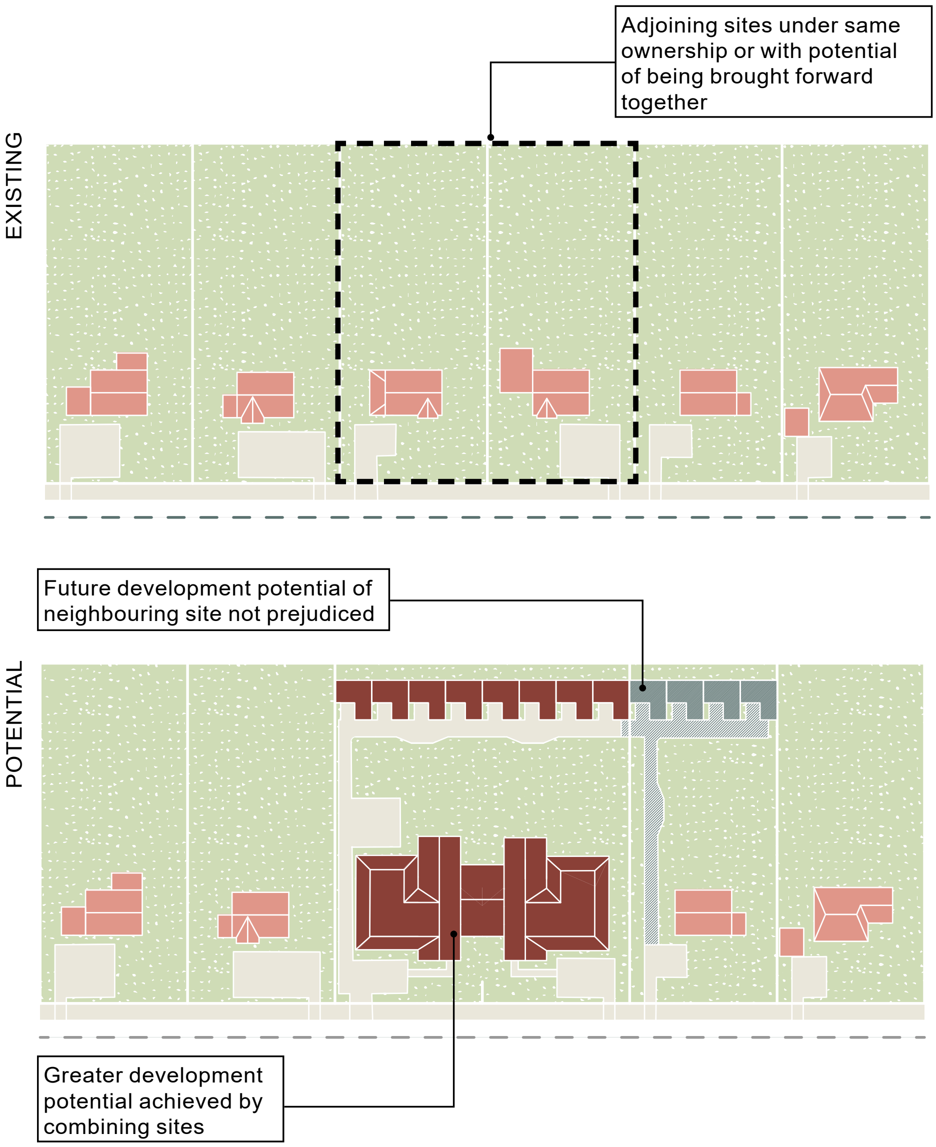


Figure 2.4a - Combining adjoining sites to provide greater development potential.

2.5 CHANGE OF USE AND CONVERSIONS

2.5.1 Suburban blocks with back lands, as well as spaces above shops, present opportunities for a change of use, dependent on Croydon Local Plan policies.

2.5.2 Where existing houses or spaces above shops are converted to provide new dwellings, consideration must be given to the design and layout to ensure awkward layouts and limited access to natural light is avoided. All new dwellings as a result of conversions must meet minimum space standards. Where spaces above shops which front busy roads are converted or developed into flats, bedrooms should generally be located away from the road.

Figure 2.5a: Oval Mews, before redevelopment with a change of use.

Figure 2.5b: Oval Mews, after redevelopment with a change of use by Chartwell Land & New Homes.

2.6 CONNECTIVITY

2.6.1 The growth of the suburban population means an increased demand on public transport services, resulting in a need to deliver increased public transport capacity and provision.

2.6.2 Whilst intensification may come forward gradually over time, there is the clear need for a holistic, forward-looking approach to infrastructure and supporting services. This should put people, and their health, at the centre of the design of our neighbourhoods, in line with TfL's Healthy Street Approach[18]. Croydon Council is committed to working with TfL and other service providers to ensure suburban growth is delivered in conjunction with adequate access to active and public transport facilities. The Croydon Local Plan, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the London Plan[19] provide detail on this.

2.6.3 On-site parking provision will be restricted in line with the evolving London Plan[19] maximum standards and minimal necessary car parking will be the starting point for all development proposals.

2.6.4 The borough will encourage lower parking provision than the maximum car parking standards set in both the current and draft new London Plan in locations that meet the following criteria and on a case by case basis:

- Site is within a controlled parking zone (or where one is under development);
- Site is within an area of moderate to good connectivity to the wider public transport network and the Growth Zone by public transport, walking and cycling (PTAL 4 and above);
- Site is in an area that will be subject to future public transport or walking and cycling improvements as part of the Growth Zone delivery proposals or Mayor's Transport Strategy proposals that will result in it having moderate to good connectivity (PTAL 4 and above).

2.6.5 In areas of PTAL 4 or more or where there are areas of existing parking stress (Refer to Policy DM30(a) of the Croydon Local Plan), to make the development acceptable, the Council will require the development to be permit-free whereby residents will be restricted from applying for on-street parking permits through the use of legal S106 agreements where existing Controlled Parking Zone exists.

2.6.6 Appropriate disabled persons parking for Blue Badge holders will be provided in accordance with the London Plan[19].

2.6.7 Parking spaces within communal car parking facilities should be leased rather than sold.

18 Refer to https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/how-we-work/planning-for-the-future/healthy-streets

Figure 2.6a: Electric bikes allow easier commuting in hilly areas. (Photo: Road.cc)

Figure 2.6b: On-street shared cycle stores.

Figure 2.6c: Trams connecting into suburban locations.

Figure 2.6d: Bus routes connecting into suburban locations.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FACILITIES

2.6.8 In order to realise the development potential and intensification of the suburbs, there is a need to improve the connectivity and public transport accessibility of these areas which can be delivered through new types of flexible bus, taxi-bus services and new cycle routes. The following sustainable transport facilities and provision will need to be provided, where appropriate, for all new residential developments and will be necessary to enable an acceptable level of minimal parking provision:

- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure should be provided in accordance with London Plan[19] standards;
- A Parking Design & Management Plan needs to be submitted for all applications which include car parking provision setting out how the car parking will be designed and managed;
- A Travel Plan Statement will be required for all developments that the Council considers would generate significant amounts of movements in relation to the existing context. This will be judged on a case by case basis considering factors such as existing parking stress, PTAL, adjacent site uses and cumulative impact of development in an area. The statement should respond to the particular concerns highlighted by the Council, outlining how the residents will be informed about the sustainable travel options in their area and how and why there are restrictions on their parking provision;
- Active transport routes, including better connections for pedestrians and cycle lanes. Particular emphasis will be placed on the use of electric bikes which present a good solution to hills. The use of both electric and standard bikes can greatly increase access to public transport; in the time taken to walk to a bus stop or station (built into TfL's PTAL model) a far greater distance can be cycled, potentially transforming PTALs;
- Secure cycle parking provision in accordance with the London Plan[19], including the provision of charging points for electric bicycles (e-bikes). Consideration of parking for cargo bikes for family homes is strongly encouraged;
- Car Club parking space provision should be in line with the requirements in Table 10.1 of the Croydon Local Plan. Where suburban residential developments present an opportunity to provide additional car club spaces or membership to nearby schemes, the Council will encourage this.
- Future bus services - On demand bus services are expected to start operating in suburban areas that currently cannot support dedicated TfL bus routes. With future transport options[20], it is anticipated that connected and autonomous[21] (also known as driverless) bus services will be operating in suburban locations in a few decades, as well as an increased number of traditional bus services. The provision of these services will strengthen the existing transport network and allow areas lacking in access to public transport to be better connected.

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19 As amended from time to time.

20 Refer to: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/future_transport_report_-_final.pdf for further information.

21 Refer to: https://www.smmt.co.uk/2018/05/worlds-first-autonomous-bus-service-begins/ for further information.

Figure 2.6e: Development of a larger scale designed by Peter Barber Architects is succesfully integrated into the context through a stepped form on the top floor and careful choice of high-quality materials that respond to local character. (Photo: Morley von Sternberg)

Figure 2.6f: A development of flats designed by Haworth Tompkins that uses the form of the balconies to add interest to an otherwise simple but well-designed facade giving character to a contemporary proposal. (Photo: Philip Vile)

CHARACTER

2.7 DEFINING CHARACTER

CHARACTER IS IDENTIFIED BY THE GROUP OF QUALITIES THAT MAKE IT DISTINCTIVE, INCLUDING THE COLLECTIVE APPEARANCE OF BUILDINGS, STREETS OR LOCAL AREAS AND CAN BE BOTH HISTORIC AND CONTEMPORARY. THIS MAY INCLUDE STREET LAYOUTS, BUILDING FORMS AND POSITIONING, LANDSCAPING, MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS.

2.7.1 The built character of an area is not defined by the people who live there, but rather the physical characteristics that it is composed of. Character can change over time and it should be acknowledged that well-designed proposals can have a positive effect on an area. This means that new types of dwelling can be integrated into an existing community.

2.7.2 Development does not need to replicate existing qualities, but should seek to respond to character through one of the approaches outlined in Section 2.8. Development should seek to evolve the character in a manner that enhances the neighbourhoods as enjoyable places to live, work and play. This can be achieved through pursuing development that references and reinforces existing architectural styles or introduces new well-designed architectural styles that add interest to the area. This does not exclude increased building sizes.

2.7.3 Each of Croydon's 16 Places has a distinct character. Applicants should consider the area they are working in and for more detail on the character of the place refer to the Borough Character Appraisal[22]. Some areas within Croydon are defined by the predominance of certain types of homes; the physical characteristics that help to define different types of housing are detailed in the Borough's Character Typology document[23]. Physical constraints that can inform the character of an area include, but are not limited to:

- The layout of streets and the relationship of built form to the street and other buildings;
- The predominance and/or design of landscaping along the street and within plots, including hardstanding;
- The layout of plots and how this informs the streetscene, including boundaries and entrances;
- The form of building footprints and the shape of roofs;
- Materials used on buildings, boundaries and hardstanding;
- Size, style and positioning of windows, architectural details & features.

2.7.4 Applicants should undertake contextual analysis that identifies the positive physical characteristics of an area and informs the approach to character for a development proposal as set out in Section 2.8. An example of contextual analysis is provided in Figure 2.7a.

2.7.5 There are many areas within the borough that have predominant physical characteristics; it is expected that through growth in suburban locations that some of the physical characteristics of these areas will evolve to accommodate the homes we need. Whilst physical characteristics may evolve, the sense of a place that defines its character should be enhanced through development as outlined in Policies DM10.1 – DM10.10 of the Croydon Local Plan. For the Areas of Focussed Intensification, greater flexibility in responding to existing character will be allowed to achieve higher densities across the areas as per Policy DM10.11. However, it is expected that developments should still demonstrate a clear approach to character in line with the guidance in Section 2.8 and that collectively developments in these area will contribute to the gradual change in character.

22 A document which identifies and analyses the character of the Places in Croydon. Available at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Borough%20Character%20Appraisal.pdf

23 A study of the different types of housing in Croydon, based on a range of criteria and characteristics. This document supports the Borough Character Appraisal by giving a typological explanation of housing in Croydon. Available in the Urban Design, Local Character and Heritage section of the local plan evidence at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework.

Figure 2.7a - Contextual analysis of local character that has informed the appearance of a proposal. This figure demonstrates one possible approach and such analysis should allow for creative responses and does not necessarily require existing forms, materials and details to be replicated. (Images: MATA Architects)

2.8 APPROACHES TO CHARACTER

2.8.1 Development proposals should identify characteristics of the area and how they have been responded to, in accordance with Policy DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan. Crucially, respond does not mean replicate and allows for interpretation of existing character to create something new that enhances the area and its character. In developing an approach to character, applicants should refer to Section 2.7 of this guide to help identify the existing character.

2.8.2 The following three (3) broad approaches to how to respond to local character in the design of new development have been identified. Applicants should seek to follow one of the approaches below and will be expected to justify why the particular approach that they take has been employed, and how it is manifested in the design of the proposal.

INNOVATIVE AND ORIGINAL

2.8.3 Schemes should use unique solutions that respond to the context of the site through contemporary use of form, materiality and detailing. This may be different from the predominant local character, but must respect existing character and not create any negative impacts on it, and will only be acceptable where there is a demonstration of high-quality design in the proposal. As per the NPPF, *innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles should not be stifled*. Areas of an inconsistent character can present a compelling opportunity to pursue an innovative and original approach, as unique additions to such an area may positively evolve its character. However, this does not limit the innovative and original approach to areas with inconsistent character.

Figure 2.8a: Eagle Hill - example of an Innovative and Original approach designed by Coffey Architects. Use of contemporary form and materials carefully arranged on a back land site (formerly occupied by garages) to create a visual connection with the street. The form is designed to allow residents to look onto their own courtyards rather than out to neighbouring gardens, making use of the sloping site to maximise the delivery of units. Refer section 2.42 for more details on this case study.

CONTEMPORARY REINTERPRETATION

2.8.4 Schemes could seek to create a development that reads as contemporary whilst working with traditional character forms and/or features and materials predominant in an area. When pursuing a contemporary reinterpretation approach, it is often possible to successfully integrate contemporary details into traditional forms or traditional detailing into contemporary forms. Contemporary reinterpretation should not allow for the poor marrying of architectural styles, or poorly applied features or pastiche.

Figure 2.8b: Coombe Road - an example of a Contemporary Reinterpretation approach designed by Common Ground Architects. The massing and materials of the proposal refer to the surrounding buildings, but distinguishes itself through the folded form of the roof and contemporary detailing. The proposal delivers several new homes across two buildings.

SYMPATHETIC AND FAITHFUL

2.8.5 Schemes should closely relate to the existing surrounding typologies by pursuing a similar form, style, materials and detailing. Proposals which adopt this approach and create poor-quality copies of the characteristic architecture of an area will not be acceptable. It can be challenging to be sympathetic and faithful where a proposal departs from the predominant density or scale of buildings in the area.

Figure 2.8c: Oval Mews - an example of a Sympathetic and Faithful approach in this development by Chartwell Land & New Homes. Attention to detail in the selection of materials, choice of windows and proportions of the proposal. The new development delivers several new homes; refer section 2.44 for more details on this case study.

2.9 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDINGS

ACCESS TO DAYLIGHT & SUNLIGHT

2.9.1 When considering the relationship with other built form, whether proposed or existing, applicants should ensure adequate daylight and sunlight that is appropriate for future residents, and that there is not unreasonable loss of light for neighbours.

2.9.2 The scale of development covered by this guide will not usually require daylight and sunlight testing, however applicants are advised to consult the BRE guidance[24] on good practice for access to natual light. Where this guidance would inhibit the efficient use of a site, there may be flexibility in the application of these standards. This will only be applicable to constrained sites and may not be used to justify substandard design of proposals. Flexibility in the application of BRE standards will only be acceptable where a proposal has a compelling design that mitigates daylight and sunlight issues.

2.9.3 Where there is concern that the orientation of the proposal and proximity to neighbouring buildings will limit access to natural light within the proposed and/or neighbouring dwellings, proposals will be required to provide a daylight and sunlight analysis study[25]. Such studies will not normally be required where a neighbour's window directly faces onto or over an application site in a manner that is considered to be un-neighbourly. These un-neighbourly windows place undue restraints on the development, and as such the light and outlook they receive will not receive significant protection.

2.9.4 New dwellings should maximise access to daylight and sunlight, including consideration for:

a. Avoiding creating single aspect dwellings, particularly if north-facing.
b. Orientation and layout of proposals to allow a minimum of one room in every dwelling to receive direct sunlight at some point within the day.
c. Well-positioned windows in relation to neighbouring built form.
d. Well-positioned windows in relation to room layout.
e. Well-considered room layouts that are not overly deep or awkwardly shaped that limit the opportunity for access to natural light.
f. Dual aspect rooms with windows on two (2) external walls to allow light from different angles and greater opportunity for direct sunlight, particularly where rooms are north facing.
g. Large areas of glazing that maximise light, generally with a window to floor ratio of no less than 15%. Where glazing is within 60º of due south, consideration should be given to heat gain from sunlight as a result of large areas of glazing.
h. The use of courtyard arrangements in constrained sites which can provide outlook and access to light.
i. The use of rooflights. When located on a flat roof, not allowing a view out, they should be used to supplement another window or skylight that allow some form of outlook.

24 Guidance is available via the 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice' (2011).

25 Tests required for a daylight and sunlight analysis study are set out in the Building Research Establishment (BRE) document 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice' (2011).

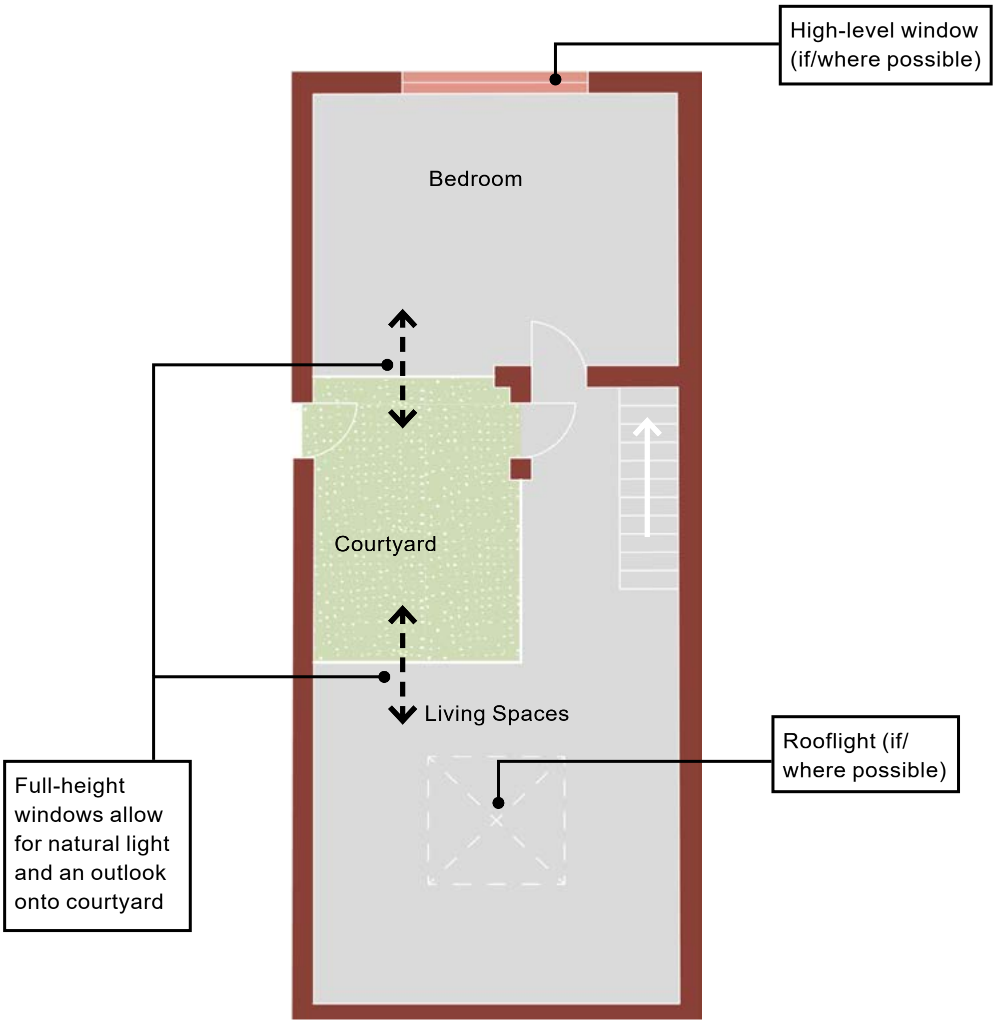


Figure 2.9a: Diagram illustrating solutions to access natural light on a constrained site that limits externally facing windows.

Figure 2.9b: The interior of a house designed by Dallas–Pierce–Quintero on an infill/backland site that uses rooflights and a courtyard to provide dual aspect rooms with access to natural light on a constrained site. (Photo: Tom Gildon)

FRONT TO FRONT DISTANCES

2.9.5 A front to front separation is considered to be the distance between the front elevation of two properties. The front is typically identified as the elevation that faces a public highway or shared access route.

2.9.6 The relationship between the front elevation of a proposal and a neighbouring property (whether the neighbouring property is existing or part of the same development) should be determined by the following factors:

- Design of the streetscene (the look and feel of the place, informed by scale, form and material treatment); and
- Access to daylight & sunlight.

2.9.7 In suburban locations, the separation distance between front elevations should generally be no smaller than the height of the developments that are facing each other. For example, where a 6m high front elevation faces another front elevation, there should be a separation of at least 6m (Refer to Figures 2.9c and 2.9d)

2.9.8 Where sites are constrained, such as back lands and rear gardens, and such separation distances are difficult to achieve, the massing of a proposal should be stepped backwards and forwards so that these distances can be achieved at intervals, with tighter areas in between.

2.9.9 Where there is a concern that a development would appear overbearing to a neighbouring property across the street and/ or create a poorly designed streetscene, they will not be supported. This will be judged on a case by case basis in light of this guidance and Policy DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan.

Figure 2.9c: A new suburban street where separation between front elevations is equal to the height of the elevations facing the street.

Figure 2.9d: A mews street where separation between front elevations is equal to the height of the elevations facing the street.

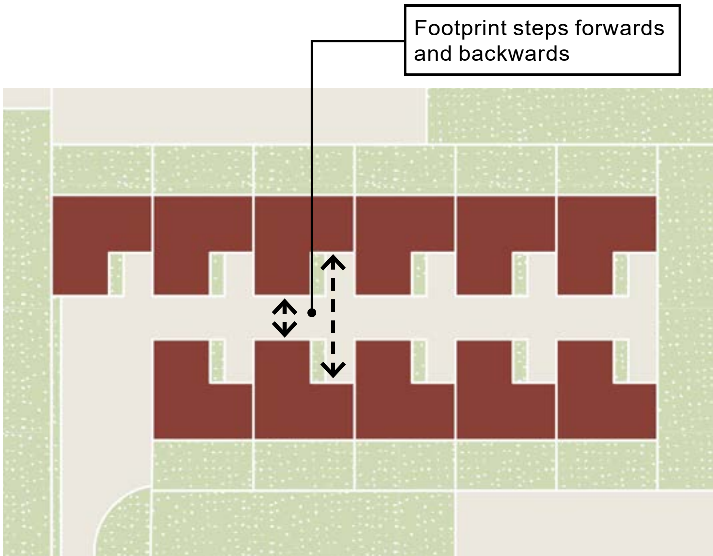


Figure 2.9e: Stepping of masing to acheive acceptable front to front seperation distances at intevals, as per guidance Paragraph 2.9.8.

BACK TO BACK DISTANCES

2.9.10 The relationship between the rear elevations of a proposal and existing or other new developments is primarily concerned with maintaining privacy. Whilst the design of suburban streets typically limits direct overlooking through separation distances, an amount of overlooking is a fact of living in the suburbs and can be beneficial in providing natural surveillance. It is inevitable that development and the evolution of the suburbs will result in an increase in overlooking as well as impact on outlook from neighbouring properties, however careful design can help to mitigate this.

2.9.11 Back to back distances between habitable rooms should be managed through acceptable distances as described in Figure 2.9f which should provide sufficient privacy to existing and new residents.

2.9.12 Direct overlooking into circulation spaces, such as entrance halls and stair wells, utility rooms and bathrooms is usually acceptable. Bathroom windows should be obscure glazed or screened for privacy.

2.9.13 Separation distance from a balcony should be the same as the distances in Figure 2.9f. This should be measured from the edge of the balcony.

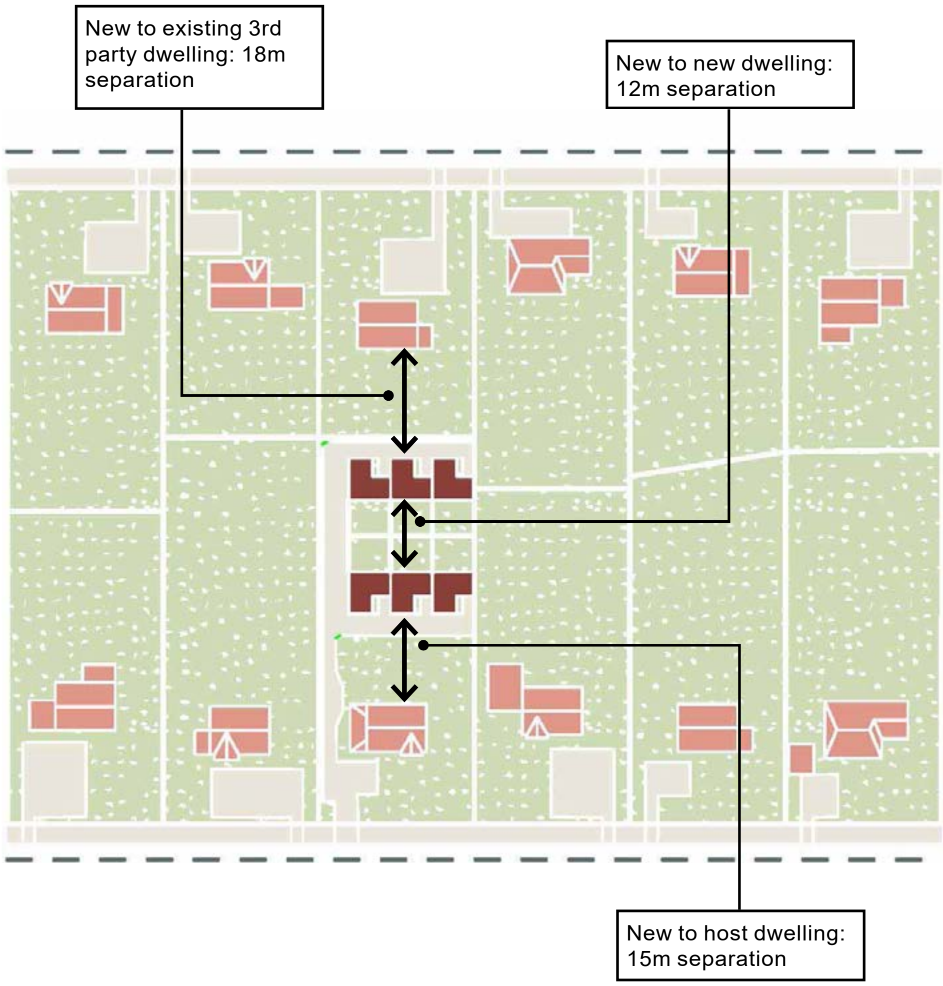


Figure 2.9f: Overlooking distances concerning solely new development reflects the establishment of a new condition associated with new residences, rather than a loss of existing amenity through a new development.

OBLIQUE OVERLOOKING, ORIENTATION & SCREENING

2.9.14 The massing of a proposal, including the orientation of the facade, can minimise issues of overlooking between rear elevations.

2.9.15 Windows on rear elevations that do not directly face each other, i.e. are at angles to one another and would provide oblique or obscured views, are not considered to result in direct overlooking. As such separation distances may be reduced. The acceptability of this will be assessed on a case by case basis.

2.9.16 Examples for orientation to minimize overlooking include:

- Developing a built form, such as a courtyard or stepping footprint that allows the development to be inward looking.
- Developing a built form that directs views away from neighbouring dwellings.

2.9.17 Where acceptable separation distances cannot be achieved due to site constraints, devices may be used to mitigate direct overlooking as per the following and Figure 2.9g:

- External panels, perforated screens, louvres, frosting and other methods used to obscure views will be acceptable where there are no alternative solutions (such as massing and orientation). Screening in these forms must be integrated with the building design and will not be acceptable where it appears to add clutter and conflicts with the appearance of the proposal.
- Projecting, oriel or angled windows that direct views will only be acceptable where they are part of a compelling design proposal and should generally provide an area of glazing that allows sufficient natural light.
- Where required, the staggering of windows to allow only oblique views between habitable rooms may be acceptable.
- Landscaping treatments often provide attractive methods for resolving overlooking without the need for architectural devices and will be considered on a case by case basis. This could include the planting of mature trees and hedges as part of a new proposal. Where such planting would not impact the neighbouring amenity and there is consideration for future maintenance, this approach may be encouraged.

2.9.18 The acceptability of the use of any of these devices to overcome issues of overlooking and insufficient separation distances will be judged on a case by case basis. This will include consideration for an overbearing appearance, quality of design and unreasonable loss of natural light to neighbouring properties.

2.9.19 Where projecting balconies are provided, there can be a need to screen the sides of balconies. This can be achieved through the following methods:

- Perforated screens or louvres. They will only be acceptable where there is a high level of investment in their design so that they are integrated within the language and materiality of the proposal. Where they appear to add clutter or dissonate with the design of the building they will not be acceptable.
- Hit and miss brickwork or stone that responds to the language and materiality of the proposal.
- The colour and appearance of frosted glazing is uncharacteristic of the suburbs and will generally not be acceptable unless it is part of a compelling design proposal.

OVERLOOKING PRIVATE OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACES

2.9.20 In certain circumstances in the borough where overlooking to a neighbouring garden is not present, this may be introduced as development occurs. While a greater level of protection will be afforded to the first 10m of a neighbouring garden (in line with Policy DM10.6 of the Croydon Local Plan), the remainder of the garden may be overlooked from neighbouring developments provided it does not prejudice development.

2.9.21 In most circumstances, the back to back distances provided in paragraph 2.9.11 are considered to provide significant separation to ensure the first 10m of garden in a third party or host dwelling are protected from direct overlooking where the rear of properties face each other.

2.9.22 Where a development may result in overlooking to the first 10m of a neighboring garden, the design should be such that only obscured, diagonal or oblique views are possible which would not be considered to be direct overlooking. This may require the introduction of architectural devices as described in paragraph 2.9.17.

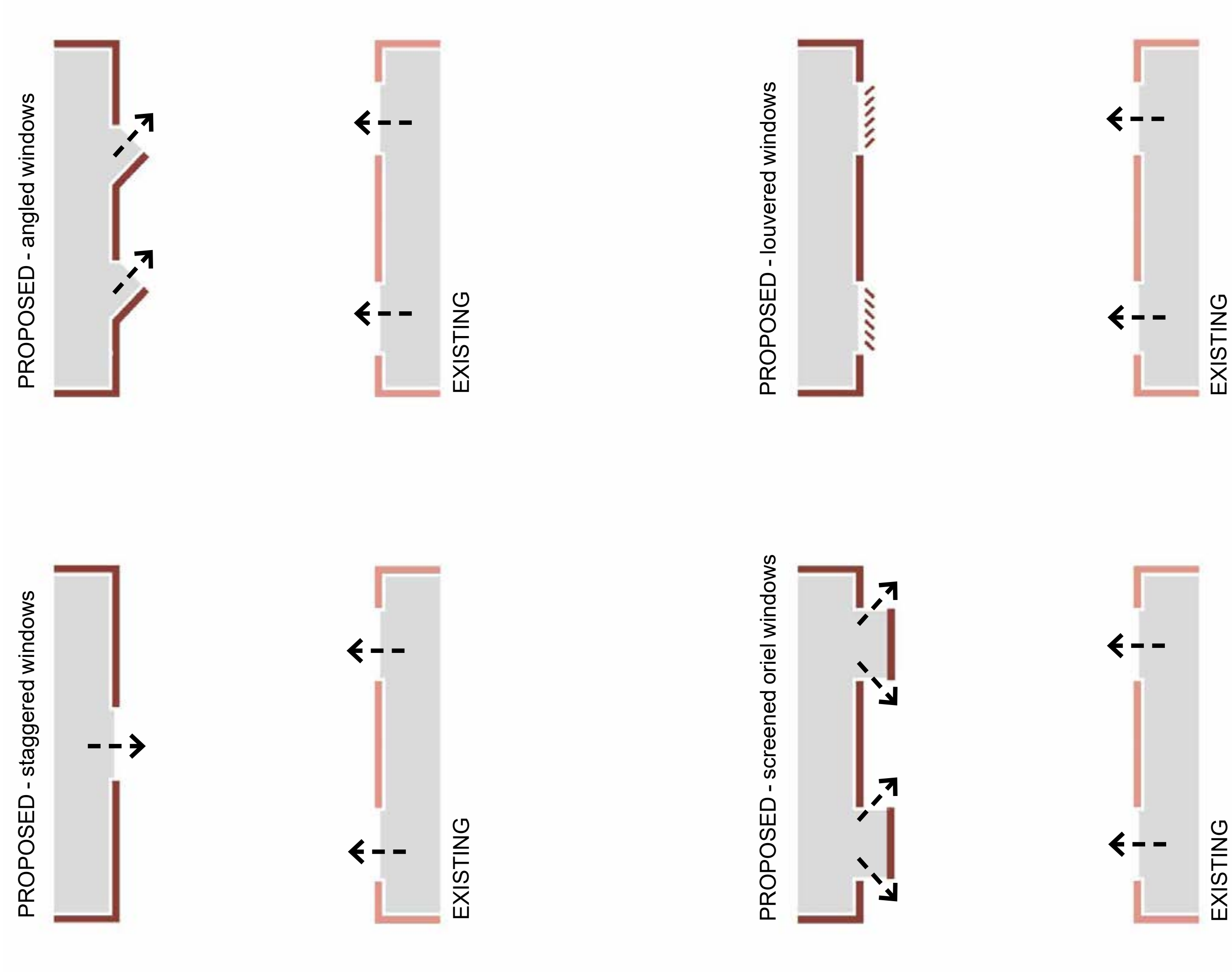


Figure 2.9g: Methods for resolving overlooking where necessitated by reduced separation distances.

Figure 2.9h: A development of two houses in a back land that is orientated around a triangular courtyard between the new houses. The design by vPPR Architects provides a form that responds to the site constraints and windows looking into an outdoor amenity space between the new houses, avoiding overlooking to neighbouring properties.

2.10 HEIGHTS OF DEVELOPMENTS FACING ONTO THE STREET

2.10.1 The Croydon Local Plan states that buildings across the borough should generally be of at least three (3) storeys. Three (3) storeys may be accommodated by employing the following methods based on the context outlined in Figures 2.10c, 2.10d, 2.10e and 2.10f. Such changes in height along a street already occur across the borough, and as such developments do not necessarily need to step down in height towards neighbouring buildings of a lesser height.

2.10.2 DM10.1 of the Croydon Local Plan recommends a minimum of 3 storeys, as such where suburban contexts allow for additional accommodation in a roof space or basement these should be afforded as follows:

- Where a design includes a roof space in addition to three full floors, it is then possible that this space is used for accommodation; this may be within the eaves or in set-back roof form.
- Where a basement is partially concealed and not fully visible from the street, there is scope for accommodation on an additional lower level as this will not be read as full storey in the streetscene.

Figure 2.10a: A development of 3 storeys containing flats sits next to a bungalow and does not appear overbearing.

Figure 2.10b: A change in height along a suburban street adds to the character and feel of the area.

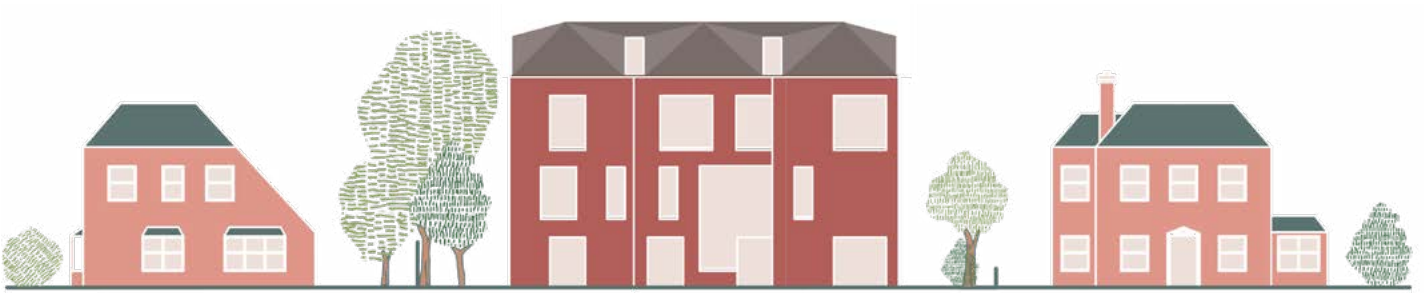


Figure 2.10c: Where surrounding buildings are predominantly detached dwellings of two (2) or more storeys, new developments may be three (3) storeys with an additional floor contained within the roof space or set back from the building envelope below.

Figure 2.10d: Where surrounding buildings are predominantly single storey, new development should seek to accommodate a third storey within the roof space.

Figure 2.10e: Where surrounding buildings are semi-detached homes in a planned estate, new developments should seek to accommodate a full third storey partially contained within the roof space to ensure the characteristic scale of the buildings along the street is maintained.

Figure 2.10f: The addition of a third storey within terraced houses will generally only be through accommodation within the roof. The acceptability of this will be based on the merit of design and the impact on street scene, given the consistent nature of continuous eaves and roof heights. A terraced house on a corner plot may seek to provide a additional full storey.

2.11 FORM OF PROJECTIONS EXTENDING BEYOND REAR BUILDING LINES

2.11.1 Where a development projects beyond a rear building line, the height and footprint of the projection does not necessarily need to be lower or narrower, provided the guidance on relationship to boundaries (Refer to Section 2.16) and overlooking (Refer to Section 2.9) is followed. It should be demonstrated that there would be no unreasonable impact on neighbouring amenity. Where it is necessary to mitigate impact on neighbouring amenity, the projection beyond the rear building line may need to step down in height and width, to meet the guidance below:

- It follows the 45 degrees rule demonstrated in Figure 2.11b and 2.11c. In exceptional circumstances, where orientation, topography, landscaping and neighbouring land uses allow, there may be scope for a depth beyond 45 degrees.
- The flank wall is designed to minimise visual intrusion where visible from neighbouring properties.

2.11.2 Applicants should also refer to the guidance on Daylight and Sunlight (Refer to Section 2.9), where there would be unreasonable impact on neighbouring access to natural light, the depth of a projection beyond the rear building line should be reduced. The design of a flank wall visible from neighbouring properties should be carefully designed to minimise visual intrusion.

2.11.3 Where stepping the height and width of a building, care should be taken as a stepping form can dilute the massing and architectural merit of a proposal. This in itself may draw more attention to the proposal through complicating form. Where stepping would overly complicate the form and create more visual intrusion on neighbouring amenity as demonstrated in Proposal 3 on pages 44 - 45, no stepping should be introduced and an overall smaller footprint that does not require stepping may need to be provided.

Figure 2.11a: A proposal designed by MATA Architects that steps in from the boundary and down in height where it extends beyond the rear of the neighbouring properties.

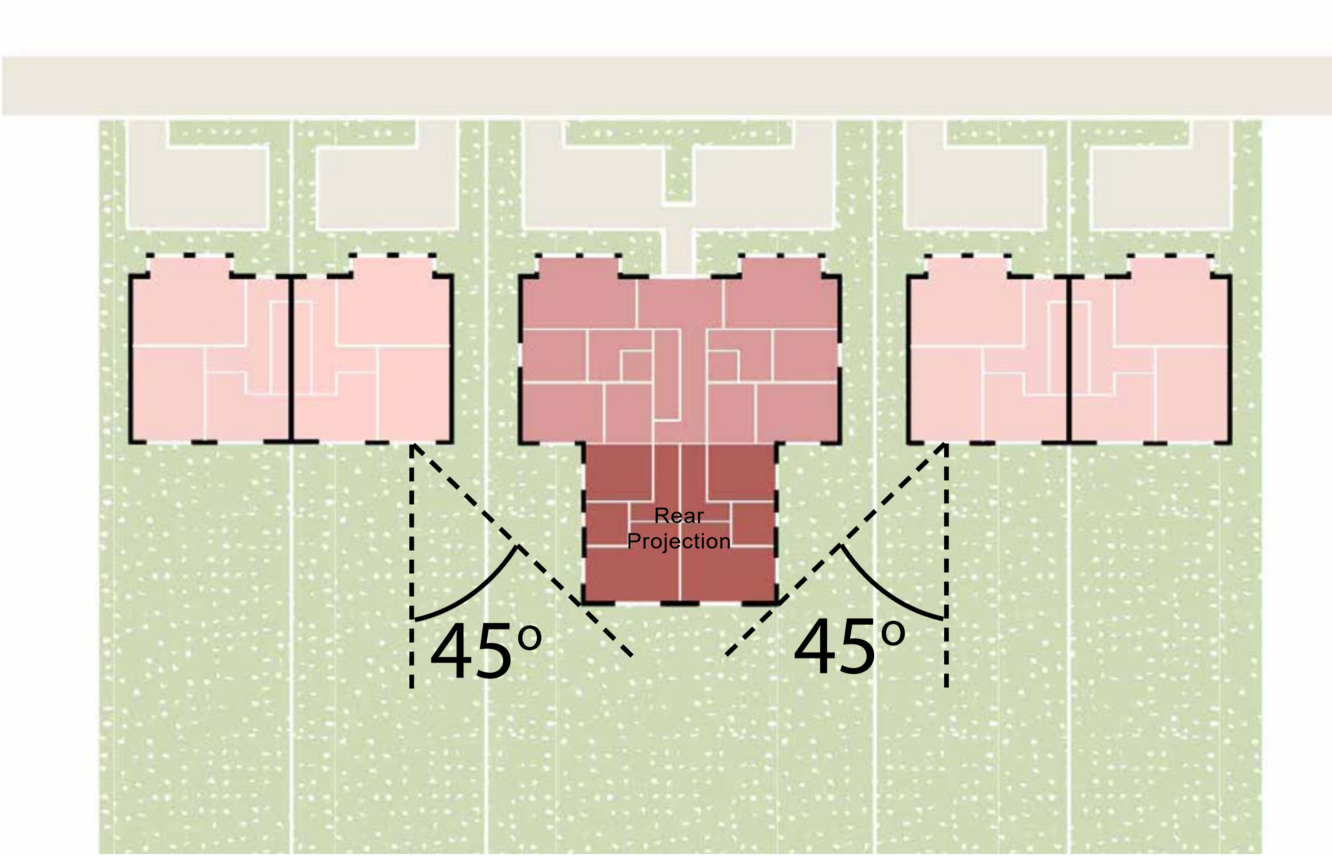


Figure 2.11b: Depth of projection no greater than 45 degrees as measured from the middle of the window of the closest ground floor habitable room on the rear wall of the main neighbouring property on both sides.

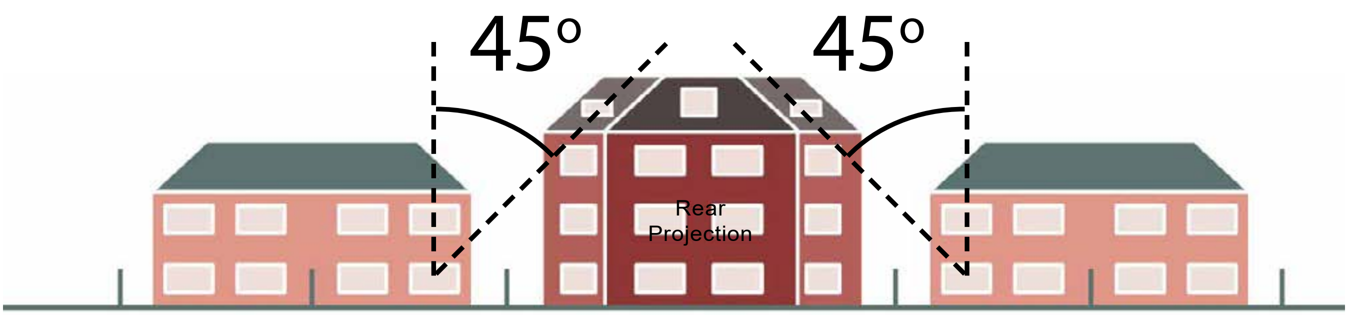


Figure 2.11c: Height of projection beyond the rear of neighbouring properties is no greater than 45 degrees as measured from the middle of the window of the closest ground floor habitable room on the rear wall of the main neighbouring property on both sides.

APPLYING 45° RULE & ASSESMENT OF POTENTIAL BUILT FORM

Note: Figures 2.11i, m & q - impact is controlled by the 45° rule which dictates that a proposal appears at a similar depth when viewed from the neighbour's kitchen window regardless of form.

Existing:

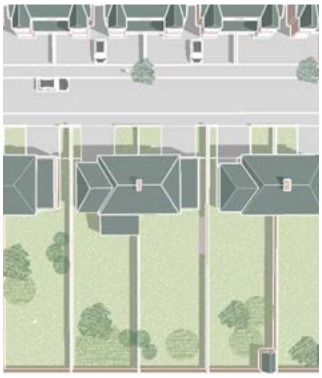


Figure 2.11d: Existing plan view.

Figure 2.11e: Existing outlook from neighbour's kitchen window.

Proposal 1 - Acceptable

Simple architectural form that meets 45° rule (Refer to guidance 2.11).

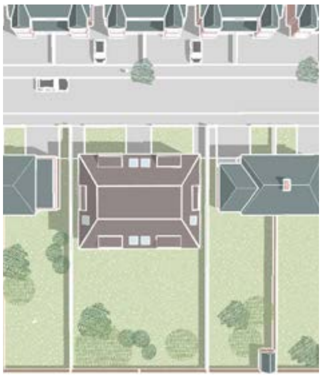


Figure 2.11h: Proposal 1 plan view.

Figure 2.11i: Apparent depth of Proposal 1 limited by 45° rule.

Proposal 2 - Acceptable

Simple architectural form that meets 45° rule (Refer to guidance 2.11) with stepped footprint to provide additional floorspace.

Figure 2.11l: Proposal 2 plan view.

Figure 2.11m: Apparent depth of Proposal 2 limited by 45° rule.

Proposal 3 - Unacceptable

Incoherent form that meets 45° rule (Refer to guidance 2.11) but results in a complicated appearance which lacks design merit.

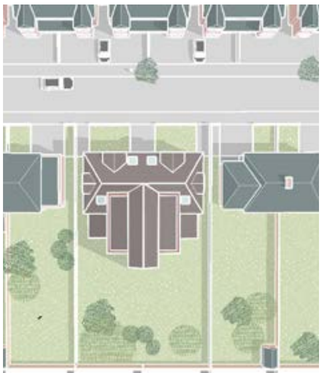


Figure 2.11p: Proposal 3 plan view.

Figure 2.11q: Apparent depth of Proposal 3 limited by 45° rule.

Note: Figures 2.11j, n & r - impact from the neighbouring garden varies depending on the form of the proposal.

Figure 2.11f: Existing view from neighbour's garden.

Figure 2.11g: Existing aerial view.

Figure 2.11j: Architecturally coherent appearance of Proposal 1 when viewed from neighbour's garden.

Figure 2.11k: Aerial view for Proposal 1 demonstrating a coherent form.

Figure 2.11n: Architecturally coherent appearance of Proposal 2 when viewed from neighbour's garden.

Figure 2.11o: Aerial view for Proposal 2 demonstrating a coherent form.

Figure 2.11r: Architecturally incoherent appearance of Proposal 3 when viewed from neighbour's garden.

Figure 2.11s: Aerial view for Proposal 3 demonstrating an incoherent form.

2.12 FORM OF DEVELOPMENTS IN REAR GARDEN SITES

2.12.1 Where a development is proposed within a rear garden, including redevelopment of a garage to the rear of a property, it should be subservient to accord with Policy DM10.1 of the Croydon Local Plan. Subservience can be achieved through proposals of either a lower height or articulated massing dependant on the context and as follows:

i. If any part of the proposed development would be within 18m of the rear wall of any neighbouring dwelling, the proposal should be of a lower height. This may be best achieved by being 1 storey lower than the neighbouring dwelling, however accommodation may be provided within roofspace (Refer to Figure 2.12a).
ii. Where no part of the proposed development would be within 18m of the rear wall of the host or any neighbouring dwelling, the proposal may be of the same number of storeys of the predominant building height in the area (Refer to Figure 2.12b) provided the footprint and/or articulated form helps achieve a massing that appears subservient to the existing dwellings.

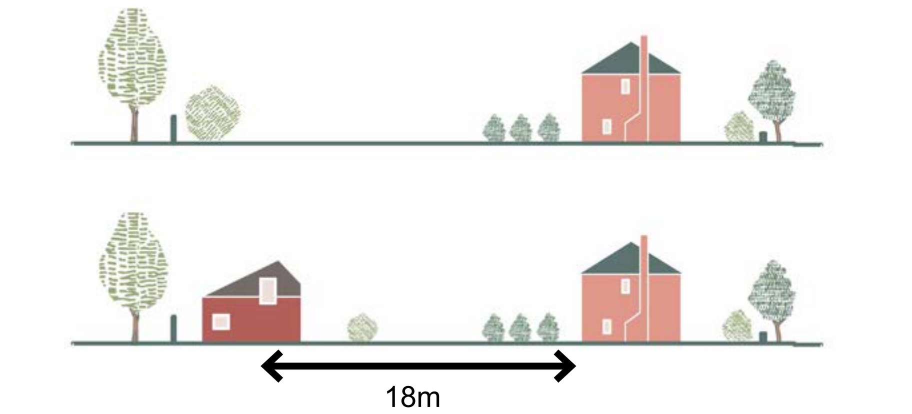


Figure 2.12a: Height of rear garden development is lower than the neighbouring dwelling where any part of the development is within 18m of the rear wall of the neighbouring property, however accommodation is provided in the roof space.

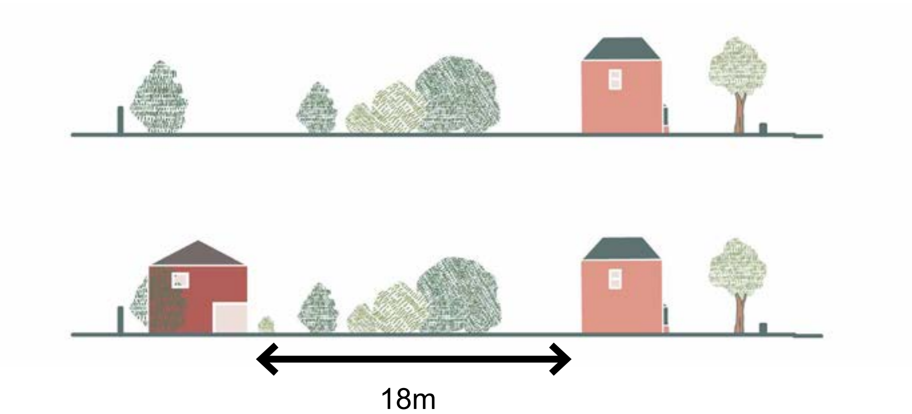


Figure 2.12b: Height of rear garden development may be equivalent to that of the neighbouring property where no part of the development is within 18m of the rear wall of the neighbouring property.

Figure 2.12c: A rear garden development that is within 18m of another dwelling that has a height that is subservient to the surrounding dwellings.

2.13 FORM OF DEVELOPMENTS ON BACK LAND SITES (INCLUDING BLOCKS OF GARAGES)

2.13.1 Back land sites and blocks of garages tend to be of a size to accommodate developments of a larger scale. The height of back land development should generally be no greater than the predominant surrounding buildings. If the development introduces a bigger built form to achieve 3 storeys as per Policy DM10.1 of the Croydon Local Plan, it can be advisable to step the height and/or footprint such that the proposal respects the scale, height, massing and density of the context in line with Policy DM10.1c. Stepping the height and/ or footprint of a proposal can help to retain a sense of openness when viewed from neighbouring properties (Refer to Figure 2.13a and 2.13b).

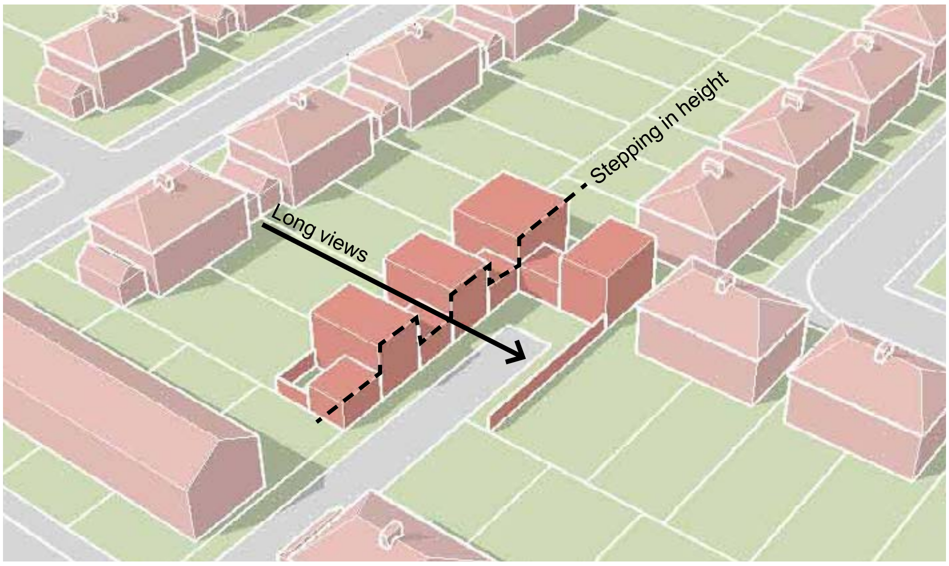


Figure 2.13a: Proposal for a back land site - height stepped to maintain sense of openness in neighbouring gardens and within the development itself.

Figure 2.13b: Visual of a proposal for a back land development by Coffey Architects where the height has been stepped to maintain sense of openness.

Figure 2.13c: A Brick by Brick proposal for a back land development designed by Stitch Studio. The proposal varies in height to respond to the context. Refer to guidance 2.13.

Figure 2.13d: A development of flats that faces onto the Croham Road is 4 storeys tall, with 1 floor contained with the roof. The development is formed of blocks that refer to the scale of dwellings along the street with recessed linking elements. Refer to guidance 2.10 and 2.15.

2.14 FORM OF DEVELOPMENTS ON CORNER PLOTS

2.14.1 By working with the dual aspect and prominent townscape position, proposals for the development of corner plots should seek to accommodate additional height and depth as marker points within the townscape.

2.14.2 Redevelopment of corner plots to provide new dwellings, including extensions or conversions:

- Should seek to include an (1) additional storey to the 3 storeys recommended in the Croydon Local Plan Policy DM10.1. Some corner plots may be able to accommodate further height provided the massing is responsive to neighbouring properties.
- May extend beyond the neighbouring rear elevations to a greater amount than set out in guidance in Section 2.11 where it would enhance the definition of a suburban block and contribute positively to the townscape. This will be judged on a case by case basis and balanced against any unreasonable impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Should respond to the positioning of neighbouring front elevations, which may require stepping in footprint to maximise development potential of a corner plot.
- Should ensure that where driveways and vehicle access points join the public highway that they meet minimum distance thresholds from junctions and allow for safe sightlines.

2.14.3 Whilst this allows for larger development, such proposals would still need to conform with relevant policy and guidance with regards to the amenity of neighbours and future residents, such as overlooking and provision of outdoor amenity spaces.

Figure 2.14a: Additional height on corner plot.

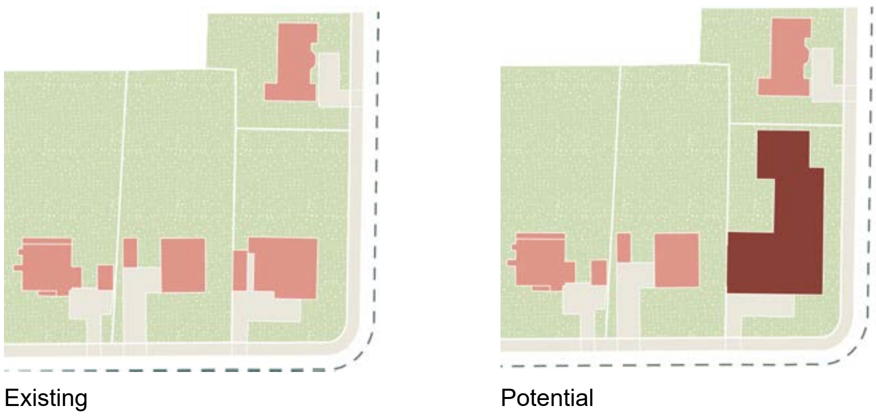


Figure 2.14b: Additional depth on corner plot with stepping of building footprint on a corner plot, responding to the position of neighbouring front elevations.

2.15 BUILDING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

2.15.1 Where neighbouring plots are redeveloped in conjunction, the form of the building may span the side boundary providing that the design responds to the gap in built form that historically existed across the boundary as drawn in Figure 2.15a. This is particularly important in areas where there is a consistent rythm to the existing plot widths that contributes to the character of the area.

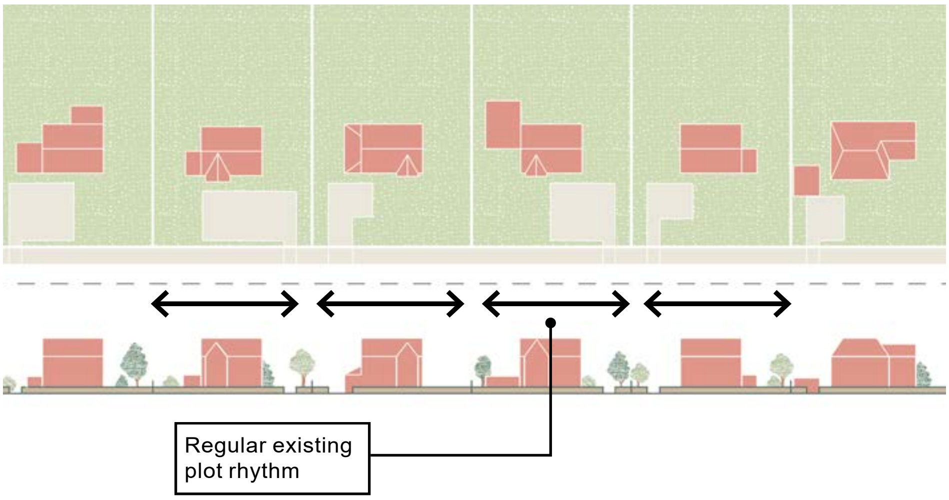
2.15.2 Proposals which span plot boundaries may seek to achieve this through:

a. Stepping form to create a link element between two main building forms located on each of the original plots. (Care should be taken with the height of the roof form so that it does not appear awkward in the streetscene); and/or
b. Use of fenestration and material treatment to differentiate the mass that spans the boundary from the mass either side.

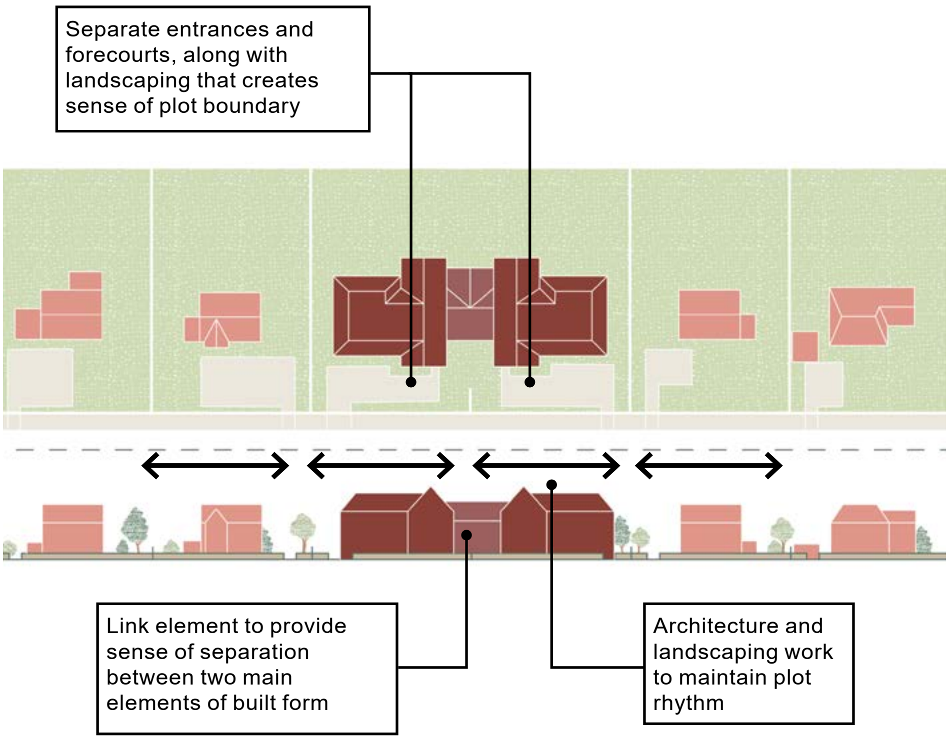
A built example of the above is provided in Figure 2.13d.

2.15.3 Consideration should also be given to the landscape design of the forecourt as this can also impact how the relationship between built form and boundaries is read. Proposals which span plot boundaries should:

a. Use landscaping to reference the former boundaries between plots, creating semi-separated areas of gardens and parking; and
b. Ensure the design of the front boundary respects the original access points and rhythm of divisions along the street, wherever possible.



EXISTING



POTENTIAL

Figure 2.15a: Maintaining sense of original development pattern through massing and site layout.

2.16 RELATIONSHIP TO BOUNDARIES IN EXISTING STREETS

2.16.1 Where development faces onto an *existing* street, the position of buildings and the space between houses creates part of the suburban feel. This can include:

- The width of the plot perceived from the street;
- The frequency of driveways that access onto the street;
- The views afforded by gaps between properties; and
- How far properties are set back from the pavement.

2.16.2 Developments that face onto an existing street that seek to build closer to the boundary with neighbouring plots must demonstrate consideration to the impact on neighbouring amenity as well as the rhythm of development along the street.

2.16.3 Separation distances, where there are no habitable room windows on the side elevations of the neighbouring or proposed development, should be no smaller than 1m, to allow for access to the rear of a property. Where existing development is built closer to the boundary, a proposal may seek to build to the same line as the existing.

2.16.4 Where a street is characterised by greater separation distances and development up to 1m of the boundary would impact the streetscene, a greater separation will be required. This should generally be landscaped. Similarly where a street is characterised by smaller separation distances to boundaries, a smaller gap may be provided.

2.16.5 When considering internal layouts, outlook and issues of overlooking, with regards to proximity to a boundary, it is important to consider how neighbouring buildings may be developed in a similar manner in the future. Where there are habitable rooms facing to the side boundary, walls should be offset from the boundary to a distance that ensures sufficient access to daylight & sunlight (Refer to Section 2.9 for guidance).

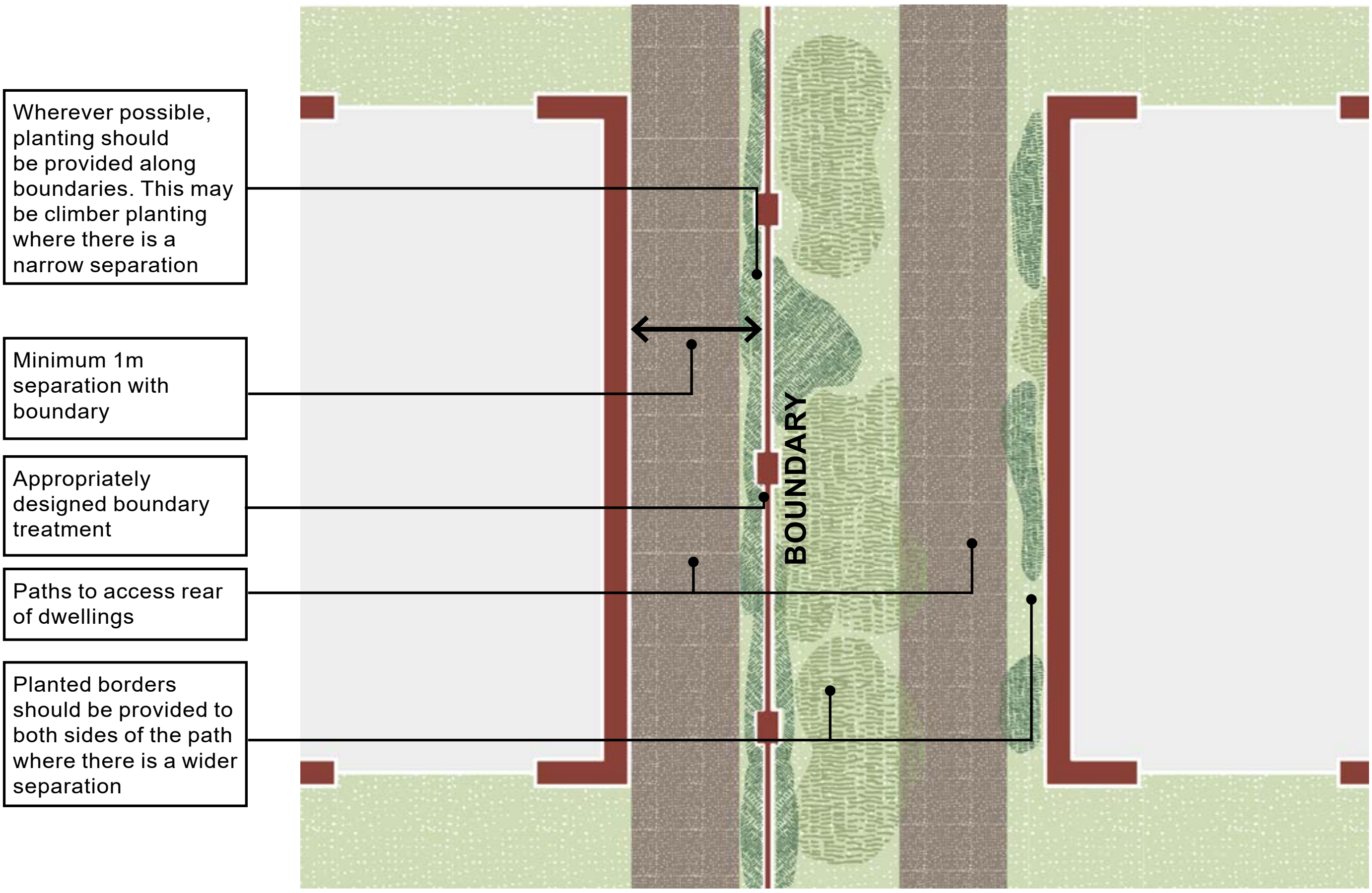


Figure 2.16a: Relationship with boundary.

2.17 FRONT ELEVATIONS – POSITIONING & WIDTHS

2.17.1 Proposals should consider the position of the front elevation of the proposal in relation to neighbouring properties and the streetscene to ensure that:

a. Where there is a consistent front building line, any development should align with this unless it can be demonstrated it would positively enhance the character of the street; or
b. Where there is an inconsistent front building line, the front elevation of a development may step forward or back provided it does not negatively impact the street scene. This may be needed to accommodate larger amenity spaces to the rear or increased parking provision to the front of a property.

2.17.2 The width of a proposal should be determined by the appearance within the streetscene and proposed proportions and fenestration of the front elevation. The maximum width of a development should also be guided by the proposal's relationship to the plot boundary (Refer to Section 2.16 for guidance) and impacts on daylight & sunlight (Refer to Section 2.9 for guidance).

2.17.3 Fenestration and material treatment can be used to add interest to elevations and resolve proposals that would otherwise appear overly wide or narrow in the streetscene.

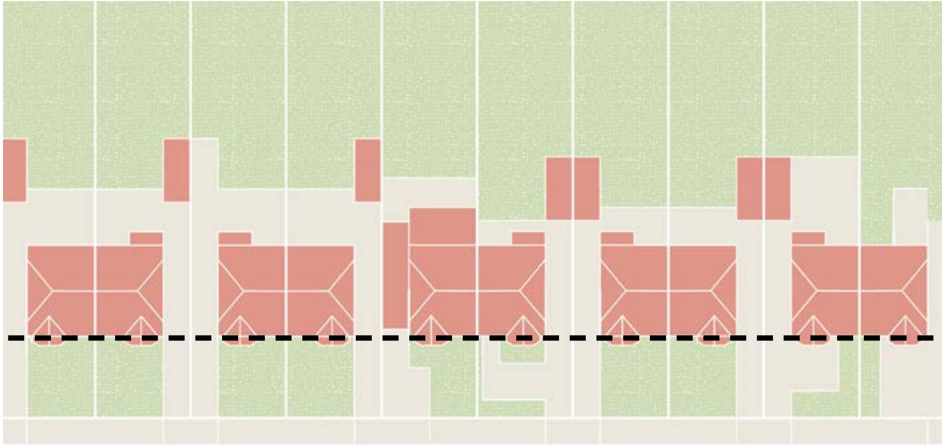


Figure 2.17a: A consistent building line facing the street.

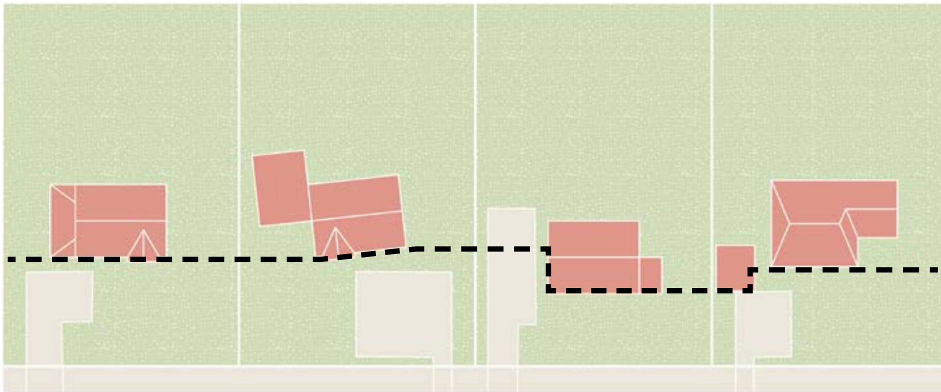


Figure 2.17b: An inconsistent building line facing the street.

Figure 2.17c: A wide development which has successfully dealt with its width through proportions and fenestration.

Figure 2.17d: A development which appears wide and squat as a result of poorly considered proportions and fenestration.

2.18 POSITIONING OF DEVELOPMENT IN REAR GARDEN AND BACK LAND SITES

2.18.1 Due to varying plot sizes across the borough, it will often be desirable for developments in rear gardens and back land sites to build along or in close proximity to boundaries and existing buildings to maximise development opportunity. However, it is important that new developments are sited so as to minimise their impacts on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

2.18.2 Development in rear gardens, garage and back land sites should be positioned so that:

- If within a rear garden, the footprint of the proposal conforms with Policy DM10.4(e) of the Croydon Local Plan. The policy seeks a minimum retention of 10m length and no less than half or 200m^2 (whichever is the smaller) of the existing garden area to be retained for the host property. This is primarily to provide sufficient outlook and amenity to existing dwellings, but also provides additional benefits of maintaining a sense of openness within gardens.
- Proposed buildings along boundaries may be thoughtfully designed to ensure there is no unreasonable loss of sense of openness or overbearing to neighbouring properties. Developments that propose to build along boundaries must demonstrate:

    1. That the appearance of the wall, as viewed from neighbouring properties, would be attractive and not overbearing; and
    2. How rainwater goods will be contained within the curtilage of their plot.
- All guidance on overlooking (Refer to Section 2.9) and form (Refer to Sections 2.12 or 2.13) have been adhered to.

2.18.3 All developments on rear garden, garage and back land sites should demonstrate how the proposal would not prejudice similar development on neighbouring sites in the future.

Figure 2.18a: A rear-garden house designed by Dallas–Pierce–Quintero that builds along the boundary wall. (Photo: David Butler)

Figure 2.18b: Existing - view from neighbour’s kitchen window without rear garden development.

Figure 2.18c: Existing - aerial view of plots without rear garden development.

Figure 2.18d: Potential - aerial view with rear garden development in one of the plots.

Figure 2.18e: Potential - view from neighbour’s kitchen window with a rear garden development built along the boundary. No windows face onto neighbouring garden and proposal drops down towards boundary, to minimise loss of amenity and ensure development potential of neigbouring garden.

Figure 2.19a: A street facing development of family homes on Purley Downs Road. The development provides accommodation within a mansard roof.

2.19 ROOF FORMS

2.19.1 Roof forms should be proportionate to the mass of the associated building and should respond to the design of the proposal. Whilst pitched roofs are commonly associated with suburbia, flat roofs are also acceptable. Proposals should ensure that:

- The proportions of the roof to the rest of the proposal are well considered. Where a pitched roof is proposed, deep plans can lead to shallower pitches which read poorly in the streetscene and will generally not be acceptable.
- Where a stepping roof form is used, it is done in a manner that adds interest to a proposal and helps reduce the appearance of mass, rather than overcomplicating the external appearance.
- Any projecting flat roofs associated with a development predominantly covered with a pitched roof are sensitively integrated into the design and do not confuse or detract from the external appearance. Where appropriate, projecting flat roofs can provide a functional use, such as a balcony.
- Where dormers are proposed that cut through the eaves line, the scale and positioning of the dormer in relation to the eaves is well considered (Refer to Figures 2.19g and 2.19h for good and bad examples).

2.19.2 It should be noted that pitched roof forms can read as overbearing in elevation drawings. Due to their pitch, the mass of such a roof is usually less when read in the streetscene. As such, it can be beneficial to provide a street level visual of the proposal to help describe the overall appearance of the proposal.

Figure 2.19b: Flat roof forms are acceptable. Set-back top floors with a change in material can be used to add interest and break down the mass.

Figure 2.19c: Unconventional roof forms are part of a compelling design by Alison Brooks Architects to break down the mass of a proposal. (Photo: Paul Riddle)

Figure 2.19d: Projecting flat roofs successfully designed by MATA Architects to be used as balconies.

Figure 2.19e: Pitch of roof is steep enough to read positively in the streetscene.

Figure 2.19f: Pitch of roof appears too shallow in relation to mass of building.

Figure 2.19g: Well proportioned and positioned dormers contribute to design of roof.

Figure 2.19h: Poorly proportioned and positioned dormers and eaves results in a poorly resolved roof.

2.20 BASEMENTS & WORKING WITH TOPOGRAPHY

Figure 2.20a: Stepping massing down a hill to gain additional accommodation.

2.20.1 Croydon's topography presents many opportunities for new development in semi-submerged lower floors with level access on one side of a property. In other settings, it may be possible to provide fully submerged basements or lower-ground floor development, however these are often considered to be uncharacteristic of suburban settings and need to be carefully designed to minimise any negative impacts on the streetscene.

2.20.2 A sloping topography can provide opportunities to work with the landscape to achieve greater footprints which extend beyond neighbouring elevations by stepping the building mass. By stepping built form down a slope, impacts on neighbours can be avoided. It is important that the rhythm of stepping follows the gradient of the slope to avoid large built form protruding from the hillside.

2.20.3 Basements, lower-ground floor development and massing that steps down a slope that do not require the introduction of light wells will generally be acceptable provided that any habitable rooms have sufficient access to natural light (Refer to Section 2.9 for guidance). Proposals will be judged on a case-by-case basis, based on the impact to the street scene, neighbouring development potential and amenity.

2.20.4 Basements, lower-ground floor development or massing that steps down a slope that requires the introduction of lightwells will only be acceptable where:

- Located to the rear of a property, or if located to the front of a development, would not be intrusive on the streetscene. Where necessary, this may require railings to be screened with planting;
- Any retaining walls are integrated into the design of the proposal and wherever possible should be landscaped (Refer to Section 2.35 for guidance);
- Lightwells have a depth that is greater than 25 degrees as measured from 2m high on windows into habitable rooms and they meet BRE guidance (unless this would render development unviable on back land and rear garden sites, in such circumstances a compelling design would need to mitigate failure to meet this guidance);
- All flats within are dual aspect, and have well-considered internal layouts to ensure the accommodation is functional and liveable; and
- Not located in an area of groundwater flooding.

2.20.5 Basements or lower-ground floor development in areas where there is a historic pattern of such development will generally be acceptable where they are well laid out and have sufficient access to natural light and are designed to respond to the existing character of basement or lower-ground floor development in the area.

2.20.6 Where any proposal for basements, lower-ground floors or massing that steps down a slope would result in large retaining walls, they must be designed in line with landscaping guidance (Refer to Section 2.35 for guidance) and accompanied by landscaping plans detailing the integration and resolution of impacts on the street scene and neighbouring amenity.

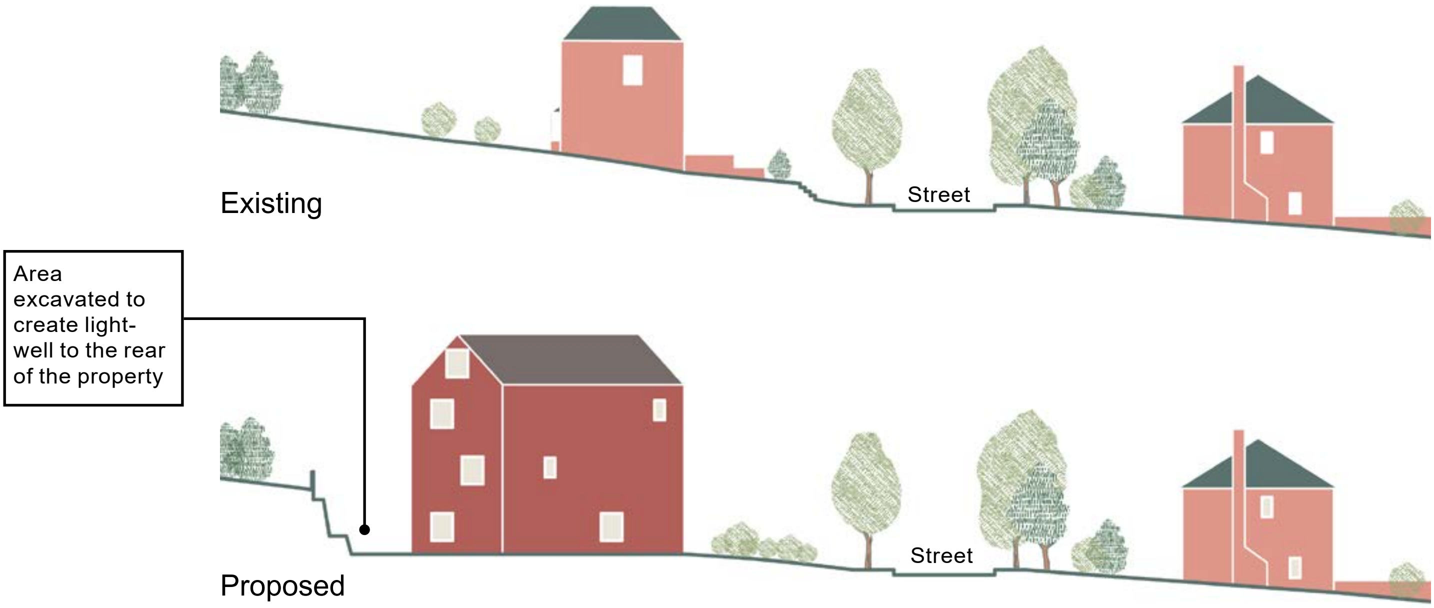


Figure 2.20b: A proposal for redevelopment with semi-submerged ground floor, including lightwell to rear, making use of the topography to provide additional accommodation.

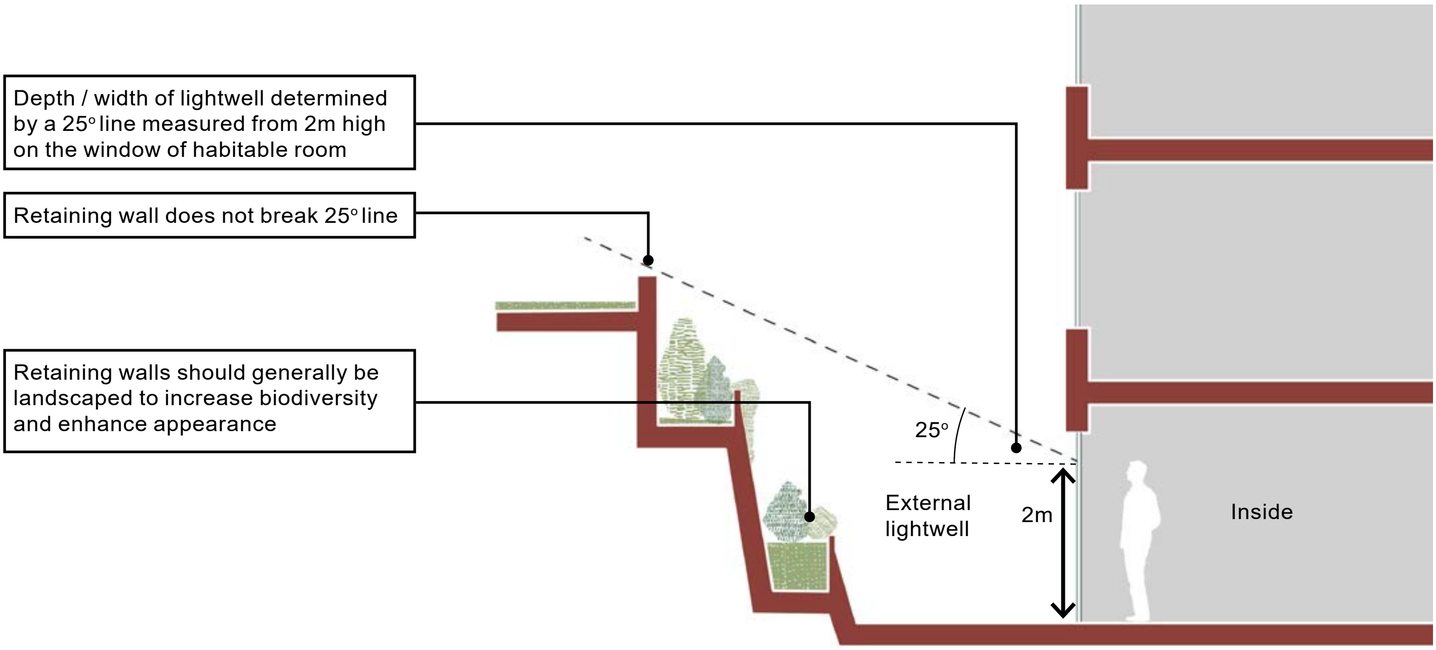


Figure 2.20c: Section showing the design guidance for creating a light well for a basement or lower-ground floor.

Figure 2.20d: Poorly designed and small lightwell that is not integrated into the design of the wider proposal.

Figure 2.20e: Successful use of topography to integrate parking into a basement. Once matured, planting will reduce appearance of retaining wall.

MATERIALS AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

2.21 MATERIALS

2.21.1 Materials should be of high quality and chosen as an integral part of the design.

2.21.2 The existing material palette in Croydon varies greatly depending on the age of development in the area. Detail on materials associated with specific housing typologies present in Croydon can be found in the Croydon Typology Appraisal[26].

2.21.3 Choice of primary facing materials should be informed by the specifics of the development and the specific nature of the context surrounding a development site, however in general, robust, natural materials with natural variation are characteristic of suburban locations. For example, this may include:

- Brick (including high quality red, multi-stock, London stock)
- High quality clay hung tiles
- High quality clay roof tiles
- High quality natural slate tiles.

2.21.4 Applicants should assess the surrounding area as this may inform their choice of materials. Materials which are innovative or different from their context may be acceptable where they are part of a compelling design, and where relevant give careful consideration to heritage assets (Refer to Section 1.4 Heritage for guidance).

26 Available in the Urban Design, Local Character and Heritage section of the local plan evidence at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework.

2.22 CHOICE OF MATERIALS & APPROACH TO CHARACTER

2.22.1 Choice of materials should form part of the approach to character as set out in guidance 2.8.

2.22.2 In an Innovative and Original approach, there is likely to be good scope for the use of contemporary materials, as well as more traditional materials. The choice of material should contribute to the Innovative and Original approach.

2.22.3 In a Contemporary Reinterpretation approach, contemporary materials could be used successfully in conjunction with more traditional building forms, provided they form a consistent and considered part of the overall design and are well detailed. It may also be appropriate to use traditional materials with contemporary detailing. The choice of materials in such an approach is likely to be informed by the local context.

2.22.4 In a Sympathetic and Faithful approach, applicants should, wherever possible, seek to use the same materials and detailing as the surrounding housing typologies. For this to be successful, applicants may wish to use reclaimed materials. Poor quality modern reproductions of traditional materials and their detailing will not be acceptable.

Figure 2.22a: An innovate material approach to an infill development by Carl Turner Architects. (Photo: Tim Crocker)

Figure 2.22b: The use of a mixture of contemporary and traditional materials contribue to a contemporary reinterpretation approach by Henley Halebrown Architects. (Photo: Andy Stagg)

Figure 2.22c: Faithful replication of material and detailing in a street facing development. (Photo: Chartwell Land & New Homes)

2.23 MATERIAL APPLICATION & DETAILING

2.23.1 The extent of application of different materials within a proposal (i.e. the amount of area covered), along with the material joints between different elements, has significant impacts on the built quality of a building, how it weathers over time and its appearance in the short and long term. Development proposals should also consider how the choice of materials will be viewed at the scale of a door opening, window reveal, eaves overhang, material join and corner.

2.23.2 Changes in material can be useful to increase or reduce the emphasis of different parts of a building, as well as adding interest. For example a projecting bay may have a different material to draw attention to it as an architectural feature, whereas a mansard roof or top floor which is set-back may choose a lighter-appearing material to reduce emphasis. However, where they are not properly integrated into a design and lack depth (for example by being applied to one façade that meets a corner where you read the material junction, as in Figure 2.23j), they will not be acceptable.

2.23.3 Patterns of materials such as change in brick or metal perforation, or a combination of materials, can be used to add interest to large blank façades where such blank façades are considered unacceptable. Use of patterns must read as part of the overall architectural expression of the building, rather than as an alien element applied to the envelope of a building.

Figure 2.23a

Figure 2.23b

Figure 2.23c

Figure 2.23d

Figure 2.23a - 2.23d: Effective use of high-quality materials in well considered details that express elements of the facade and add interest.

Figure 2.23e

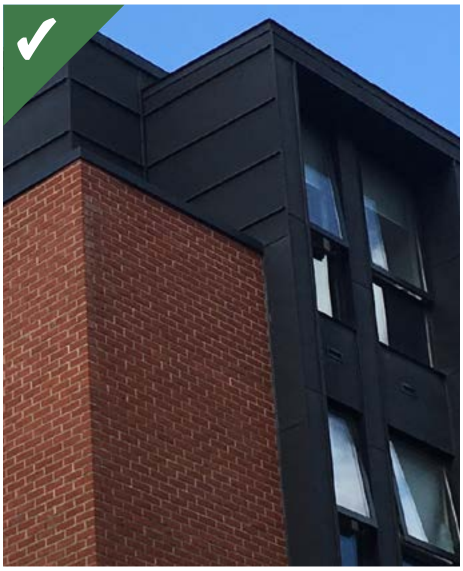


Figure 2.23f

Figure 2.23g

Figure 2.23e - 2.23g: Effective use of high-quality materials in well considered arrangements and patterns that express elements of the facade and add interest.

Figure 2.23h: Use of render that weathers poorly and not be maintained.

Figure 2.23i: Use of wood that weathers unevenly near material joins and has not been properly maintained.

Figure 2.23j: The change in render colour at the corner contributes to a flimsy appearance, highlighting that it is surface applied and lacks depth.

Figure 2.23k: Half-timbering has been wrapped around the side of the building but stops at the first window, highlighting that it is non-structural and is an applied detail. It should have either been continued along the length of the building or kept within the gable so it did not break the eaves line.

2.23.4 The use of timber and render for cladding can weather poorly, particularly where parts of a façade are exposed to the elements, creating visually unappealing, uneven discolouration or deterioration. This can be prevented through careful consideration of how a building's envelope may be unevenly exposed to weathering. For example, water run-off from roofs or windows can cause severe deterioration. Development proposals that seek to use timber or render cladding will only be acceptable where the detailing between elements of the building is carefully considered and demonstrated in sufficiently detailed drawings submitted as part of the application. Applicants should also consider the on-going maintenance of these materials, such as the need to re-paint or stain every few years.

2.23.5 Where a development is located in a street characterised by half-timbering and an applicant seeks to replicate this cladding, real timber pieces appropriately treated for weather protection and with detailing that is informed by traditional timber detailing should be used.

2.24 FENESTRATION / PLACEMENT OF OPENINGS

2.24.1 The placement of windows and doors within a façade should be carefully considered to provide relief from the materials covering the bulk of the building envelope. The regular pattern and proportions of windows and doors can also be a key characteristic of an area.

2.24.2 The regular or irregular sizing and placement of windows and doors in a local area should be identified through photographic and drawn contextual analysis, typically by line drawings of the street elevations. Development proposals may use this as a starting point for window and door proportions and positioning. Positioning may occur by replicating or departing from the pattern, provided it is part of a well-considered and compelling architectural expression. Where symmetrical elevations or a consistent pattern of openings are characteristics of an area and the proposal seeks to replicate this, the scale and proportions of the elevation should not be altered as this can create a weak pastiche.

2.24.3 The proportion and position of windows can be used to adjust the way the proportions, scale, mass and height of a building are perceived; this may include helping to emphasise verticality, horizontality or even reduce the apparent scale of a building that appears too wide or tall. For example, vertically proportioned openings on a wide façade can help to reduce the appearance of width by adding verticality to the expression of the façade. Arrangements of windows that create an in-balance across a façade or appear poorly positioned or proportioned, and do not appear to form part of a compelling architectural approach, will be unacceptable. Large elevations with small openings can be overbearing and will generally not be acceptable. New developments of a scale larger than the existing predominant scale may struggle to replicate fenestrations of neighbouring properties successfully and as such may require larger opening sizes.

2.24.4 Front entrances to a property should be clearly identifiable and of a scale that responds to the scale of the development; standard domestic doors and surrounds usually appear small on larger developments containing flats. Applicants may consider the use of framing devices, such as porches, to add emphasis to a front entrance.

Figure 2.24a: Proportions and positioning of windows add to horizontal emphasis of the façade and contribute to a weak pastiche.

Figure 2.24b: Windows are too small and their positioning fails to break up mass of façade.

Figure 2.24c: Generously sized openings help to break up the mass of new terraced homes designed by Haworth Tompkins. Their position adds rhythm to the elevation. (Photo: Jack Hobhouse)

Figure 2.24d: Simple but robust material choices are given interest through the placement and detailing to windows and doors in a row of mews houses designed by Peter Barber Architects. (Photo: Morley von Sternberg)

Figure 2.24e: A development of homes in a backland uses a contemporary palette of brick, metal and timber. The most exposed surfaces are made of hardwearing brick, whilst protected features such as doors are made of timber. Refer to guidance 2.21 - 2.23.

2.25 REVEALS & OVERHANGS

2.25.1 Interest can be added through detailing of eaves, window and door openings, lintels and plinths. The depth of window and door reveals should generally be at least 100mm deep so as to provide a provide substance, texture and character to elevations.

2.25.2 Varying the depth of a window reveal, from a recess to a bay, can be used to add interest to a façade, but should be done with care to avoid overly complicated façades.

2.25.3 Fully flush façades with windows and doors aligned to the external envelope, are only acceptable on contemporary proposals where it is justified as part of a well-considered and compelling overall architectural approach. Where applicable, development proposals will need to demonstrate that there is sufficient expression in façades through massing and material treatment to ensure that façades do not appear overly flat and/or overbearing.

2.25.4 Deep eaves or large overhanging roofs will only be acceptable where they are integrated into the design and would not result in unpleasant and shady spaces.

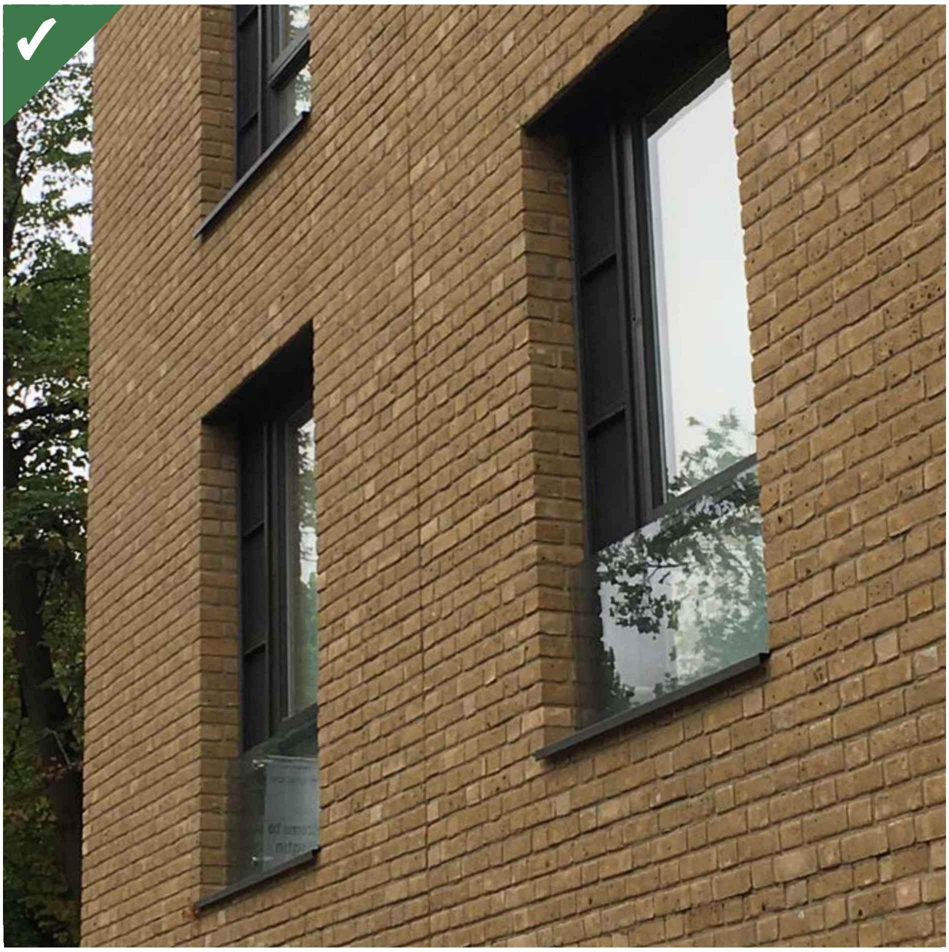


Figure 2.25a: Deep reveals provide a sense of solidness that can add appeal to facades.

Figure 2.25b: Shallow reveals can result in a poor appearance that lacks depth and windows appear as if they are stuck on. Shallow reveals should generally only be used where they are part of a compelling design.

2.26 BALCONIES

2.26.1 Balcony design is an integral part of a proposal and must be part of the initial design phase.

2.26.2 Balconies supported by columns will generally not be acceptable to the front of a property, but may be acceptable to the rear of a property where they are integrated into the design. Recessed and cantilevered balconies add less clutter to the external appearance of a development and may be acceptable to the front, as well as the rear of a property, where they are successfully integrated into the design of the proposal.

2.26.3 Balustrades may adopt the same material as the building envelope, minimising the impact on the external appearance. However, this may limit the amount of light to windows and doors set within the balcony, in which case, a metal or wooden balustrade may be used as these can be appropriate in a suburban setting.

2.26.4 Metal and wooden balustrades should be finely detailed and of a colour that responds to the window frames and materials of the external envelope of the building.

2.26.5 Glass balustrades can dominate the appearance of a development as their reflectivity can cause them to stand out and they can often present an overly commercial character, therefore their use will generally be unacceptable. Where glass balustrades are proposed, it must be part of a compelling design and should avoid using tinted glass. Such glass balustrades will only be acceptable where they are designed with minimal framing. Glass balustrades with heavy metal framings and fixings will not be acceptable.

2.26.6 Wherever possible, the sides of balconies should be open to maximise amenity for future residents, however in some cases screening may be required for overlooking purposes. Balconies that require screening to prevent sideways overlooking should be avoided as add-on screening devices often appear incongruous in a suburban residential setting. Where necessary, screening material that is climb-proof and responds to the materials and design of the building envelope should be used. For example, 'hit and miss' brickwork are acceptable means to resolve issues of sideways overlooking and appropriate response to a brick building. Similarly, perforated metal may be used to create a screen while drawing upon the material of the window frames (if relevant). Frosted glass screens are generally unacceptable as the material appearance often contrasts with the material of the building envelope, making a feature that is not traditionally characteristic of suburban settings unduly prominent.

Figure 2.26a: External balconies with supports that are not integrated into design of the proposal. The use of glass balustrades have resulted in occupiers retrofitting screening devices to provide privacy that exacerbates the poor appearance.

Figure 2.26b: Balconies facing the street that are successfully integrated into the design of the proposal.

Figure 2.26c: A combination of recessed and cantilevered balconies are provided in this development designed by Peter Barber Architects that provide rhythm to the scheme and allow it to successfully sit alongside a traditional terrace. (Photo: Morley von Sternberg)

2.27 VISIBLE ANCILLARY ITEMS

2.27.1 With the exception of rainwater goods, no servicing items, such as vents, flues, pipes, wiring, telecommunication boxes or satellite dishes, should be located on the front elevation or prominent side elevation of a development. Such items add clutter and diminish the appearance of a building. All pipes should be grouped and, where technically possible, combined into a single pipe. Servicing items should be located to be as discreet as possible, at the end of an elevation or at the corner of a recess or, where possible, within the building envelope. Shadow gaps incorporating drainage could be incorporated within the design of the building, breaking up the built mass while reducing the visual impact of such ancillary items. Applicants should illustrate external servicing item locations on drawings submitted with planning applications.

2.27.2 Soil and waste pipes should be incorporated into the envelope of the building. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate there is appropriate space for servicing pipes to be accommodated within the envelope of a building.

2.27.3 Eaves and/or gutters which overhang a sites boundary are generally not acceptable as this could prejudice the development potential of adjoining sites.

2.27.4 Meter cupboards and service intakes should be located out of sight from the street or in subterranean meter cupboards where possible.

2.27.5 Solar panels should be integrated into the design from an early stage with a regular layout and a discreet appearance. If located on a flat roof, they should not be visible from street level. Where located on a pitched roof, they should be integrated into the design of the roof so as to minimise impact on the appearance of the development.

2.27.6 Other items such as alarm systems and signage should be considered early in the design stage. The quantity should be limited and positioned to avoid the appearance of applied clutter on the external envelope.

2.27.7 If colours other than white are used in window and door surrounds, (i.e. grey aluminium), all externally applied items, such as pipes and meter cupboards, should generally be finished in the same colour. Applicants should indicate the colour and finish of ancillary items on drawings submitted with planning applications.

Figure 2.27a: Poorly coordinated placement of visible ancillary items on elevation visible from the street has a negative impact on the building's appearance.

Figure 2.27b: Example of where placement of servicing items has been considered early in the design development, ensuring elevations are kept free of clutter.

Figure 2.27c: Flues, vents and pipes add clutter to the façade.

2.28 SUBDIVISION OF PLOTS AND INFILLING

2.28.1 Proposals that seek to subdivide and/or infill must conform to Policy DM10.4(e) of the Croydon Local Plan and should refer to Section 2.16 or 2.18 of this guide (as relevant) in relation to building positioning. They should also consider the existing pattern of development along the street, and the associated visual amenity that breaks in built form provide.

2.28.2 Whilst spaces between sets of terraced homes and pairs of semi-detached homes are often characteristic of the original design and can provide visual amenity, in many streets this pattern of development has already been broken by side extensions and older infilling. In any street where it would not result in significant loss of visual amenity, infilling will be acceptable.

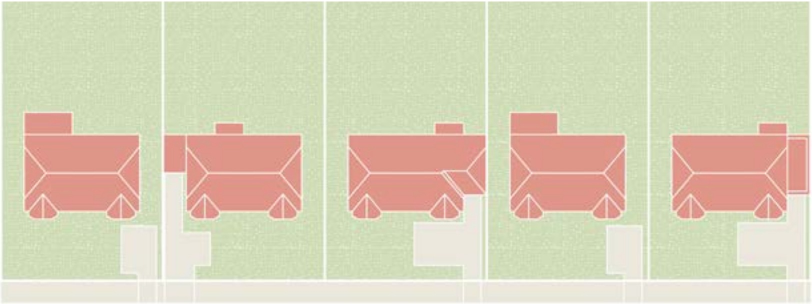
2.28.3 The pattern of front gardens, boundaries and driveways visible from the street can add rhythm to the street and contribute to the townscape. This can be negatively interrupted where a plot is subdivided.

2.28.4 Where subdivision would be visible from the street, proposals should ensure that where there is a consistent pattern of forecourts, driveways and/or boundaries:

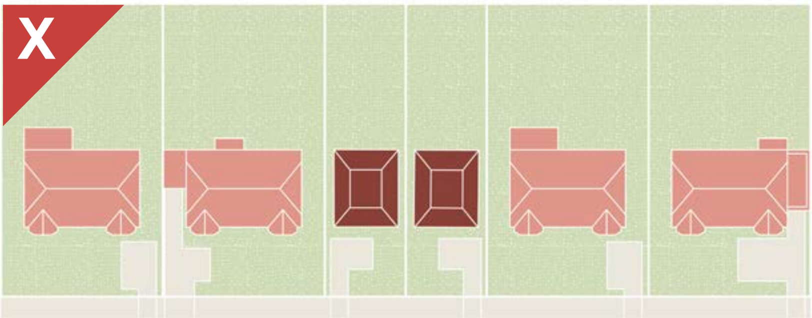
- They are retained or rebuilt to follow the existing pattern of the street. This should include minimising the number of new vehicular access points. Vehicular access points may be shared by several properties.
- The front garden is not subdivided with walls, fences or hedges. A larger front garden should be maintained with access to properties from one forecourt.

2.28.5 Subdivision will only be acceptable where it doesn't limit the provision of a larger development or the delivery of family homes.

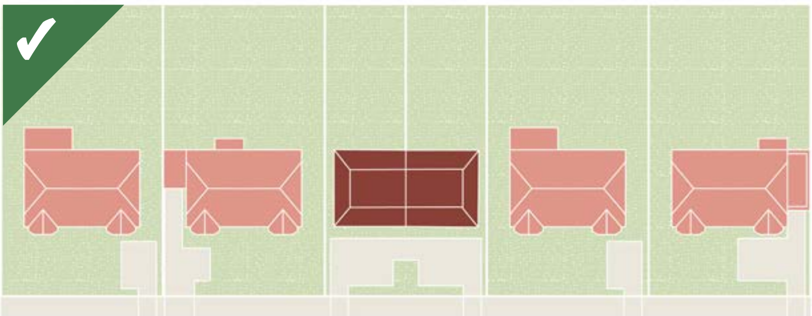
Figure 2.28a: Successful subdivision to provide two new homes, with one to the rear of the plot.



Existing: Even spacing of existing plots provides a consistent rhythm to the street



Unacceptable: Plot subdivision which divides the forecourt would interrupt consistent rhythm of the street



Acceptable: Plot subdivision with a shared forecourt that helps to maintain the consistent rhythm of the street

Figure 2.28b: Method for plot subdivision in a street with a consistent rhythm of plot sizes.

2.29 DRIVEWAYS, ENTRANCES AND NEW ROUTES

2.29.1 Driveways, entrances and new routes should be designed to prioritise pedestrian flow and safety. This will generally mean limiting the number of vehicular access points to control vehicle flow and prioritising pedestrian and cyclist focussed designs.

ENTRANCES & BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

2.29.2 Entrances to new developments could be clearly marked with gate posts, planting or a built boundary treatment (such as a brick wall) that responds to the existing streetscene, the proposed dwelling and scale of the street.

2.29.3 Gated developments will not be acceptable.

2.29.4 Entrances should avoid tall walls or wooden fences either side of a new driveway that close off the development to the street.

2.29.5 Front boundaries should be designed to respond to any consistent boundary treatments along the street. Planting along the front boundary can help improve the streetscene and will generally be encouraged.

NEW DRIVEWAYS AND HARDSTANDING

2.29.6 New driveways should be designed in accordance with Figure 2.29e and Figure 2.29f. New driveways and hardstanding should be designed to ensure no net loss of vegetation or areas of planting and landscaping.

2.29.7 Entrances should generally be of a width that meets the criteria set out in Figure 2.29e and where possible, replicate any characteristic scale and pattern of entrances and easements witnessed along the road. Overly wide entrances and easements that would impact the streetscene or result in loss of landscaping will not be acceptable. Where an existing entrance is narrower, the acceptability of this will be judged on a case by case basis and, where necessary, development applications will need to demonstrate that a modern vehicle can safely and easily access and exit from the site.

2.29.8 Undercroft arrangements are only acceptable where they do not negatively impact the streetscene, can be concealed from the street with a garage door and meet relevant emergency access and highways regulations. A garage door should be of a scale appropriate to the street and the proposal.

2.29.9 Where a new driveway accesses onto a road within the Transport for London Road Network, applicants should consult and come to an agreement with TfL. TfL should also be consulted where a development accesses onto or is in close proximity to a tram route.

Figure 2.29a: Streetscene dominated by high fences used as boundary treatments.

Figure 2.29b: Failure to screen hardstanding and bin stores with a landscaped boundary treatment.

Figure 2.29c: A low-level boundary treatment which integrates planting.

Figure 2.29d: The impact of a retaining wall is minimised through the use of planting.

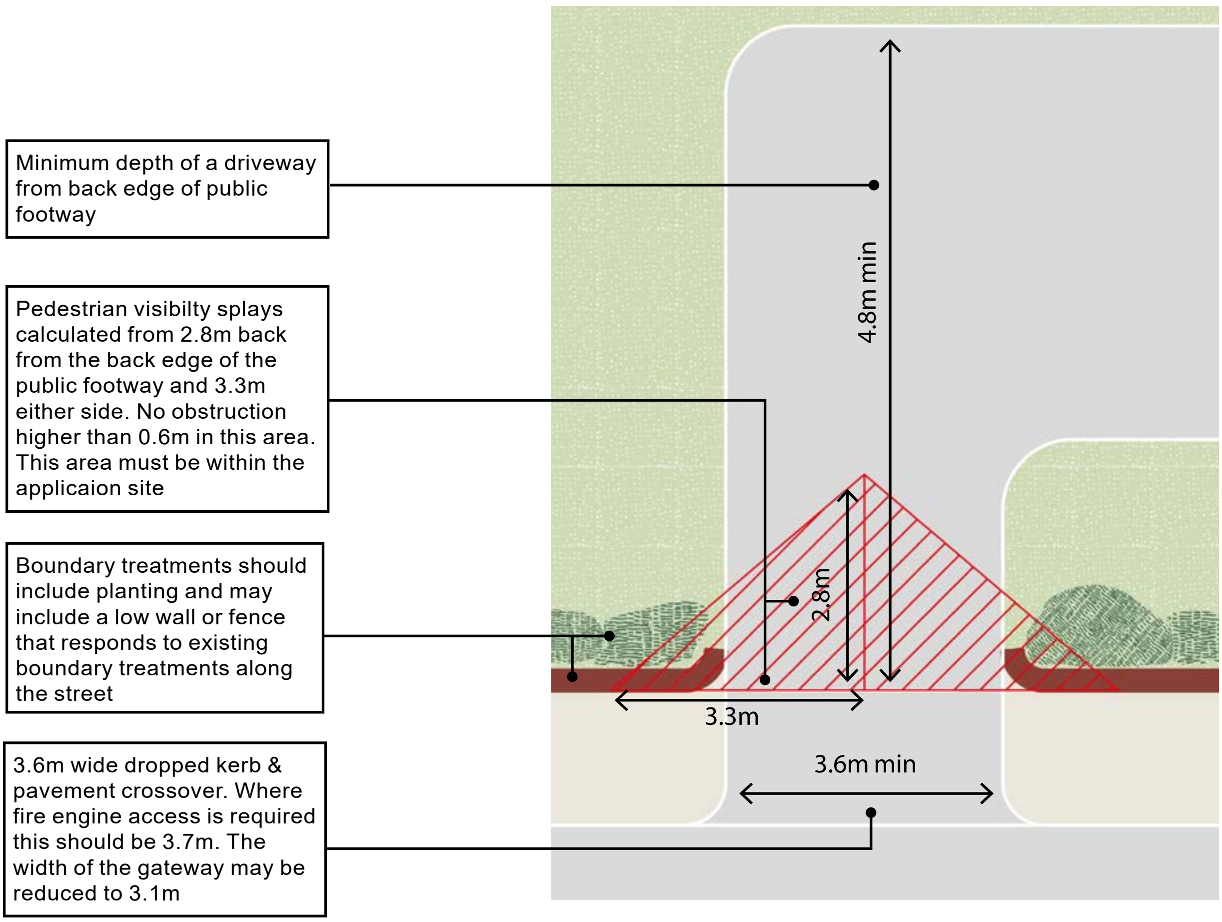


Figure 2.29e: Requirements for entrances and boundary treatments.

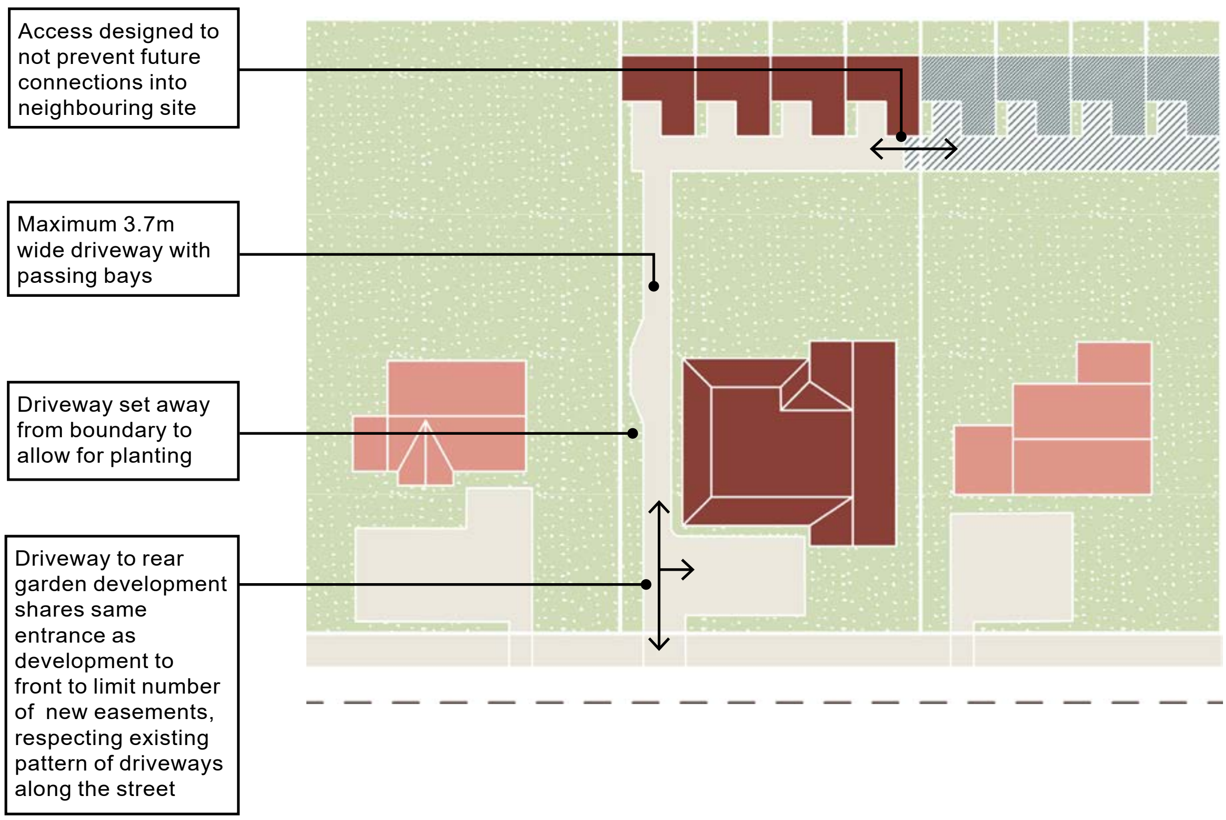


Figure 2.29f: Optimal layout of driveway for redevelopment of a detached home and for access to rear garden development.

ACCESS REQUIREMENTS:

2.29.10 When designing a proposal, consideration should be given to the need for appropriate access arrangements, including safety. This includes:

- Providing emergency service access[27] and refuse collections;
- Where emergency or service vehicle access is not possible, such as back land sites with narrow driveways, alternative service requirements should be discussed with the relevant authority;
- Where appropriate access and turning for refuse collection vehicles[28] is not possible, a refuse store must be provided within 20m of the street[29]. This point must be no more than 30m from the front door of the dwelling (excluding vertical distance) (Refer to Figure 2.29g);
- Where it is not possible to find a suitable location for the refuse store, the proposed development may be required to demonstrate how the refuse associated with the development will be available on the street on collection days, for example, through an established management company and management schedule for the development;
- Where a car free development is proposed, it may be possible to provide pedestrian only access where the appropriate set down space is easily accessible from the closest highway to meet access requirements[30];
- Access into a building and individual units via circulation spaces should be designed to allow ease of access for all users. Consideration must be given to the accessibility of outdoor space and the provision of space for activities to occur outdoors which support the health and development of children (Refer to Figure 2.34a);
- Where a proposal on a rear garden or back land requires the use of a rear lane to access the development, this route ensures safety for users and residents through the use of lighting, high quality surfaces and overlooking. Where the location would prohibit any natural surveillance from a public highway or neighbouring properties over such an access route, proposals will generally not be acceptable.

27 As per Building Regulations. Available at: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200135/approved_documents.

28 Refer to Croydon Council's 'Waste and Recycling in Planning Document (2015)' for guidance, available at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/rrandw

29 As per Veolia waste collection standards.

30 As defined by Building Regulations.

NEW STREETS

2.29.11 If the scale of a development requires a new street, where the new street meets an existing road, this should be designed in accordance with the relevant highways guidance available on Croydon Council's website[31] and the Public Realm Design Guide. Where this is the case the Council's Highways team should be consulted at an early stage.

2.29.12 The design of new streets and entrances should consider the safety of residents, avoiding over-engineered solutions that prioritise motorists and maximising the use of landscaping measures to control motor vehicle movement.

31 Available at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/transportandstreets.

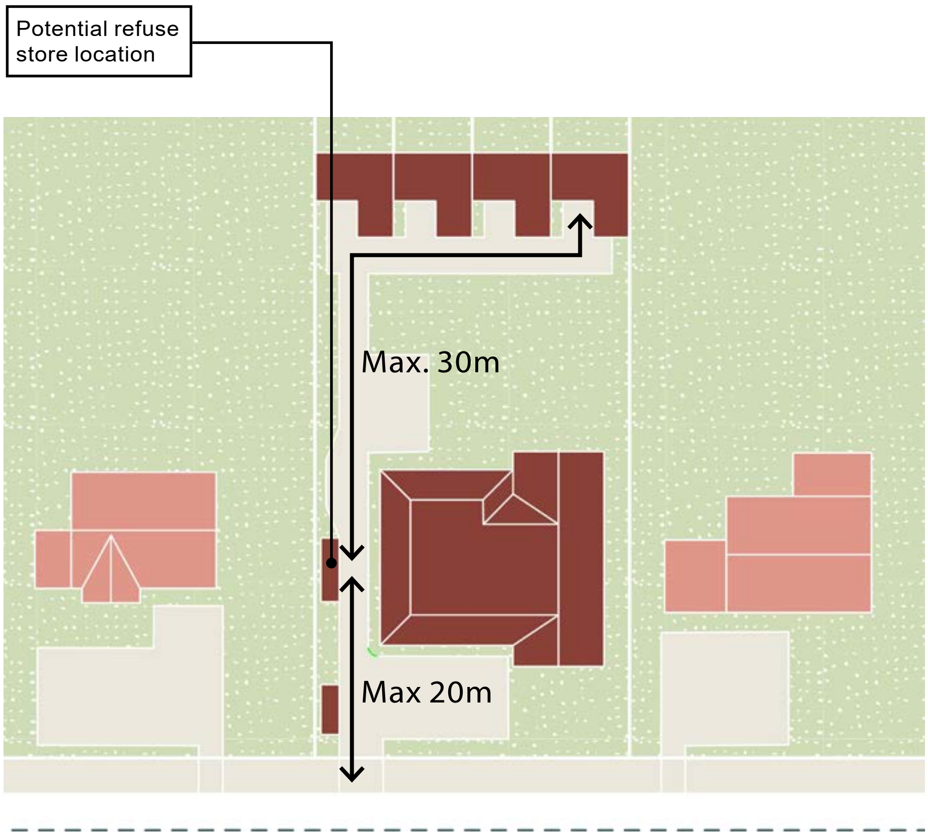


Figure 2.29g: Suitable location of bin stores on sites with limited access for refuse lorries.

CONNECTING INTO THE EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOOD

2.29.13 Where possible, development should seek to create pedestrian connections through suburban blocks, providing a thoroughfare that links between existing parallel streets. These will be encouraged where they create quicker access to transport services, parks and other amenities, and will be secured through planning agreements. Such connections should be designed to prioritise pedestrian movement and must ensure safety, including a good level of natural surveillance through overlooking and optimised active frontages, along with the use of lighting and high quality surfaces.

2.29.14 These connections may require a development to obtain access to an existing shared access route outside the development site. Proposals should demonstrate that, where possible, they seek to provide connections through an agreement with neighbouring land owners.

2.29.15 Development should safeguard space to allow for future connections and avoid ransom strips.

Figure 2.29h: A new route created by a back land development is well lit, overlooked and has a legible destination.

Figure 2.29i: Existing street pattern with back lands.

Figure 2.29j: New connections created through suburban block after a series of back land developments.

2.30 PARKING DESIGN

2.30.1 The provision of car parking associated with a proposed residential development can often lead to the loss of both front and rear gardens. The cumulative loss of gardens within suburban locations can greatly impact biodiversity, presenting issues associated with flood risk and air quality, along with health and wellbeing. The loss of front gardens to parking is particularly problematic in terms of negative impact on the street scene.

2.30.2 Policy DM10.2 of the Croydon Local Plan states that parking within the forecourt of buildings will only be acceptable where it would not cause undue harm to the character or setting of the building and where there is sufficient screening without the vehicle encroaching on the public highway.

CAR PARKING

2.30.3 Car parking should be provided in a mixture of locations (including the front and rear of the property), thus reducing an overbearing and unacceptable amount of hardstanding in one location.

2.30.4 Car parking should only be accommodated in forecourts facing onto the street up to a quantum that is not considered to impact negatively on the street scene. Applicants will need to demonstrate this through an assessment of the prominence of forecourt parking within the existing street scene and include measures to mitigate impacts, such as mature planting. Car parking in forecourts must be set back from the front edge of the plot by at least 0.75m to provide for a boundary treatment (wall, fence or hedge) and landscaping (hedge, flower borders or grass).

Figure 2.30a: Poor design of parking without any landscaping; hardstanding dominates forecourt.

Figure 2.30b: The use of a basement for parking allows the front garden to remain predominantly planted.

2.30.5 In instances where the topography can be utilised to provide subterranean car parking, it will be looked upon favourably as it can reduce the need for parking in forecourts and rear gardens. However, creating it in other circumstances is recognised as expensive and may undermine the viability of development[32].

2.30.6 Back land or rear garden development may utilise a courtyard arrangement where car parking can be concealed between built form or where garages can be introduced at ground level with accommodation above.

2.30.7 In some locations, as a result of a development additional parking may occur on the street. In these cases, assessed on a case by case basis, this may be acceptable where it is deemed safe by the Council's Strategic Transport officers and will not unreasonably impact on pedestrians or cyclists. This must be supported by a documented parking assessment demonstrating that there is kerbside capacity for car parking (using Lambeth

Figure 2.30c: Bays of parking separated by planting.

Methodology[33]). Parking on streets should not be through designated bays.

2.30.8 In areas of very low transport accessibility such as PTAL 0-1, it will be harder to access sustainable transport and therefore may be more difficult to reduce reliance on private cars. In these areas the Council will seek to accommodate all parking within the site (off street) and any anticipated need for on-street parking will be judged on a case by case basis.

32 Basement car parking should be balanced against cost and will not be an acceptable grounds for the lack of affordable housing provision (where applicable to schemes of 10 or more units).

33 Available at: http://www.trafficsurveys.co.uk/lambeth-methodology.htm

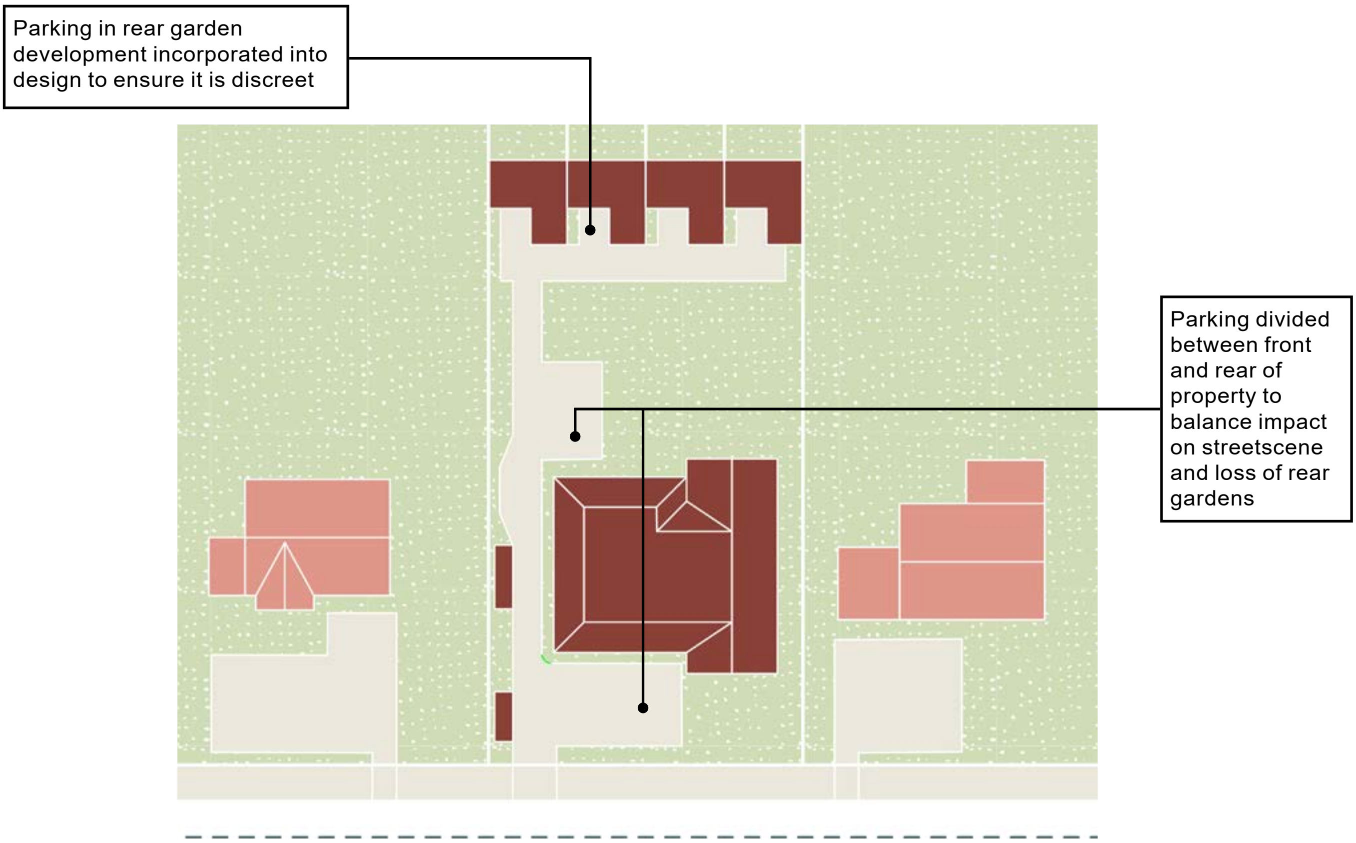


Figure 2.30d: Indicative parking arrangement for a street facing and rear garden development.

2.30.9 In locations where there are significant additional demands on kerbside space and parking pressure, the Council may introduce or amend parking controls on roads within the area. Where this is proposed, this can be taken into account when considering a development proposal to encourage more sustainable travel choices and reducing car ownership. In these locations the Council can restrict the occupants of new developments from applying for on street permits and in appropriate locations with good PTALs make the development completely car free.

2.30.10 Parking should:

- avoid impeding access to outdoor amenity space from ground floor properties or shared doors;
- be screened with planting between and around bays and be informed by a landscaping plan which minimises visual impact on the streetscene and neighbouring properties; and
- include within the design a flexible parking resource to accommodate motorbikes and microcars and smaller electric vehicles, or alternative future uses. Such flexible parking should recognise the changing sizes of and reducing demand for private vehicles.

2.30.11 Where existing lawns, planted areas and trees (soft landscaping) is lost to hardstanding associated with new development, including parking, this must be offset with appropriate landscaping and drainage systems (Refer to Section 2.36 for guidance).

2.30.12 Parking spaces within a development site should have dedicated electric vehicle charging provision in accordance with the London Plan minimum standards and the Croydon Local Plan, requiring the provision of active spaces[34] and passive provision[35].

2.30.13 The active provision should be in the form of a wall mounted charging point adjacent to the parking bay. Stand-alone charging point posts should be avoided wherever possible. Tethered cable charging points should be avoided unless the occupier's vehicle is known. The charging point should be able to provide two power rating options, either a "standard" 3kW or "fast" 7kW[36] .

34 Active spaces are fully wired and connected, ready to use, points at parking spaces.

35 Passive provision requires the necessary underlying infrastructure (eg capacity in the connection to the local electricity distribution network and electricity distribution board, as well as cabling to parking spaces) to enable simple installation and activation of a charge point at a future date.

36 Further information is available at: https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/urban-planning-and-construction/transport-assessment-guide/guidance-by-transport-type/electric-vehicle-charging-points#activation and https://www.zap-map.com/charge-points/charging-home/.

2.31 ANCILLARY STORAGE FACILITIES AND BUILDINGS

2.31.1 Storage for refuse and cycles is an essential part of development and additional storage as part of domestic living is desirable. Where it is not feasible to incorporate storage facilities into the envelope of the building, they may be provided externally within a designed structure. Storage facilities whether within the envelope of the building or not, should be integrated into the design of a proposal from an early stage. New dwellings must provide suitable refuse and recycling, cycling and other ancillary storage facilities in line with Policy DM10 and DM30 - Cycling and Policy DM13 – refuse and recycling of the Croydon Local Plan.

2.31.2 Cycle and Refuse storage facilities should be designed to:

- Be of a capacity large enough for the development;
- Be of a secure, weatherproof and solid construction, with a material palette and design that responds to the design and material palette of the proposed development;
- Be secure on all sides;
- Be in an easily accessible location;
- For cycle storage, be in a well overlooked location;
- For refuse stores, be located in a visually discreet and easily accessible location. Generally, they should not be visible from the front elevation so as to avoid harm to the character of the building;
- Have minimal impact on the amenity of neighbours, including visual consideration, collection noise and odours associated with refuse;
- Where possible, make use of subterranean storage;
- Where possible, be integrated into the landscape design;
- For cycle storage, it should be designed to allow occupants to choose how the space is used if they do not wish to store bicycles, providing the option to store other items;
- For cycle storage, does not require bicycles to be wheeled through living spaces;
- Be in addition and separate to the general storage provision required for each new dwelling.

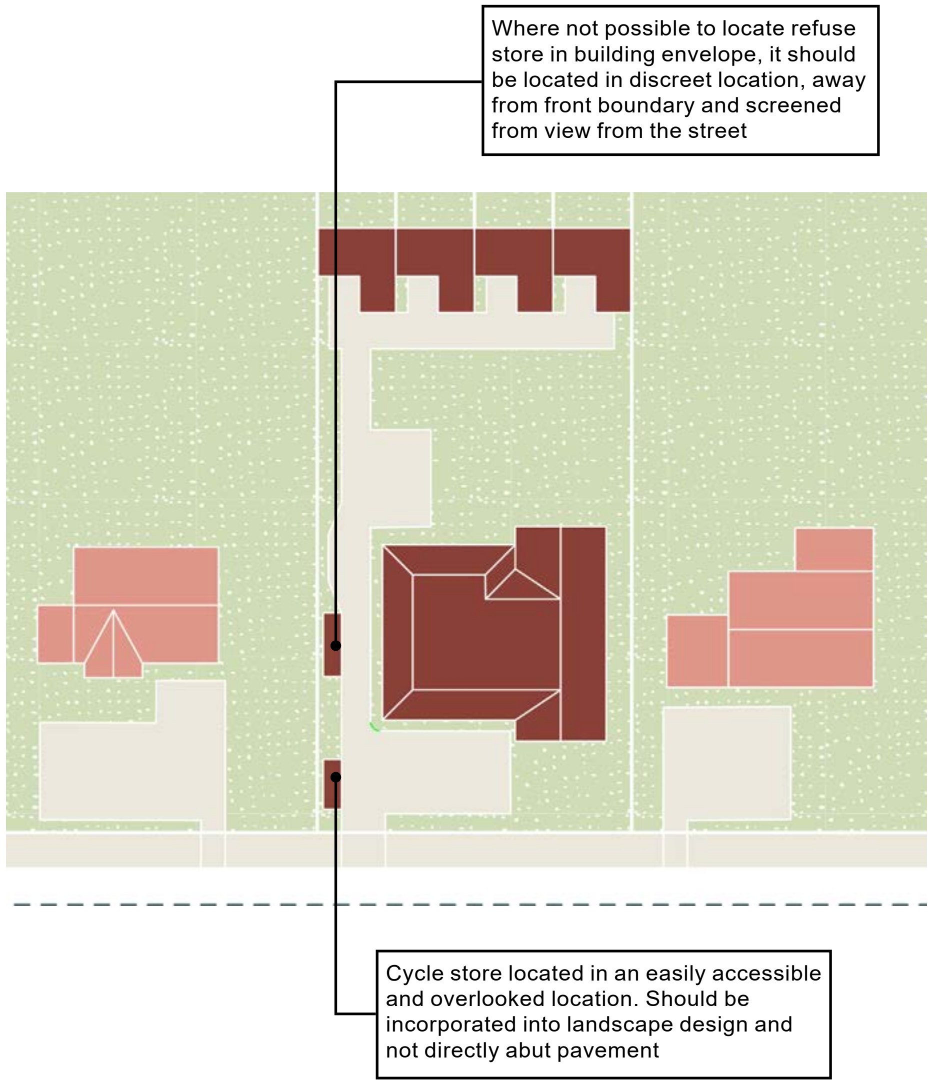


Figure 2.31a: Indicative refuse and cycle storage locations.

2.31.3 Wherever possible, some provision for visitor cycle parking should be made. This is best provided with cycle racks or stands to the front of a property.

2.31.4 For more detailed information on refuse stores, refer to Croydon Council's technical guidance[37].

2.31.5 The Council will, in exceptional circumstances, consider kerbside refuse, recycling and cycle stores for residential development only. This is only acceptable where these are designed so as to include public realm improvements to the street, potentially including planting that minimises visual intrusion. This is likely to be associated with conversions of residential units above shops, where the current

37 Guidance is available at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/rrandw/new-developments-and-conversions.

Figure 2.31b: Refuse and cycle stores that are separate from the main building but integrated into the design of the proposal through the use of the same materials and architectural features. They are situated in a discreet location with minimal impact on the streetscene, neighbouring and residents outlook.

Figure 2.31c: Refuse stores in highly visible locations that are not integrated into the landscape design or any other aspect of the design.

lack of suitable refuse storage leads to waste presented in bags on the footpath, or a series of larger developments that are part of the wider regeneration of an area. In these circumstances, shared storage facilities are encouraged for efficiency and less impact on the visual amenity. These stores should be designed to ensure:

- They are secure and designed to prevent fly tipping;
- Where possible, they make use of subterranean storage;
- They use a material palette and design that responds to the associated development and/or the surrounding context;
- They have minimal impact on the street scene through landscaping and other public realm improvements in the surrounding area.

Figure 2.32a: Successfully designed landscaping incorporating swales as part of the drainage strategy for the development of housing designed by Bell Phillips Architects. (Photo: Kilian O'Sullivan)

LANDSCAPING & OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

2.32 LANDSCAPING

2.32.1 The provision of landscaping is particularly important to support Croydon's ecology and biodiversity, as well as providing important amenity to residents. Policy DM10.8 of the Croydon Local Plan sets out the landscape policy which requires proposals to seek to retain existing landscaping features that contribute to the setting and local character of an area. Where proposals would result in the loss of existing garden space, they must be cognisant of Policy DM10.4e of the Croydon Local Plan that seeks to protect from the unreasonable loss of outdoor amenity space.

2.32.2 Landscape plans should be considered early in the design of a scheme. Proposals with varied planting and features will contribute to the biodiversity of an area, as well as the visual amenity of a property and neighbourhood. This will add value to a development and its setting.

2.33 PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

2.33.1 Natural and maintained landscaping within the suburbs provides important habitats that contribute to biodiversity and environmental health of our neighbourhoods. All proposals must have regard to Policy SP7.4, DM27 and DM28 of the Croydon Local Plan which seek to deliver ecological restoration across the borough. Suburban development proposals should seek to achieve this by supporting and enhancing the biodiversity on individual sites through:

- In the first instance, retaining existing trees and planting.
- Only where the removal of existing landscaping is unavoidable, they are replaced with mature trees and planting. This will only be acceptable where the loss is outweighed by the benefits of a development. Replacement planting should be native species that will help enhance the natural biodiversity of the area. This applies to planting lost both within and outside a site boundary as a result of development.
- Providing a wildlife area of natural landscaping within gardens. This may be ideally located to the rear of sites and should seek to be at least 3m deep to allow sufficient space to encourage natural habitats.
- Providing landscaping that incorporate a range of features. This should include a mixture of trees, hedges, shrubs, planted borders, grassed areas and where possible water features. This should be demonstrated in landscaping plans submitted at application stage and may be conditioned as part of an approval. Plans which do not balance the provision of grassed areas with other landscaping elements will generally not be acceptable.
- Providing greenroofs where a significant amount of existing landscaping is lost to hard standing and/or the footprint of the proposal. Applicants may be required to calculate and demonstrate on a plan the quanitity of landscaping lost.

2.33.2 Applicants are advised to refer to the Urban Tree Manual which provides advice on selecting the right tree for the right location[38].

38 Refer to: https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/urban-tree-manual/

Figure 2.32b

Figure 2.32c

Figure 2.32b & 2.32c: Well landscaped communal areas with a variety of planting that add interest.

2.34 DESIGN OF PRIVATE & SHARED OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

2.34.1 New dwellings should include outdoor amenity space as set out in policy DM10.4 of the Croydon Local Plan and:

- Where possible, is directly accessible from the dwelling. Where this is not possible, applicants will need to demonstrate this and provide shared outdoor amenity space in lieu.
- Where possible, provides outlook from habitable rooms.
- In exceptional circumstances where directly accessible private outdoor amenity space is not possible or would negatively impact the external appearance of the proposal, extra emphasis will be placed on the provision of high quality shared outdoor amenity space.
- Where shared outdoor amenity space is provided, units with direct access should include an area of semi-defensible private space.
- Where a shared outdoor amenity space is provided in lieu of directly accessible private outdoor amenity space, provide a large area of shared space, along with a series of semi-private spaces allocated to each unit, as shown in Figure 2.34a. These should be open to the shared areas and may be bordered by low hedges and shrubs but should not be divided from the other garden areas with fences or high hedges.
- Shared outdoor amenity space should be designed to accommodate a series of different uses, with quieter seating areas along with family orientated areas, and should seek to include a mixture of grassed and planted areas as a minimum, and a shared patio area.
- Schemes over 10 units and all schemes containing flats must provide play space in accordance with Policy DM10.4 (d) of the Croydon Local Plan. Play space need not be provided with off the shelf equipment, but can often be better accommodated with natural play as part of the landscape design.
- Shared access to a garden shed or similar, along with a garden tap, are encouraged and should be provided to facilitate maintenance and ownership over the space by residents.

2.35 LANDSCAPE DESIGN ASSOCIATED WITH RETAINING WALLS & LARGE FLAT ROOFS

2.35.1 Retaining walls may be required on sloping sites. Where necessary, retaining walls should respond to the materials and design of the proposed development and should be integrated into the landscaping proposal. This may include stepped planting borders within the retaining wall. Large, blank retaining walls that impact the street scene or neighbouring amenity will not be acceptable.

2.35.2 Where large flat roofs cannot be avoided and are visible, landscape design should be used to make these less prominent as viewed from the streetscene and neighbouring habitable rooms. This may include the provision of a green roof and planting surrounding the built form to help reduce impact on visual amenity.

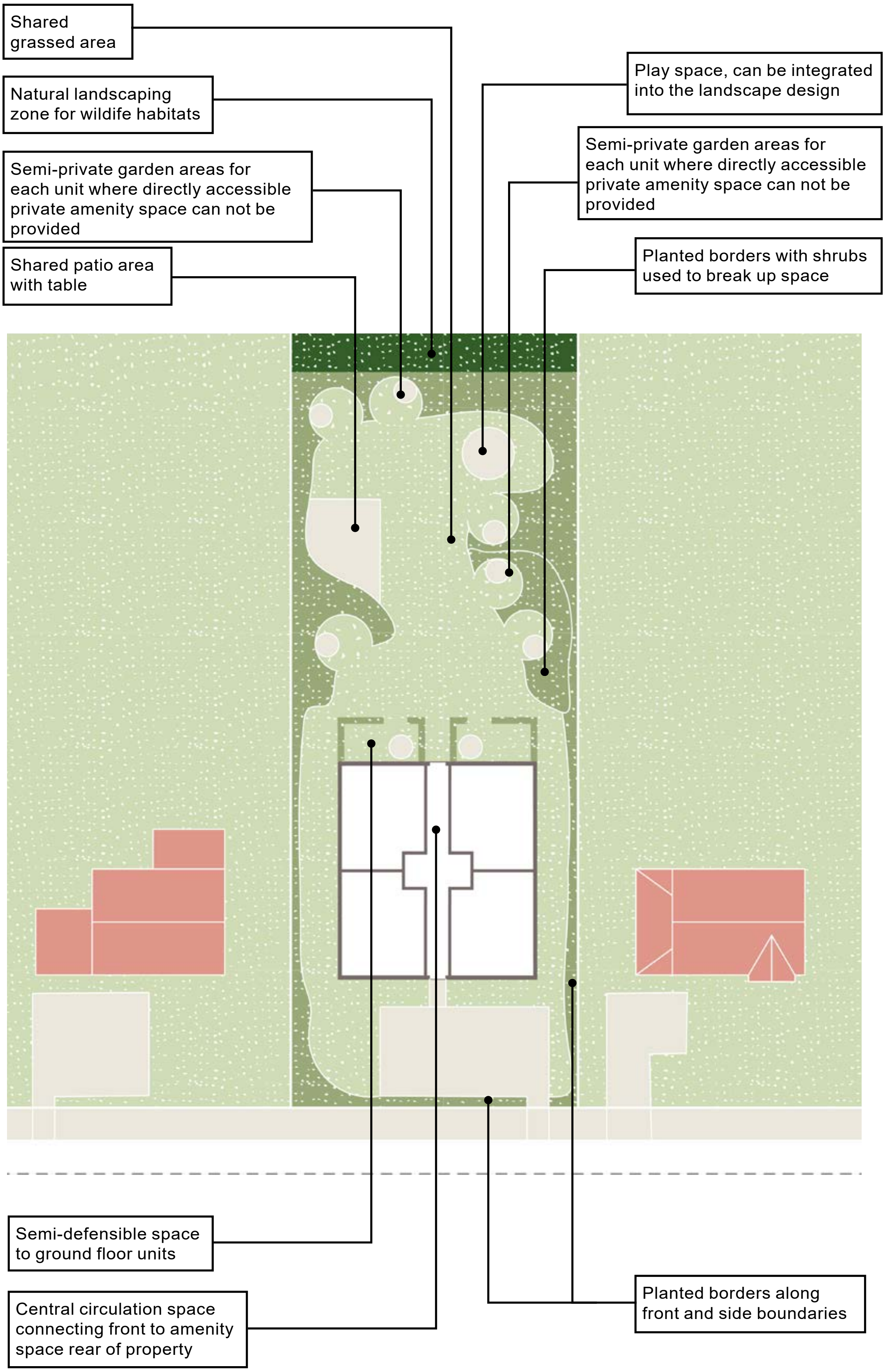


Figure 2.34a: Diagram for a typical shared amenity space

2.36 SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SUDS)

2.36.1 SuDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to ensure that a proposed development is able to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on the site, as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible. Where required, they should be integrated into the landscaping design at an early stage[39]. SuDS Designers are advised to use the Council's Sustainable Drainage - Design and Evaluation Guide [40]. The guide links the design of SuDS with the evaluation requirements of planning, in a sequence that mirrors the SuDS design process.

WHY USE SUDS?

2.36.2 SuDS offer significant advantages over conventional piped drainage systems in reducing flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water runoff from a site, promoting groundwater recharge and biodiversity benefits, as well as improving water quality and amenity value.

Figure 2.36a: Green roof designed by Hayhurst & Co.

Figure 2.36b: Trench with planting.
(Photo: James Hitchmough)

Figure 2.36c: Stepped roof with planters designed by Hayhurst & Co.

Figure 2.36d: Drainage pond.
(Photo: 2b Landscape Consultancy)

39 See Council's Validation Checklist at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/make-application/validation-checklist for details of a range of matters which applicants should be aware of when submitting planning applications.

40 See advice on the Council's role as the Lead Local Flood Authority at: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/flood-water/advice-to-planning-applicants.

DESIGN OF SUDS

2.36.3 SuDS should be incorporated and integrated into the design of the landscape and buildings in suburban development to maximise landscaping and biodiversity opportunities. Appropriate options for SuDS in residential suburban developments include:

- GREEN ROOFS: A specially designed roof covering that absorbs water and attenuates flow to a drainage layer below.
- FILLER TRENCHES AND DRAINS: Shallow trenches filled with shingle and gravel to allow for temporary surface attenuation.
- DRAINAGE SWALES AND PONDS: Vegetated spaces that can be used to store excess water and may include an existing level of water and capacity provision. Drainage swales and ponds may also be included in a landscaping plan for development that is free from water except in case of flooding.
- BIORETENTION SYSTEMS: Contained, lowered landscaped areas or pre-fabricated units with soil and vegetation to reduce run-off.
- PERMEABLE PAVING: Permeable paving that allows water to filter down to the layer below and be discharged into a controlled drainage system.
- RAINWATER AND/OR GREYWATER HARVESTING: The easiest and most common form that can be provided is a household water butt, where it can be stored and used for gardening and other purposes at a later date. Greywater (water from showers, baths, basins etc.) needs to be treated if stored for any amount of time. This should be considered to achieve sustainability and building control objectives.

Figure 2.36e: Permeable paving.

Figure 2.36f: Water butts.

CASE STUDIES

2.37 REGINA ROAD

2.37.1 A good example of a ***proposal for a back land*** development on a site which is highly constrained, narrowing at one end. The development proposes a larger block where the site is wider, containing flats, and then a series of 1 and 2 storey houses. The change in scale reflects the proximity to existing neighbours. The use of high-quality contemporary materials differentiates the proposal from its surroundings, with architectural form that reinterprets traditional suburban building types to create unique homes that respond to issues of overlooking.

2.37.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council's website, using case number: 16/06023/FUL. The scheme was designed by Stitch Studio for Brick by Brick.

Figure 2.37a

Figure 2.37b

2.38 MULBERRY LANE

2.38.1 A good example of a ***sympathetic and faithful approach*** on a rear garden site. Well-chosen materials and considered detailing responds to the surrounding architecture. The development sits within the East India Conservation Area adjacent to other intensification examples, including the conversion and extension of existing properties into flats.

Figure 2.38a

2.39 ONSLOW GARDENS

2.39.1 A good example of an ***innovative and original approach*** in a rear garden development. The development provides 2 new family homes in the rear gardens of existing properties, with access being provided by the existing driveway of one of the host dwellings. The form and material approach is contemporary and seeks to enhance the local character by deliberately distinguishing itself from the existing street facing development.

2.39.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council’s website, using case number: 16/00455/P

Figure 2.39a

Figure 2.39b

Figure 2.39c

2.40 RUSHDEN & RAVENSDALE

2.40.1 An example of 3 adjacent sites delivering a total of 28 homes in place of existing garages. Each site within the proposal presents a positive approach to suburban intensification. The proposal for a 7-storey block of flats on the ***corner site*** makes the most of its prominent location within the streetscene. Homes of 2 and 3 storeys located to the rear of existing dwellings are of a scale that respond to their context.

2.40.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council's website, using case number: 16/06374/FUL. The scheme was designed by HTA Design for Brick by Brick.

Figure 2.40a

Figure 2.40b

Figure 2.40c: Site plan.

2.41 MELVILLE AVENUE

2.41.1 The redevelopment of a single dwelling into 6 flats within a 3 storey + basement dwelling. This proposal exemplifies a good ***contemporary reinterpretation approach*** to character through the use of high-quality contemporary architectural design that makes a contextually considered response to the site and neighbourhood characteristics. The units are large and carefully planned, with generous window sizes. The landscaping and roof terraces make the most of the topography of the site, providing well considered communal amenity spaces.

2.41.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council's website, using case number: 17/00720/FUL. The scheme was designed by MATA Architects.

Figure 2.41a

Figure 2.41b

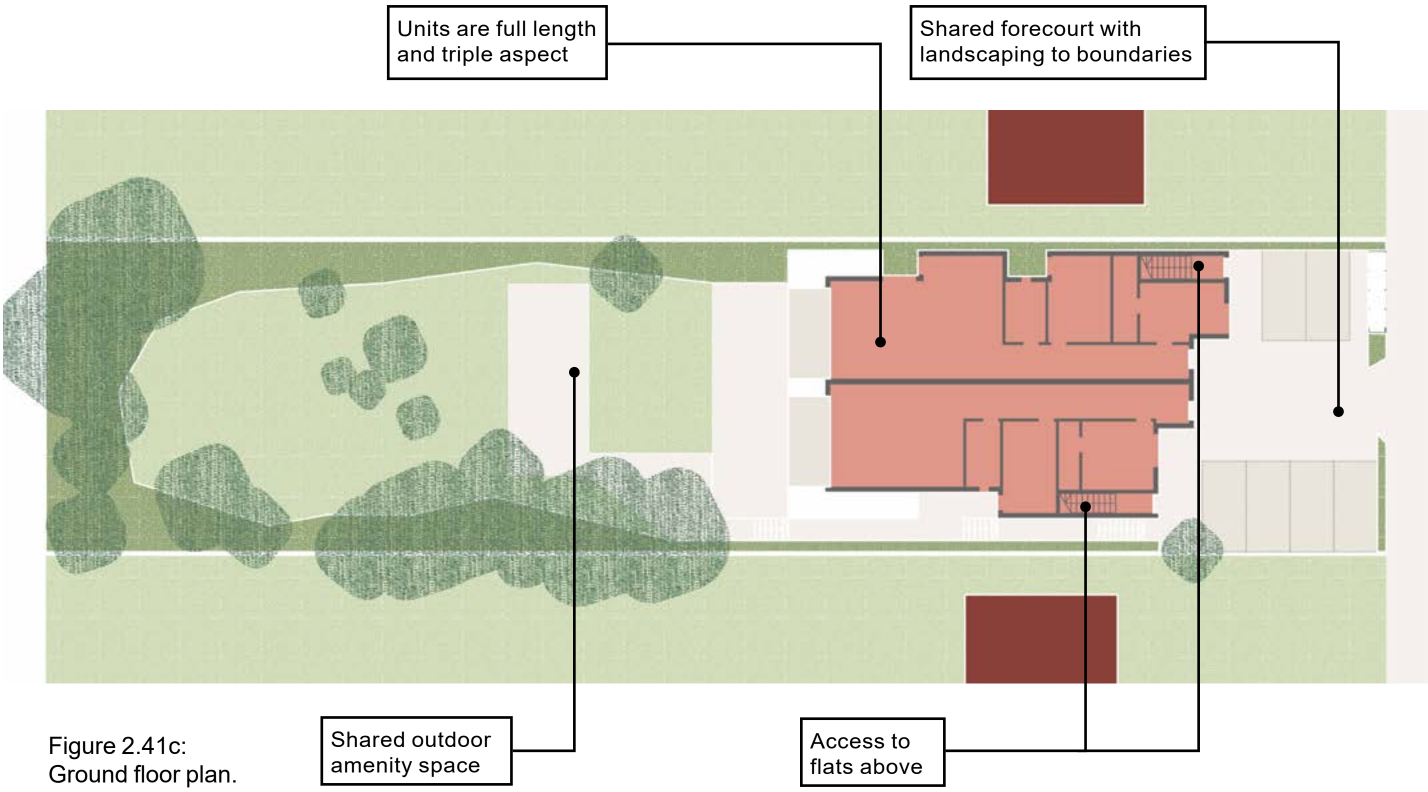


Figure 2.41c:
Ground floor plan.

2.42 EAGLE HILL

2.42.1 The redevelopment of a constrained site formerly containing garages to provide 8 flats within a development that carefully steps down the site's steep topography. The homes are orientated around internal courtyards to bring light into deep plans and to prevent overlooking to neighbouring properties, whilst providing multiple outlooks. The building form is ***innovative and original*** but makes reference to the site's former use as garages.

2.42.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council's website, using case number: 16/06275/FUL. The scheme was designed by Coffey Architects for Brick by Brick.

Figure 2.42a

Figure 2.42b

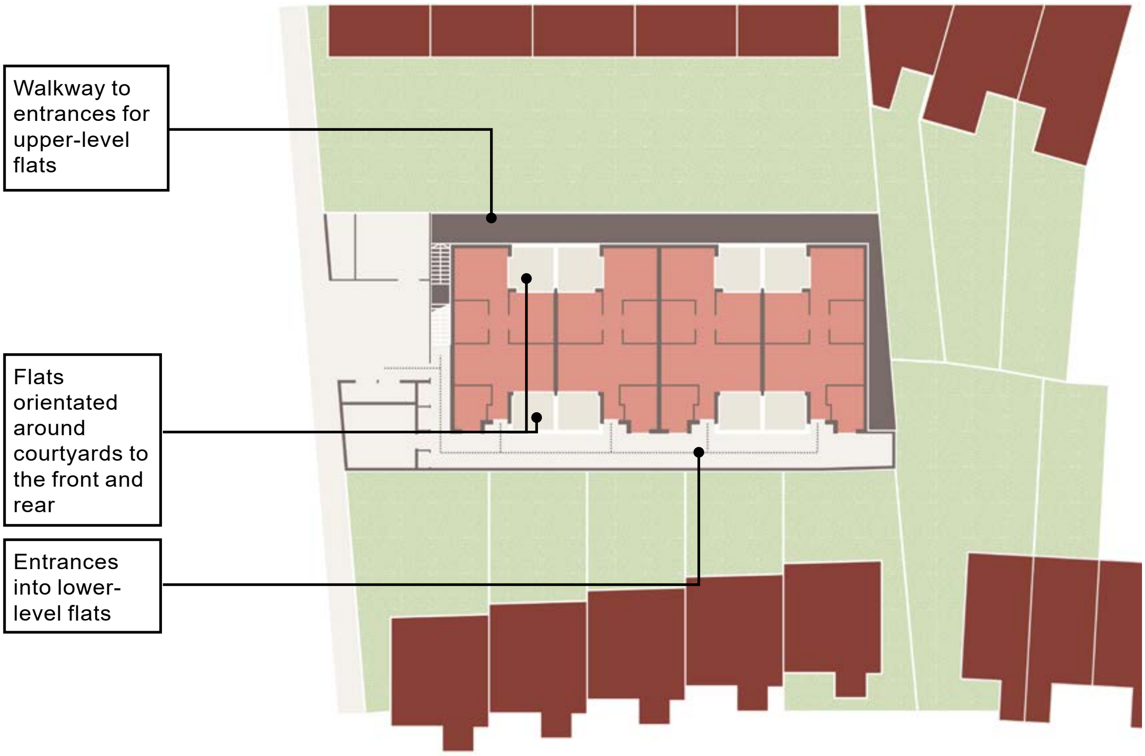


Figure 2.42c: Lower-level plan.

2.43 PAIR OF SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES

2.43.1 The redevelopment of 2 adjoining semi-detached properties, typically each being 3-bedroom dwellings. The proposal ***optimises the site*** to provide a high proportion of family-sized homes. There are 6 x 3-bedroom flats located in the street facing block, the third floor of which is partially contained within the roof-space. The rear garden development provides 2 x 2-bedroom houses that are inward facing so as not to prejudice development on neighbouring sites. The distribution of mass across the site reduces the impact of intensification on streetscape whilst providing a high percentage of family-sized units. The proposal that faces onto the street makes use of symmetry to respond to the context of the semi-detached street, with an enlarged building envelope to provide increased footprint to ensure the delivery of family-sized units. Parking is distributed across the site to minimise visual intrusion.

2.43.2 This is a designed scheme to highlight the possibility of such redevelopment.

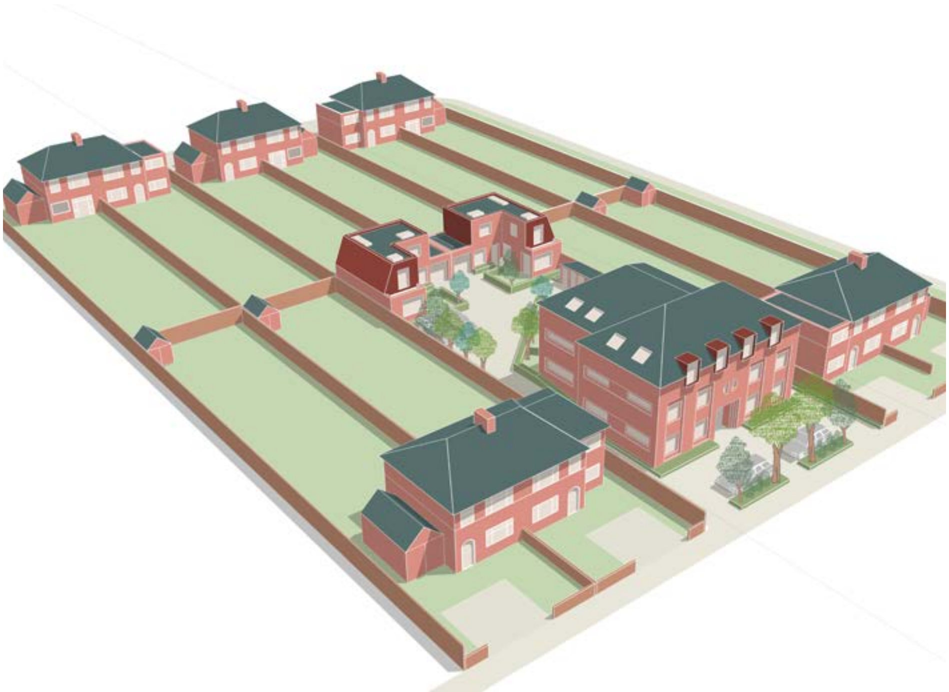


Figure 2.43a

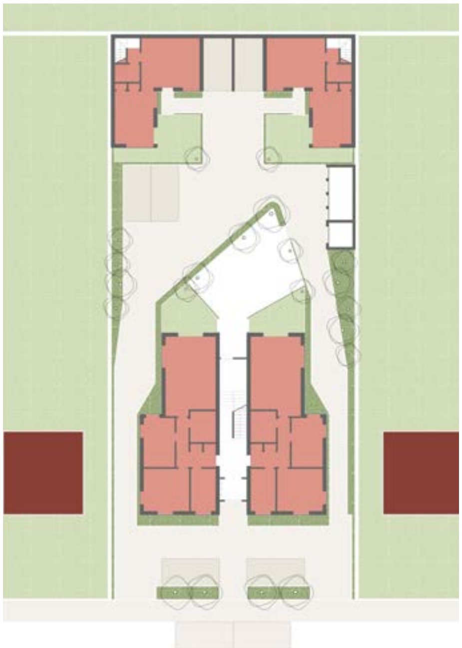


Figure 2.43b: Ground floor plan.

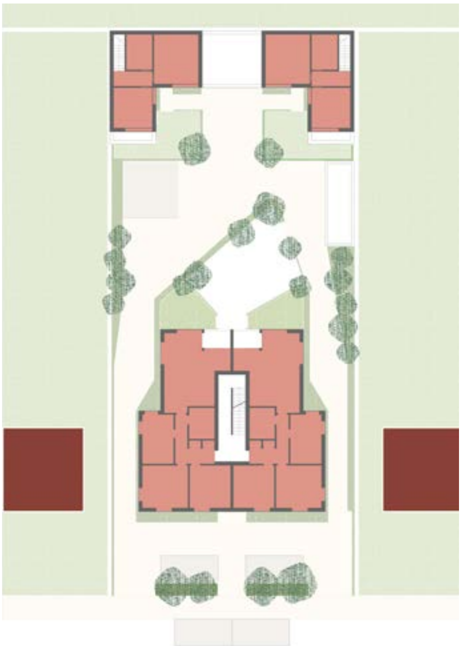


Figure 2.43c: First floor plan.

2.44 OVAL MEWS

2.44.1 Redevelopment of disused commercial/industrial buildings to provide 3 flats and 6 houses on an awkwardly shaped site with challenging overlooking issues. Where the proposal fronts the street it takes a ***sympathetic and faithful approach***, matching materials and details to the neighbouring properties. To the rear, a mews style language is developed with a close-knit plan orientated around a shared access path. The layout ensures homes are dual aspect and have access to private outdoor amenity space.

2.44.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council's website, using case numbers: 5/01118/P. The scheme is a development by Chartwell Land & New Homes.

Figure 2.44a

Figure 2.44b

2.45 PURLEY DOWNS ROAD

2.45.1 A good example of the redevelopment of a single family house to provide 8 ***family-sized homes***, each containing four-bedrooms. 2 houses face onto the road, with a further 6 houses set in the rear garden. The development is designed in a traditional style using high quality and robust materials that respond to the existing local architecture.

2.45.2 For more information, visit the planning public access register on the Council's website, using case number: 16/04186/FUL.

Figure 2.45a

Figure 2.45b