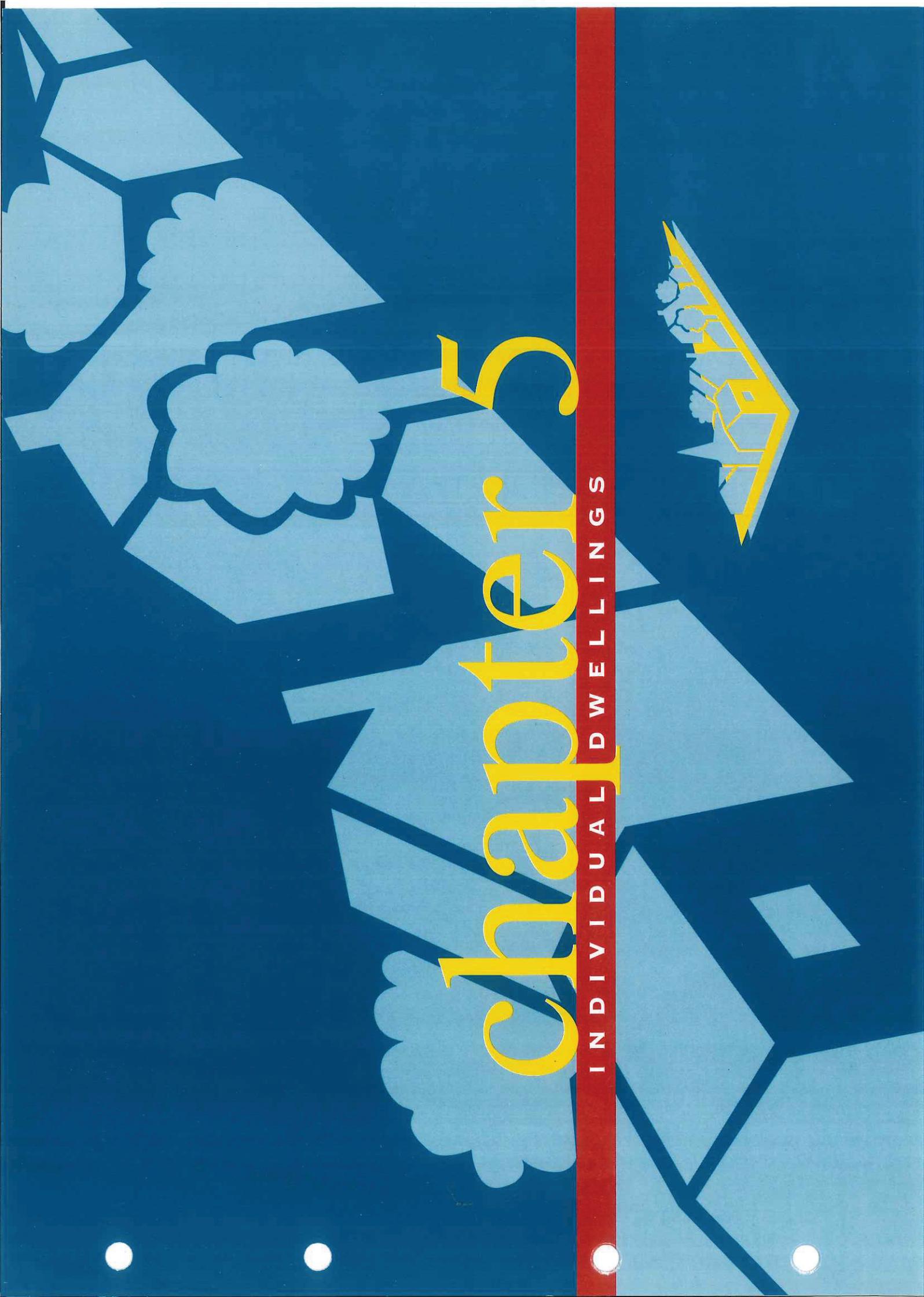


chapter 5

INDIVIDUAL DWELLINGS

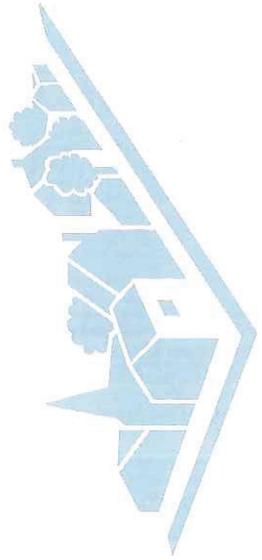


5

INDIVIDUAL DWELLINGS

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CHAPTER 5 - INDIVIDUAL DWELLINGS

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Aims

5.0.1 One of the aims of this guide is to ensure that new housing development respects the local character of Lincolnshire. This does not mean that all 20th Century development should copy the designs of the past but, rather, that an appreciation of traditional local architecture combined with the thoughtful application of modern building techniques and suitable materials should provide the basic design principles for new developments.

5.0.2 The best way of achieving this will be to employ the services of a skilled professional with a good knowledge of, and sympathy towards, the character of the locality.

APPROACH TO DESIGN

5.1.1 Designers are no longer constrained to a limited range of traditional building materials and techniques and this freedom of choice has resulted in many new developments which are unsympathetic to their surroundings. However, carefully selected mass produced products, coupled to traditional detailing, where appropriate, can help to overcome this problem.

5.1.2 There will be occasions where the designer wishes to build modern dwellings employing new materials, new technology and new forms and, at the other end of the spectrum, there will be those who prefer to build in more traditional forms. This guide does not preclude either of these approaches although where proposed development would have a significant impact upon an area it may be more appropriate to follow a traditional design approach. A high standard of design and good quality materials will always be expected whichever approach is chosen.



5.1.2

5.1.3 The vast majority of new estates, however, will fall between these two approaches and may be described as “mainstream traditional” - e.g dwellings of brick and tile, using mass-produced materials and providing comfortable and affordable homes.

5.1.4 The following pages show how the incorporation of traditional local features, together with the application of a few simple but well established architectural principles will help towards the creation of high quality development, creating a more varied and interesting environment - the kind of surroundings people enjoy living in because they have a distinctiveness and character with which they can readily identify.

Learning From The Past

5.2.1 A close look at traditional Lincolnshire settlements, particularly the ways in which their buildings are grouped together, reveals a remarkable series of shapes and roof formations from which to evolve new, traditionally-based shapes for today. Settlement patterns differ from place to place but developers should take note of the local tradition in order to provide a recognisable reference point which complements and contributes to the built and surrounding environment.

5.2.2 In the past buildings evolved from the limitations and proportions of the materials used. In taking reference points from traditional buildings on which to formulate new designs to meet today's needs, developers should look at their dimensions, scale and mass. The proportion of roof area to wall area is another strong visual characteristic as well as the pitch of the roof itself. The height, scale and position of chimney stacks can also affect the balance and appearance of a building.

5.2.3 Although modern construction is far removed from such an historical context, new development should reflect the best qualities of its surrounding architecture.

Context

5.3.1 Each individual dwelling of a development plays an important part in achieving a satisfactory whole. If the development is to be sympathetic to its surroundings and to have an environment in which it is a pleasing dwelling, then the design of each dwelling, and its relationship to its neighbouring dwellings, will need careful attention.

5.3.2 Whether the style of the development is to be modern or traditional, the designer must address the question:-

“How can each dwelling best contribute to a development which respects and enhances the unique qualities of the area?” For example:

- *What role will the building play visually within the general scene?*
- *Will it be seen in isolation or will it form part of a wider composition with other buildings? Should the architecture be passive to merge into the street scene, or assertive to form a focal point?*
- *Are the materials and details of the dwelling in keeping with the area and with its immediate neighbours?*
- *Is the size of the dwelling really suitable for the size of plot or are you trying to “get a quart into a pint pot”?*
- *How can the design best deal with the challenges such as overlooking, a sloping site, a corner plot, or a difficult orientation?*

This list is not intended to be exhaustive but it is only by asking such questions that issues of context can be resolved.



Scale

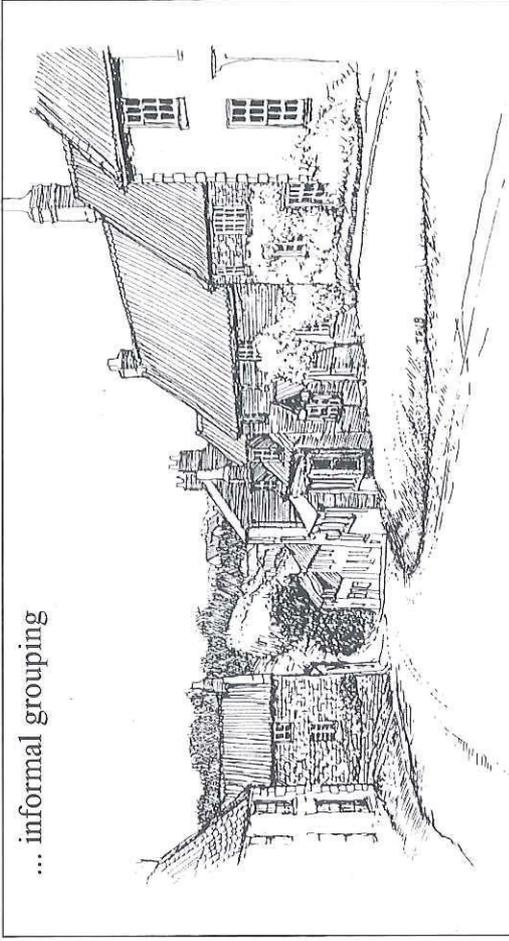
5.4.1 Scale should not be confused with size. It is a relative measure, and in architectural terms, the scale of a building is normally judged against other buildings, space around them, or against man himself. Dwellings that relate well to the human scale will create a familiar living environment. For example, most people react comfortably to the scale of a cottage, but they will be overawed by the scale of a cathedral.

5.4.2 Many of our historic towns and villages consist of small scale properties grouped informally together along narrow streets or around small greens and thus possess a character which is familiar, and comfortable. On a grander scale, many urban areas comprise three or four storeyed properties, and the streets, footpaths, public parks, and formal squares are correspondingly increased in scale. So the scale of the buildings frequently goes hand in hand with the scale of the space around, and enclosed by, the buildings.

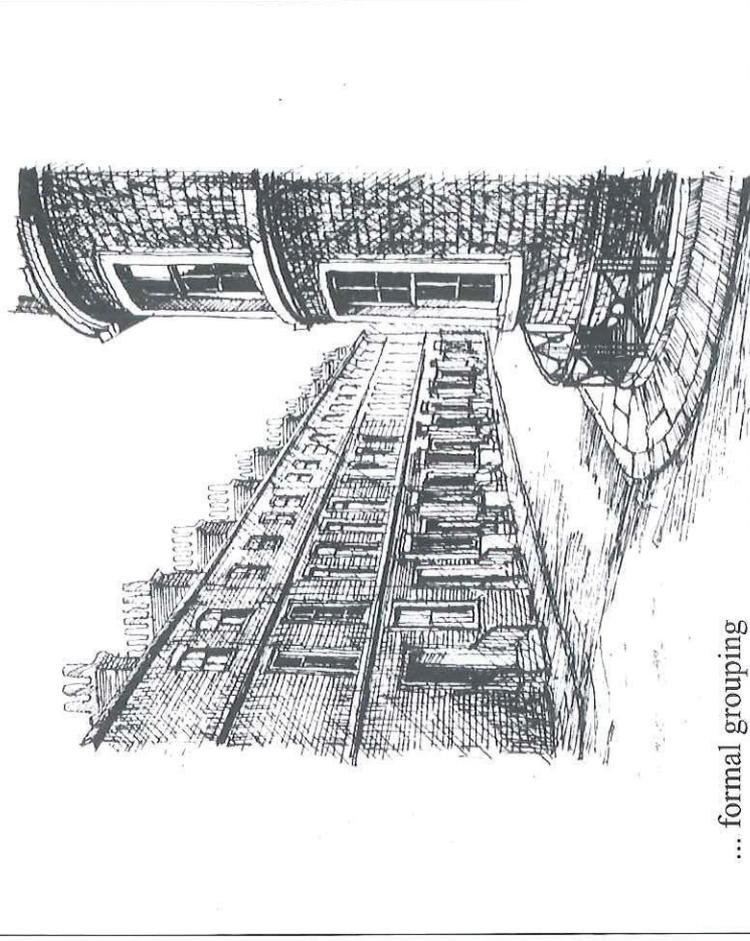
5.4.3 A starting point for new development is that the scale of the individual dwelling should respect the scale of any neighbouring development. For example, a development of small traditional cottages may look completely out of scale where dwarfed by an urban setting. Enlarging the cottages could bring them into scale physically with the neighbouring buildings, but they would still not “ring true” as they would no longer possess traditional scale.

5.4.4 Equally, any attempt to mask an inappropriately large scale house, by applying a cottage style is likely to fail, being both out of scale physically and out of character. Where a large scale building is appropriate, for example in an urban setting, or where it is spatially well detached from its neighbours, then the detailing of the building - for example the style of doors and windows - should reflect the grander nature of the dwelling.

... informal grouping



... formal grouping



Form

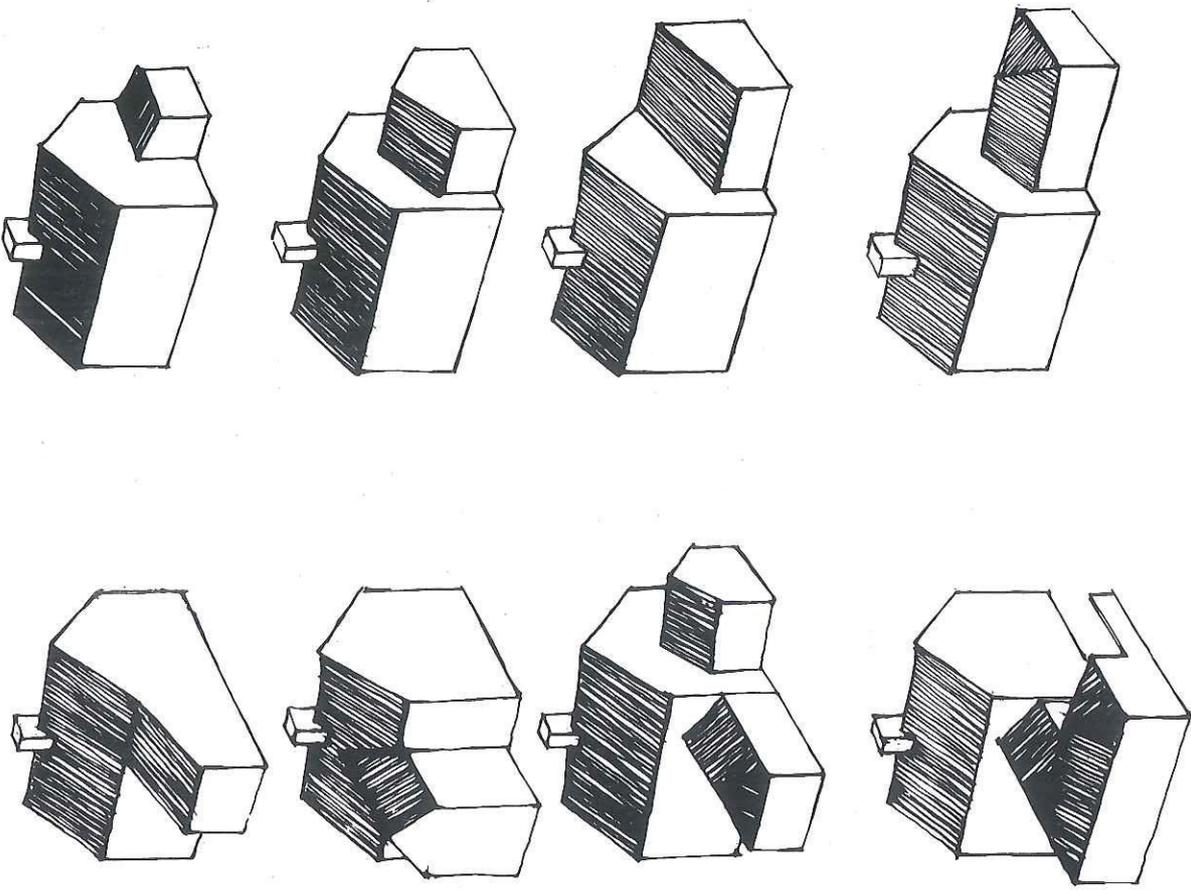
5.5.1 There is little point in producing a well thought out layout if each neighbourhood created consists of nothing more than characterless buildings.

5.5.2 Traditional Lincolnshire house forms evolved from the available local building materials and the limitations which these placed upon the builders - see Chapter 4 on materials. Houses were frequently only a single room in depth, or a single room in width. Often this simple rectangular form was extended by lean-to additions, or by single or double storey wings to the side or rear of the main house. This resulted in larger houses of irregular plan form, appearing as a series of linked small scale elements.

5.5.3 In the large towns, where space at ground level was at a premium, terraces of 3 or 4 storey height, frequently with accommodation within the roof space, were common.

5.5.4 New dwellings can be of many different forms to provide the living accommodation required to meet the varying needs and aspirations of the prospective occupier. The near square plan form, often with an integral garage, covered with a single pitched roof is one in particular which is alien to the Lincolnshire traditional building and is as a result difficult to successfully assimilate. This is so even where the property is "cosmetically treated" with local materials and details. It is possible, with careful attention, for the living accommodation required by the purchaser to be provided within dwellings which reflect traditional designs.

TRADITIONAL LINCOLNSHIRE FORMS



DETAILED DESIGN

Windows and Doors

5.6.1 Good quality detailing around door and window openings will enhance the appearance of a building. Segmental and keystone arches, brick or stone voussoirs and sills, moulded architraves and drip moulds are all characteristic details which can be used to good visual and practical effect. Contrasting materials are also occasionally used to emphasise these details.

5.6.2 Straight brick soldier arches and tile-creased sills tend to highlight the horizontal elements of an opening and are not a truly traditional detail.

5.6.3 It is also desirable both visually and functionally to recess windows and doors well back from the external face of the wall. This introduces more relief and interest to the facade while offering greater protection from the weather, minimising thermal bridging of insulated walls and improving the effectiveness of the vertical damp proof membrane to the cavity wall.

5.6.4 The proportions should be carefully considered when selecting windows and doors! Traditional windows were usually sub-divided so that each pane of glass was the same size, and this resulted in windows which were pleasing to the eye. There are many "off the peg" modern windows which still achieve this.

5.6.5 Simple vertical boarded doors, or those with recessed moulded panels are preferable to the more fussily detailed types.

5.6.6 A solid section of walling is desirable between each opening,

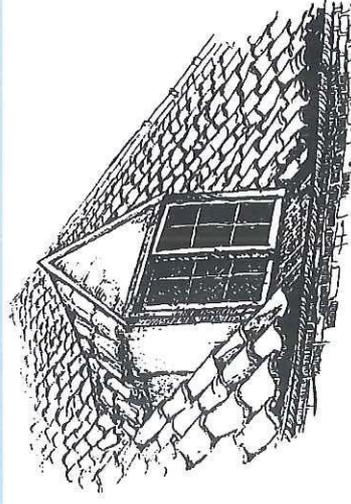
as windows which are placed very close together, or very close to the corner of a wall, will make a building look structurally unsound. The temptation to link windows together with panels of different materials should be avoided.

5.6.7 The position of windows and doors, particularly to the street elevation, needs care and a balance must always be struck between the need to achieve a satisfactory floor plan and a visually pleasing elevation. Many traditional buildings are based upon a simple grid of "window over window" and this may still be the easiest way of achieving a well balanced elevation. A skilled designer, with an appreciation of the importance of visual balance, will be able to achieve equally satisfying results with less regular patterns of openings.

Dormer Windows

5.6.8 Dormer windows should be smaller than windows on the lower floors, should respect their proportions, and normally have gabled or hipped roofs.

5.6.9 It is better to have two small dormers rather than one large one. Painted or stained boarding to the side cheeks and apex of dormers should be avoided - traditionally these would have been rendered or covered in sheet lead.



Eaves and Verges

5.6.10 Eaves and verges perform both a practical and aesthetic role by protecting and finishing the walls and roof and adding visual relief and often embellishment to a building.

Roofscape

5.6.11 Traditional details requiring little maintenance include simple, slightly projecting brick eaves and verges, tumbled brickwork and brick and stone parapets. More decorative features, such as dog-toothed or dentilated brickwork, moulded stone and modillion eaves cornices were also commonly used.

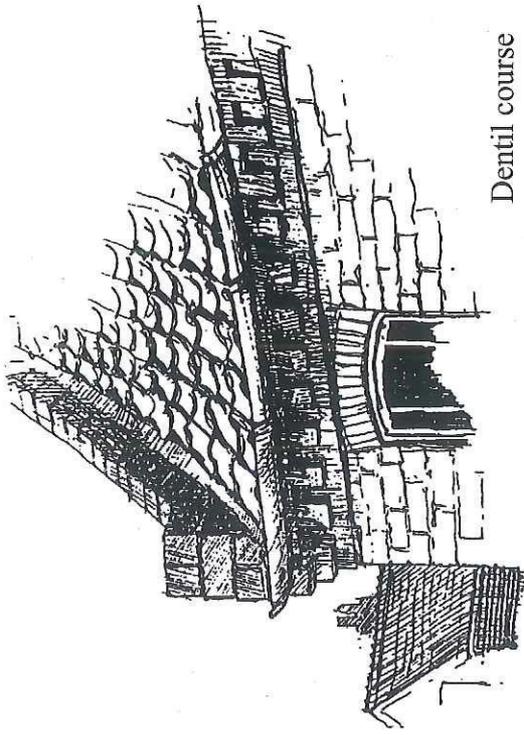
5.6.12 Decorative barge boards, deeply overhanging eaves and projecting verges are an attractive and distinctive feature commonly associated with 19th Century estate villages, picturesque cottages and railway architecture. If barge boards and fascia boards are to be used, such details are likely to be more appropriate than the plain, undistinguished boards commonly associated with much post war housing.

5.6.13 Sloping sites provide unique opportunities to achieve an interesting roofscape and these opportunities should always be exploited.

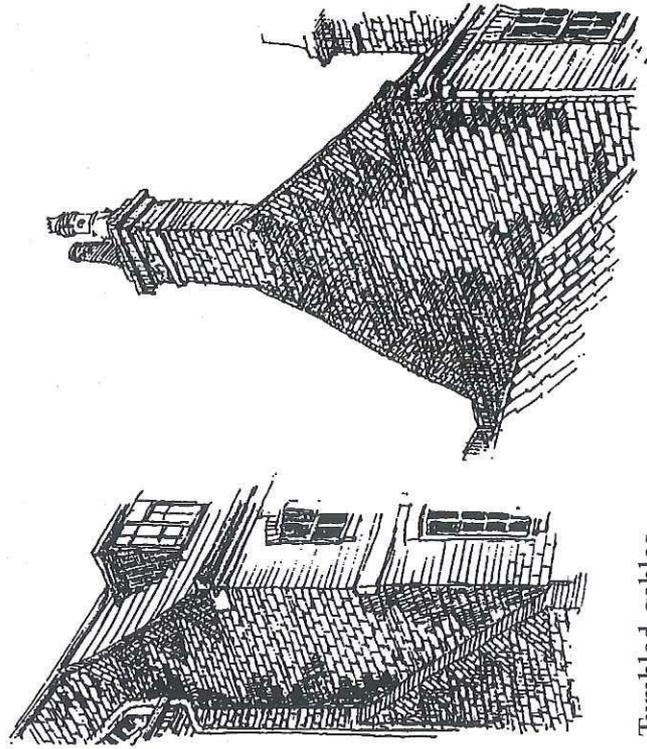
Porches

5.6.14 The appearance of a dwelling can be enhanced or ruined by the addition of a porch. A simple gabled or lean-to roof supported on shaped brackets can look very satisfactory, particularly where the materials and detailing match that of the main dwelling.

5.6.15 Fully enclosed porches need particular care so that they do not become obtrusive and out of scale with other elements of the facade.

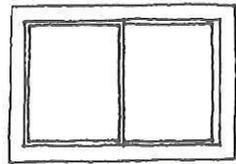
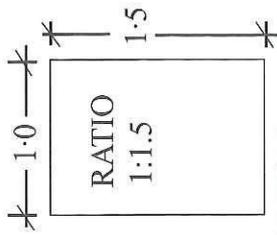


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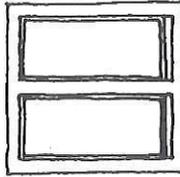
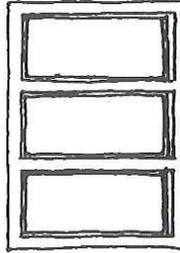
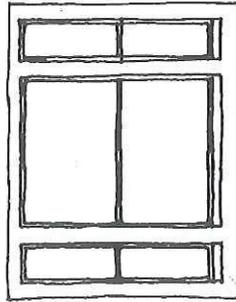


Tumbled gables

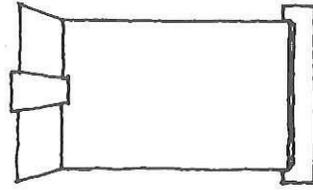
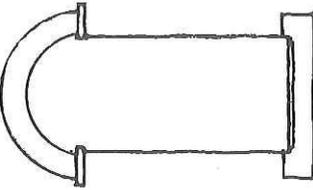
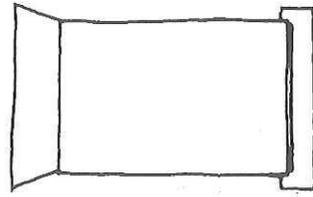
5.6.4 ... TRADITIONAL WINDOWS TEND TO BE NARROW



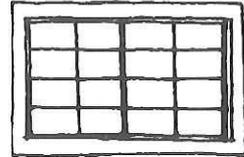
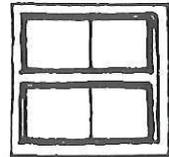
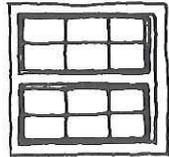
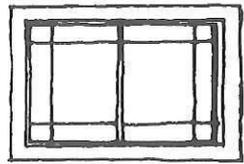
... OR VERTICAL IN PROPORTION



... THEY ARE OFTEN EMPHASISED BY HEADS AND SILLS

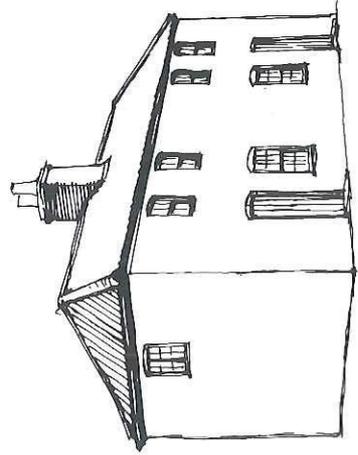
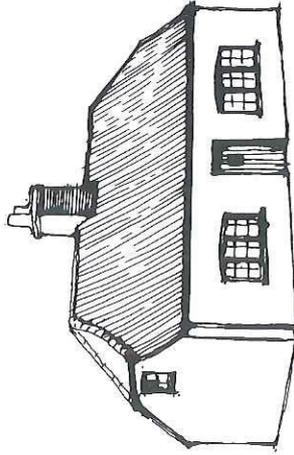
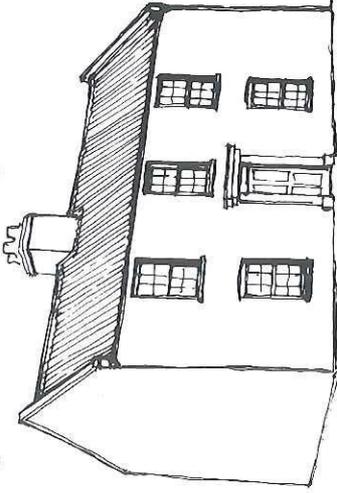


... AND SYMMETRICAL IN APPEARANCE WITH NARROW PANES



MODERN DESIGNS CAN FOLLOW THESE PRINCIPLES TO GOOD EFFECT

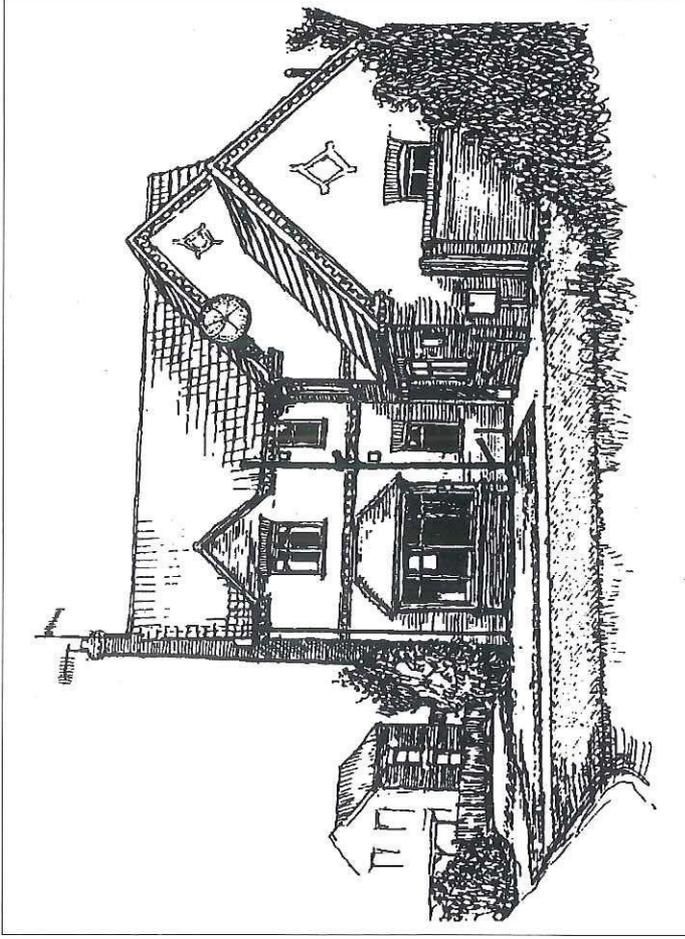
... Used thoughtfully in elevations, the narrow shapes and vertical proportions of windows and doors, can help counter-balance the horizontal proportions of the building itself.



Miscellaneous Details

5.6.16 External pipework, balanced flues, satellite dishes, meter boxes etc, are incidental features which can spoil otherwise attractively designed new buildings.

5.6.17 On new houses all pipework, apart from rainwater gutters and downpipes should run inside the building and there are now alternatives to the ugly detail of soil vent pipes protruding above the roof line. Balanced flues, should be restricted to the private side of the building, as should gas supply pipes. Meter boxes can be a real visual intrusion especially on small terraced or semi-detached properties. On all new buildings consideration should therefore be given early in the design process, to restricting meters to subsidiary elevations. **In sensitive locations standard plastic meter boxes on the public faces of buildings will not be acceptable.**



PARKING

Parking and Garaging

5.7.1 An essential element of successful highway design is the elimination of undesirable parking on the highway. It is not sufficient merely to meet the minimum necessary number of parking spaces by allocating small "left over" areas of land for this use. Unless parking is carefully considered as an essential element of a co-ordinated design, the result will be unsatisfactory both visually and in road safety terms. Future parking needs should also be considered especially where family homes are being provided and car ownership may be higher.

5.7.2 **The required minimum number and size of parking spaces, standards of parking layouts and turning areas, together with general examples of good practice are shown in Appendix E.**

5.7.3 Experience shows that drivers tend to park as close as possible to the entrances of the houses which they visit. If parking provision is not conveniently located this can lead to parking on verges or footways. Allocated parking spaces should therefore be provided within the private curtilage wherever possible.

5.7.4 Where this is not possible, for example for terraced houses or flats, parking spaces should be sited clear of the carriageway within about 20m of an entrance to the property and linked to the dwelling by a convenient, attractive and well-lit footpath. Large concentrations of parking should be avoided.

Security

5.7.5 Cars which are left unsupervised are a prime target for vandals and thieves. 25% of all crime involves motor vehicles. Any parking space outside the private curtilage should therefore be visible from some of the adjacent dwellings. This does not mean that car parking should be allowed

visually to dominate the estate, but underlines the need to strike a balance between convenience, security and appearance.

Parking Within The Curtilage

5.8.1 Parking or garaging within the private curtilage of the dwelling has the advantage of being accessible, secure and easy to supervise. One disadvantage is that the car can become visually very dominant. Therefore the provision and siting of drives, hardstandings and garaging must be carefully considered.

Garages

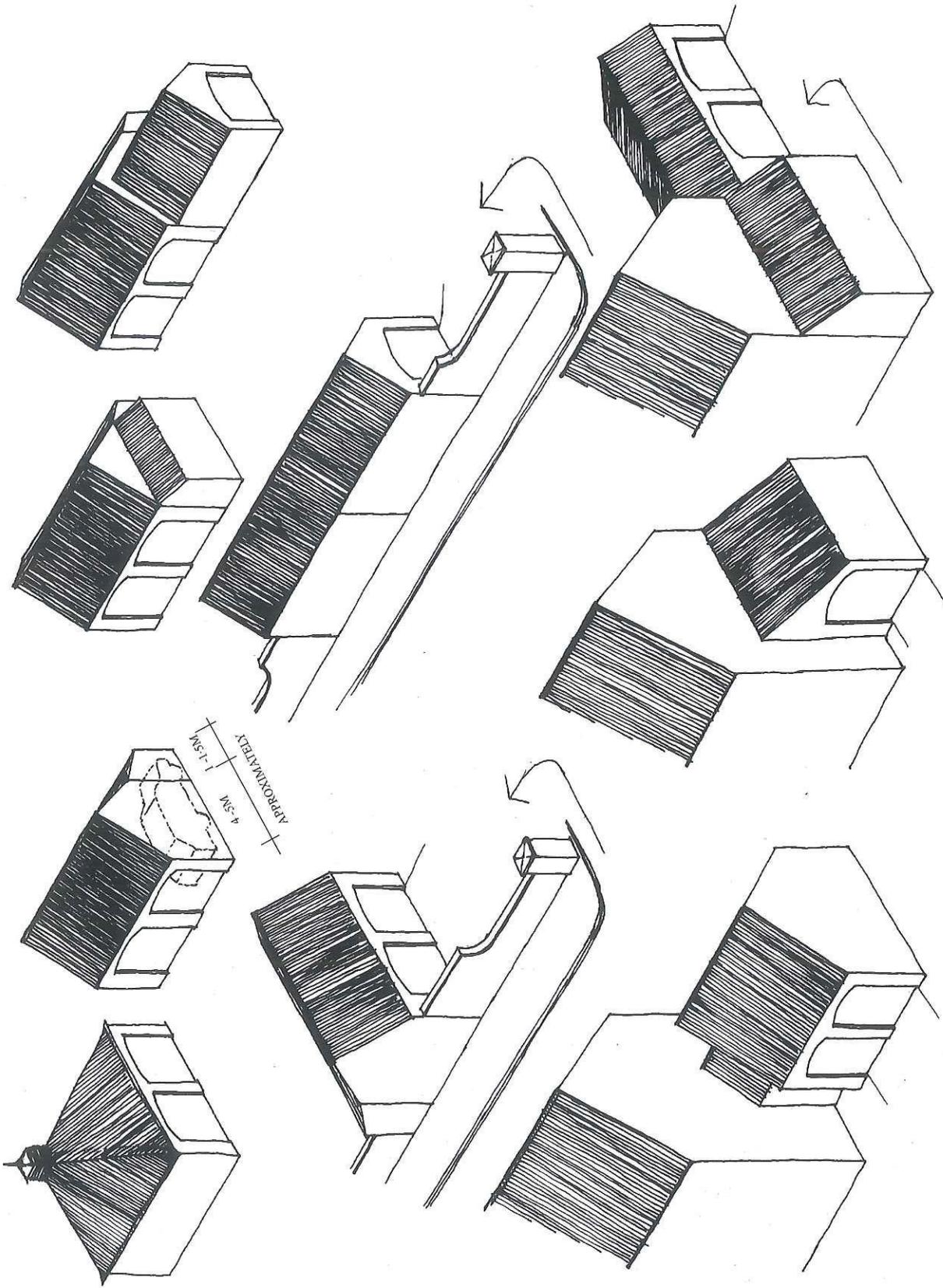
5.8.2 Developers will be required to minimise the visual impact of garages by careful attention to the style and colour of doors, the architectural detailing of the openings, and the way in which they are assimilated into the overall design. Integral garages can be particularly damaging in visual terms - dominating the elevation of a dwelling because the garage door is so much larger than any other element in the facade. Integral garages can also increase the overall scale and apparent bulk of dwellings.

5.8.3 Integral garages, and garages attached to the living space, can be utilized as storage or extended living space, displacing the car to the drive, hardstanding or highway. Clearly the amount of living and storage space provided within the dwelling influences this.

5.8.4 If well designed, garages can be used to good effect in the overall design of the property and development. Not only can they provide a small scale building set hard against the back edge of the footpath, but they can also create a well screened private courtyard in front of the dwelling. In such locations garage doors must not give direct access onto the public highway. It is also essential that garages in such locations do not impair sight-lines causing hazards to pedestrians and road users.



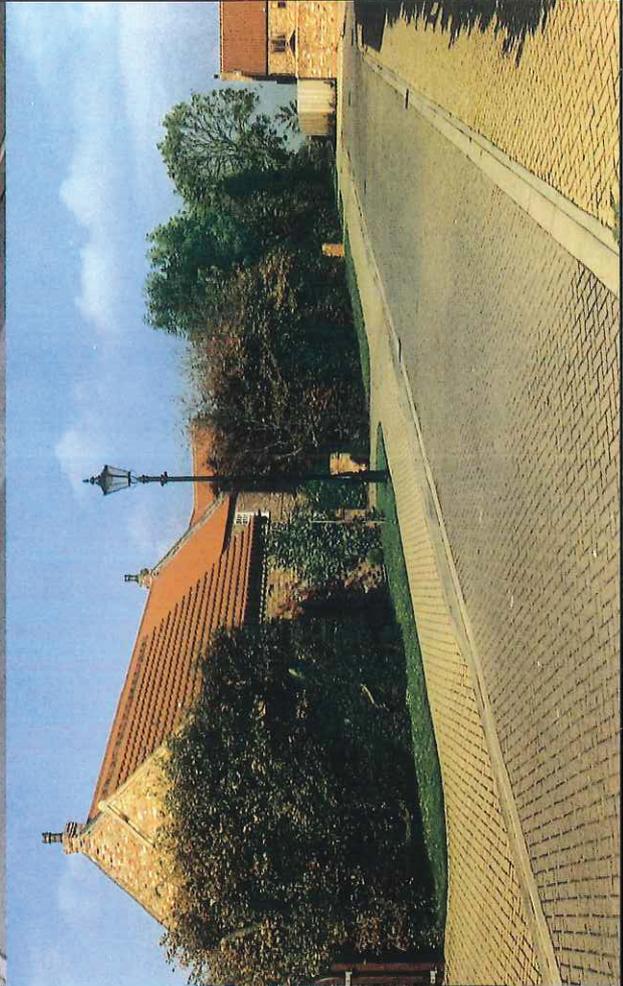
5.8.4. WELL DESIGNED GARAGING: FREE-STANDING, PAVEMENT EDGE & INTEGRAL



GARAGES USED AS A FOCUS



GARAGES AS PAVEMENT EDGE BUILDINGS



Drives and Hardstandings

5.8.5 Parking on drives and hardstandings in front gardens, particularly where directly in front of houses, can be detrimental to the street scene. Developers should give considerable thought to the provision of hard and soft landscaping to limit such effects. Similarly driveways and hardstandings to the side of the property can dominate the layout, but can be assimilated by careful design.

Grouped Parking Outside The Dwelling Curtilage

5.8.6 This can provide an economical use of space, leaving the private gardens of dwellings free for uses other than accommodating cars.

5.8.7 The disadvantages of grouped parking are that surveillance by the residents can be difficult to achieve; the parking is further from individual dwellings, frequently being relegated to a backland site; and the appearance of such areas is often poor.

5.8.8 Grouped parking should be:

- *sited within about 20m of the dwellings served and linked to them by a safe and attractive path that is well lit for use during darkness;*
- *overlooked by some of the surrounding properties to provide surveillance and lessen the risk of vandalism or theft. The lighting of such areas will also benefit security;*
- *surfaced and landscaped to a high standard. The individual parking bays should be delineated in a permanent manner, e.g by the use of granite setts, and the detailed design should protect surrounding walls, fences and planting from vehicle damage.*



5.8.8

5.8.9 Where grouped parking is to be provided in front of dwellings or adjacent to a main approach to dwellings, special attention will need to be given to the choice of materials and to the provision of substantial planting visually to break up the mass of cars. In such locations the use of “small unit” paviers will be required.

5.8.10 Parking spaces should be assigned to particular dwellings and these, together with visitors’ parking bays, should be clearly but discretely signed. Grouped parking may be particularly appropriate when used with features such as town squares or courtyards. Private parking areas will not be adopted by the Highway Authority, but suitable arrangements must still be made for their maintenance.

5.8.11 **Visitor parking space will be required in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix E. Where such spaces are adjacent to the highway they shall be:**

- *sited clear of any highway visibility splay;*
- *situated within 20m of the dwellings they are intended to serve;*
- *constructed to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority.*



STREET FURNITURE

- 5.9.1 A great deal of time, consideration and effort which goes into the layout of a housing estate can be ruined because of lack of thought about the location of street name plates, telephone kiosks, utility service cabinets, litter bins, bus shelters and street lighting columns.
- 5.9.2 On large estates an information board close to, but not immediately within, the entrance to the estate is a useful feature and should be combined with the provision of a layby.
- 5.9.3 Suggested combinations of street furniture for successful layouts include the provision of telephone kiosks and post boxes adjacent to bus shelters that are on main footway/footpath links. In addition, street name plates affixed to property are likely to suffer less from vandalism, and cause less clutter on the highway.

