# Part D: Buildings and Layout

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- D1 Blocks and Frontages
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- D4 Boundary Treatments

This part of the Development Requirements SPD provides further detailed guidance on the interpretation of the following Core Strategy policies, as appropriate:

- CS.9 Design and Distinctiveness
- CS.15 Distribution of Development
- CS.20 Existing Housing Stock and Buildings

This section of the SPD provides advice on how applicants can ensure that proposals achieve high quality design in new development.

It will be used by Stratford-on-Avon District Council to help reach decisions on whether to approve or refuse planning applications. Making sure that applications comply with the guidance contained within SPD will make it easier for the Council to grant planning permission. The Council's planning policies are set out in the Core Strategy, available at <u>www.stratford.gov.uk/corestrategy</u>

Key words or terms which appear throughout the document are included in the Glossary.

# **D1. Blocks and Frontages**

Policy CS.9 Key Design Principles: Sensitive: Proposals, including layout and orientation, will be sensitive to the setting, existing built form, neighbouring uses, landscape character and topography of the site and locality.

#### Grain

The grain of an area is an expression of the pattern of development. This is best illustrated by 'figure ground' plans. Figure ground plans are 2 dimensional maps of urban space that show the relationship between built and un-developed space (See Fig D1 below).

For a new development to integrate well with its context, it needs to take account of the grain that surrounds it, without necessarily trying to replicate it. It should integrate with existing movement networks and create attractive and continuous streetscapes, knitting in visually and functionally with existing development

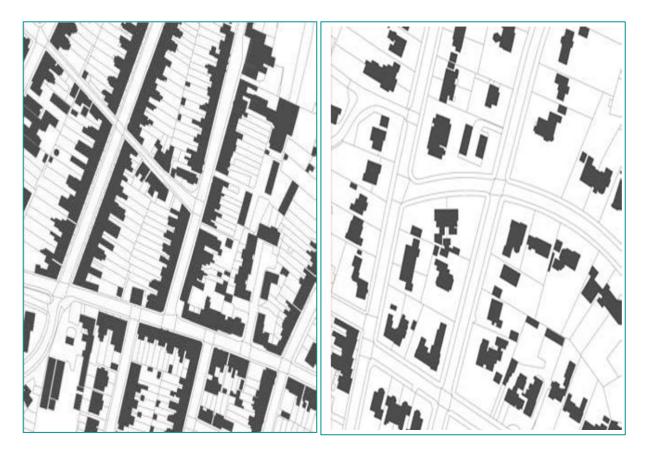


Fig. D1 - Examples of urban grain, showing the high density fine grained development in Old Town, Stratford-upon-Avon through to lower density coarse grained development in the Welcombe Road residential area, Stratford-upon-Avon.

#### Massing

The massing of a building is defined by the physical volume or bulk of a structure or building and relates to its scale, size and height. The impact of a new building on its neighbors may be exacerbated by issues of overlooking, loss of light and shadowing. Orientation, topography/levels, context and the character of the surrounding area are all matters which must be thoroughly addressed and considered together with scale and massing to achieve a positive outcome. Adequate spacing between individual properties should be considered, to avoid a terracing effect. The impact of side extensions on the building's massing should be given appropriate consideration.

The size of new buildings needs to respect the setting in which they are built. If the area is covered by a character area appraisal, the local context and key elements such as predominant storey heights will usually be included. A common criticism is that new buildings are perceived to be overbearing or overpowering. Larger scale buildings may however be appropriate for good design reasons such as at key corner plots, at the end of a vista or where they front open spaces.

#### Density

Density can be defined in various ways. However, the Council will expect residential density to calculated using the number of dwellings per hectare (dph). While development should make efficient use of land, the overriding objective should be to create an attractive development that functions well and is appropriate to its context, irrespective of the numerical density.

Developments that propose relatively high density, for example in excess of 50 dph will need to demonstrate that the increased spatial requirements for associated car parking, bin storage and cycle parking can be provided, whilst still providing sufficient quantity and quality of private amenity space, landscaped areas and public open space. In addition, mitigation of surface water runoff from roof space and hard surfacing via Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should continue to be a primary consideration. Further guidance on SUDS is available Part N Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

#### Orientation

The orientation of a building should be informed by the analysis of site constraints and opportunities. This includes orientating buildings, their windows and gardens to maximise opportunities for solar gain or to take advantage of particular views or for surveillance purposes.

Information on solar orientation and cooling and preventing excessive solar gain may be found in <u>D2 Solar Orientation and Night Cooling</u>.

#### Frontages

The character of the street and development is significantly influenced by the width/depth of private space between the front of the dwelling or building and the edge of the street (including footpath if relevant), and whether the building line is continuous, staggered or broken as shown in Figs.D2a and D2b below.

The amount of frontage amenity space or setback from the street to a dwelling should be determined by the existing or proposed character of the street and its degree of urban, suburban, formal or informal nature. The amount of setback must be related to the street as a whole and the front to front dimensions should be appropriate to the importance of the street within the street hierarchy and settlement. Primary streets will be wider and grander and are likely to have buildings set well back from the street with well-designed and landscaped space between, together with appropriate boundary features.

In all but exceptional cases, the frontage should be no less than 0.5 metres (to allow for opening windows, canopies, steps, planting,) and is unlikely to be more than 6 metres.



Fig. D2a - Examples of continuous and fragmented building lines.

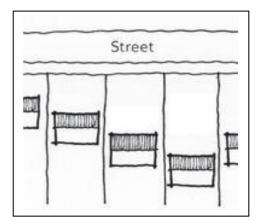


Fig. D2b – Example of a staggered building line.

Where the development proposes a more urban, higher density approach, proposed setbacks will be generally smaller (0.5-2 metres). Lower density development proposals with a more open and rural character should have greater setbacks, ranging between 3-6 metres.

Development in more urban areas and fronting primary routes should have more consistent building lines and setbacks, not varying in depth along the length of a street by more than approximately 2 metres. In more suburban, lower density areas, building lines and setbacks can vary more as appropriate to the character of the street that exists or is being created.

Setbacks greater than approximately 5.5 metres will normally allow on plot parking to the front. Where this occurs sufficient planting should be provided to help soften the impact cars may have on the streetscape.

Continuous building frontages (90-100% of a street occupied by building frontages) may be appropriate in urban contexts, while more broken frontages (occupying less than 60% of a street frontage) are more appropriate in less urban contexts, where a more green/ rural character is desirable. In both cases the continuity of a building frontage can also help reinforce the street hierarchy contributing to legibility.

In order to ensure an appropriate level of amenity and mitigation from noise and disturbance from parked or passing vehicles a distance of not less than 1.5 metres from the windows of a habitable room to the vehicle should be achieved. In extreme circumstances further mitigation of noise might be required via passive or mechanical ventilation to rooms as an alternative to opening windows.

#### **Active Frontages**

Well designed 'active' frontages add interest, life and vitality to the public realm and street. The contribution that active frontages can make to the quality of the built environment and creating sustainable communities for the future is recognised in best practice guidance, including the Urban Design Compendium 1.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/urban-design-compendium

Active frontages can be achieved using the following principles:

- Have frequent doors and windows with few blank walls;
- Use **projections** such as bays, balconies and porches to articulate facades;
- Where appropriate consider making lively internal uses visible from the outside, or spilling onto the street e.g. pavement cafes;
- Use transparent glass for windows, where privacy allows, rather than mirrored or frosted glass;
- Consider **level changes** between the ground building level and pavement, with a gentle ramp or limited number of steps up to a dwelling's front doors where appropriate or raised terraces for pubs or restaurants, for example. A change of up to 450mm is often desirable to give a sense of privacy and surveillance, but only where suitable alternative disabled access is available.

#### **Designing Housing Types**

Many developments, particularly by volume house builders, use a limited set of house types. It is essential therefore that the types have regard to their role in the making of streetscapes and the creation of places, rather than adopt a 'one-size-fits-all' plan which assumes a standard suburban context. The design of house types should reconcile place making requirements with those of local distinctiveness and meeting sustainability objectives.

#### **Successful Streets**

Successful streets comprise houses which ensure continuity of frontage and appropriate sense of enclosure. They should relate to each other, yet have sufficient variety to allow for individual preferences and a degree of personalisation.

For the most part, traditional designed buildings within Stratford-on-Avon District have a relatively overall simple form, which includes a range of unit types as shown in the illustrations (Fig. D3) below.

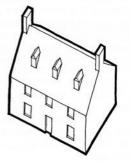




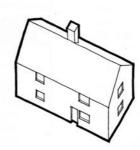
One-unit, one and a half storey attached house with end stack, Great Alne, Arden area

One-unit, two storey attached house with end stack, Stratford-upon-Avon, Avon Valley area

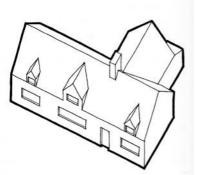
Two-unit, two storey detached house with central hall and end stacks, Stretton-on-Fosse, Cotswold Fringe area



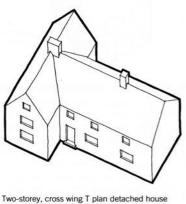
Two-unit, two and a half storey attached house with central hall and end stacks, Kineton, Feldon area



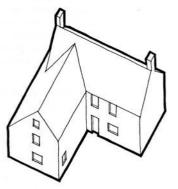
Two-unit, two storey detached house with central stack and off-set door, Great Alne, Arden area



Three-unit, T plan, one and a half storey detached house with central stack and multi-light windows, Long Marston, Avon Valley area



wo-storey, cross wing I plan detached house with central stacks and multi-light windows, Priors Marston, Ironstone Uplands area



L plan two storey detached house with end stacks, Fenny Compton, Cotswold Fringe area

Fig. D3 - Illustrates the range of house types found in Stratford-on-Avon District.

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House designs do not however have to follow traditional detailing and form in all cases. Contemporary design and innovation with specific and explicit aims is encouraged in appropriate circumstances.

There are two keys elements to creating successful street, including:

- Houses that turn the corner;
- Houses that terminate views.

#### Houses that turns the corner

Corners are a key element in place-making: they play a pivotal role in moving from one space to another (see Fig. D4). Without good corners, the townscape is diminished. A well-designed corner will make an important contribution to the character and attractiveness of the place. The corner building is one that is seen in three dimensions and inevitably will become a minor landmark including for persons with dementia (see 'Dementia and Town Planning' RTPI Practice Advice January 2017). It may therefore be appropriate to have a key building located on a corner or to make a design statement through its height or materials.



Fig. D4 - Photo of a house that 'turns' the corner well, Long Ground, Wellesbourne.

This gives a spacious entry impression to a development. This layout is appropriate for relatively formal situations, providing good rear gardens.

Corner design solution shown in fig.D4 above is poorly designed and should usually be avoided as they result in overshadowing and overlooking in rear gardens, and poor amount of garden space and amenity

#### **Houses that Terminate Views**

Classic townscapes comprise a sequence of linked spaces of walkable distances. These spaces are prevented from being endless corridors by curving streets or buildings which terminate long views. Buildings which terminate views at street junctions become an integral part of keeping vehicular speeds low.

In formal places these views are symmetrical and are of a scale which is legible from a greater distance than the street. Thus elements such as gable ends, openings, string courses and other architectural features are given emphasis or the building height or materials are in contrast to adjacent buildings.



Fig. D5 - Shows a house that terminates the view.

In more informal contexts, a building can terminate a view by its location at the head of a T junction: its profile does not have to be symmetrical, but it should dominate the space.

It may also be appropriate to leave the terminal view as an open vista towards open countryside or to have a large stature tree at this point.

Further guidance can be found in <u>Part E. Architectural Style/Elevational Design</u>.

#### **Passive/Natural Surveillance**

Passive or natural surveillance is the informal, close observation of people in public areas (such as the street or open space) or semi-public space (such as a shared car park).

It is achieved when there is a good level of overlooking by neighbours of that space. It acts as a deterrent to people wishing to commit anti-social behaviour, which reduces both fear and opportunity for crime.

To achieve effective natural/passive surveillance, it is important that size, shape and position of the windows of habitable rooms allow an unobstructed view of the space.

Flats and non-residential buildings with well-proportioned-balconies and roof terraces looking onto public space can provide better levels of passive surveillance.

Balanced with the need for surveillance, is the desire of residents for privacy in their own homes. Where this issue is not adequately addressed at ground level, blinds and curtains tend to be closed throughout the day and night, negating any passive surveillance benefit.

A mixed use development with well positioned windows can provide public spaces and routes with passive surveillance from non –residential buildings such as offices during the weekday and residential dwellings at other times.

# **Find out more** Creating safer places to live through design<u>https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/creating</u> -safe- places-to-live.pdf <u>http://www.securedbydesign.com/wp-</u> content/uploads/2017/06/Secured by Design Homes 2016 V2.pdf

# **D2.** Solar Orientation and Night Cooling

#### **Solar Orientation**

The layout and design can make the most of sunlight, shelter and natural ventilation to create buildings that are naturally comfortable for their occupants, reducing the need for artificial heating, lighting and cooling.

Passive solar design exploits the free heat and light energy provided by sunlight by sunlight entering buildings through windows and uses air movement for ventilation. This can be extremely effective when combined with heavy construction materials which heat up and cool down slowly, good insulation, and sufficient measures to prevent excessive solar gain in summer.

To fully take advantage of these opportunities requires thinking about factors like sun orientation and potential shading by landscape design or other buildings, when first designing the layout of a site and the design and layout of buildings. This is why we need to make sure the possibilities are thought about at the earliest stages of planning a development. This section gives guidance on how schemes can incorporate the principles of energy efficient and passive solar design.

#### Benefits of passive solar design:

- By applying simple layout and building design principles, savings of up to 10% on fuel costs can be made;
- Passive solar developments need cost no more than 'conventional' developments;
- Good layout and design results in natural comfortable houses that are attractive to buyers;
- Passive solar design is not dependent on technology and has no ongoing cost implications;
- Designing a building to take advantage of local conditions produces locally distinctive buildings. In previous centuries, traditional buildings were often designed with similar principles in mind.

#### **Site layout principles**

Careful orientation is vital for passive solar energy gains. Ideally, the elevation of each building with the largest proportion of glazing should be orientated within 30° of south (solar orientation) with a smaller proportion of glazing on the north elevation.

Inevitably, road layout will largely dictate the arrangement of buildings on a new development, with east-west roads enabling the optimal orientation of buildings for passive solar gain. However, it is not essential for buildings to be orientated due south as variations of up to 30° either way can be used.

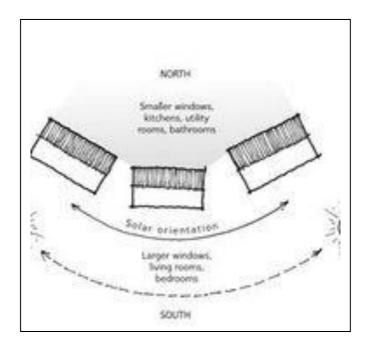


Fig. D6 - Orientation of buildings to maximise passive solar gain.

Over shading by other buildings should be minimised. On a flat site this could be achieved by locating taller buildings to the north of a site, or to the south of road junctions, open spaces or car parks.

Putting higher density and taller buildings to the north can also help to shelter the site from the coldest north winds in winter. Layout should also be informed by the existing contours and landform of the site to make the most of opportunities for shelter and sunlight.

Deep-plan buildings, e.g. offices, tend to be highly energy dependent, with the middle of the building needing electric lighting and ventilation throughout the day. Large buildings should be designed to give all occupants access to natural light and ventilation, either by a more complex form, or with courtyards, light-wells or atria which introduce light and air deep into the building.

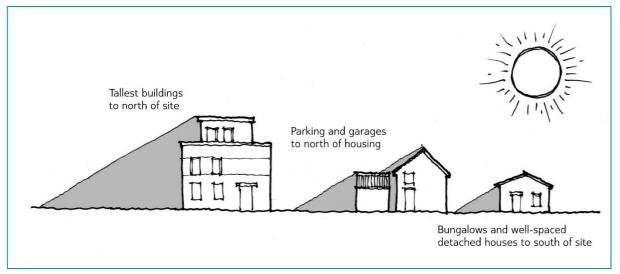


Fig. D7 – Over shading by other buildings should be minimised.

#### Landscape

Trees should be kept an appropriate distance from buildings to allow light to buildings. In cases where trees might grow to overshadow gardens they should be deciduous so that they allow sunlight to pass through the bare branches in winter yet provide shading in summer. Existing and new planting can be used to provide shelter, and to provide shading in summer for amenity areas and car parking.

Shelterbelts, made up of mixed species, can be located to the north of development, or where they will give shelter from the prevailing wind. They should be distanced 3-4 times their mature height from south-facing elevations.

Green space also reduces storm water run-off and helps lower the risk of urban flooding. <u>Part N: Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure</u> provides further information.

#### Cooling and prevention excessive solar gain

With predicted increases in summer temperatures, building design will need to ensure there is adequate cooling to prevent uncomfortable internal temperatures. The following are therefore very important measures to provide:

#### **Natural ventilation**

At its simplest this takes the form of windows which can be opened by adjustable amounts. Positioning opening windows or air vents on opposite walls draws fresh air through the building.

#### Night cooling

Providing ventilation that is secure enough to be left open at night is a very effective way to bring down the temperature of a building. This could take the form of windows with a secure open position, or air vents in the wall. Night cooling works best if the building has a high thermal mass which can cool overnight and then restart the process of absorbing heat over the next day.

The use of green walls and roofs are also effective in keeping the buildings cool at night, by providing shading and removing heat from the air through a process of evapotranspiration. See <u>Part N: Landscape design, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure</u> for further information.

#### Adequate external shading on the south-facing windows

External shading from adjustable awnings and shutters, or permanent sun louvres, can block out sun when it is high in the sky in summer, but still allow sun in when it is lower in the sky in winter or early and late in the day. South facing windows actually make this form of shading more effective. Internal shading, e.g. blinds, is less effective for reducing excessive heat gains.

#### Green space and shading

In urban areas, green spaces provide some respite in extreme heat and improve air quality. Planting can provide shade for amenity areas and car parking in summer. Further guidance on designing green spaces and green roofs are available in Part M: Landscape Design and Trees and Part E: Architectural Style, Construction and Materials. Open spaces requirements are set out in Part L: Open Space.

Passive solar energy houses need not be significantly different in construction or appearance to conventional housing. If it is possible to achieve good solar orientation (see layout guidance above), the following measures should be included.

#### Glazing

A rule of thumb is to have a conventional amount of glazing but to locate 70% of the glazing on the south elevation.

If windows are too large, heat loss may outweigh solar gain, and occupants' desire for privacy is likely to lead to installation of net curtains or blinds which block out the solar gains.

There should be less glazing on the northern elevation, although a window area of at least 15% of the floor area of each room is recommended.

#### Internal layout:

Locate well-used rooms requiring warmth and light on the southern side. In a house this will probably be the main living rooms and largest bedrooms.

Locate less well-used rooms, uses requiring heat generating appliances, and rooms that should be cool, on the north side of the building. In a dwelling this could be the kitchen, bathroom, utility room and garage. In a commercial development this could be storage areas, or the location of working machinery which will generate heat as a by-product.

#### Thermal mass:

Solid heavy walls and floors absorb heat slowly in warm conditions, and give it out slowly again when it is cooler. Traditional stone walls or stone flagged floors provide a valuable thermal mass.

#### Insulation:

Well insulated walls and roofs make the most of the heat gained through passive solar design.

## D3. Public and Private Outdoor Space

#### Public/Private Distinction

Private space for houses should be located to the rear, wherever possible, and ideally backing on to similar private garden space with no public access. This arrangement provides property security and allows for relatively tranquil and sheltered spaces. See Fig D8 below

The street elevation should have windows to habitable rooms and doors, allowing for natural surveillance of the street and the 'defensible space' between the dwelling and street.

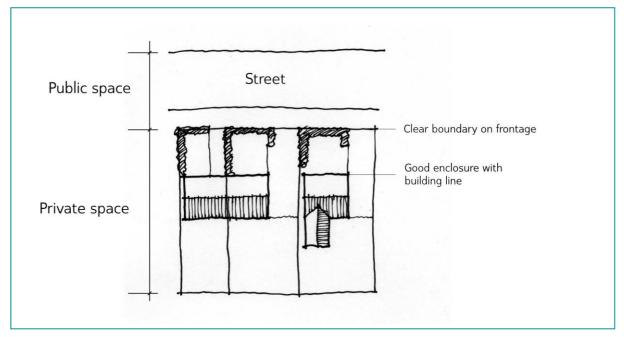


Fig. D8 – An example of well-designed public/private distinction.

Apartment blocks and non-residential buildings also need to clearly identify their fronts and backs. These buildings need to concentrate the main entrance or entrances on the street frontage and sides. The more private communal open space should be away from street views. Service areas should be hidden from the street or its visual impact (of car and cycle parking or a delivery zone, bin storage) be mitigated by good design.

#### **Communal Open Space**

For flats, the provision of individual private gardens may not be possible, so private communal open space will be required to provide an appropriate area of shared semiprivate space. This can also provide an attractive setting for the building within the local context. The following guidelines apply to the provision of communal open space:

- The amount of private communal space provided for flats should be determined by the local context; however, as a guideline, the provision of 25 square metres of useable space per unit of accommodation would normally provide a functional area of communal open space;
- Communal open space should be allocated in proportion to the number of units in the building and to make this space comfortable and not overdominated by the mass of a building it should be located and configured appropriately;
- Generally, private communal space for flats should be provided with some form of enclosure and privacy, while including a degree of overlooking by residents. In some instances, a robust boundary treatment may be needed, such as cases where traffic or other noise needs to be reduced;
- The private communal space provided should be suitable for normal domestic activities, such as relaxation, drying washing, BBQs etc and not merely act as a grassed setting for the building;
- Developers of ground floor flats are encouraged to provide private outdoor sitting space directly linked wherever possible. Where direct access to private communal space is provided for ground floor flats, some defensible space should be provided which may include planting, to safeguard the privacy of residents from other users of communal space;
- Appropriate planting for the space should be provided and the arrangements for the management and maintenance of the space should be fully set out;
- Useable amenity space excludes narrow strips of land and excessively shady and noisy areas.

In cases where accommodation for the elderly (including sheltered accommodation) is proposed, the use and purpose of private communal space may need to differ from that of ordinary flatted development. Occupants are likely to be less mobile and have a range of disabilities. In these cases, careful consideration should be given to means of access, levels, hardstanding, the type of planting (such as sensory), shelter and seating areas.

As general guidance, the provision of 20 square metres of private communal space per bedroom for elderly communal accommodation and 25 square metres per unit in other flatted accommodation would provide functional areas of private communal space.

#### **Private Outdoor Space**

An important component of good quality residential design is the provision of useable outside private space where residents can take advantage of fresh air and direct access to the natural environment. This is different from semi-private communal space (which is shared by residents).

Whilst acknowledging that external private space can be provided by a variety of means such as back or side gardens, roof terraces and balconies, the amenity value of such spaces is dependent upon a number of factors such as privacy, configurations, size of area, orientation, levels, accessibility, amount of daylight and degree of overshadowing.

Private outdoor space should be easily accessible for all physical abilities, but accessible only to those residents for which it is designed to be used.

The size of the private outdoor space may need to be increased:

- To reflect the local character;
- Where excessive shading renders significant areas of the garden unusable due to neighbouring buildings or other structures, trees, orientation;
- Where significant mature trees are to be retained within the garden space;
- To ensure areas of privacy;
- Where gardens are unusable due to their size, levels or configuration;
- Where parts of gardens are unusable due to excessive traffic or other noise (noise attenuation in the form of acoustic fencing may also be necessary).

The Council welcomes innovative proposals for the provision of private and communal outdoor space such as roof gardens, balconies, gardens integrated within the fabric of individual houses or flats and high quality landscaped grounds, so long as they do not unacceptably harm the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or the character of the area.

#### **Residential Front Gardens**

Front gardens are an important contributor to the landscape design of the street and green infrastructure, as well as providing opportunities for social interaction and providing 'defensible space' between the dwelling and street thus aiding security.

In some situations, it may be appropriate for front gardens no to be provided, such as where there is a local tradition of houses fronting directly onto the pavement or in a 'homezone' or mews street. In such circumstances where there is a lack of 'defensible space' the design of streets and dwellings should achieve security by other means. For example, the street layout should be designed to enable good natural surveillance to provide residents with an increased sense of security.

#### **Residential Rear (or Side) Gardens**

Proposals should give careful consideration to the size of the proposed rear or side gardens taking into account local context. As a general guideline, a rear garden length of 10.5 m and width of 5m would provide a reasonably functional area of private outdoor space. However, for other site specific and design reasons (e.g. privacy requirements or overshadowing) gardens may need to be larger.

Table D1 below provides the minimum sizes of private gardens serving different sizes of dwellings. It should be considered as a starting point for discussion with planning officers when designing private gardens for residential development.

Table D1: Indicative minimum garden areas by house type.	
House Type	Indicative garden area
Two bedroom houses	40 sqm
Three bedroom houses	50 sqm
Four bedroom houses	62 sqm

#### **Balconies**

The installation of balconies on buildings can offer a positive contribution, by providing outdoor sitting areas, where outward views will not unacceptably affect the neighbouring amenities or character of the area.

To ensure that balconies are properly integrated into buildings and their surroundings, they should be considered early in the design process.

#### **Roof Terraces / Green Roofs**

In the interests of making best use of urban land, roof terraces can increase opportunities for private residential, and 'private' communal open space subject to there being no overriding design or privacy concerns affecting the amenity of neighbouring residents and character of the area. Further information about green roofs is available in <u>Part E: Architectural Style, Construction and Materials</u>.

### **D4. Boundary Treatment**

Policy CS.9 Key Design Principles: Attractive and Sensitive Proposals will be of a high quality design and will reflect the context of the locality

- General Principles
- Front boundaries
- Rear and Side boundaries
- Existing boundary treatment.

The nature or type of front boundary treatment is a significant influence in the creation of a certain character for a street and development.

It is a fundamental urban design principle to clearly demarcate public and private space and therefore appropriate boundary treatments are required. Planning applications should be accompanied by details of treatments for all boundaries - front, side and rear Boundary treatment should be appropriate to position of the boundary in the plot, the street, the settlement and the character area. The choice of proposed feature (in terms of position, shape, size, details of construction and materials) should be based on the range found in similar positions within the settlement where development is to occur.

There are five basic forms of boundary treatment commonly found in the District:

- stone walls;
- brick walls;
- timber fences;
- metal railings;
- hedges.

#### **Front boundaries**

Boundaries (particularly front) should be clearly defined, using appropriate boundary markers, such as low walls, fences and hedges. In some cases, it may be appropriate to mark the boundary between public and private space through a change in hard surfacing or through ground cover shrub planting. This may be particularly appropriate in courtyards and mews where the objective is to create a more intimate enclosed space. An appropriate use of materials or planting can ensure that pedestrians and motor vehicles are kept away from ground floor windows, thereby protecting residents' privacy. Boundary treatments should respect the required vehicular and pedestrian visibility splays.

As a general rule, low walls and/or metal railings (less than 1.2m in height) are more appropriate as front boundary treatments in more urban areas along streets higher in the street hierarchy, while soft planting, hedging and timber fencing is more appropriate in rural villages, lower density areas and along secondary and tertiary routes in the street hierarchy which have a softer and greener character.

#### Side and rear boundaries

The length of side boundaries onto the public realm should be kept to a minimum and rear boundaries onto public realm and the street should be avoided. Where this does occur boundary treatment should be of brick, hedging or other appropriate materials, such as ivy screens which can soften the wall and add to the character of the street. Standard close boarded timber fencing will not be acceptable as it undermines the quality of the public realm. Rear boundary treatment in particular, should ensure that they provide a good level of security and safety for future occupiers.

In rural areas and infill developments in particular, good boundary design can help to integrate new development with an existing environment. Green boundaries which form the interface between open countryside and a built-up area, particularly as seen from major roads or entry routes to settlements are especially significant.

In all locations where rear or side boundaries are visible from the public realm, brick walls rather than close boarded fencing (which is visually unattractive) should be used. Where a boundary interfaces with the open countryside, the most likely acceptable treatment will be indigenous hedging or in some circumstances post and rail, metal estate railing, pale and picket fencing. In edge of settlement situations, adjacent to the countryside, sufficient space to enable structural buffer planting will be required on boundaries as appropriate. Further guidance on New Structural Planting available in Part M: Landscape and Trees. Close boarded fencing adjacent to the countryside is not acceptable. In certain urban, difficult, or 'hostile' planting situations, an instant hedge could be considered as a boundary, so as to soften an otherwise hard dominated, unattractive constrained area. An example of an instant hedge using ivy is shown below. For further information on hedges and on landscape design, please see Part M: Landscape Design and Trees.

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#### Fig. D9 - An ivy wall – (Picture courtesy of Best4hedging).

#### **Existing boundary treatment**

Existing hedgerow or tree boundaries are particularly important and the presumption shall be that they are retained, protected during construction works (including root protection zones), reinforced by new planting and managed via a management and maintenance plan.

Boundary treatments vary across Stratford-on-Avon District. The photos below show some examples of frontage and boundary features from various settlements. It should be noted that where the property is a listed building pre- application advice on the appropriate boundary treatment should be sought.



Fig. D10 - An example of a dwarf wall with railings.



Fig. D11 - An example of a half round copings wall.

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Fig. D12 - An example of estate railings.