Isle of Man Government
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# Residential Design Guide
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## Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Planning and Building Control Directorate Murray House

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and Status of this Document

1.1.1 The aim of this guidance is to help all of those involved in the design process (developers, homeowners, architects and agents and planners) to work together to improve the quality of our built environment. It is hoped that this document will encourage creative, innovative and locally distinctive designs that respond to the changing needs of our communities.

1.1.2 This document is not intended to stifle creativity or to promote planning by numbers and off the peg designs, but rather to create a supportive context for good quality designs, be they traditional or modern.

1.1.3 The ***Reform of the Planning System – Programme for Government 2016 – 2021 GD 2018/0031*** which was laid before Tynwald on 15th May 2018 stated that "over the next 8 months, we will undertake a range of procedural changes which will introduce… New and improved design guidance and new minimum standards for most new developments", and this is intended to ensure "Our properties contribute to making our Island an even better place to live and work".

1.1.4 The Government is also committed to achieving net zero by 2050 and Tynwald have approved the ***Phase 1 Action Plan*** which establishes how and why the Island should respond to this world wide situation.

1.1.5 Development has an important role to play in this, given that housing forms the majority of the greenhouse gas emissions, at 34% of all emissions, followed closely by surface transport (18%) and how we use our land in future will play a critical role in achieving net zero.

1.1.6 This guidance document responds to the above commitments and sets out how the Department will interpret and apply the Development Plan policies in relation to residential design. It is issued by the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture with the agreement of the Minister.

1.1.7 It is intended to apply to any residential development within existing villages and towns, including individual houses, flats, houses in multiple occupation, conversions and householder extensions.

1.1.8 It is envisaged that separate guidance will be provided for dwellings in the countryside, although some of the broad principles set out within this document may still be relevant to such proposals.

1.1.9 The document is not a Planning Policy Statement (as per Section 3 of the ***Town and Country Planning Act 1999***) but is capable of being an 'other material consideration' (as per Section 10(4)(d) of the Act). Furthermore, where proposals adopt the approaches set out within this document, they are more likely to be considered to comply with the detailed Development Plan policies that relate to design. For example, General Policy 2 of the ***Isle of Man Strategic Plan (2016)***.

1.1.10 This document was originally published in 2019 and updated in 2021 reflecting the use of the document by the Department and those involved in applications and expanded content in relation to climate change.

## 1.2 How to Use this Document

1.2.1 When considering any proposals for any new residential development (either a new dwelling or an extension), the following issues are normally relevant (see General Policy 2 of the ***Strategic Plan***):

- potential visual impact upon the streetscene;
- for extensions – the potential visual impact upon the existing property;
- potential impacts upon neighbouring properties, i.e.
  - reduction of day light and increase of overshadowing,
  - overbearing impact upon outlook, and/or
  - overlooking resulting in a loss of privacy;
- potential impacts upon highway safety, i.e.
  - loss of off-street parking due to proposed works / visibility splays, and
  - adequate parking provision; and
- any site-specific issues/opportunities/constraints (e.g. the presence of trees).

1.2.2 This document provides general advice but cannot cover every eventuality. Wherever possible, it sets out what is likely to be generally acceptable or unacceptable. If a proposal does not meet these, the planning application should include an explanation of why the proposal is still considered acceptable.

1.2.3 All planning applications will be judged on their own merits, taking account of the likely effect on neighbouring properties and the character of the building or street.

1.2.4 In particular, it should be noted that this guidance does not provide specific detail in relation to heritage issues (e.g. in relation to Registered Buildings or sites within or adjoining Conservation Areas) or rural housing, as separate guidance is available in relation to these matters, although some elements may be relevant (for example, see **Chapter 5.0** in relation to Conservation Areas)

1.2.5 The way in which issues are considered may be different where a proposal relates to the development of a new dwelling (or dwellings) compared to a householder extension. Therefore, the approach to the design of new houses (whether single dwellings, larger schemes or new estates) should take account of the issues set out in **Chapter 3.0**, whilst targeted guidance on different types of extensions is provided in **Chapter 4.0**.

1.2.6 There are some common concepts which may apply to all types of development, and these are set out in **Chapter 2.0 (Sustainable Construction)**, **Chapter 5.0 (Architectural Details)**, **Chapter 6.0 (The Wider Site)**, and **Chapter 7.0 (Impact on Neighbouring Properties)**. The impacts on neighbouring properties relates to both the impact of the development on existing nearby properties and, where a development would result in more than one property, the impact of the proposed dwellings on each other.

## 1.3 Design Statements

1.3.1 The ***Strategic Plan (2016)*** contains the following policy.

> Strategic Policy 5: New development, including individual buildings, should be designed so as to make a positive contribution to the environment of the Island. In appropriate cases the Department will require planning applications to be supported by a Design Statement which will be required to take account of the Strategic Aim and Policies.

1.3.2 Where an application is accompanied by a design statement, it provides an opportunity for the applicant to explain how they have considered a Sustainable Construction approach (see **Chapter 2.0**) responded to the need to:

- maximize carbon sequestration;
- minimize greenhouse gas emissions;
- maintain and enhance ecosystems;
- achieve biodiversity net gain;
- provide sustainable drainage systems; and
- provide active travel and public transport infrastructure.

1.3.3 In relation to the other elements of this guide, it is similarly helpful to explain what elements comply with the guide and, if elements do not comply, the justification for this.

1.3.4 Developers are encouraged to discuss larger proposals with Local Authorities to understand any local issues or relevant operational considerations (e.g. bin collection). Where such discussion have taken place and influenced the design, it is helpful to highlight this.

## 1.4 Permitted Development

1.4.1 The ***Permitted Development Order*** allows certain householder development to take place without the need for a planning application to be made and approved. The Department has created the "Interactive House" (http://www.myhouse.im/) and any person considering extending/altering their property is encouraged to utilise this tool, to determine whether or not a planning application or building regulation consent is required. Further advice on the planning process can be obtained from http://www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/.

## 1.5 Other Legislation

1.5.1 Potential applicants should also note that most developments, regardless of whether or not they require planning approval, will require approval under the Building Regulations and other legislation may also apply, such as in relation to flats (see **Section 3.7**) and in relation to equalities legislation and avoiding discrimination.

1.5.2 Planning Approval and Building Regulations are two very separate requirements, with planning more on whether or not something should happen and wider impact whilst Building Control focuses on how something is built – including safety and energy efficiency issues.

1.5.3 Obtaining planning approval does NOT mean that Building Regulation Approval has also been obtained – and vice versa. Applicants are advised to contact the relevant Building Control

Authority as early as possible to discuss their proposals (see contact details at the end of this guide).

1.5.4 The issue of Sustainable Construction spans both, with some elements (e.g. building shape, overall design, orientation) being planning whilst some elements (e.g. insulation) being Building Control. It is important to note that whilst compliance with Building Control is expected as a minimum, and so would not justify a proposal being granted planning approval, where certain design approaches are influenced by Building Control requirements (or indeed any other legal requirements), this may be relevant if justifying why those approaches have been taken.

(End of Chapter 1)

# 2.0 Sustainable Construction

## 2.1 Elements of Sustainable Construction

2.1.1 Sustainable Construction is implemented at the scale of individual sites and buildings and takes account of both the construction process (including the resources and raw materials used in construction) and how buildings are designed and used. It is about:

- Construction Materials;
- Building Design;
- Climate Change Resilience;
- Protected and contributing to the local environment; and
- Pleasant, Healthy, Safe, and Inclusive Spaces.

2.1.2 More details on each of these is provided below.

2.1.3 It should be noted that in respect of alterations to pre-1920s buildings, reduced standards of insulation and energy conservation may be acceptable where the building's historic fabric and/or special character will not enable current U-value standards to be achieved.

2.1.4 Where the justification for a proposal for a replacement dwelling is in part due to the increased efficiency, it is appropriate to note both the carbon footprint of the demolition process and also the issue of embodied carbon. It may be that the overall carbon footprint of a replacement house, when considered in this way, is greater than reusing or renovating the existing property.

## 2.2 Construction Materials

2.2.1 Selecting construction materials which are durable and with low negative environmental impact (including recycled/reused materials where possible) and minimizing waste (for example reusing construction and demolition waste) is important. In order that the impact of construction materials on the environment is minimised, the following procurement hierarchy is often applied (where 1 is most desirable):

1. reclaimed from on-site demolition (e.g. reusing bricks as bricks);
2. recycled from on-site demolition (e.g. crushing bricks for sub-base use);
3. reclaimed from other sites;
4. high recycled content;
5. sustainable materials sources (e.g. natural insulation, certified timber, etc.); and
6. other materials.

2.2.2 This hierarchy can be applied to all manner of building projects, from large-scale housing developments to small-scale projects undertaken by homeowners. It is important to ensure any material brought onto the site is suitable for use (e.g. don't use contaminated soils for landscaping). Details of materials to be imported to the site and pre and post site levels should be shown.

## 2.3 Building Design

2.3.1 Designing buildings that maximize the use of natural systems (e.g. sunlight for warmth and light) and conserve energy (through energy efficiency and use of renewable energy) and water

2.3.2 In terms of heat and energy it is important to consider the points set out below.

- Building Form –
  - Minimise ratio of heat-loss area (exposed elements) to floor area.
  - Passive design (which takes advantage of the climate to maintain a comfortable temperature range in the home, reducing or eliminating the need for auxiliary heating or cooling).
  - The orientation and position of dwellings should optimise the opportunities for solar gain and renewable energy generation, and account for constraints, such as trees.
- Glazing should be sized and orientated to reduce heat loss whilst allowing light and heat from the sun to enter.
- Consider sun rooms instead of conservatories, and if conservatory is provided, ensure it is well insulated from main house.
- Consider how reasonably usable space for outside drying of clothes will be provided, to avoid the need for drying with tumble dryers/radiators.
- Meeting insulation standards (Building Control) and opportunities to exceed these. Boilers, lighting and white goods should be energy efficient but are not normally controlled by planning and so won't be considered. Consider what level of ventilation is provided and how to balance this with heat loss, also the potential for heat recovery systems.
- Provision of Renewables Technology – many forms are permitted development, but if to be taken into account then should be shown on proposed plans and may be conditioned to ensure provision, e.g. solar water heating, photovoltaics, biomass heating, ground/air source heat pumps and wind turbines.
- In relation to air source heat pumps, noise can be a potential concern and so regard will be had to the noise limits as set out in the Permitted Development Order.
- Where parking spaces are to be provided, the provision of electric vehicle charging points (or details of how this could be provided in the future by ensuring appropriate provision is made in the wiring etc. of the dwelling) may be appropriate.

2.3.3 In terms of water conservation it is important to consider the points set out below.

- Types of WCs, taps and showers fitted.
- Rainwater harvesting (e.g. for WCs), grey water recycling, water butts.
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) – paving, driveway, and patios can be designed with spaces around each block to allow rainwater to pass through.

## 2.4 Climate Change Resilience

2.4.1 Being aware of, and resilient to, the impacts of climate change, including minimizing flood risk – separate guidance is available on flood risk, but there is an overlap in relation to the potential to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems etc. as part of a Sustainable Construction approach.

## 2.5 Contributing to the Local Environment

2.5.1 Proposals should consider protecting and enhancing both the environment on site and the wider green infrastructure network – including opportunities for active travel. For example, existing natural features such as trees and hedges should be retained and protected wherever possible, green roofs can be incorporated in building design and natural habitats and additional tree planting can be incorporated into landscaping proposals.

2.5.2 Replacement of natural ground cover with artificial surfaces, for example artificial grass, concrete or tarmac should be avoided wherever possible.

2.5.3 Green or brown roofs are, in short, vegetated roofs, or roofs with vegetated spaces. They are also referred to as eco-roofs and roof gardens. They bring many benefits including:

- reducing and managing rainwater run-off (thereby helping to prevent overloading of drainage systems and flooding);
- improved thermal performance of building;
- reduction in sound transmission;
- improvement in air quality;
- reduction in the urban heat island effect; and
- provision of habitat for native flora and fauna;

2.5.4 As well as complying with relevant Legislation (***Wildlife Act 1990***) proposals should aim to:

- protect and enhance the existing biodiversity on site through the retention and protection of existing wildlife features (as a priority);
- compensating against their loss where retention is not possible (as a last resort); and
- by providing enhancement measures.

2.5.5 The outcome should be to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity. Consideration should be given to the following points.

- Retention and protection of important habitats for wildlife such as mature trees, hedges, sod banks, ponds & semi-natural habitats.
- Protection of features from the impacts of artificial lighting.
- Retention and protection of bat roosts or bird nest sites within buildings (e.g. designing roof space to retain bat roosts or swift nest sites).
- Where reasonable and proportionate, providing alternative wildlife features as compensation, should retention of existing features not be possible (e.g. creation of a new sod bank or the erection of integrated bat and bird bricks).

- Providing additional opportunities for wildlife on site via the creation of natural or artificial features (e.g. creation of ponds, provision of bat or bird boxes, choosing landscaping plants that are good for insects).

## 2.6 Pleasant, Healthy, Safe, and Inclusive Spaces

2.6.1 Proposals should provide buildings and spaces that consider occupiers and users, and take account of the needs of all. A pragmatic approach should be taken to situations where there could be conflicting priorities for use of the space with one amenity not favoured to the detriment of another, with any balances that have been struck explained as part of supporting information. Some of the key points to consider are set out below.

- They should make it easier to travel by means other than private car, including good links to public transport routes, the incorporation in the layout of a development of safe and convenient walking/cycle routes and provision of facilities for cycling (including safe and convenient storage).
- Designing out crime and fear of crime from buildings and spaces is important for overall wellbeing, but also to encourage people to walk and cycle. Consideration of appropriate lighting that allows for people walking at night/in bad weather but also avoids unnecessary light pollution.
- It is important to consider equalities issues, for example, ensuring that the design of pavements and crossings allow for people with limited mobility, wheelchairs, prams, bikes etc.
- Proposals should take into account the needs of different age groups, such as the need to provide space for children to play (both with dedicated and equipped public open space but also safe streets and spaces for informal play) and opportunities to design flexible accommodate that can be adapted to the needs as people get older (e.g. lifetime homes).
- People should be able to easily recognise the buildings they wish to visit and how to get there with appropriate provision of seating and rest areas en-route which can also promote social interaction in an outside environment.
- Consideration should be given in relation to bin/recyclable storage into the practicalities of these being used by everyone.

2.6.2 In considering bike storage within a site, this is more of an issue for smaller houses/flats etc. where there is less potential to erect sheds or use garages. In considering whether bike storage is acceptable it is important to consider whether there is:

- level access to the storage;
- sufficient space to maneuver;
- doors on storage and passage through doors to get to storage;
- charging points (or the potential for them) for electric bikes (and noting that electric bikes may not be able to be stored vertically);
- secure storage (as some bikes are of high value);
- avoidance of joint bike and bin storage; and
- safe, lit access routes to storage.

## 2.7 Policy Framework

2.7.1 The ***Strategic Plan*** sets out a number of aims which are supported by this approach, including those set out below.

- To promote efficiency and economy in the protection, use and re-use of resources.
- To contribute towards reducing energy consumption by encouraging more efficient use of energy through conservation, recycling and waste reduction.
- To support energy generation from renewable resources.
- To embrace the principles of Sustainable Development i.e. development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- To reduce the need for travel, especially by private car, and to make the best use of existing infrastructure, including existing and former railway routes.
- To protect, maintain and enhance the built and rural environment (including biodiversity).
- To encourage high quality development throughout the Island.
- To promote high standards of residential amenity in new development and to provide a physically safe environment for all communities.
- To promote improved access to buildings, spaces and services for less able people.

2.7.2 The ***Strategic Plan*** also contains a number of relevant policies including those set out below.

- General Policy 2(n)
  - requires developments, "to be designed having due regard to best practice in reducing energy consumption".
- Strategic Policy 4(b)
  - requires developments "to protect or enhance the landscape quality and nature conservation value of urban as well as rural areas but especially in respect to development adjacent to Areas of Special Scientific Interest and other designations".
- Environment Policy 13
  - states, "Development which would result in an unacceptable risk from flooding, either on or off-site, will not be permitted".
- Infrastructure Policy 5
  - states, "Development proposals should incorporate methods for water conservation and management measures to conserve the Island's water resources".
- Energy Policy 5
  - states, "The Department will prepare a Planning Policy Statement on Energy Efficiency. Pending the preparation and adoption of that PPS the Department will require proposals for more than 5 dwellings or 100 square metres of other development to be accompanied by an Energy Impact Assessment".
    It indicates that this assessment is intended to demonstrate what measures have been taken in the design of the development to reduce energy consumption and increase energy efficiency.

2.7.3 In light of the above, all developments are encouraged to include details of how they have considered and incorporated Sustainable Construction principles. Irrespective of any other requirements, proposals for operational development resulting in the creation of 5 or more dwellings (including houses and flats) should include details of potential water, gas and electric usage, how this has been minimised and any on-site grey water or renewable energy generation that is proposed.

2.7.4 In the event that an Energy Performance Certificate is produced for a building, it may be that some of the information within this is relevant for the above and vice versa. However the above process is intended to focus on the design elements of the process that fall within the planning process and outside the Building Regulations process.

(End of Chapter 2)

# 3.0 New Homes

## 3.1 Local Distinctiveness

3.1.1 The ***Strategic Plan (2016)*** states at paragraph 4.3.8:

> "The design of new development can make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Island. Recent development has often been criticised for its similarity to developments across the Island and elsewhere – 'anywhere' architecture. At the same time, some criticise current practice to retain traditional or vernacular designs. As is often the case the truth lies somewhere between the two extremes. All too often proposals for new developments have not taken into account a proper analysis of their context in terms of siting, layout, scale, materials and other factors. At the same time a slavish following of past design idioms, evolved for earlier lifestyles can produce buildings which do not reflect twenty first century lifestyles including accessibility and energy conservation. While there is often a consensus about what constitutes good and poor design, it is notoriously difficult to define or prescribe".

3.1.2 This document is intended to facilitate good quality design, and an important aspect of that is local distinctiveness.

3.1.3 New residential development should be informed by the best qualities of our existing residential areas. However, this does not mean that all new residential developments should seek to replicate the appearance of older ones, and good quality contemporary design is encouraged.

3.1.4 Nevertheless, it is important that the design of new residential developments, including their scale (including height), form, layout/orientation, and detailed design (including the materials used) is informed by and respects both the nature of the development site and the character of the neighbouring buildings and surrounding area.

3.1.5 The character and context of any residential development is created by the locally distinctive patterns and form of development, landscape, culture, and biodiversity. These elements have often built up over a considerable time and tell a story of the site's history and evolution - the creation of a 'sense of place'.

3.1.6 The character and context of a site should influence design positively so that development does not simply replace what was there but reflects and responds to it, for example by allowing the long-term retention of existing mature landscaping features such as trees or water features.

3.1.7 The initial site context should also identify established building heights, lines, and orientation of buildings that are adjacent to the site and should have a positive relationship with established housing and other development, including ease of pedestrian and vehicular movement.

3.1.8 If the context to a development has been compromised by earlier development, this should not be seen as a reason to perpetuate what has been done before. Opportunities should be

sought to deliver high quality sustainable development that reflects up-to-date technologies and aesthetics and creates a strong "sense of place".

3.1.9 ***Strategic Plan*** Environment Policy 42 states in part,

> "New development in existing settlements must be designed to take account of the particular character and identity, in terms of buildings and landscape features of the immediate locality".

3.1.10 The supporting text (7.34.1) states in part,

> "In terms of existing settlements, in both rural and urban areas, new development will be expected to follow the following design principles. Development will need to:
> i. be of a high standard of design, taking into account form, scale, materials and siting of new buildings and structures;
> ii. be accompanied by a high standard of landscaping in terms of design and layout, where appropriate;
> iii. protect the character and amenity of the locality and provide adequate amenity standards itself;
> iv. respect local styles; and
> v. provide a safe and secure environment."

## 3.2 Dwelling Types, Tenures and Uses

3.2.1 A residential development should avoid having the same type, height, and density throughout, including avoiding continuous, bland, and uninteresting roofscapes.

3.2.2 It is important to provide an appropriate range of dwelling types and tenure. In larger developments, a mixture of tenures and property types will encourage the development of a diverse community with living opportunities for all members of society, and affordable dwellings should be "pepper-potted" throughout the site rather than all located in one area.

3.2.3 The design of the estate and its dwellings should ideally be sufficiently flexible and adaptable to meet the changing needs and demands of its residents over the foreseeable life of the development with homes being capable of extension and adaptation to the changing needs of their occupants.

3.2.4 In larger housing developments facilities such as community centres and shops or other services should be provided to reduce the need for car use and increase sustainability.

## 3.3 Transport Issues

3.3.1 It is important that development considers the needs of travelling by different means, and where possible reduces the need for people to travel, and then provides low carbon options for the travel that is required.

(Continue to paragraph 3.3.2)

3.3.2 The Department of Infrastructure has produced an ***Active Travel Strategy*** to promote walking and cycling as alternatives to motorised vehicles, as this can reduce environmental impacts and facilitate healthier lifestyles. It is also important to consider the potential to maximise opportunities to use public transport rather than private cars. Nevertheless, realistic provision for car parking is also a consideration.

3.3.3 To achieve the above, it is important to think about:

- how pedestrians, cyclists and drivers will move within and through a site;
- how it connects with existing transport networks (including footpaths, cycle routes and nearby or proposed bus stops);
- whether it is appropriate to allow for bus routes to be amended to run through the site, and
- what provision is made for the parking of cars and the storage of bicycle (including provision for EV charging, or provision for this to be easily installed if required).

3.3.4 Consideration should be given to imaginative ways to provide adequate levels of car parking for both residents and visitors without it dominating the streetscape. The use of the most appropriate type of parking (within the curtilage, shared parking areas, and/or on-street) and both hard and soft landscaping can help to ensure that the visual impact of car parking is minimised. Suspended pavement systems can be used to incorporate trees into hard landscaping areas such as car parking spaces.

3.3.5 Car parking should be conveniently located in relation to its users, and in a form that avoids long rows of spaces without interruption by planting or other features.

3.3.6 Car parking should be sensitively accommodated within, and not dominate, the streetscape. Where possible it should be behind the building line, or it may be appropriate to have parking off the main estate roads in parking closes.

3.3.7 Developments should also incorporate appropriate provision for the secure and convenient storage of bicycles to promote more sustainable methods of transport (See **Paragraph 2.6.2**).

3.3.8 Where trees are to be planted within hard surfaced areas, tree pits should be appropriately engineered to support the weight of the paving and provide a subsurface void that can be filled with sufficient soil to allow root growth. There should be sufficient space for the trees to grow to their full mature size without impeding the use of adjacent parking spaces and the species choice should be carefully considered to ensure that the trees are suited to the site constraints and nuisance issues will be avoided.

3.3.9 Traffic management and subtle changes in street materials can also be used to complement the use of layout and buildings to reduce vehicle speeds without the need for traffic-calming devices such as speed humps and chicanes. Roads should practicably and safely accommodate service vehicles – refuse, deliveries, and possibly public transport where appropriate.

3.3.10 The Department of Infrastructure has developed a ***Manual for Manx Roads***, and this should be referred to in relation to highways issues. Further information is available at: https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/infrastructure/highway-services/

## 3.4 Private and Public Space

3.4.1 It is important to clearly demarcate public and private space. High quality, consistent boundary treatments should be provided both within and on the edge of development. However, other approaches may be acceptable on rear and side boundaries (i.e. timber panel fences). Discussions with Local Authorities in terms of any local issues or, where relevant, adoption/maintenance arrangements are encouraged (this is also relevant for Section 3.5 on Page 15).

3.4.2 'Left over' space that serves no useful function as part of the public realm should be avoided, and often such space provides the opportunity to incorporate street trees and private realm landscape can be used to green the development.

3.4.3 New landscape planting should be of a size and scale which can make an immediate impact in the short term and deliver longer term benefits. The mature size, species, and characteristics of trees should be carefully considered so that tree planting will not result in undue overshadowing, nuisance issues or apprehension about risk through being too close to buildings.

3.4.4 The Department's ***Supplementary Guidance on Trees (June 2019)*** provides 3 key principles to bear in mind when considering development proposals. Principle 2 states 'The design should aim to achieve a harmonious relationship between trees and structures that can be sustained in the long term.

3.4.5 The older guidance within ***Planning Circular 1/93 Landscape Guidance Notes*** may also be relevant, although it should be noted that the planting of Cotoneaster is no longer recommended and should be avoided.

3.4.6 A well-landscaped estate will look more attractive and should help to contribute to achieving biodiversity net gain and carbon sequestration. Natural ecological features such as ponds, wildflower meadows or hedges as well as bird, bee and bat features can easily be incorporated into, or attached, to individual buildings.

3.4.7 In selecting species for inclusion within landscaping schemes, as well as considering the practicalities of planting and maintenance, and impacts for future site users (in terms of species that may obstruct visibility splays etc.) consideration should be given to the use of species which are native, as well as those that can attract and sustain wildlife, as part of landscaping schemes both within and around individual plots.

3.4.8 It is important to ensure sufficient space within building(s) and plots for bin storage which has convenient access to the point from which it will be collected (normally the kerbside). Ideally these spaces should not be at the front of the plot and if so should be subject to appropriate screening.

3.4.9 It is advisable to seek the guidance of the relevant Local Authority in relation to bin/recyclable storage and collection requirements, and to show the proposed space within your planning application. In larger developments, for example, where a neighbourhood centre is proposed, it may be appropriate to consider the provision of recyclable 'bring' points.

3.4.10 Provision should be made for new technological services, for example broadband conduits, electric car charging points and telecommunication masts.

## 3.5 Public Open Space

3.5.1 It is important that open space provision is sufficient, both in terms of quantity and quality.

3.5.2 Many assessments have been undertaken in the UK into the satisfaction of occupants with their place of residence, many concluding similarly, that the creation of a sense of place and community, accessibility to facilities, public transport, and open space are very important as are good design and sensitive provision of parking which does not dominate the streetscene.

3.5.3 The ***Isle of Man Strategic Plan (2016)*** Recreation Policy 3 requires all new development (where appropriate) to include landscaped amenity areas. Proposals for 10 or more units should provide recreational and amenity space, in accordance with the standards specified in Appendix 6 to the Plan (in relation to formal space, children's space, and amenity space).

3.5.4 Planning Applications for 10 or more residential units should therefore include information on how the requirement for each of these 3 categories has been calculated, and how sufficient space is included within the proposal (specifying which parts of the site are intended for which use).

3.5.5 It is important green space and play space is fit-for-purpose and in an appropriate location – conveniently and safely accessible to all the residents it is intended to serve. Applications should demonstrate that each area of open space is:

- located so as to be accessible to the development it serves (having regard to distances and also potential obstacles such as busy roads) – noting the relevant walking distance guideline for whichever type of open space is being considered;
- designed to be of appropriate quality – noting the relevant quality guideline for whichever type of open space is being considered; and
- is of sufficient size (including allowing for an activity zone and, where relevant, buffer distance) for the intended type of open space.

3.5.6 In considering the above, it is expected that the standards within ***Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play – Beyond the Six Acre Standard – England*** will be applied (further information is available at: http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance ). It is important that the application makes it clear when and how the open space will be provided, equipped (where relevant) and maintained (including which organisation(s) is/are responsible for what elements in the immediate and longer term).

3.5.7 A well-designed estate will result in public open spaces which are overlooked by housing to provide an element of supervision. Similarly, paths should be well lit and wide enough for people to pass each other and where there is an element of supervision all to design out crime and create a safe environmental where the occupants and users feel safe.

## 3.6 Efficient Use of Land

3.6.1 The ***Strategic Plan (2016)*** contains the following policy:

> Strategic Policy 1: Development should make the best use of resources by:
>
> (a) optimising the use of previously developed land, redundant buildings, unused and under-used land and buildings, and reusing scarce indigenous building materials;
>
> (b) ensuring efficient use of sites, taking into account the needs for access, landscaping, open space and amenity standards; and
>
> (c) being located so as to utilise existing and planned infrastructure, facilities and services.

3.6.2 Land is a finite resource and it is important to strike a balance between the need to make best use of land (i.e. by maximising densities, so that as many dwellings as possible can be provided on the least amount of land thus reducing the need to develop new areas) and the need to make sure that new developments are attractive and fit-for-purpose. Changing the use of land, particularly from green field to developed, can also significantly contribute to our greenhouse gas emissions.

3.6.3 The ***Site Assessment Framework for the Area Plan for the East*** contained broad assumptions about typical densities for different locations and types of developments **(see Figure 3.A below)**, and these can provide a helpful starting point. However, these should not be taken as targets and does not mean, however, that developments should be so densely developed that they provide inadequate outlook, amenity space, car parking, or an overall attractive environment to see or be within. In reality, the development that takes place may be of a higher or lower density and, as determined by the context of the site and/or the location.

| Density Level | Dwellings per Hectare | Location and Development Type Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Very High | 100-450 | Promenade or very centre of town development. Typically apartments. |
| High | 40-100 | Town centre development. Typically development which is apartments or terraced housing. Also could be development on smaller sites. |
| Medium | 15-30 | Larger sites close to the settlement centre, typically estates incorporating different dwelling types including some apartments and terraced housing. |
| Low | 5-10 | Larger sites towards the edge of settlements, consisting of mainly houses and bungalows with relatively few apartments or terraces. |
| Very Low | 2 | Houses set in parkland surrounded by substantial grounds. |

Figure 3.A: Density of Different Types of Site

## 3.7 Housing and Flat Standards

3.7.1 This guidance document does not provide detail on acceptable house standards, although it is important that new development provides acceptable amenity standards as per the ***Strategic Plan (2016)*** General Policy 2 (part h). It is anticipated that further work will be undertaken into potential size standards in relation to what acceptable standards may be and the best mechanism to implement these. This guidance will be updated as necessary. In the meantime, it should be noted that:

- the Department of Infrastructure has published detailed standards in relation to affordable housing https://www.gov.im/media/1350123/20150908-housing-standards-final-version-jan2016-lr2.pdf
- DEFA Environmental Health ***Housing (Standards) Regulations 2017*** relates to various internal standards (including bedroom sizes) for houses in multiple occupation and flats http://www.tynwald.org.im/links/tls/SD/2017/2017-SD-0122.pdf
- Building Control Regulations do not control room size per se. However, ***Document 'M'*** sets out levels of accessibility for wheelchair uses.

3.7.2 It is important to facilitate development which allows the reuse of previously developed land and/or the reuse of buildings. It is acknowledged that sometimes a pragmatic approach may need to be taken in applying policies and standards, to enable this reuse to occur. Therefore, where the applicant can satisfactorily demonstrate that a pragmatic approach is necessary this may be taken into account in assessing the application.

3.7.3 The ***Strategic Plan*** is clear that the creation of flats, whether by the erection of a new building of the conversion of an existing one, can be acceptable and may even result in the upgrading of an area through new investment in existing fabric. Strategic Policy 12 indicates that support will be given to, "…the creation of flats by conversion of redundant boarding houses, and vacant or under-used space above commercial premises subject to compliance with detailed standards" and Housing Policy 17 sets out key considerations for the conversion of buildings into flats including that they have sufficient space, car-parking if practical, a pleasant outlook 9especially from principal rooms) and consideration of traffic management

3.7.4 Applicants are advised to consider the other legislation that controls flats (Environmental Health, Building Control, and Fire Safety) to ensure that any proposed design takes account of these issues. Initial consideration of practical issues such as bin storage is also important. Developments should either provide parking or explain why this cannot be provided, how the development is accessible to local amenities/public transport/off-site parking and should, if possible, provide secure and convenient bicycle parking facilities within the site.

(End of Chapter 3)

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# 4.0 Householder Extensions

## 4.1 General Considerations

4.1.1 House extensions are one of the most common forms of development. Individually and cumulatively, extensions can have a significant impact on the quality of the built environment.

4.1.2 When altering or extending buildings in order to modernise, adapt, enlarge, or extend them, the overall character and form of the buildings and spaces around them are affected. Guidance is therefore required to provide advice as to what is acceptable in planning terms.

4.1.3 General Policy 2 of the ***Isle of Man Strategic Plan*** (IOMSP) indicates that generally house extensions and new houses within areas designated for development will be permitted, providing that they reflect and enhance the appearance of the existing property, adjoining properties, and their setting in terms of scale, design and materials. However, there are a substantial number of detailed issues that need to be taken into account in designing domestic extensions.

4.1.4 This section provides general guidance on issues that are likely to apply to all forms of extensions, and then more detailed additional advice in relation to different potential types of extensions.

4.1.5 The main design elements that should be considered include:

- the relationship to the original part of the building
  - including materials, design and detailing (such as window materials and proportions);
- the relationship with adjoining properties
  - including the building line, roof line, orientation, and the slope of the site;
- the pitch, shape and materials of the original roof
  - including the presence of original dormers and chimneys; and
- the impact of the alterations on the living conditions of future occupiers
  - consideration of loss of private amenity, external space, and impact on issues such as bin storage. For example, an extension should not lead to a situation where there is no amenity or where bins are left on roads/lanes as a result.

4.1.6 All extensions and alterations, particularly those incorporating modern design approaches, should be considered holistically with the original/main building and its setting in the landscape/townscape to avoid an awkward jarring of materials and forms. However, well-judged modern designs using contemporary and sustainable materials will be welcomed, as the Department does not wish to restrict creative designs where they can be integrated successfully into their context. Such approaches, where well designed, can serve to both improve the sustainability of buildings and significantly improve the appearance of buildings to the general benefit of the streetscene.

4.1.7 However, where inappropriately designed, located, and finished, such approaches can be harmful to the character of a building and its surrounds, and become a local eyesore. Therefore, in some cases, modern design approaches will not be the most appropriate solution, and the character and form of the building and its context may require a more traditional and reserved design approach.

4.1.8 It should also be accepted that, in some instances, it may not be possible to design an acceptable extension due to the sensitivity of the site, limited space, or the relationship with neighbouring dwellings. It is important that, where a different approach is made, that the thinking behind this is explained as or as a part of a design statement submitted with the application together with clarification on why it is considered by the applicant that this approach is acceptable in this case.

(End of Section 4.1)

## 4.2 Potential Visual Impact of an Extension upon the Existing House

4.2.1 The first aspect which the Department considers when determining the suitability of an extension to a house is whether the design of the extension fits with the existing property.

4.2.2 Extensions should generally appear subordinate to the existing house i.e. appear as smaller additions rather than being overbearing features dominating the existing house.

### Choice of Roof Design

4.2.3 Extensions should generally have the same roof pitch (angle) and shape as the existing dwelling and the height (roof ridge) should be lower than that of the main building **(see Figure 4.A below, Figure 4.J on Page 30** and **Figure 4.K on Page 31)**.

4.2.4 Generally, pitch roofs matching the roof of the existing dwelling are the preferred roof type, compared to flat roofs, which are generally introducing a new form of roof type to a property.

4.2.5 There can be properties which have flat roofs/low pitched roofs where a pitched roof maybe inappropriate. However, generally on the Isle of Man the majority of properties have a pitched roof (gable/hipped etc.).

4.2.6 Further, it is also important that the form/type of roof pitch of the new extension is well designed, especially if publically viewable.

The proportions at the front of the house have been well considered in relation to the original house.

The overall balance of the property is better maintained.

The roof form and window positions do not align with the dominant lines of the original property, therefore, making it feel unbalanced with the semi-detached house.

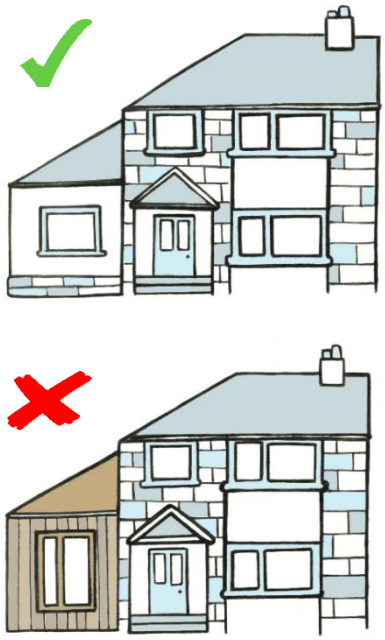
Figure 4.A: Extensions should Respect the Existing Roof Design

### Choice of Features

4.2.7 General Policy 2 requires that any extension should respects the site and surroundings in terms of the siting, layout, scale, form, design and landscaping of buildings and the spaces around them.

4.2.8 Accordingly, the fact an extension cannot be publically visible is not a reason to allow poorly designed extensions – see **Section 5.2** for more information.

4.2.9 The extension should normally incorporate any design/interesting features of the existing dwelling (with windows and doors replicating the design, proportions and materials of the original building, and being in line with the existing openings) **(see Figure 4.A on Page 21 and Figure 4.B below)** unless a deliberate design decision has been made to adopt a different approach, and in this case, a supporting statement should accompany the planning application to explain the evolution of the scheme, and why it should be considered acceptable.



The roof tiles and brick plinth of the extension help visually connect the extension to the original house.

Here the materiality of the extension has not been well considered in relation to the original house, causing it to look out of place.

Figure 4.B: Extensions should Respect Existing Features and Designs

## 4.3 Potential Visual Impact upon the Streetscene/Landscape

4.3.1 Extensions should generally be in keeping with the character and appearance of the street in which they are seen.

4.3.2 Taking note of the spaces between existing dwellings and adhering to the front building line are important aspects when considering the appropriateness of an extension in the streetscene.

4.3.3 In the case of dwellings which form part of a group of properties and which have a prominent appearance within the streetscene, it will be especially important to ensure any extension does not adversely affect either the overall group of dwellings or the individual dwelling.

## 4.4 Potential Impact on Highway Safety

4.4.1 Generally, most residential dwellings have access to a parking space within the curtilage of the property, which can improve environmental and highway conditions of the area.

4.4.2 If two or less parking spaces are currently available within the property, the applicant should try to ensure that the extension would not result in the loss of parking.

4.4.3 If there are more than two existing spaces, then the applicant should try to ensure that there would still be at least two acceptably sized parking spaces (the Manual for Manx Roads indicates a full sized parking space is 3.25m x 6m, although in some instances these can be reduced).

4.4.4 Careful consideration should also be given to ensure any extension does not impinge upon visibility for motorists or pedestrians, this is especially important in the case of dwellings located on corner plots adjacent to a public highway. See **Section 4.9** for more details.

### Highway Services

4.4.5 The Department of Infrastructure Highway Services have approved a Manual for Manx Roads that goes into further detail on the requirements for all highway related matters (including parking issues). Any application that relates to highway/parking matters should be considered against this document also.

4.4.6 It is an offence under the Highways Act 1986 to carry out any works within the public highway without the permission of the Department of Infrastructure and no construction work affecting the highway can commence until a Section 109A Agreement has been signed.

(End of Section 4.4)

## Types of Householder Extensions in the following sections

4.5 Front Extensions 24

4.6 Rear Extensions 24

4.7 Flat Roof Extensions 27

4.8 Side Extensions (Extension to Side Elevation) 30

4.9 Extensions to a Dwelling on a Corner Plot 33

4.10 Dormer Extensions 34

4.11 Roof Terraces, Balconies, Decking and Patios 35

**Note:** In addition to the extension-specific guidance set out in the following sections, the overall guidance set out in **Chapter 2.0** and earlier in this chapter should also be referred to as well as any of the guidance on related issues set out in subsequent sections which are relevant to a proposal.

## 4.5 Front Extensions

4.5.1 An extension to the front of a property can have the greatest impact upon the individual dwelling and/or the streetscene. There may be limited circumstances when a front extension is appropriate, for example where the street has an irregular building line or pattern.

4.5.2 Any extension should normally appear as if it were designed with the original building and not look out of place in the street **(see Figure 4.C below)**. A porch extension is perhaps the most common form of extension to the front elevation of a dwelling. Whilst porches are relatively small in size, careful consideration still needs to be given.

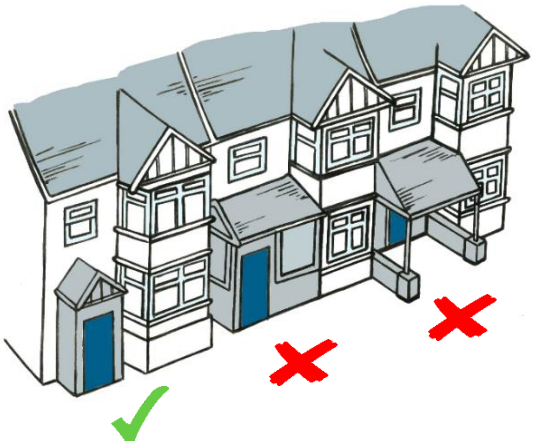


Figure 4.C: Front Extensions should not Look Out of Place

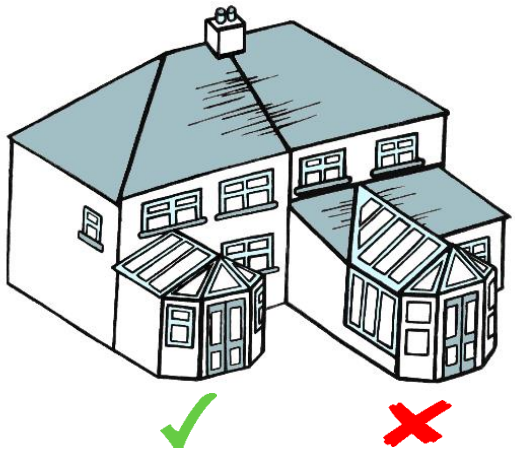


Figure 4.D: Rear Extensions' Depth and Position are Important

## 4.6 Rear Extensions

4.6.1 Generally, the main issues for rear extensions relate to potential loss of light and/or overbearing impact upon the outlook of neighbouring properties.

### Projection of the Extensions

4.6.2 Extensions to terraced or semi-detached properties can have the potential for the greatest concern. With either type of property, the depth (i.e. rear projection) of an extension and the position (near the shared boundary) are key in ensuring any such extension does not impinge on the amenities of neighbouring properties **(see Figure 4.D above)**, and so, if there are issues, the solution may be the reduction in the depth of the extension, or to set it further away from the boundary.

4.6.3 However, chopping off small sections to leave uncharacteristic angles will not normally be permitted, as it is unlikely to produce a form of extension that is in keeping with the original house.

4.6.4 A "tunnelling effect" can be caused where windows are set back behind extensions projecting out either side. Ensuring an extension does not project too far from the rear of the house and/or setting an extension in from the boundary can help reduce problems of loss of daylight.

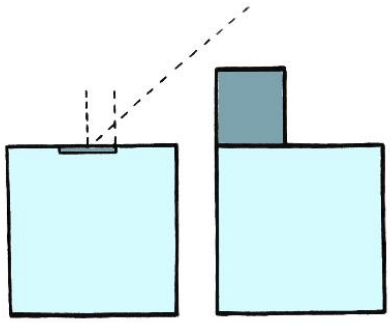
## The "45 Degree Approach"

4.6.5 A useful guide to determine the likely impact of a rear extension upon neighbouring properties is by using the "45 degree approach".

4.6.6 A 45 degree line is drawn from the centre point of the closest relevant window on the ground floor of the neighbouring property. Proposals are likely to be supported where the length of the line exceeds 12 metres before reaching any part of the proposed development **(see Figure 4.E and Figure 4.F below)**.

4.6.7 However, it should be highlighted that this is a guidance only, and passing the test does not mean automatic approval, nor the reverse.

4.6.8 Furthermore, the 45-degree approach will not always be appropriate and in certain cases there will be other factors that will carry as much, and potentially more weight, such as orientation, and changes in levels.



1. Identify the closest relevant window
2. Find the mid-point of the window
3. Draw a 45 degree line from the mid-point
4. This line should not reach the proposed development within 12 metres

Figure 4.E: 45 Degree Approach - Method

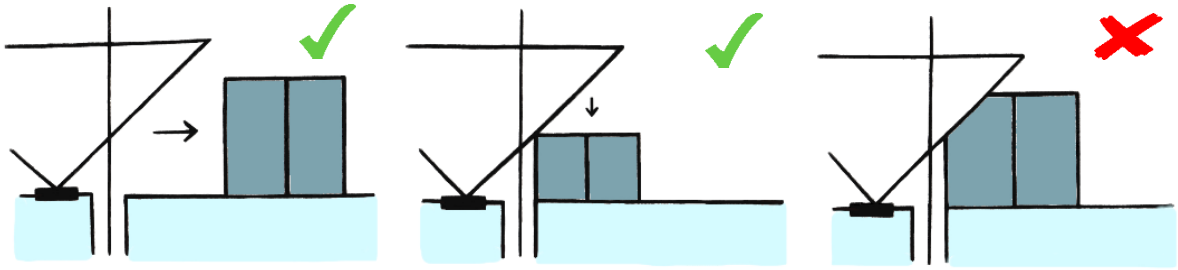


Figure 4.F: 45 Degree Approach - Examples

## Additional Guidance for Terraced and Semi-detached Properties

4.6.9 For terraced houses and narrower semi-detached properties, even single-storey extensions are unlikely to be supported where they project more than 3 metres from the back of the house.

## Additional Guidance for Two-Storey Rear Extensions

4.6.10 Two storey rear extensions have the potential to produce the greatest impact upon the amenities of those in neighbouring dwellings (see **Chapter 7.0**). There may be concerns if a proposal is to extend a semi-detached or terraced property along or close to the joint boundary. Extensions, which could have an adverse effect on the ground-floor living rooms or kitchens of neighbouring properties (**Primary Windows**), are unlikely to be supported.

4.6.11 However, problems may not arise if the neighbouring property already has a single-storey extension or outhouse on the boundary. In these cases, the Department is more likely to support proposals for a two-storey extension (if it keeps to all other aspects of this document).

## Neighbouring Amenities

4.6.12 Each proposal should pay particular attention to poor outlook for and overlooking of the neighbouring property.

(End of Section 4.6)

## 4.7 Flat Roof Extensions

4.7.1 The Department has seen a rise in flat roofed typed extensions in recent years, some being more successful than others.

### Using a Parapet

4.7.2 It is generally considered that the design of the flat roof extensions should utilise parapet walls including architectural detailing. For example, variation in brick patterns, detailing over windows/doors, variation in materials used, banding course etc.

### Design and Finishing

4.7.3 Furthermore, contemporary designed flat roofed extension can be acceptable in certain circumstances.

4.7.4 Also, careful consideration of the finishes of the extension needs to be given to avoid a jarring being existing and new.

### Explaining Choosing a Flat Roof Design

4.7.5 Any application should explain the reasoning for why a flat roofed design was considered and why the design approach has been chosen. For example, giving the level and position or first floor windows above would prevent a pitch roof structure being built or to reduce the massing of the extension upon neighbouring properties etc.

### Good and Poor Design Examples

4.7.6 Every application is judged on its own merits (one size does not fit all) and what may be accepted to one property, may not be acceptable to another. However, as a starting point, the Department has provided some initial examples of how flat roofed extensions can be undertaken, including design approaches and the Department would recommend consideration of similar approaches when considering flat roofed extensions (or an extension). Please refer to **Figure 4.H on Page 28 and Figure 4.I on Page 29**.

4.7.7 As mentioned, the previous appropriate examples are just that examples. There are a variety of styles and designs which can be undertaken to sit well with the existing property and one example indicated may not be appropriate in all cases. However, the examples given an indication and direction the Department wishes to see any further flat roofed extension.

4.7.8 Poorly designed/finished flat roofed extension are likely to be resisted. Replicating existing poor designed/finished extension either already being found at the property and/or neighbouring properties is not a reason to allow further inappropriate flat roofed extension. Examples of poorly designed flat roofed extension can be found in **Figure 4.G on Page 28**.

(Continue to Figures in Section 4.7)

## Poor Design Examples

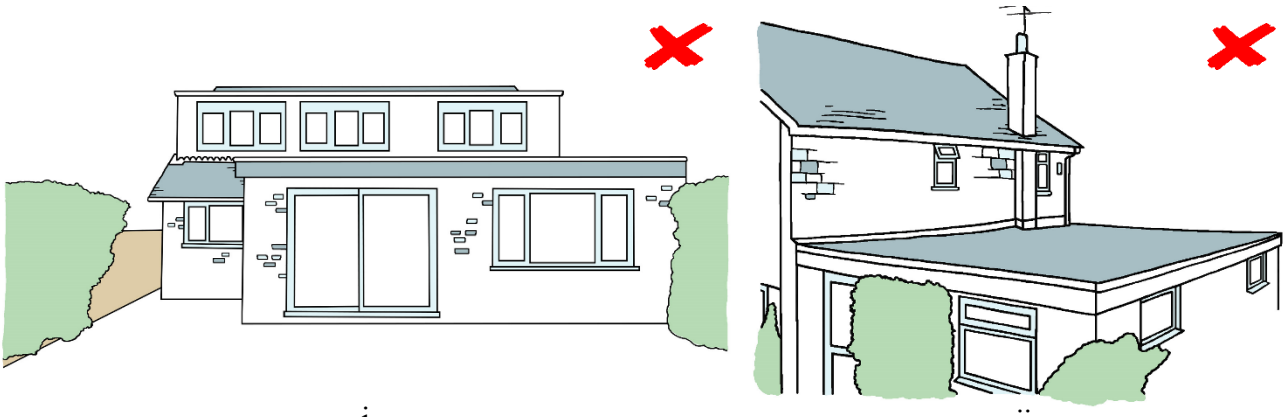


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Figure 4.G: Examples of Poorly Designed Flat Roof Extensions

## Good Design Examples - Traditional Style

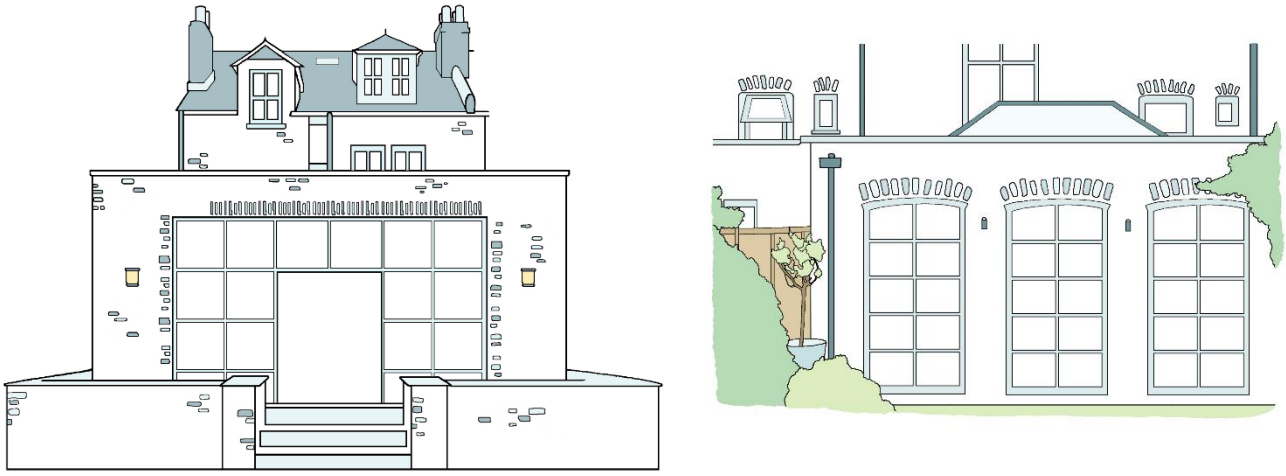

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Figure 4.H: Examples of Good Traditional Style Flat Roof Extensions

## Good Design Examples - Contemporary Style

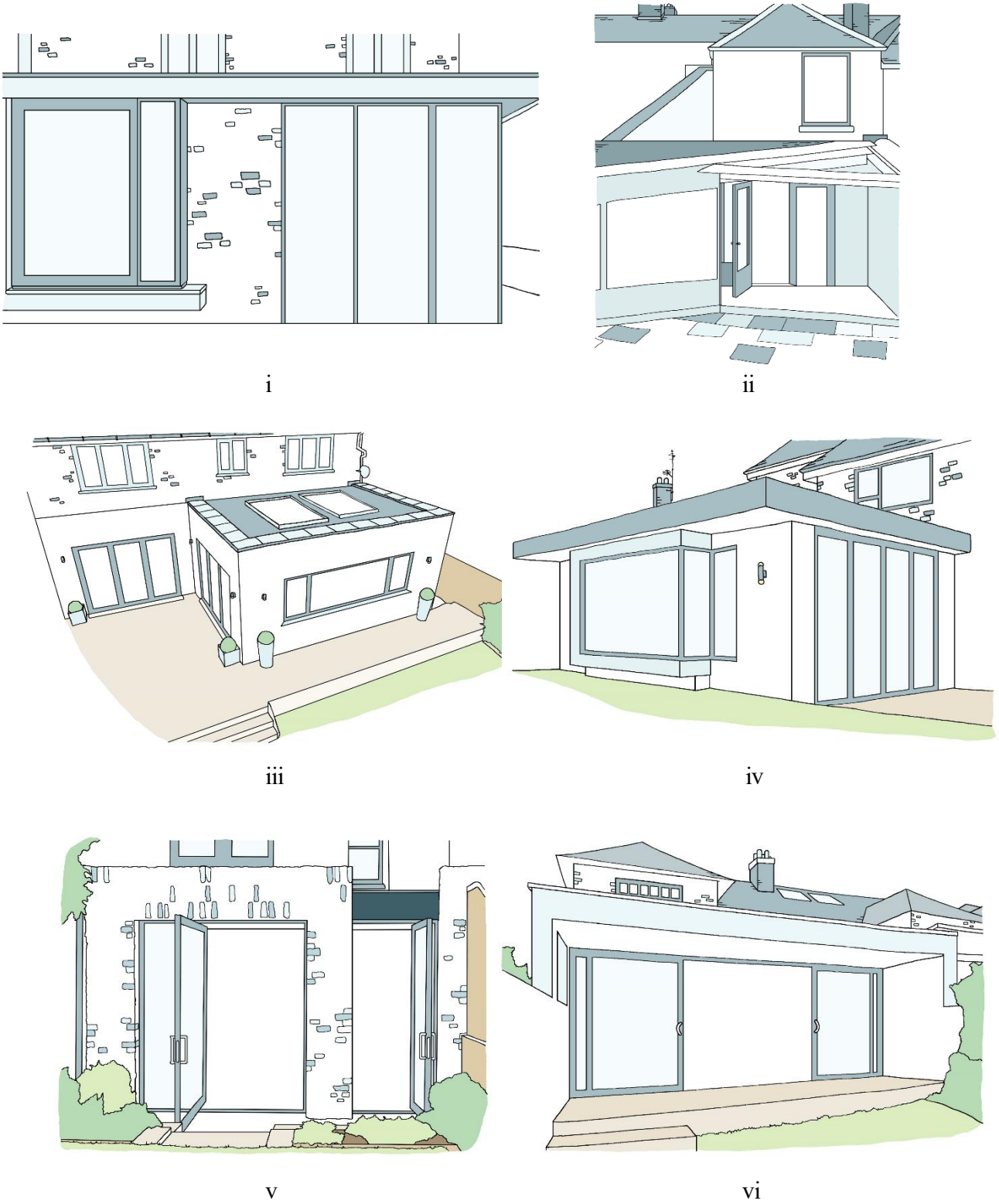



Figure 4.I: Examples of Good Contemporary Style Flat Roof Extensions

(End of Section 4.7)

## 4.8 Side Extensions (Extensions to Side Elevations)

4.8.1 This type of extension is a common extension throughout the Island, as many properties are built with an attached garage, which can physically accommodate being built above.

4.8.2 Generally, the main issues relate to the potential visual appearance of the extension within the streetscene and of the individual dwelling as well as the impact on the amenities of those in neighbouring property (see **Chapter 7.0**).

4.8.3 It is key that any side extension respects the proportion, design and form of the existing dwelling and that it appears as a subordinate to the main dwelling.

4.8.4 A side extension should generally not project in front of the existing building or have flat roofs.

4.8.5 A pitched roof will normally be essential to any side extension. The roof of the proposed extension should match the original in terms of pitch and shape. The ridge line should either follow or, often preferably, be lower than the original dwelling **(see Figure 4.J below)**.

(Continue to Paragraph 4.8.6)

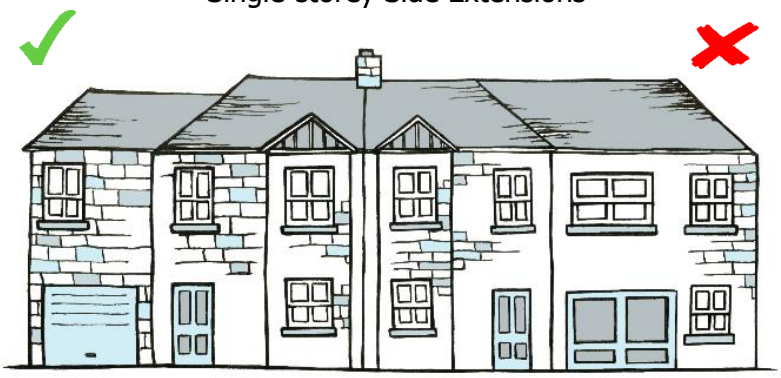
Figure 4.J: The Roof of Side Extensions should Match the Original's Pitch and Shape

## Proportion of the Extensions

4.8.6 Whether the side extension is single or two storey, the height and width of these side extensions should be proportionate to the size of the main dwelling. The width should be significantly less than the width of the main dwelling. The ridge height of single storey side extensions should normally be below the eaves level of a two-storey house to give clear definition between single-storey and two-storey elements **(see Figure 4.K below)**.

(Continue to Paragraph 4.8.7)

Single-storey Side Extensions



Two-storey Side Extensions

Figure 4.K: Side Extensions should Respect the Height and Width of the Main Dwelling

## Maintaining a Visual Break

4.8.7 Generally, where the property stands in a line of detached/semi-detached dwellings and the extension would fill in the gap, there is a risk that the extension will create a terraced appearance. This is not always in the interests of maintaining the character of the street, individual house, and in the interests of visual amenity, and so should generally be avoided **(see Figure 4.L below)**.

4.8.8 One way of maintaining a visual break would be to set back the extension behind the front of the dwelling by a metre to create a clear break.

4.8.9 In some circumstances, only the first floor would be required to be set back by 1 metre, although this will be determined on a case by case basis. However, it is still advisable that the ground floor should be set back behind the front elevation, even if only by 0.3m to create a "shadow" which avoids the unsightly joining of old with new finishes, whilst also providing a distinction, albeit modest, of the extension from the main house.

4.8.10 A second way of maintaining a visual break, perhaps where the garage exists, and it is not practicable to set the first floor back from the line of the frontage, would be by leaving a gap of at least 1 metre between the side of the extension and the boundary of the property.

4.8.11 However, a slight setback should still be retained, potentially at first floor level at least. Again, this design helps avoiding the "terracing effect".

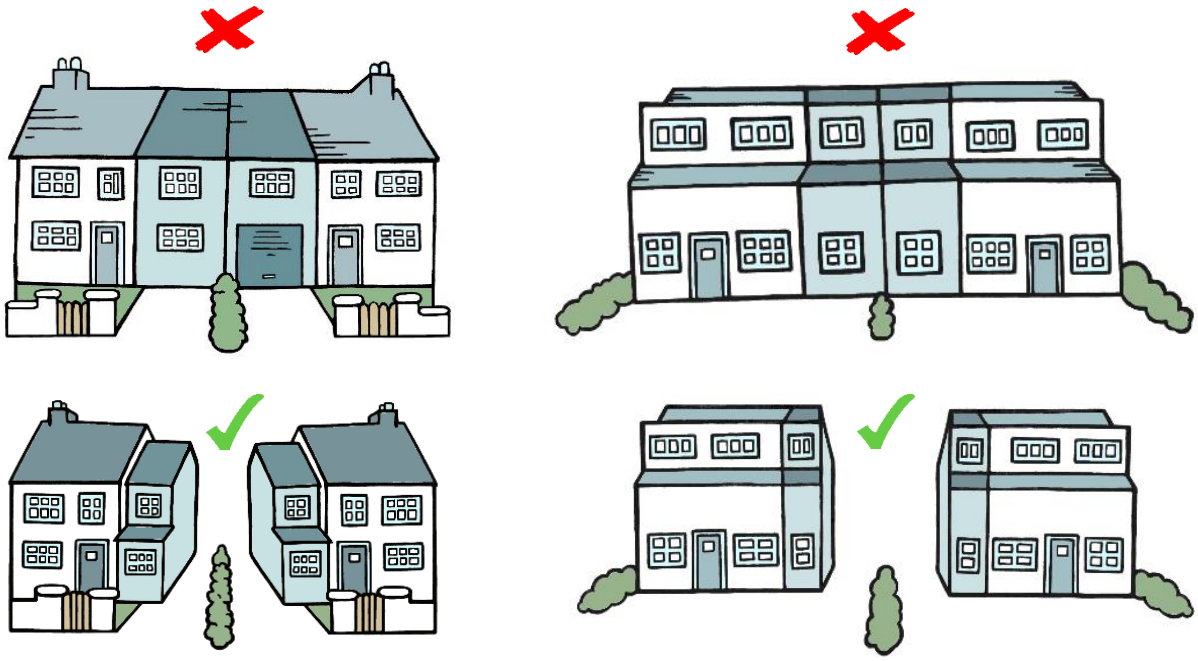


Figure 4.L: Side Extensions should Maintain a Visual Break

## Retention of Pedestrian Passageway

4.8.12 In any case, where space permits, the Department would encourage applicants to retain a pedestrian passageway, between the side extension and common boundary. This will also enable access for maintenance purposes, filling of oil tanks, allow transportation of refuse and garden waste, without passing through Habitable Rooms, and give the dwelling a setting within its own plot. (End of Section 4.8)

## 4.9 Extensions to a Dwelling on a Corner Plot

4.9.1 The extension of dwellings which are positioned on corner plots needs careful consideration, as these are generally apparent from the adjacent public highway (footpath/road) and can result in a dominating feature in the streetscene, particularly if they come forward of the general line of the fronts of neighbouring properties.

4.9.2 Extensions in these locations should not be visually over-dominating or disrupt the sense of openness between the properties and the streetscene.

4.9.3 Generally, any extension should not project further than the building line of those properties on adjacent roads, whilst still respecting the existing dwelling **(see Figure 4.M below)**.

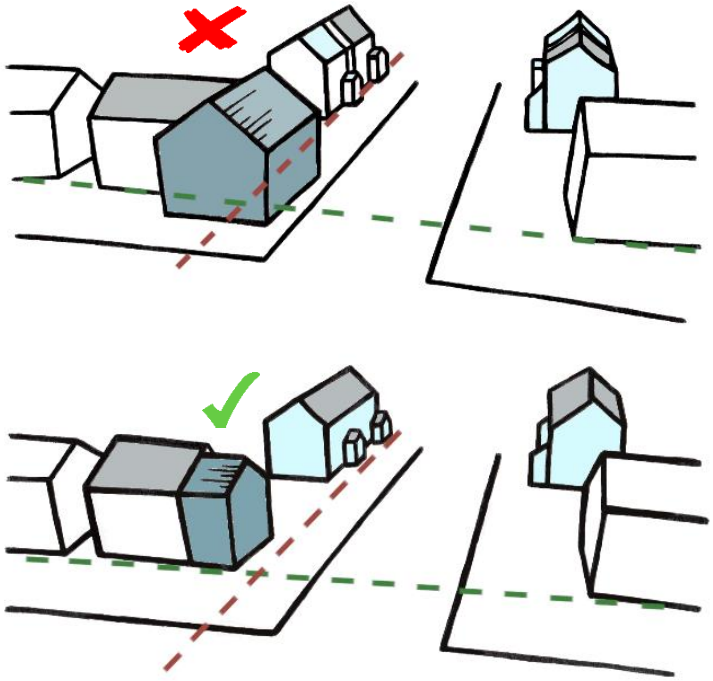


Figure 4.M: Extensions to a Dwelling on a Corner Plot Needs Careful Consideration

## 4.10 Dormer Extensions

4.10.1 Dormer extensions are often problematic as they can adversely affect the character and appearance of both the individual property and the wider streetscene. Unless they are for non-habitable rooms such as bathrooms with obscured glazing, they can also create overlooking. They are unlikely to be supported where they are publically visible, unless they already form a positive characteristic of the property or streetscene.

4.10.2 There are various types, and applicants should consider which is most appropriate for their house.

4.10.3 Traditional properties should avoid having flat roof dormers, as pitched roofed dormers may be more appropriate **(see** Figure 4.N **below)**.

4.10.4 Flat roofed dormers can appear as clumsy additions to a roof pitch if they are overly long or tall, or if they are as tall as the ridge. Therefore they are only generally appropriate on more modern properties (1960/70's bungalows) and/or properties where the area is characterised by houses with flat roofed dormers. Finishing the front and cheeks of the dormers in a tile or tile like material can reduce this impact.

4.10.5 The position within the roof plane, size, and proportion are also important aspects to consider. The size of any dormer should be secondary to the size of the roof in which it will be positioned.

4.10.6 Therefore, dormers that would be as wide as the house, and run flush or close to the elevations/roof ridge of the house, will not normally be supported **(see Figure 4.O below)**.

Figure 4.N: Traditional Properties should Avoid Flat Roof Dormers and Prefer Pitched Roof Dormers

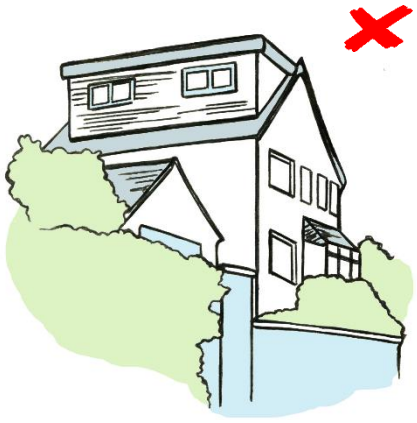


Figure 4.O: Flat Roof Dormers of Almost Full Roof Width will not be Supported

## 4.11 Roof Terraces, Balconies, Decking and Patios

4.11.1 These can add a welcome amenity to a dwelling, as long as the scale, design, and materials complement the character of the property, whether it is traditional or modern.

### Roof Terrace

4.11.2 In most instances, roof terraces on terraced or semi-detached properties are unlikely to be acceptable **(see Figure 4.P below)**.

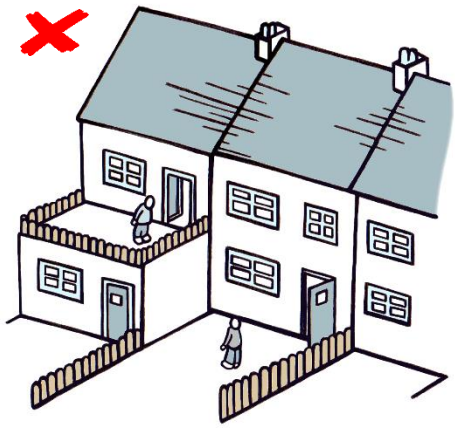


Figure 4.P: Roof Terraces on Terraced or Semi-detached Properties are Unlikely to be Acceptable

4.11.3 For detached properties they can be acceptable where they are carefully designed to avoid unreasonable overlooking of neighbouring properties (including gardens). Large separation distances to neighbouring boundaries and habitable room windows will help to avoid such issues.

### Privacy Screen

4.11.4 Strategically placed solid screens/obscure glazed screens/slatted shutter screens may sometimes help where it is not otherwise possible to avoid overlooking. However, the use of such screens needs to be combined with careful design as such screening may result in a loss of light and/or be an overbearing and dominating feature to the outlook of the neighbouring properties/streetscene.

### Balconies

4.11.5 Balconies should not result in views into the rear windows of neighbouring properties at a distance of less than 20 metres.

4.11.6 Additional consideration should also be given to the potential visual impact upon the streetscene and the individual dwelling.

4.11.7 A projecting balcony can result in an alien and top heavy feature, particularly at first floor level or above. Thought should be given to minimising the visual impact of such an addition with regard to the size, projection, and materials.

4.11.8 Balconies should be designed to complement the proportions and character of the property and should be in line with windows on the original house.

4.11.9 Raised decking, terraces or patios that are higher than 0.3 metres require planning approval.

## Impact on Neighbouring and Visual Amenities

4.11.10 It is a requirement to ensure that neighbours' privacy is maintained by installing screening (fence, hedge etc.) that reaches the height of 1.8 metres above ground level. Screening will only be appropriate if it does not cause loss of light and/or be overbearing to an adjoining property.

4.11.11 These areas should be designed sensibly in order to avoid dominance at the front boundary of a property. Large areas of decking are unlikely to be supported at the side or front of a property.

(End of Chapter 4)

# 5.0 Architectural Details

## 5.1 Chimneystacks and Flues

5.1.1 Chimney stacks make an important contribution to the character and appearance of dwellings, the street scene, and the skyline. They are also often particularly important features of many dwelling designs, which as well as being functional, also provide interesting and distinctive patterns in the roofline, and often make a positive contribution to the particular quality and general appearance of an area.

5.1.2 Extensions and roof alterations should avoid the loss of a chimneystack that positively contributes to the dwelling's character and appearance. The Department encourages, wherever practical, the retention of prominent chimneystacks to traditional/period properties, which add to the character and quality of the streetscene, especially where the individual property is within a Conservation Area.

5.1.3 Proposals for traditionally styled new dwellings or extensions should include chimneys, either as full working chimneys or "fake stacks", which at least give the appearance of a chimney and help break up a potentially bland roofscape.

5.1.4 In recent years the Department has seen a number of planning application for flues serving wood burning stoves, and is broadly supportive of these. Consideration should be given to their placement, height, size, and finish, as the main issue is likely to be the visual appearance of them and whether they would fit with the existing property and the streetscene as a whole.

5.1.5 Tall and/or prominent flues which have a detrimental impact to a property and/or streetscene are unlikely to be supported. Where a flue may have an unacceptable detrimental impact, it may be possible to mitigate the impact by:

- colouring the flue to blend in with the existing colour of the wall the flue may adjoin (or a dark colour when the flue sits within a roof);
- encasing the flue so that it appears as a chimney; or
- incorporating the flue within the existing or new chimney stacks.

5.1.6 Before making any planning application, it is often helpful to discuss the required positioning and size of the flue required with the relevant Building Control Authority as Flues also require Building Control Consent (separate from planning approval). Details of flue sizing and positioning of the flue and installation of CO2 and heat alarms within the dwelling are all identified within the Building Regulations (Approved Document J – See **References** and **Useful Contacts** for details).

## 5.2 Windows and Doors

5.2.1 The majority of traditional properties (i.e. Manx farmhouses & Victoria terraces etc.) on the Isle of Man have vertically proportioned windows. A general exception to this is more modern properties (i.e. 1960/70s) which have more horizontally proportioned windows (i.e. picture windows) **(see Figure 5.A below)**.

5.2.2 The proportions and style of proposed windows should be identified and included within the design process. For new dwellings, windows should be sympathetic to those in neighbouring properties. For extensions, windows should be sympathetic to, and reflect the style of openings in, the original part of the building.

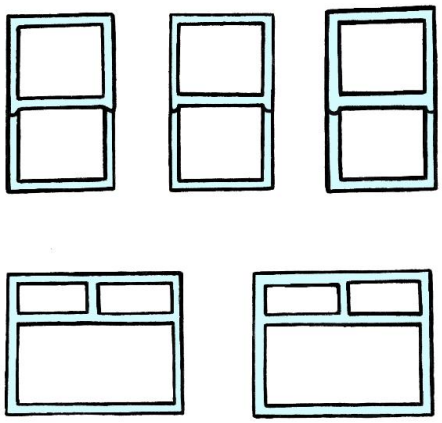


Figure 5.A: Traditional Vertical Windows (top) and Modern Horizontal (bottom) Windows

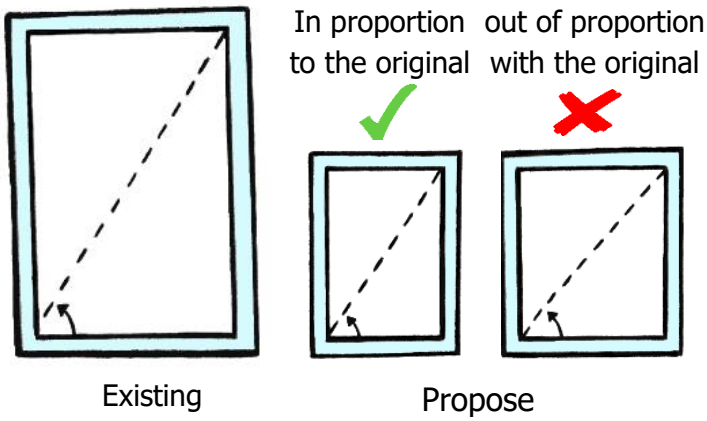



Figure 5.B: Proposed Windows should Reflect the Proportion of their Existing Counterparts

5.2.3 In either case this can be achieved by:

- reflecting the same ratio between solid wall and window;
- reflecting the existing proportions **(see Figure 5.B above)** (the correct proportions can be established by completing a scale drawing of the original opening, establishing the angle of a diagonal across the window and applying this angle when designing windows of differing sizes);
- positioning windows to match the original symmetry and pattern of the existing building; and; and
- where existing windows are set back, new windows should also be set back to the same depth as the existing ones.

### Large Windows and sections of Glazing

5.2.4 The introduction of large windows can maximise natural light, but need to be designed and positioned to sit comfortably with neighbouring buildings/the existing part of the building. Larger sections of glazing are more likely to be supported where they are part of a well-designed contemporary scheme.

(Continue to Paragraph 5.2.5)

## Doors

5.2.5 The front door with its surround, canopy, or porch is often one of the most prominent features of a dwelling, especially for older dwellings in Conservation Areas and Registered Buildings. The size, ornateness, style and design of a door and doorway should reflect the architecture of the building in which it sits.

5.2.6 The style and material of new doors should generally match those on the existing building, particularly if the property is of a traditional character and the door is an original (see Figure 5.C below).

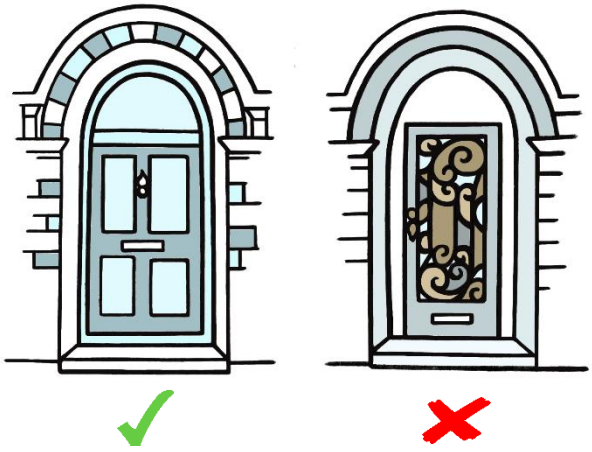


Figure 5.C: Style and Material of New Doors should Match the Existing

## Matching Original Style

5.2.7 Where doors or windows are not the originals or are of an inappropriate style, any new doors or windows should generally match the original door's style, design, and size. This can generally be ascertained by neighbouring properties that may still have their original doors in place. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to reinstall windows and/or doors that reflect the original style/design. Where the original door surround detail exists, this should be retained where possible.

(End of Section 5.2)

## 5.3 Finishing and Detailing

5.3.1 The design, detailing, external finishes, materials, and architectural features can have a significant impact on the overall appearance of a new dwelling or an extension.

5.3.2 Consideration should be given to the relationship between the new building/extension and surrounding properties/the original part of the building. For example, matching the brick/stone/render and colour/type, the mortar joints and continuing string-courses or continuation of plinths, string courses, decorative brickwork, bargeboards, and fascias.

5.3.3 For extensions, the position of joinery details should reflect those of the original building, this is especially relevant to more period/traditional dwellings. Consideration should also be given to the most appropriate pattern, texture, and type of roof tiles/slates.

5.3.4 However, it is recognised that in some circumstances, a distinctive break in style/finishing/details may be appropriate and there have been good examples of the use of more contemporary high quality design and finishes to traditional buildings.

5.3.5 Planning approval is required for the alteration of the external finish of a building (i.e. rendering over a Manx stone finish or pebble dash to a render finish).

5.3.6 Generally, the Department would seek the original finish of the building being retained.

5.3.7 On the Isle of Man traditional buildings are normally finished in painted render or traditionally laid Manx stone finishes. In addition, any original decorative detailing should be retained, otherwise the architectural interest of a property can be significantly affected.

5.3.8 There are generally two styles of render on the Isle of Man: vernacular and polite/architectural, as set out below. Buildings with a render finish can be found painted in a variety of colours.

- Vernacular render
  - is generally found on lower status, smaller cottages/houses, rural buildings, and much older buildings. The render is applied in an unstructured organic way that follows contours of the building material to which it is being applied.
- Polite/architectural render
  - is generally found on higher status buildings that have been considered and designed rather than developed organically over time. This is common on the Island from the Georgian period onwards. It is often referred to as stucco work and can contain imprinted and sculpted details and is intended to replicate carved stone.

5.3.9 The use of Manx stone is also a traditional building finish/construction found on the Island. It is more common in rural areas, although can be found on individual properties in towns/villages throughout the Island.

(Continue to Section 5.3.10)

5.3.10 There are a number of examples of properties on the Island in the 'Arts and Craft' style. This was an international movement in the decorative and fine arts that began in Britain and flourished in Europe and North America from 1860 to the 1930's. The detail of finishes varied, but included render, roughcast render, black and white gables, red brickwork, decorative coloured glass windows and slate & red tiles to roofs etc.

5.3.11 There are examples of brick constructed houses (generally within towns), often using two or more colours (polychromatic detailing). These houses where generally constructed in late Victorian times. However, brick finishes have also been used in more modern times within new housing developments and larger scale developments.

5.3.12 There are also more localised traditional finishes (as well as those already listed) throughout the Island, mainly dependent on the nearest quarry providing the stone at the time. For example:

- in the south
  - Castletown (Limestone)
  - Granite (Ballamodha Straight),
- in the west
  - Peel (sandstone)
- in the north
  - buildings finished with river & beach stone (pebbles) & Ballacorey brick (red brick).

5.3.13 Accordingly, depending on the existing finish of a dwelling, consideration should be given to try replicating the existing finish.

5.3.14 The Department recognises that in some instances contemporary design solutions may be appropriate, providing they are of a high standard of design quality, and are of appropriate form, scale, and materials. Examples of more modern finishes include large areas of frameless glazing forming the extension, the use of timber/metal cladding, and a variety of roofing finishes, including sedum, copper, or aluminium.

5.3.15 Where it is not possible to source suitable materials to replicate the original approach, or where the materials that are available would be likely to result in the replication appearing as a poor intimation of the original, there is potentially scope for a more contemporary design approach (design and finish) which would result in a clear distinction between old and new.

(End of Chapter 5)

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# 6.0 The Wider Site

## 6.1 Boundary Treatments

6.1.1 Boundary treatments, whether traditional or modern, contribute a great deal to the streetscape and character of an area. They define areas of private space and often make a positive contribution to the setting of the building.

6.1.2 Poorly designed boundary treatments can undermine the quality of the built environment and lead to issues such as the obstruction of visibility splays.

6.1.3 Where new or altered boundary treatments are proposed, care should be taken to ensure that the proposed materials and detailing take a lead from the surroundings.

6.1.4 The suitability of the boundary treatment to the front of a property or facing the road should take account of the context of the area.

- For open plan estates
  - it is normally better for there to be no walls or fences, with gardens being delineated through their use of low level plants.
- For more urban areas
  - there may be a predominance of low garden walls with railings above.
- In rural areas
  - sod banks or hedging is more likely to be appropriate, unless there are stone walls present.

### Height of Boundary Fence

6.1.5 Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, generally no walls or fences should be higher than 1m where they face a highway.

6.1.6 Boundary features to the side and rear boundaries can generally be higher (2m) without causing concerns. However, there are circumstances where there is a need for lower boundary heights in particular on corner plots, or if there is a public highway to the side and/or rear of the site.

### Typical Boundary Treatment by Location

6.1.7 Where dwellings are within an open plan estate or have a distinctive character, the erection of walls and fences greater than 1 metre at the front of the property is unlikely to be acceptable. The character of such estates is derived from the open, landscaped environment and physical built barriers will significantly detract from that character.

6.1.8 For properties within a town/village where there is a repeated style of boundary treatments, for example, low walls with cast iron railings above, then the style predominant in the street should normally be followed, in order to strengthen the existing unique character of the streetscene.

6.1.9 In rural areas, any new boundary treatment should be of the traditional style (i.e. Manx stone walling/Manx sod banks/post and wire fencing) typical of the immediate locality.

Fencing and high walls should be avoided, especially to boundaries which are publically visible (e.g. roadside or footpath). Use of hedging may also be appropriate to consider and bring wider benefits for example in relation to biodiversity (see **Section 3.4.3 to 3.4.7**).

6.1.10 Overall, removal or substantial alteration of historic boundary treatments is unlikely to be acceptable.

6.1.11 Boundary treatments should be designed in materials and details that respect the surrounding streetscape or area, and boundary treatments should not be oppressive and should allow the building within the site to remain engaged with the wider streetscape.

## 6.2 Trees

6.2.1 Various developments, including that which involves extending a property, can change the relationship between the built environment and existing nearby trees.

6.2.2 For example, a proposal may result in a building extending into an area that is shaded by a tree or that is affected by the seasonal debris created by trees.

- e.g. blossom in spring, honeydew in summer, or leaf fall in autumn.

6.2.3 The characteristics of existing trees and their shade patterns throughout the year need to be carefully considered.

6.2.4 If existing trees have not reached their ultimate height/spread, consider how these factors may change as the tree(s) continue to grow.

6.2.5 The effect of existing trees on an extension/new build is an important consideration, both in terms of the finished building and also the construction process.

- Damaging ground compaction and disturbance, grade changes and root severance can cause damage to the below ground parts of a tree and its rooting environment.
- Above ground, accidental damage can occur to stems and branches through the movement of equipment and materials.

6.2.6 If the extension/new build will be close to an existing tree it is important to be aware that on shrinkable soils, the foundation design should take account of the risks of indirect damage, physical damage caused by subsidence and/or heave. Direct damage can also occur as a result of incremental root and stem growth. For more information please see **Section 3.4** and also the Department's guidance in relation to trees and the planning process.

## 6.3 Front Gardens and Driveways

6.3.1 Front gardens provide an important physical boundary between a dwelling and the public realm. They can enhance the privacy of a dwelling, as well as filtering out the noise and air pollutants produced by pedestrians and motorised traffic.

6.3.2 Front gardens with perimeter walls, hedges, or fences can offer safer spaces in which children can play and they often contribute to the natural habitat of wildlife. Urban green space has a positive effect on health and wellbeing, by enhancing sensory and aesthetic awareness.

6.3.3 Gardens can also make an important contribution to local biodiversity and can contribute to carbon sequestration and climate change adaptation, providing natural flood risk mitigation and other ecosystem services.

## Transforming a Front Garden to a Driveway

6.3.4 Increased car ownership and the resultant increase in demand for parking spaces has led to congested roads and has prompted many households to consider transforming their front gardens into a hard-standing to provide off-street car parking.

6.3.5 Using good design, and a little imagination, it is possible to combine parking provision with an attractive and welcoming front garden.

6.3.6 Suspended pavement systems can used to incorporate trees in to hard landscaping areas such as car parking spaces.

## Assessing the Impact of the Transformation

6.3.7 It should be noted that, for properties within Conservation Areas, in particular terraces, the creation of new access/openings may unacceptably disrupt the rhythm, appearance and character of the existing streetscene/Conservation Area and is unlikely to be supported. In such areas, parking to the rear may be a more acceptable option.

6.3.8 It should be acknowledged that car parking in front gardens does not necessarily increase the overall amount of car-parking capacity within an area. The creation of an off-street space normally requires the provision of a new access, which can result in the loss of at least one on-street parking space. Proposals which do not result in a net benefit are unlikely to be supported.

6.3.9 Proposals, which result in more than 50% of the frontage length being given over to hard surfacing, where half of the frontage is removed to provide vehicular access, will not normally be supported, to ensure the character of the street scape is retained, and avoid frontages of properties appearing as one large car parking area, detrimental to the appearance of the streetscene and to the outlook of residents.

6.3.10 It is important that the design of a driveway maintains a balance between hard and soft landscaping, and contributes positively to the streetscene. Proposals are unlikely to be supported where they do not meet the following guidelines:

- the area intended for the driveway should be the minimum space necessary (see the Manual for Manx Roads);
- where possible, the impact of the driveway is lessened by retaining mature trees and shrubs and/or creating areas of new planting, for example:
  - a planted strip or hedge between the vehicular and pedestrian access can help to break-up the appearance of the hard-standing, whilst
  - planting around the fringes of the driveway can also be used to good effect and may be used to help screen the vehicle;
- if an opening is made in an existing wall, fence or other boundary feature, the ends should be made good with matching or sympathetic materials (i.e. pillars);
- where possible, separate pedestrian access should be retained/provided;

- existing gates should normally be retained and any new gates should not open out over the highway;
- any new gates, walls, fences or other boundary features should reflect the traditional style of the local area;
- consideration should be given to a strip of grass or gravel placed in the centre of the hard-standing can hide leaked oil and maintain the look of a front garden; and
- parking spaces should be avoided directly in front of any primary window as the resulting outlook can be undermined by the presence of parked cars.

6.3.11 The cumulative impact of the creation of a large number of impermeable surfaces within an area can lead to a material increase in run-off during rainfall events, potentially causing localised flooding. Therefore, proposals are unlikely to be supported unless they adopt one or more of the following approaches:

- utilising an existing green or gravel area;
- guiding water away from any impermeable area towards a vegetated area, or soakaway; and/or
- constructing a driveway from block paving or other permeable surface
  - i.e. replacing loose gravel with resin bound gravel (prevents gravel spilling onto highway) (Loose gravel on a driveway within 5 metres of the highway should be avoided) or
  - matrix pavers or cellular paving or brick pavers or permeable bitmac.

6.3.12 If, following the installation of a driveway or parking area, there are disputes between neighbouring properties in relation to drainage matters, this will normally be regarded as a civil matter.

6.3.13 Consideration needs to be given to the movement of people and vehicles entering and leaving the driveway/access. The following advice should be considered:

- to allow good visibility splays for cars leaving the driveway, vegetation or other features such as gates, pillars and walls should not be over 1m high within the required visibility splay (See Manual for Manx Roads to determine required visibility splay); and
- cars should not overhang the pavement, should not block the entrance to the dwelling and a clear pathway should be provided at the entrance to the dwelling.

6.3.14 It is an offence under the Highways Act 1986 to carry out any works (i.e. creation of a new access, altering an existing access and dropping a kerb etc.) within the public highway without permission of the Department of Infrastructure and no construction work affecting the highway can commence until a Section 109A Agreement (separate from a planning application – without this agreement the works approved by the planning application cannot be carried out) has been signed.

(End of Chapter 6)

# 7.0 Impact on Neighbouring Properties

## 7.1 Good Neighbourliness

7.1.1 Applicants are advised to envisage what a new dwelling or extension would be like if they lived next door.

- Would they like this development next door to them?
- Would they feel blocked in or overlooked?
- Would the development feel too close, dominant/overbearing or cause a loss of light to their home?

7.1.2 By examining what it would appear like from the point of view of neighbouring properties it is possible to gain an insight into what may or may not be acceptable.

7.1.3 It should also be noted that, whilst the Department does not involve itself in ownership issues between neighbours (as these are a civil matter), applicants should ensure that no part of the extension (including foundations and guttering) crosses the boundary line.

7.1.4 The Department encourages sidewalls being set at least 0.3 metres from the boundary line. If this is not possible, applications should include a sectional drawing showing that all aspects of the extension are within the ownership of the applicant's property.

7.1.5 The Department would encourage potential applicants to consider discussing their proposals with their neighbours before an application is made.

7.1.6 For large developments it may be appropriate to hold a public meeting. The benefits include the following:

- local residents will feel that an effort has been made to keep them informed and perhaps that their views have been taken into account; and
- they can gain a greater understanding of aspects of the development;
- it can avoid local residents becoming alarmed when they see the planning application being advertised on the Government website and yellow site notice displayed outside the application property.

## 7.2 Main Considerations

7.2.1 There are some common issues in relation to impact on neighbouring properties which may apply to both new dwellings and extensions to dwellings, and these are:

- potential loss of light/overshadowing;
- potential overbearing impact upon outlook; and
- potential overlooking resulting in a loss of privacy.

### Tiers of Rooms and Windows

7.2.2 In assessing the above issues it is important to understand the functions of different rooms and the importance of the windows serving them. For the purpose of this document, the Department defines three types of rooms:

- Primary Habitable Rooms
  - Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Kitchens which includes dining facilities and Conservatory;
- Secondary Habitable Rooms
  - Bedrooms and kitchens; and
- Non-Habitable Rooms
  - these include bathrooms, utility rooms, hallways/corridors, stairs/landings, garages, porches, and storage.

7.2.3 Within this document, the phrase 'habitable room' means both Primary and Secondary unless otherwise indicated. However, in assessing impacts in relation to light/overshadowing and overbearing impact on outlook (but not overlooking), the Department draws a distinction between:

- Primary Window – The main window serving a Primary Habitable Room.
  - Where there is only one window, this is the Primary Window.
  - Where there is more than one window, the Primary Window is normally the largest and the one which provides the most pleasant outlook; and
- Secondary Window – Any window serving a room that is not the Primary Window.

7.2.4 Therefore, for the issues set out in **Section 1.2.1** (excluding overlooking), any secondary window serving a Primary Room will be considered as if it were a window serving a Secondary Room.

7.2.5 Planning Applications should include drawings showing the primary windows of primary habitable rooms on any property which has an elevation within 20 metres of the closest elevation of the proposed development.

7.2.6 The impacts on neighbouring properties relates to both the impact of the development on existing nearby properties and, where a development would result in more than one property, the impact of the proposed dwellings on each other.

## 7.3 Loss of Light/Overshadowing

7.3.1 A development should not result in significant levels of loss of day light or overshadowing, especially to primary habitable rooms, or to private gardens.

7.3.2 Applicants are advised to look carefully at the path of the sun throughout the day, and consider where shadows fall, using this information to help in considering the design, position and height of the extension.

7.3.3 The impact of overshadowing will increase if the new property/extension is to the south of a neighbouring property (as the sun's orientation is east to west). When the windows affected serve habitable rooms then it will be necessary to assess the impact upon light reaching these rooms.

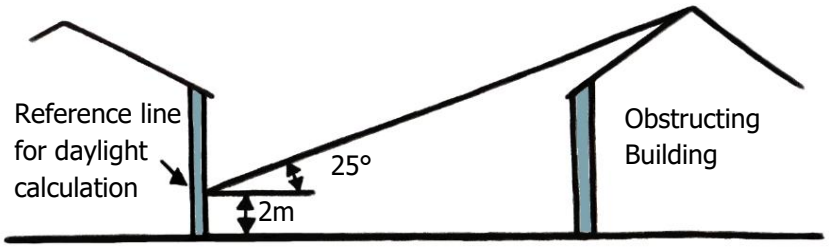
(Continue to Paragraph 7.3.4)

### The "25 Degree Check"

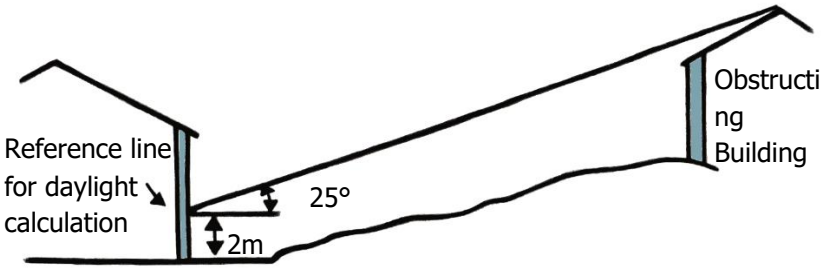
7.3.4 A simple check can be undertaken in relation to this issue **(also see Figure 7.A below)**:

- A side view is drawn which includes the proposal site and the main face of the neighbouring property.
- A point is identified which is 2 metres above ground level on the closest wall with a relevant window of the neighbouring building.
- A line is drawn from this point at a 25 degree angle towards the application site.
- If no part of the proposal is above this line, there will still be the potential for good daylight to the interior.

7.3.5 Where a change in level separates two adjoining dwellings, a proposal for a dwelling on a higher site or an extension to the higher dwelling, will normally have a far greater effect on its lower neighbours than in the reverse.




Section in plane perpendicular to the main face of the building




On sloping sites, overshadowing is more of a problem and greater spacing is required to obtain the same access to daylight for buildings lower down the slope

Figure 7.A: 25 Degree Check

## 7.4 Overbearing Impact upon Outlook

7.4.1 Any development should ensure that existing residents can enjoy appropriate levels of comfort and enjoyment of their properties without their outlooks being impacted by an overbearing building/structure.

7.4.2 The positioning, design and scale of an extension/new build dwellings should not be dominant or have an adverse impact on the primary windows of a primary habitable room or on the private garden that may be present in a neighbouring property.

7.4.3 It is normally possible to avoid overlooking with careful design and by following the guidance set out within this document.

7.4.4 The impact on a private garden may include consideration of the overall size of the garden and whether only a small part of it is likely to be impacted on detrimentally.

## 7.5 Overlooking Resulting in a Loss of Privacy

7.5.1 Overlooking can take a variety of forms, whether created by a window or the creation of roof terrace/balcony.

7.5.2 The intensity of overlooking depend on a variety of a factors, such as

- the use of the overlooking spot,
- the use of the area being overlooked,
- the typical duration of usage, and
- any mitigation methods can be used to reduce the overlooking, such as opaque glazing.

### The "20 Metre Guide"

7.5.3 The "20 metre guide" provides a useful way to identify where overlooking is likely to be a concern. It refers to the distance between elevations that contain windows serving habitable rooms that face each other **(see Figure 7.B below)**.

7.5.4 If this distance is over 20 metres, overlook is unlikely to be a concern.

7.5.5 This distance can be relaxed, where the design or orientation is such that privacy and amenity of a neighbouring property is not compromised.

7.5.6 In dense urban areas, where there is already a level of mutual overlooking, a lesser standard may be acceptable.

7.5.7 The required distance may need to be greater, if there is a change in topography, which would result in an adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of a neighbouring property.

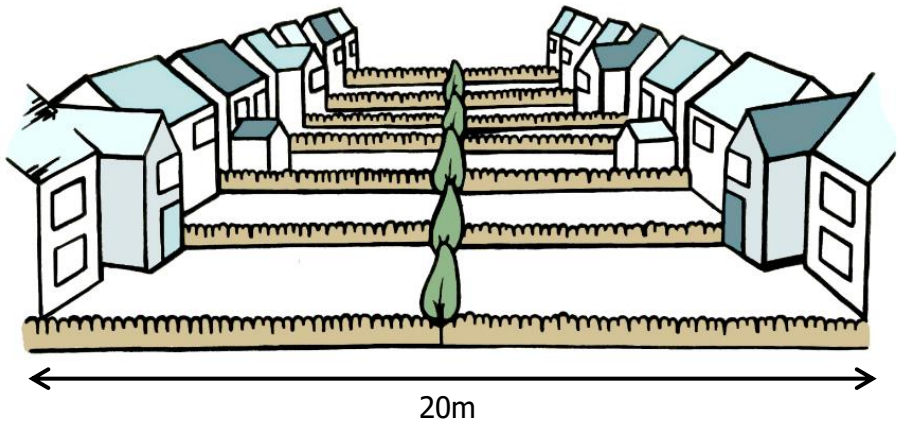



Figure 7.B: 20 Metre Guide

7.5.8 The presence of existing or proposed landscaping features (e.g. fences, walls, and hedges) may help to mitigate overlooking at a ground floor level (depending on relative heights). Although the permanent retention of such landscaping cannot be guaranteed, it would be within the gift of both neighbours to retain/maintain/replace such landscape features.

7.5.9 Depending on the site specifics, landscape features not within the site boundary may not to be counted as a measure in reducing overlook.

(End of Chapter 7) (End of Chapters)

# References

The following links are to documents that have been referred to within this Guide.

These links has been checked to be valid on 30 July 2021.

If a newer version of the following document has been published, consideration should also be given to these newer documents.

Reform of the Planning System – Programme for Government 2016 – 2021 GD 2018/0031

https://www.gov.im/media/1361383/action-plan-reform-of-the-planning-system.pdf

Phase 1 Action Plan for Carbon Neutral

https://www.gov.im/media/1368096/gd20190101-iomg-action-plan.pdf

Town and Country Planning Act 1999

https://www.gov.im/media/1349046/townandcountryplanningact1999_4.pdf

Permitted Development Order 2012 (Keeling Version)

https://www.gov.im/media/1369756/townandcountryplanning-permitteddevelopment-order2012consolidated_v03130721.pdf

Wildlife Act 1990

https://www.gov.im/media/1363689/wildlife-act-1990.pdf

The Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016

https://www.gov.im/media/1350906/the-isle-of-man-strategic-plan-2016-approved-plan-15_03_16.pdf

Active Travel Strategy 2018-2021

https://www.tynwald.org.im/business/opqp/sittings/Tynwald%2020162018/2018-GD-0043.pdf

Manual for Manx Roads

https://www.gov.im/media/1359885/manual-for-manx-roads-220621.pdf

Supplementary Guidance on Trees (June 2019)

https://www.gov.im/media/1366226/supplementry-guide-on-trees-june-19.pdf

Planning Circular 1/93 Landscape Guidance Notes

https://www.gov.im/media/633719/landscapeguidancenotes.pdf

Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play – Beyond the Six Acre Standard – England

https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England.pdf

The Site Assessment Framework for the Area Plan for the East

https://consult.gov.im/cabinet-office/area-plan-for-the-north-and-west-preliminary-publi/supporting_documents/4%20Site%20Assessment%20Framework%20PP4%2004.05.21.pdf

Isle of Man Design Guide – Affordable Housing Standards

https://www.gov.im/media/1350123/20150908-housing-standards-final-version-jan2016-lr2.pdf

Housing (Standards) Regulations 2017

https://www.tynwald.org.im/links/tls/SD/2017/2017-SD-0122.pdf

Approved Document M

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m

Approved Document J

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/468872/ADJ_LOCKED.pdf

# Glossary

**Active Travel Infrastructure**

The elements of the physical environment that make it easier to travel by walking, running or cycling, including public elements – such as the design of roads and paths and the design of individual buildings - provide sufficient space within homes to store bicycles etc.

**Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP)**

Air source heat pumps use air outside the building as a source for heat. An air source heat pump can be fitted in a roof space or to the outside of a building to provide space heating for your home

**Amenity**

A pleasant or useful feature or facility. It can also relate to the quality of life enjoyed by occupants, for example the quietness of their environment.

**Biodiversity Net Gain**

An approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. It still relies on the application of the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate, or compensate for biodiversity losses. It is additional to these approaches, not instead of them.

**Biomass**

Organic matter, esp. plant matter that can be converted to fuel and is therefore regarded as a potential energy source

**Brown Roof**

Thin layer of crushed rubble and gravel, ideally obtained at minimal cost from the redevelopment site itself. They are intended to be gradually colonised by spiders and insects and provide a feeding site for insectivorous birds

**Building Line**

The line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street. The building line can be shown on a plan or section.

**Building Regulations**

A code to ensure the health and safety of people in and around all types of building.

**Carbon Sequestration**

The long-term storage of carbon which acts to prevent it from being emitted or remaining in the atmosphere.

**Character**

The local, visual distinctiveness of a townscape as defined by patterns of development and the local culture in the form of the richness of materials, landscaping and types of architectural forms.

**Conservation Area**

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Department**

References to 'the Department' refer to the Department of Environment, Food, and Agriculture. The Town and Country Planning Act (1999) includes various powers and responsibilities for the Department in relation to the determination of planning applications, and most of these are delivered by the Planning & Building Control Directorate.

**Design Statement**

A report that sets out, illustrates and justifies the process that has led to the development proposals.

**Ecosystems**

A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

**Elevation**

The façade of a building, or the drawing of a facade.

**Energy Performance Certificate**

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) tell you how energy efficient a building is and let the person who will use the building know how costly it will be to heat and light, and what its carbon dioxide emissions are likely to be.

**Form**

The layout, density, scale (height and massing), appearance (materials and details), and landscape of development.

**Green Infrastructure**

A network of multi-functional green space and other green features, urban and rural, which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities. Green infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands – and also street trees, allotments, private gardens, green roofs and walls, sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) and soils. It includes rivers, streams, canals and other water bodies, sometimes called 'blue infrastructure'.

**Green Roof**

A roof that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and soil or a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane. They have a number of benefits including increasing biodiversity, reducing surface rainwater runoff and helping to insulate and cool the building they cover

**Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP)**

Only a few metres below the ground the temperature stays relatively constant throughout the year. Using ground source heat pumps, this heat can be sourced to provide space heating in your home, and in some cases help pre-heat your water for your central heating system.

**Layout**

The way buildings, routes, and open spaces are placed in relation to each other.

**Local Distinctiveness**

The particular positive features of a locality that contribute to its special character and sense of place and distinguishes one local area from another.

**Registered Building**

A building/structure identified on the Island as having special architectural or historical interest and being formally designated/protected under the relevant legislation.

**Massing**

The combined effect of height, volume, and shape of a building or group of buildings.

**Net Density (Sites)**

This includes housing and directly associated uses and excludes major distributor roads, primary schools, open spaces serving the wider area and significant landscape buffer strips.

**Photovoltaics (PV)**

Solar photovoltaic (PV) technology is a semi-conductor based technology that converts the energy in sunlight into electricity. A PV system comprises the PV panel (generator) and the wiring and electronics.

**Public Realm**

This is the space between and within buildings that are publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts parks and open spaces.

**Sections**

Drawing showing a slice through a building or site.

**Solar Photovoltaic (PV) panels**

Solar PV panels convert the light of the sun into electrical energy that can be used in the home or exported to the national grid.

**Solar Water Heating**

Solar water heating uses heat from the sun to warm up a liquid that is pumped through a panel on your roof. In the most common kind of system, this liquid is then pumped through a coil situated in a hot water cylinder, where the heat is transferred to water.

**Street-scene / Streetscape**

The view along a street from the perspective of a driver or pedestrian, especially of the natural and man-made elements in or near the street, including the roof and building line, street trees and landscape features, pavements, bus stop shelters and other street furniture.

**Storey**

A floor level from ground floor upwards. A room in the roof normally constitutes a storey for example in the case of dormers. However, rooms in the roof space including the use of Velux type windows that preclude overlooking will not be regarded as a storey.

**Subordinate**

To be lesser than something else - smaller/less imposing

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)**

Comprise a variety of different measures that allow rainwater to permeate safely into the ground, rather than run off into surface water drains and waterways, thereby helping to maintain groundwater levels and reduce flooding.

**Topography**

A description (or visual representation on a map) of the shape of the land, for example, contours or changes in the height of land above sea level.

**Vernacular**

The way, in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques, and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

**Wind Turbine**

Wind power generation is the conversion of the kinetic energy in the wind to mechanical energy, which in turn is used to generate electricity.

# Useful Contacts

**Planning and Building Control Directorate**

Department of Environment Food and Agriculture

First Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 2SF

Telephone - 685950

Website - www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/

**Pre-application emails:**

For: Douglas, Onchan, Garff, Ramsey, Lezayre, Bride, Andreas & Ballaugh

North inbox – northplanning@gov.im

For: Braddan, Santon, Marown, Malew, Arbory & Rushen, Port Erin, Port St Mary, Patrick, Peel, German & Michael

South inbox – southplanning@gov.im

**Building Control**

General:

Website

www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/building-control/

Technical guidance

https://www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/building-control/technical-assistance-and-requirements/

Email

buildingcontrol@gov.im

For Douglas:

Douglas Borough Council Building Control

Douglas Town Hall, Ridgeway Street, Douglas, IM99 1AD

Telephone – 696375

For Onchan:

Onchan Commissioners Building Control

Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, IM3 1RD

Telephone – 675564

For the rest of the Island:

First Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 2SF

Telephone – 685902 or 686446

Planning and Building Control Directorate, Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

First Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 2SF

Email: planning@gov.im  Website: www.gov.im