



City of  
Doncaster  
Council

Doncaster Planning Policy

# Revised Transitional Developer Guidance

April 2024

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**Originally published in April 2022, this Document was updated in August 2023, and in April 2024, to reflect adoption of the following Supplementary Planning Documents:**

**August 2023**

- **Flood Risk SPD**
- **Technical and Developer Requirements SPD**
- **Loss of Community Facilities and Open Space SPD**
- **Local Labour Agreements SPD**

**April 2024**

- **Rural Development SPD**

## 1. Purpose of the Document

- 1.1. Following the adoption of the Doncaster Local Plan, the Unitary Development Plan, Core Strategy and a suite of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which sat behind these have been revoked.
- 1.2. City of Doncaster Council is preparing new SPDs to support the new Local Plan. In the meantime, elements of the Developer Guidance and Requirements (DGAR) SPD and the Residential Backland and Infill Development (RBID) SPD have been retained in this document to provide continued guidance to developers whilst new SPDs are prepared.

### Status of this document

- 1.3. This document is not an SPD, but is guidance to inform developers about what should be considered when submitting planning applications. Specifically, it provides direction on certain elements of design, landscaping, trees and equestrian development.
- 1.4. This document is not, and will not be formally adopted as an SPD, but includes the still relevant sections of the DGAR SPD (with slight updates to references to reflect changes since this was adopted) as guidance. Large parts of the DGAR SPD have been fully revoked and should not be used any longer by developers or officers. This is generally because the new Local Plan now covers these areas in sufficient detail, and the previous guidance is either out of date or in conflict with new policies.
- 1.5. Table 1 (below) summarises what has been fully revoked, and what is now guidance contained in this document.

Paragraph / Section	Former SPD / section	Status	Now refer to
<b>Developer Guidance and Requirements SPD</b>			
2.2	Intro	Revoked	N/A
2.3	Commercial, retail and MU design	Partially revoked	LP Policy 46 & Policy 48
2.4	Residential Design Requirements	Revoked	LP Policy 44
2.5	Character and Amenity	Guidance	Transitional Developer Guidance (TDG) Section 2.1
2.6	Creating a well – structured layout	Guidance	TDG Section 2.2
2.7	Street Design and Car Parking	Guidance	TDG Section 2.3
2.8	Attractive, Liveable and Sustainable Homes	Guidance	TDG Section 2.4
2.9	Landscape and Boundaries	Guidance	TDG Section 2.5
2.12 – 2.14	Residential Extensions and Alterations	Guidance	TDG Section 2.6
2.15 – 2.18	Extensions / Alterations / New Dwellings in the Countryside	Revoked	LP Policy 25
2.19 – 2.23	Equestrian Development	Revoked	Rural Development SPD, Section 3.9
2.24 – 2.27	Public Rights of Way	Revoked	LP Policies 18; 19 & 20
3	The Historic Environment	Revoked	LP Chapter 11

4	Transport and Accessibility	Revoked	LP Chapter 7; Appendix 6 & 7
5	Strategic Green Infrastructure	Revoked	LP Policy 26
6	Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Ecological Networks	Revoked	LP Policies 29; 30 & 31
7	Open Space Standards and Requirements	Revoked	LP Policies 27 & 28
8	Landscape, Trees and Hedgerows	Guidance	TDG Section 4

#### **Residential Backland and Infill Development SPD**

1.0	Introduction	Guidance	TDG Section 3.1
2.0	The Design Process	Guidance	TDG Section 2.1
3.0	General Design Requirements	Guidance	TDG Section 3.4 & LP Policy 44
4.0	Detailed design requirements for backland development	Guidance	TDG Section 3.5 & LP Policy 44
5.0	Detailed design requirements for infill development	Guidance	TDG Section 3.6 & LP Policy 44
6.0	Design Checklist	Guidance	TDG Section 3.7

#### **Development and Flood Risk SPD**

1	Introduction	Revoked	N/A
2	Flooding in Doncaster	Revoked	LP Policy 57
3	Policy Context	Revoked	LP Policy 57
4	Aims and Objectives	Revoked	LP Chapter 14
5	Planning Application Assessment Process	Revoked EXCEPT Section B – Sequential Test (Guidance)	LP Policy 57 & TDG Chapter 6 for Sequential Test
6	Monitoring and Review	Revoked	LP Appendix 12
7	Other Sources of Information	Revoked	N/A
Appendices	Appendix 1 - 5	Revoked	Policies 56 & 57

*Table 1 – DGAR and DAFR SPDs Revoked or Guidance*

1.6. The following sections comprise of elements of the DGAR and RBID and which are retained here as guidance.

1.7. Please note, this document was originally published in April 2022 and has been updated in August 2023 and April 2024 to reflect the adoption of 5 new SPDs which replace elements previously published in the Transitional Developer Guidance:

<b>Former Transitional Developer Guidance Section</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Now refer to</b>
Landscape, Trees & Hedgerows	Replaced	Technical and Developer Requirements SPD
When is a Flood Risk Sequential Test Required?	Replaced	Flood Risk SPD
Equestrian Development	Replaced	Rural Development SPD

## 2. Residential Design Requirements

### 2.1. Character and Amenity

- 2.1.1. Local Plan Policy 41: Character and Local Distinctiveness (Strategic Policy) says that developments should: recognise and reinforce the character of local landscapes and building traditions; be of a high quality design that contributes to local distinctiveness; and integrate visually and functionally with the immediate and surrounding area at a settlement, neighbourhood, street and plot scale.
- 2.1.2. New residential developments must be accommodated in a manner that protects the living conditions of existing residents and contributes to the attractiveness of the city. These developments should generally be in character with the existing built environment. A key starting point is for the designer to undertake a character and context appraisal of the area to inform the design approach. This should be presented in an applicant's Design and Access Statement.
- 2.1.3. A character appraisal will be required to inform developments, and should be included within the Design and Access Statement. The level of detail the appraisal goes into will depend upon the nature of the site and surroundings and the scale of development proposed. An appraisal can contain text, photos, diagrams, plans and sketches to present the information.
- 2.1.4. A robust character appraisal will help to identify what kind of approach to undertake when designing a scheme, for example it will help to decide whether to;
- Reflect - should the development seek to reflect the character of the existing area?
  - Interpret - should the new housing development interpret certain aspects of the surrounding character in new ways?
  - Contrast - should the development contrast with the existing character? (only relevant in specific exceptional circumstances for example the creation of a new landmark. This requires a high level of design skill to successfully achieve).



*Figure 1 – Top: sometimes in historically sensitive areas it may be better to reflect the existing vernacular as this new development does successfully; Bottom: contemporary interpretation of vernacular design is desirable and will be supported where it will make a positive contribution to the area.*

2.1.5. South Yorkshire Archaeology Service have undertaken a Historic Environment Characterisation Study which sets out the key characteristics for a range of environments in the city as a starting point resource for designers. [More information is available at South Yorkshire Historic Environment Characterisation](#).<sup>1</sup> This work will be further supplemented by ongoing character and context appraisals, including conservation area appraisals, baseline neighbourhood and local distinctiveness studies. The Council will continue the production and review of Conservation Area Appraisals, as tools for encouraging sensitive design in the city’s conservation areas. Council planning / design officers will be able to provide developers and designers with the latest information and advice during pre-application discussions.

2.1.6. Designers need to consider the characteristics of the surrounding neighbourhood, so that the development can positively contribute to the character and function of the existing place. The following questions can be used as a checklist to guide and structure the character appraisal:

- How big are plot sizes in the area and what are their shapes?
- What proportion of the plot is developed?

<sup>1</sup> [www.sytimescapes.org.uk/zones/doncaster](http://www.sytimescapes.org.uk/zones/doncaster)

- How does built development in the area respond to topography? Does it work with the slope or go against it? Step up or down?
- Are streets enclosed by continuous / straight building lines or are buildings, stepped, or set back from the street?
- Are there front gardens? How big are they?
- How tall are buildings generally in the surrounding area?
- Are buildings joined or standalone?
- Is the massing of buildings simple or are there joined elements and structures? What shapes do these create?
- What shape and type of roof is prevalent?
- What is the roofscape like? Are there defining features (e.g. chimney types)?
- What types of building / housing forms are most common: terraces, townhouses, detached, semi- detached, linked or separate?
- Are common materials used for walls, roofs, windows, or are there some common themes / predominant materials or building elements?
- What colour and texture are materials? What are their properties?
- What is the pattern of fenestration - horizontal or vertical? Are windows and doors placed symmetrically on elevations? What types of windows are used? Are they rectangular or squared? Are there dormer windows? Bay windows? Projecting / floating bay windows?
- What are interfaces like between the public and private realm? Are there porches / verandas, changes in material or steps?
- Do buildings have rich ornamentation and detailing or are they relatively plain?
- What are the surrounding land uses? How will they impact on the scheme?
- Therefore, is there a strongly defined character to the area? What is it? How can it be reflected / interpreted in the new development?



Figure 2 - A careful study of surrounding buildings, materials and detailing should inform materials selection in a new development in order to re-enforce local distinctiveness

2.1.7. Designers are challenged to create and reinforce local distinctiveness through imaginative housing design which references local character in new and interesting ways. The images below show an example of how key building elements in Dunsville could be interpreted in a sympathetic, yet contemporary, way in a new infill development.

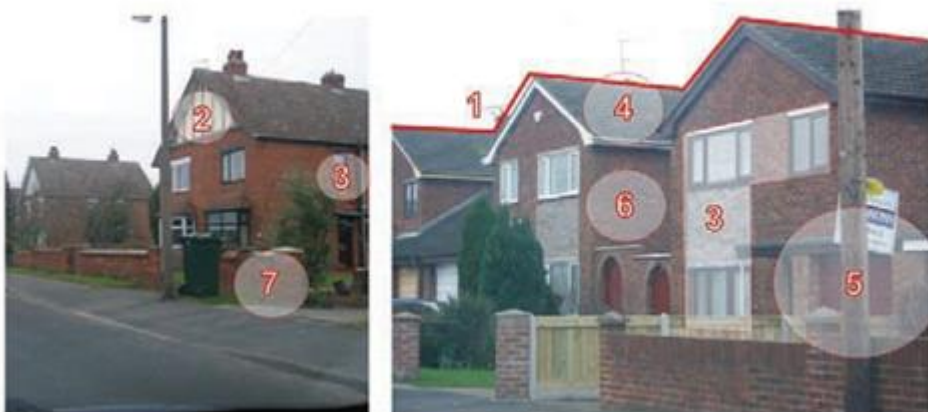


Figure 3 - Understanding local building elements (Dunsville)



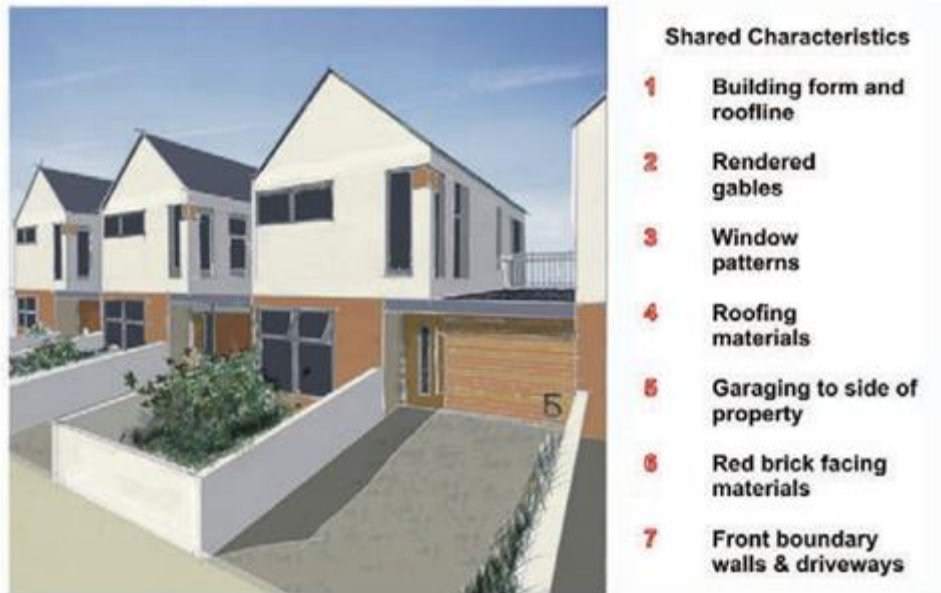


Figure 4 - How understanding local elements (Figure 3) can inform new designs

2.1.8. New housing should not give rise to adverse amenity issues, particularly with respect to overshadowing, privacy and overlooking of occupiers of existing properties. Plot size, site layout, open space, landscape, garden space, building size and form, architectural style, materials, access and car parking provision and arrangement are all key design aspects of a development which will be considered in the assessment of proposals, alongside Building for a Healthy Life criteria. Key standards in relation to separation distances, amenity and sun light can be found in the table and diagrams below.

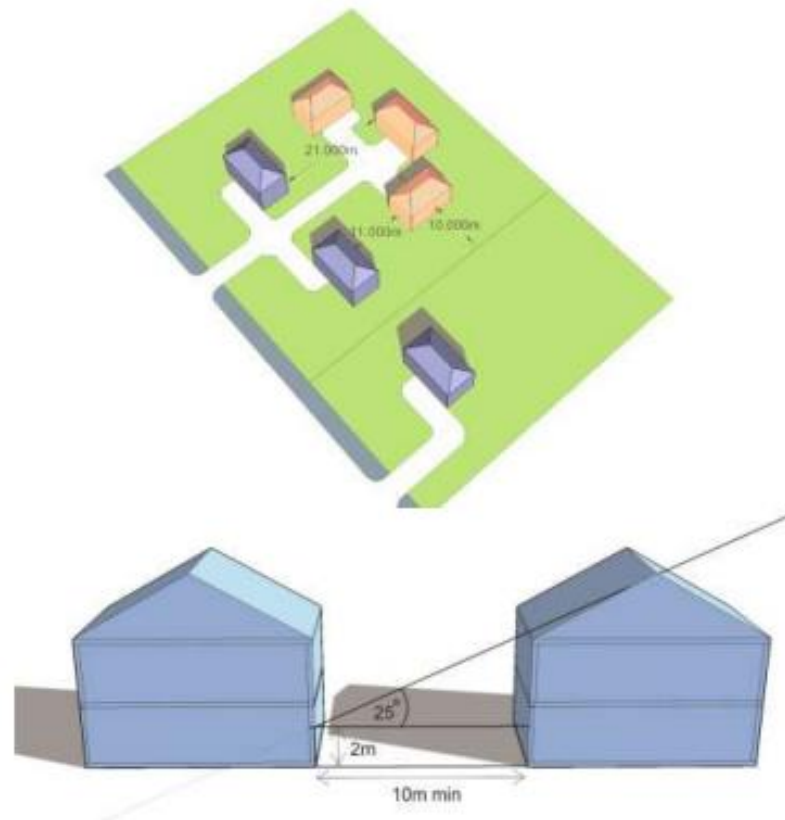


Figure 5 - Key Standards for separation distances, amenity and sun light

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
	<b>Maintaining &amp; enhancing character and amenity</b>	
1	<p><b>A development should seek to create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character - to do this an understanding of the local area is required.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A context appraisal proportionate to the scale and complexity of the scheme should be undertaken to inform the design and submitted along with the application within the Design and Access Statement (where required). This should set out the existing character of the area, key design issues, opportunities and constraints which have informed the design.</li> <li>Major development proposals should seek to vary the character of different parts of the site through the creation of relevant character areas, which are contextually relevant and respond to the different opportunities and constraints in different parts of the site.</li> </ul>	SYRDG pp. 44 – 53, 65
2	<p><b>The layout, siting, scale, massing, form, detailing and materials proposed should be sympathetic to the character of the area, and where appropriate, the existing host property, whilst allowing innovation where it is appropriate and clearly justified.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where new developments seek to integrate into existing areas, they should generally follow established building lines, building heights, massing, plot development ratios, materials and landscaping treatments, unless otherwise justified through the context and character appraisal.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b>New development should consider the adjoining land uses and ensure the design of the development addresses any potential land use conflicts. The development should not significantly impact on the living conditions, privacy and amenity of neighbours (including their private gardens) or be overbearing;</b></p> <p><b>Day-lighting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceptable day-lighting of interiors is usually achieved if a 25 degree angle is drawn from a point 2 metres above the floor if the façade is not obstructed. Applied to the fronts of 2 storey dwellings, this suggests that a minimum separation distance of 10 metres is required between the front of properties (BRE, 2007).</li> <li>Another way of assessing the impact of neighbouring buildings on daylight and outlook is the '45 degree rule'. This states that there is normally the potential to achieve adequate levels of daylight and outlook when no part of a building cuts through a line radiating at 45 degrees from the centre of a window that lights a habitable room.</li> </ul>	<p>SYRDG pp. 112</p> <p>SYRDG pp. 94, 112</p>

Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards	Further Details
<p><b>Separation distances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-3 storey properties should have back to back distances (between facing habitable rooms) of no less than 21m, and front to front distance of no less than 12m, dependent upon the street hierarchy (new properties should not create blank elevations or gables facing the public realm).</li> <li>• 4 storey properties should have back to back distances of no less than 27m, with front to front distances of no less than 24m.</li> <li>• Where backs of 2 storey houses are at an angle from one another, to avoid overlooking habitable room windows which are less than 21m should be outside a 45 degree line drawn from the centre of the closest first floor rear window and parallel to the rear elevation, or be more than 21m distance between them if less than 45 degrees from the centre line.</li> <li>• Separation distances will also increase as there are changes in level between properties or increases in building height at the discretion of the planning case officer.</li> <li>• Habitable room windows that overlook neighbouring garden space should normally be at least 10 metres from the boundary. Where a new property overlooks an existing garden these distances may need to be increased. Oblique or obscured outlook from habitable room windows within 10m of the boundary may be allowed at the discretion of the case officer dependent upon site specific considerations.</li> <li>• Where first floor habitable rooms, face habitable rooms in a single storey dwelling, or the habitable rooms of two single storey dwellings face one another this separation distance may be reduced at the discretion of the case officer</li> </ul>	

*Table 2 – Maintaining and Enhancing Character and Amenity*

## 2.2. Creating a well – structured Layout

- 2.2.1. Local Plan Policies 42 and 44 encourage good layout design. The street pattern of routes and spaces should reflect the movement hierarchy- the most important routes should connect the most important destinations and be obvious through the way they are designed. Busier streets should be more formal, with housing and landscape designed to re-enforce their role. Streets which have less of a public role may be lower in the movement hierarchy, quieter in nature and perhaps more informal in design.
- 2.2.2. A clear hierarchy of streets and spaces that visually link landmark buildings and reference points both within the development and outside, will help to create a clear and logical structure to the scheme. Development proposals should create a legible layout, whereby the articulation and orientation of streets and buildings will enable people to find their way around.

- 2.2.3. The ‘street’ and the ‘block’ are the most robust urban structure which have stood the test of time, as most of the best historical precedents demonstrate. Developers will be expected to adopt a traditional street based approach to the layout of new housing areas, whereby properties front onto the street. The urban block is an organising structure which is flexible, can accommodate different uses and allows areas to change over time. It facilitates good overlooking of the street and restricts access to the rear of properties, creating a clear distinction between ‘front’ and ‘back’. It allows scope for gardens, parking and servicing within the block.
- 2.2.4. To create successful high quality residential areas, where people want to live, they must feel safe and secure. It is well publicised that the design and layout of buildings and spaces in between have an impact on crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. It can also affect the reputation of an area constraining its potential for long term sustainability. Natural surveillance has a fundamental role to play in creating safe and secure places. Public areas which are well used throughout the day and well overlooked, feel safer and therefore create places where people want to spend time. As a result, there is more activity which in turn increases surveillance. This increases the opportunity for criminal activity to be seen and therefore can deter criminal or antisocial behaviour.
- 2.2.5. To increase activity and natural surveillance, the criteria of Local Plan Policy 47 should be followed. In residential developments, the following principles should be adhered to:
- Public areas including: streets, footpaths; cycle paths; play areas; open space; and car parking should be well overlooked from surrounding properties;
  - Buildings should front the street and provide active frontages, blank frontages and gables should be avoided;
  - A mix of uses, housing types and sizes should be promoted which can increase activity throughout the day resulting in more presence and surveillance;
  - Enhanced overlooking should not compromise the privacy of individual properties;
  - Private space should be well defined and enclosed, for example through the use of fences, walls, gates, hedges or changes in surface treatments.

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
	<b>Creating a well – structured layout</b>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>New developments should integrate into existing movement networks and provide clear and direct footpath and cycle connections to local facilities and public transport services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layouts should respect established movement patterns, cater for pedestrian desire lines and link into existing footpaths and cycle-ways wherever possible to help achieve walkable neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>	SYRDG pp. 75-78, 81- 82, 91-92, 94, 110

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layouts should encourage pedestrian permeability and ease of movement, generally through the creation of formal and informal block layouts.</li> <li>• Layouts for major schemes should develop a street hierarchy that reflects the role of the street in the movement hierarchy, keeping to the well-proportioned height to width ratios relative to the type of street.</li> </ul>	
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Streets should be defined and enclosed by the fronts of new homes to provide active frontage and continuity along streets.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height to width ratios of between 1:2 and 1:4 provide good spatial enclosure. Ratios less than 1:4 (e.g. 1:5) will usually need street trees to create an adequate sense of enclosure.</li> <li>• Buildings should front onto streets and have windows and doors facing the street to create active frontage, integral garage doors should be limited along streets.</li> <li>• Corner buildings should be designed so that both elevations seen from the street have windows to them, rather than offering blank walls to the street.</li> </ul>	SYRDG pp.89, 94
<b>6</b>	<p><b>The scheme should be easy to understand and to find your way around</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important views and vistas to existing or new landmarks should be retained or created.</li> <li>• There should be a logical hierarchy of streets and spaces, some with distinctive features to act as landmarks.</li> <li>• Views along streets should be ‘stopped’ by buildings, and materials choices used to reinforce the legibility strategy, for example by distinguishing key plots or corner buildings in contrasting materials or architectural character.</li> <li>• Larger schemes should seek to create individual character areas, where building typologies, landscaping and materials are varied to create clearly distinguishable areas within the overall development.</li> </ul>	SYRDG pp.52, 74, 83 -86, 92-93, 108, 110

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
7	<p><b>Public and private areas and open spaces should be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designers should think about what types of spaces are created and where they should be located. Consider how spaces can be designed to be multi-functional, serving as wide an age group as possible and how they could contribute towards enhancing biodiversity.</li> <li>• Public open spaces and areas accessible to the public should be well defined and overlooked by surrounding properties.</li> <li>• A management and maintenance plan to include a sustainable way to fund public or shared communal open spaces should be developed and agreed with the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Front boundary treatments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will expect developers to use vertical features such as robust walls, railings, fences, medium height hedge forming shrubs, bin-stores (or combinations thereof) to define front boundaries, particularly at corner locations which are more vulnerable.</li> <li>• Boundary treatments proposed should generally remain low, i.e. 0.9 - 1.2 metres to enable full view of the front of the house and meet visibility requirements for vehicle access and driveways.</li> <li>• Select species that will form a strong and effective boundary and reduce the visual impact of frontage parking, such as hedge forming shrubs rather than low growing specimens or exotic or ornamental plants.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rear and Side Boundary Treatment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rear gardens must be defensible and ensure that the space is private for the occupiers. In this situation, a higher boundary is considered to be appropriate such as 1.8m timber fencing to rear boundaries and more robust walls adjacent the public realm e.g. at corner plots or enclosing parking courts.</li> <li>• Plot division fencing to rear gardens should be 1.8m close boarded fencing, or SBD compliant 1.5m with a 300mm trellis top.</li> </ul>	<p>SYRDG p.60-61, 103</p> <p>SYRDG p.95</p>

*Table 3 - Creating a well - structured layout*

## 2.3. Street Design and Car Parking

- 2.3.1. Local Plan Policy 44 requires that there is sufficient convenient, safe and secure allocated and visitor car parking space designed so as not to dominate the appearance of the residential street-scene or impact negatively on the function or character of new and existing streets. At criteria 8 it requires access points, street design, parking and operational highway requirements to be safe and provide adequate footpaths, encourage

vehicle design speeds of 10-20mph or less, and complement the character of the existing street-scene and highway functions.

- 2.3.2. The SYRDG is a local interpretation of the Manual for Streets approach. It contains detailed guidance in relation to street design and technical standards and details that generally must be met. However since its publication and implementation the approach to street design has shifted in certain areas so the Local Plan policy and criteria referred to above are a more up to date reflection of key design requirements.
- 2.3.3. New residential developments must provide acceptable means of access to the site, for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. In addition to functional requirements relating to access and movement, streets provide an important social role for community interaction. Safety for all users of the public realm is a key consideration in street design, particularly for those with visual impairments or mobility problems. In this respect residential streets should generally be designed to encourage low vehicle speeds through the introduction of speed restraint measures and have adequate segregated footpaths and cycleways where appropriate.
- 2.3.4. The defining feature of the street is the arrangement of plots and buildings facing or fronting onto the public highway and defining distinct areas of public and private space. Functionally, the public realm is for the common activities of movement and public interaction and the private realm for occupation. This definition underlines the fact that a street is not just the carriageway. To function properly the public highway, landscape, boundaries and the buildings in their plots either side need to work together. In this view, an individual street is made up of both the public highway and the buildings in their plots either side as well as landscaping and street tree planting within it.
- 2.3.5. For major larger developments, the character of new streets should not be uniform but should vary as part of a hierarchy, depending on their location in order to integrate development into the locality, to retain local distinctiveness and create vibrant, legible and memorable places. The street and space hierarchy should include a commitment to the incorporation of street trees within the public realm, along higher order avenues and within key spaces, junctions and community focal points as required by Local Plan policies 44 and 48.
- 2.3.6. Within a housing scheme there are often opportunities to create community focal points and areas of interest that can help way-finding and create distinctive places which add to character. Types of focal points include; green spaces, hard landscaped junctions and squares, intimate street spaces and pedestrian / cycle links. They provide amenity for residents, places for children to play, and areas to meet and socialise. They also provide relief to urban layouts and scope to accommodate tree planting, which is particularly important when developing at higher densities. The council will expect developers to include focal points within their residential development proposals, as part of the overall site layout.





Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards	Further Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New development should have access to, or create, community focal points that are well located, accessible and safe. A community focal point is a place ‘where paths cross’ and people might meet, stop and carry on a conversation. As a bare minimum a community focal point should be a space within the public realm in addition to the minimum needed for movement.</li> <li>• By default tree planting of some kind should be included within all the above street types with more repetitive linear and generous provision in higher order streets in the hierarchy. In addition trees should be planted at community focal points and intersection spaces, with adequate space provided to enable full growth.</li> </ul>	

Table 4 - Street Design and Car Parking

## Car Parking

2.3.7. All housing developments must also provide adequate car parking in safe, convenient and secure locations close to and overlooked by occupiers. Residential parking standards are set out in Local Plan Appendix 6 and the table below. Car parking spaces should be well defined and integrated with good quality surfacing materials and landscaping within the public realm whilst not letting parking dominate the residential environment. On street parking has the potential to be both space efficient and can also help to create a vibrant street, where neighbours have more opportunity to see and meet other people. In order to meet these objectives, residential layouts should be designed to:

- provide a mix of parking solutions, not all plots within a layout should have frontage parking platforms;
- reduce the visual impacts of parking on the street-scene through the siting and spacing of properties and spaces, and ensuring front boundary treatments and landscaping such as trees and medium height hedgerows are provided;
- discourage parking that compromises the operation of the highway; and
- ensure in-curtilage / on plot parking does not result in streets dominated by parking platforms to the front of the property or large expanses of garage doors at street level.

2.3.8. Garages and integral garages are often not used for their intended purpose due to a lack of storage provision, inadequate sized garages / doors and a trend towards increasingly large vehicles. This places additional pressure on parking in the public realm and can result in the loss of front gardens as these are paved over. Therefore, integral or standalone garages will not be counted as a parking space unless they are an adequate size (currently 3x6 metres minimum clear internal dimensions).

2.3.9. In determining the right levels of parking the council will consider the anticipated demand from the type of housing proposed, the likely occupiers, the design of the public realm and highway, the proposed parking design solutions and any local restrictions will be considered.

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
	<b>Street Design and Car Parking</b>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>There should be adequate provision of allocated and visitor car parking, designed in a way as to not dominate the street</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of parking solutions should be used, appropriate to the context and the types of housing proposed;</li> <li>• Large unsupervised or uninhabited rear parking courts of more than six spaces will be discouraged as they offer more opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour;</li> <li>• Where parking is positioned to the front of the property, designers should ensure that at least an equal amount of the frontage is allocated to an enclosed, landscaped front garden as it is for parking to reduce vehicle domination.</li> <li>• provide defined visitor parking bays on-street, and where there is a high proportion of drives along frontages or dedicated bays cannot be provided footpaths will need to be widened to 2.5-3m to accommodate kerb parking and allow space for users of the footpath;</li> </ul> <p><b>Parking standards for houses and apartments For dwelling houses and apartments the council will aim to achieve the following minimum parking standards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Local Plan Appendix 6, pp. 321</li> </ul>	SYRDG p.116-117, 102, 103, 135-137, 144 - 145

*Table 5 - Street Design and Car Parking (II)*

## **2.4. Attractive, liveable and sustainable homes**

### **External Design**

2.4.1. Quality detailing and ornamentation of buildings needs to be done in an honest and sympathetic manner. Detailing should have integrity and not be a pastiche of arbitrary architectural styles, which have no relevance to the context. Craftsmanship and quality bespoke elements should be introduced in key places e.g. around the entrance to the property. Designers and developers should provide architectural richness in new residential developments by:

- designing buildings as a three dimensional whole, so that elements such as bay windows are designed in from the start rather than being 'bolted-on' at the end;

- ensuring external materials are designed to a human scale, and large areas of glazing / windows are subdivided;
- designing windows and doors so that they are set back from the external facade of the building, which introduces some depth and modelling to the façade;
- providing bay windows and / or balconies that step out into the public realm and add depth to the elevation;
- incorporating three-dimensional detailing (from traditional brick corbelling to more contemporary approaches), that again give 'depth' to a building; and
- ensuring that changes in materials are related to the design of the building, rather than being an arbitrary way of creating interest.

2.4.2. The starting point for material choices is an assessment of the surrounding context. Whilst there may be clues to appropriate materials in the area (particularly in places with a strong historical context / character), this does not necessarily mean that developers need to slavishly copy these materials or apply them in a superficial way. Designers need to consider the properties of the material, its scale, colour and texture in relation to the surrounding area and the character that they wish to create.

2.4.3. Dormer windows are a characteristic of many areas in Doncaster, and are increasingly becoming more common as developers provide additional accommodation in the roof space. Similarly, skylights / rooflights are now a common feature. Both may be used to add variety to the roof form and are usually acceptable when they provide a balanced / symmetrical elevation and will not result in an overly tall property or one with a dominant roof pitch. Dormer windows and roof lights should generally be small and in scale so that they do not dominate the roof, and should be wholly accommodated in the roof or break through the eaves lines. Dormer windows should generally have pitched roofs for buildings with a traditional aesthetic, flat or 'shed' dormers are often a feature of more contemporary dwellings. Chimneys can add greatly to the architectural richness of building forms, and are often significant elements in the roofscape within existing older residential areas. However, it is important that they are designed as strong and meaningful forms and have a legitimate purpose.

2.4.4. Waste storage and collection is an issue that is continually overlooked by developers and designers. Appropriate space for the storage, sorting and collection of refuse and recyclables needs to be considered at both the development and individual dwelling scale at an early stage in the design process in order to avoid 'bin blight'. Doncaster householders currently have three wheeled bins and a green collection box for recyclables.

2.4.5. The aim is also for every home to have access to a private amenity space for houses / bungalows and shared communal open space or balconies (as a minimum) for apartments, extra-care, care homes and sheltered housing. Gardens in particular provide numerous health, social and physical benefits, and make a contribution toward sustainable development, for example by providing space for wildlife, the drying of

clothes, cycle storage, composting, natural drainage and rainwater collection. Further guidance on the appropriate size of private and communal gardens and amenity space are provided in the following table.

### **Internal Design**

- 2.4.6. The internal design and layout of our homes can affect our health and quality of life. Adequate space and light are key considerations in successful home design. Daylight refers to the level of diffuse natural light coming from the surrounding sky dome or reflected off adjacent surfaces and is affected by levels of cloud. Sunlight, on the other hand, refers to direct sunshine and is very much brighter than ambient daylight but changes throughout the day and year. The aim is for every home to have adequate space and light to create a healthy living environment.
- 2.4.7. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) '25 degree' standard is a useful rule to ensure that properties benefit from minimum levels of day lighting. Acceptable day-lighting of interiors is usually achieved if a 25 degree angle is drawn from a point 2 metres above the floor if the façade is not obstructed.
- 2.4.8. Local Plan Policy 45 sets out key housing space and accessibility standards which developers must meet. In order to protect the living conditions and well-being of future occupants, applications for residential development must demonstrate how the proposed accommodation is functionally fit for purpose and has been designed to meet the specific needs of the occupants. It should demonstrate how the accommodation is large enough to provide sufficient space for privacy, socialising, studying, cooking, dining, sleeping, washing and storage of household goods and belongings. All dwelling units should have convenient access to adequate private or communal amenity space and benefit from good levels of day lighting, privacy and security. In ensuring high quality accommodation is provided, planning officers will require floor-plans to be submitted, which include furniture layouts. They will check;
- the overall internal floor-space is sufficient and the size of individual rooms are large enough for the intended purpose;
  - the size of amenity space is sufficient for the number of occupiers;
  - there is enough storage space and the layout of internal rooms; and
  - circulation space is designed to facilitate its intended function.
- 2.4.9. To allow the Planning Authority body to check compliance of a development against the Nationally Described Space Standard it would be helpful if planning applications clearly state on all appropriate plans:
- The internal area (m<sup>2</sup>) and width (m) of every bedroom and the number of intended occupants for each bedroom in each different type of dwelling on the site;
  - All specific storage spaces and its internal area (m<sup>2</sup>) in each different type of dwelling on the site; and

- The overall gross internal area (m<sup>2</sup>) of each different type of dwelling on the site.

2.4.10. National planning policy makes it clear that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements should be addressed and Local Plan Policy 45 seeks to do this. To allow local authorities the policy tools required to meet this need, the Government established 'Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M' which the Local Plan refers to. It sets out optional building regulations with specific accessibility and adaptability design features. There is currently not enough housing that is flexible and adaptable enough to provide a suitable living environment for people as their needs change to promote independent living. This problem is predicted to escalate as residents of Doncaster are living longer, bringing alongside it the health and disability issues that are associated with older age. Inclusive housing design is about ensuring that new housing is easily adaptable and capable of meeting the needs of a wide range of people, including those with a physical disability. In particular, inclusive design should make access possible for all potential occupants and visitors by making the entrance and ground floor step-free, making sure that doors and stairs are wide enough for disabled users and allowing easier and cheaper adaptations to take place.

2.4.11. To allow the Planning Authority and Building Control body to check the compliance of a development against the M4(2) and M4(3) wheelchair adaptable building regulations, it would be helpful if submitted drawings clearly state on all appropriate plans:

- The required number and mix of M4(2) and M4(3) wheelchair adaptable dwellings;
- Provide measurements of the specific design requirements both regulations require, as outlined in the relevant sections of the established 'Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M' in each different type of applicable dwelling on the site; and
- For M4(3) adaptable dwellings, the combined floor area for living, dining and kitchen space (m<sup>2</sup>) in each different type of applicable dwelling on the site.

2.4.12. In order to reduce the environmental impacts of new housing it is appropriate to consider the whole life cost of a building and how its design and specification can benefit consumers and the wider public in the longer term. The basic principles for achieving higher environmental standards which developers should consider, include:

- ensuring future flexibility in the design of buildings;
- ensuring good levels of fabric efficiency to reduce heat loss;
- reducing demand for energy use
- providing energy from sustainable sources
- reducing demand for water and encouraging re-use of water
- making recycling / reducing waste easy

- making alternative transport modes attractive; and
- using sustainable materials and construction techniques.

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
	<b>Attractive, liveable &amp; sustainable homes</b>	
11	<p><b>Developers and designers should seek to create attractive homes and buildings which are robustly designed and constructed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality detailing and ornamentation of buildings needs to be done in a honest and sympathetic manner. Detailing should have integrity and not be a pastiche of arbitrary architectural styles which have no relevance to the context;</li> <li>• Designers need to consider the properties of the material, its scale, colour and texture in relation to the surrounding area and the character that they wish to create;</li> <li>• Dormer windows and roof lights should generally be small and in scale so that they do not dominate the roof;</li> <li>• Appropriate space for the storage, sorting and collection of refuse and recyclables needs to be considered at both the development and individual dwelling scale, with short routes to the street provided to the rear of properties to provide access and service bin collection;</li> <li>• The aim is also for every home to have access to a private amenity space for houses / bungalows and shared communal open space or balconies (as a minimum) for apartments, extra-care, care homes and sheltered housing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Private and communal amenity space standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private gardens of two bedroom houses/bungalows should be at least 50 square metres; for three or more bedroom houses/bungalows, 60 square metres;</li> <li>• Shared private space for flats must be a minimum of 50 square metres plus an additional 10 square metres per unit either as balcony space or added to shared private space;</li> <li>• Where shared private space cannot be provided balconies must be provided. Balconies must be a minimum of 3 square metres and provide usable space clear of door swings to count toward the minimum requirements;</li> <li>• At least 50% of a private amenity area should receive unobstructed sunlight in summer.</li> </ul> <p>The amount of shared private space to be provided will also depend on the quality, quantity and accessibility of local public open space.</p>	<p>SYRDG pp. 123-125</p> <p>SYRDG pp.72</p> <p>SYRDG pp.129-131</p>

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
12	<p><b>New homes should incorporate good quality internal living environments.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aim is for every home to have adequate space and light to create a healthy living environment, and each should benefit from good levels of acoustic insulation, privacy and security;</li> <li>• Applicants should demonstrate how the accommodation is large enough to provide sufficient space for privacy, socialising, studying, cooking, dining, sleeping, washing and storage of household goods and belongings and meet the space standards of Policy 44.</li> </ul>	SYRDG p.130-132
13	<p><b>Applicants should seek to reduce the environmental impact of new housing and where appropriate build in resilience to climate change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developers should maximise insulation and where possible explore potential low-cost measures which can be incorporated into new homes in order to improve sustainability.</li> <li>• When building in or adjacent to areas which may be prone to flood risk, designers should consider integrating flood resilient design features into the home.</li> <li>• Sustainable Urban Drainage systems should be considered for all types of residential development.</li> </ul>	

*Table 6 - Attractive, liveable & sustainable homes*

## **2.5. Landscapes and Boundaries**

2.5.1. The requirement for high quality streets and spaces necessitates the use of landscape design expertise during design development, and not at the end of the design process when a layout has been agreed. Landscape, materials, street furniture and public art should be carefully chosen to support the distinctive character of streets, and considered in the development of the hierarchy of street types. For example:

- materials may change from bitmac for streets at the top of the hierarchy to brick pavers for courtyards and setts for mews streets;
- formal 'boulevard' tree planting and front boundary walls along streets at the top of the hierarchy may change to informal, soft planting and shrubs in a mews.

2.5.2. Most developments will benefit from, and will be required to provide, a detailed scheme of hard and soft landscaping - see Local Plan Policy 48. The selection of robust, fit for purpose hard landscape materials (such as highway surfacing materials or paving) can help to create attractive public realm which increases the appeal of residential areas whilst minimising on-going maintenance requirements. Soft landscape (such as trees, shrubs and hedgerows) can be used to soften the impact of new buildings and car

parking areas and to screen busy roads. New planting will be particularly important on development sites that abut the green belt or countryside policy area, or within a green wedge to soften the urban edge. More detailed guidance in relation to soft landscape and tree requirements can be found in section 5.

2.5.3. The council will expect developers to use robust front boundary walls, railings, fences, hedges, bin-stores and changes in surface materials (or combinations thereof) to:

- define semi private thresholds into the front of properties to provide a degree of privacy and security (particularly important at corner locations and streets with heavier pedestrian flows);
- help screen car parking at the front of properties and integral garages; and
- provide a threshold to pause whilst entering a property, and stop children running directly onto the street (a minimum a 1-2m threshold should be provided) this also allows scope for personalisation.

2.5.4. Suitable locations for the storage and collection of household refuse from kerbside collection services needs to be considered as part of the front boundary treatment. Where frontage binstores are proposed these need to be of a robust brick construction and gated. Rear gardens must be defensible and ensure that the space is private for the occupiers. In this situation, a higher boundary is considered to be appropriate such as 1.8m timber fencing to rear boundaries and more robust 1.8m walls adjacent the public realm e.g. at corner plots. Plot division fencing to rear gardens should be 1.8m close boarded fencing, or SBD compliant 1.5m with a 300mm trellis top.

	<b>Key Residential Planning Requirements and Design Standards</b>	<b>Further Details</b>
	<b>Landscape</b>	
14	<p><b>New residential developments should take advantage of existing landscape features, such as trees and hedgerows, and provide a well-designed new hard and soft landscape scheme.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to maximise the benefits of tree planting, the council will expect a minimum of 1 tree per dwelling, including street trees to be designed into the public realm and adoptable highway along key streets and within community focal spaces (see 9 above).</li> <li>• Surface materials should be selected to reinforce the function of street spaces and used to differentiate the street hierarchy and focal points. They should be unfussy and selected with the potential range of users in mind.</li> </ul> <p>Further detailed guidance in relation to landscape design can be found in section 5 of this document.</p>	<p>SYRDG pp. 70,74, 103-106,170</p> <p>SYRDG pp.106</p>

*Table 7 - Landscape*



## 2.6. Key design principles for residential extensions and alternations

2.6.1. The following key design principles should be followed for all types of residential extension and alteration and will be used as a framework of considerations to assess the quality of new proposals:

- a) The design concept, layout and detailing should take reference from the host dwelling, neighbouring properties and the character of the area;
- b) Development is of a scale and proportion that is subservient to the host dwelling, in relation to the existing ridge height, massing, roof pitch, and remaining curtilage space;
- c) The design respects the living conditions of neighbours, (ensuring adequate privacy within buildings and outdoor spaces) and not result in unacceptable overshadowing, overlooking or an overbearing relationship (Table 2 sets out key standards in this respect);
- d) Existing architectural features of the host dwelling are retained and, where appropriate, enhanced. Materials are compatible or matching to the existing building;
- e) Development allows for the successful retention of appropriate trees and hedgerows;
- f) Extensions and alterations do not result in an unacceptable loss of car parking, or impact negatively on highway safety, visibility or pedestrian access;
- g) New development takes opportunities to mitigate any environmental impacts such as flooding and increase environmental sustainability such as insulation.

## 2.7. Design and layout considerations

2.7.1. When considering applications for domestic extensions, the council will consider the impact that the extension may have on both the dwelling itself, on the immediate neighbourhood, and on the neighbours. Key factors which will be assessed include:

- a) **Appearance** - A badly designed extension may have a considerable impact on the character of an area. The main aim may therefore be for the extension to look as though it had been designed as part of the original dwelling, and not added at a later date. However, in certain circumstances there may be opportunities to enhance buildings using more contemporary additions or innovative design. Where an extension is proposed in a Countryside Policy Area or Green Belt, a design which differs slightly from the original dwelling may be required, in order to minimise the impact of the mass and scale of the dwelling on the countryside area;
- b) **Roof** - Any two-storey extension to a house with a pitched roof should have a roof of a similar form with roof slopes to a **similar** pitch. Single-storey extensions should also preferably have a matching pitched roof, in particular where any such extension is visible in the street scene. It is important to note that, whilst flat roofs may be

marginally cheaper, a pitched roof is usually superior in both design and performance in the longer term;

- c) **Size and scale** - Extensions should be smaller than the existing dwelling and subservient to it. An extension that is larger than half the width of the existing house will appear out of scale and dominate **the** existing house. The ridge and eaves lines of any extension must be level with or lower than those of the existing dwelling. In some cases it may be better to make a distinct break in both the roofline and wall-line, to ensure that the extension remains secondary to the original dwelling and to avoid unsightly matching in of old and new materials. The scale of different types of extensions is discussed in more detail below;
- d) **Doors and windows** - Window and door openings on extensions must match the size, proportion and positioning of those on the original dwelling. This includes dormers. For example, if the original **windows** have a vertical emphasis, those in the extension should also have a vertical emphasis. Window materials should also generally match the existing;
- e) **Materials** - The materials used for extensions should closely match the existing materials in terms of type, colour, texture and method of construction. This is especially the case where the original dwelling is constructed of local stone. Where this is not possible, the relationship of the extension to the original dwelling should be reflected in the design;
- f) **Details** - A detail can be defined as the junction between one building material and another. Between a roof and a wall, a house may have overhanging or flush eaves. Between a window and a wall, window heads and sills may be expressed in brick, stone or timber. Details should match the method of construction and, where possible, match those of the existing house;
- g) **Gardens, trees, hedgerows and wildlife** – These are valuable assets in our residential areas and should be given adequate consideration during the design process. Where development is proposed on a garden area a proportion of the garden must remain and be considered a usable amount. Whether tree preservation orders exist or not, sound and healthy trees should be retained on site wherever possible and given enough room to grow, both above and below ground. Extensions should not be sited on the basis that the size of a tree can be controlled by pruning. The need to prune a tree to create the space to build implies that the building will be too close to the tree and the quality of life of occupiers is likely to be affected. Similarly, the internal layout of an extension should consider the position of trees and the effect on light. Positioning non-habitable rooms, such as utility rooms or bathrooms or store rooms where such an impact will be the greatest. Even though most residential extensions and domestic alterations are small scale it is important to that on site trees are protected during construction. The most effective way of protecting trees on any development site is to erect sturdy fencing around the tree and its roots before work begins;
- h) **Sustainability and insulation** - Extensions and alterations provide a good opportunity to enhance the environmental performance of a building such as improved insulation both internal and external, solar gain, green roofs and the

introduction of energy capturing or generating equipment, which could be considered at the same time as part of a planning application. **Separate** installation of energy generating or capturing equipment, green roofs or external cladding may require planning permission. A particularly challenging design consideration can be external cladding of buildings used, for example, to enhance insulation. This will have significant implications for the style and character of buildings and streets. When considering such works it is important to select colours and textures which enhance and do not detract from the prevailing character of the area.

## **2.8. Types of Extension**

### **Porches**

- 2.8.1. Although in many cases planning permission may not be required for porches, they should not be over dominant, and the design should reflect the criteria applicable for all extensions.

### **Front Extensions**

- 2.8.2. The design and scale of extensions forward of a front wall of a house, and their distance from the pavement, are of paramount importance to the character of a residential area, which may be adversely affected by poor design or uncharacteristic front projections. Front extensions are discouraged in streets where a strong uniform character exists, however they may be acceptable where the house is set back from the pavement, or where it is well screened. Where possible, a reasonable distance between windows of habitable rooms, should be maintained (refer to Table 2 for guidelines on separation distances).

### **Side Extensions**

- 2.8.3. Side extensions are usually prominent in the street scene and can have important implications for neighbours. Two storey side extensions should be set back from the front wall to avoid a terracing effect and should not dominate the host dwelling in terms of its span / width, i.e. be lesser than the host dwelling. The rear projection should accord with the requirements for rear extensions. Windows should not lead to over-looking neighbouring dwellings or those on the opposite side of the road, and there must be no obstruction to highway sight lines, especially in the case of extensions on corner plots.



Figure 6 - Acceptable and Unacceptable Side Extensions

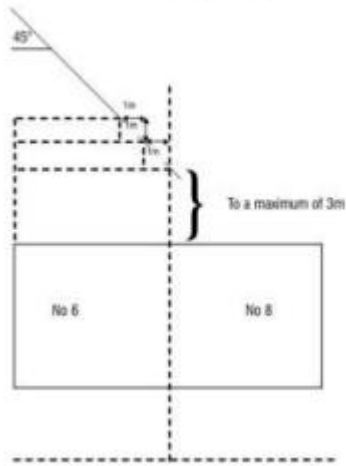
## Annexes

- 2.8.4. Annexes are becoming increasingly common. Where possible these should be attached to the main dwelling. If detached, they should be; small-scale, ancillary, contain no more than 1 bedroom (ensuite), a day room and a small kitchenette. The annex should not be self-contained and should still have a reliance on the main dwelling and share facilities which include its garden and its access.

## Rear Extensions

- 2.8.5. Rear extensions are usually partially hidden from the street scene and therefore can have less of an impact, but can still affect the character of rear gardens. However, they should still be appropriately designed so as to be in keeping with the character of the original dwelling and the surrounding area. They should not overlook, over-dominate, or overshadow the adjoining property, and must leave adequate usable private garden space. Where possible, the distance from the extension to the front or rear of the nearest neighbouring dwelling should be 21m.
- 2.8.6. Many single storey extensions no longer require planning permission due to the introduction of new permitted development rights. Where permission is required, single storey extensions to both semi-detached and terraced properties should normally be designed with a rear projection of not more than 3.0m. In cases where there are existing outbuildings projecting more than 3.0m and which are to be demolished and replaced with a new single storey extension, consideration will be given to proposals exceeding 3.0m, but which project no more than the existing outbuildings. Conservatories are usually to the rear, and therefore tend to fall under the requirements for single storey rear extensions. All applications will be assessed taking into account the relevant permitted development requirements at that time.
- 2.8.7. Individual two storey extensions which project more than 3m would have to be set in from the boundary by 1.0m for each metre in excess of 3m. Two storey extensions will be looked at more stringently in terms of over-looking, over dominance, and over shadowing.

**Semi Detached Property: Single Storey**



**Detached Property: Single and Two Storey**

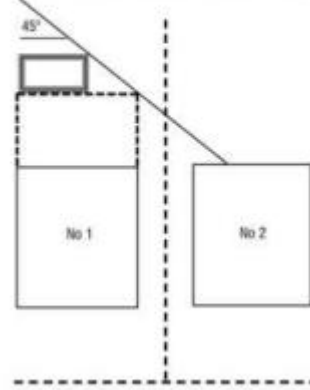


Figure 7 – Extension Examples semi-detached and detached properties

**Terraced Property: Single Storey**

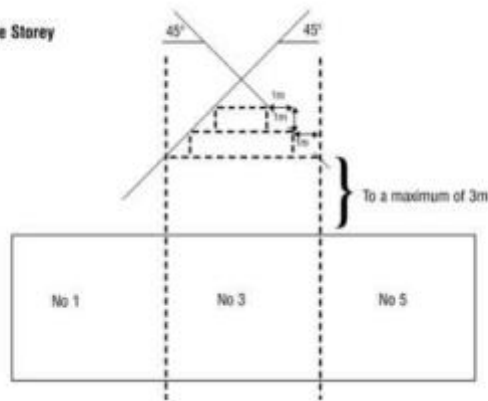


Figure 8 – Extension Examples – terraced properties (I)

**Terraced Property - (With Offshot), Single Storey & Two Storey**

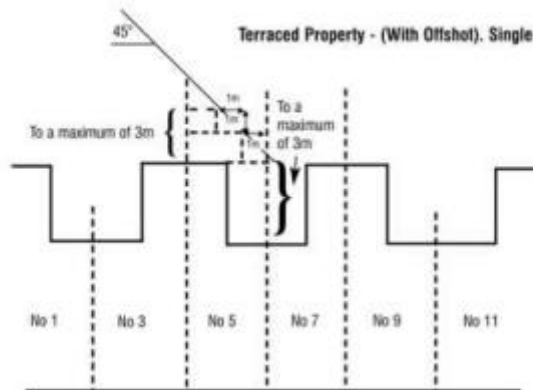


Figure 9 – Terraced properties (II)

2.8.8. In the case of detached properties there is often more scope to consider larger rear extensions before they impinge on the amenity of neighbouring properties, simply

because of the increased distance between properties. However, extensions will generally not be permitted where they are so large that they would encroach into the 45 degree exclusion zone. This is measured from the centre of the closest window to any habitable room (i.e. lounge, bedroom and kitchen) in the rear elevation of the adjacent dwelling.

## Dormer Windows

2.8.9. Large dormer windows are undesirable, especially at the front of the dwelling. Several small dormers will usually be more acceptable. When considering the design of dormers, the main roof of the dwelling house should continue to dominate, therefore the dormer will normally have to be set down from the ridge of the main roof, be set in from the sides, and be set well back from the eaves. Generally, where possible, dormers should have a pitched roof to match the existing, especially at the front.



Figure 10 - Acceptable and Unacceptable Dormer Window Design



Figure 11 - Before and after photographs showing a sympathetic side / front extension which is well proportioned in relation to the host

### **3. Backland and Infill Development**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

- 3.1.1. Policy 44 of the Local Plan and Part C in particular aim to manage backland and tandem developments. Residential backland and infill developments have a role to play in delivering housing targets for the city, however, they also have the potential of creating significant adverse impacts in the communities they are located. This section is intended to explain how backland and infill developments can be designed to protect and enhance existing residential areas and highlights key issues relevant to these specific forms of development.
- 3.1.2. The Local Plan requires a balance to be reached between achieving the city's housing targets and at the same time protecting the character of an area and improving the quality and attractiveness of existing communities. Policy 44(C) highlights specific parts of the city which will now be protected from any further backland development, so whilst the guidance below can be applied to those areas, it is principally aimed at developments outside those areas.
- 3.1.3. Doncaster city's residential areas will be typical of many residential areas throughout the country. Certain residential areas will now include development that at the time was deemed acceptable, in terms of design, quality and density. These developments were bound by policies that could be said, did not understand the future impacts that they would cause. A change in public opinion, a policy change requiring the improvement of local distinctiveness and the fostering of sustainable communities has altered present day decision making. If proposals in the past were assessed against present day criteria it would not be surprising that a number of these applications would be refused. Therefore development cannot now just mimic existing examples of our newest developments within existing residential areas, the Local Plan represents a new policy framework.
- 3.1.4. Careful consideration is now required when designing backland or infill developments, and each application will be judged on its merits.

#### **3.2. Definition of 'backland' development**

- 3.2.1. Backland can usually be defined as development on land behind the rear building line of existing housing or other development, and is usually land that is formally used as gardens, or is partially enclosed by gardens. Not all of backland development is surrounded by residential, or proposes residential, however. It does not include sites where development, as opposed to access to the development, adjoins a public highway.

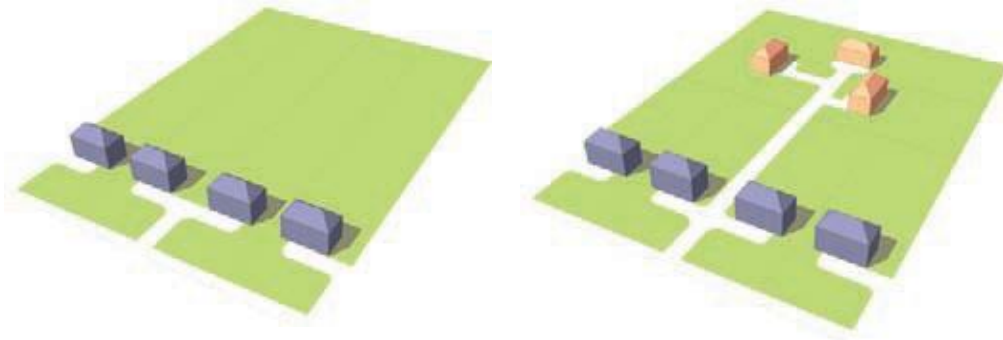


Figure 12 - A site before and after a backland development has taken place

### 3.3. Definition of 'infill' development

- 3.3.1. Development in a small gap (e.g. 1-5 properties) in an otherwise continuous built up frontage, or the small-scale redevelopment of existing properties within such a frontage, usually consisting of the frontage plots only.



Figure 13 - A former employment site replaced with a residential scheme

### 3.4. Key Design Requirements

#### Plot Size

- 3.4.1. The proposed building plot should generally be of similar dimensions, in size and shape to the existing plots within the immediate locality. Proposals that would lead to over-development of a site or the appearance of cramming will generally be resisted. In certain parts of the city, the plot size and shape are an important characteristic of the historical urban grain, or the relationship between plot size and the footprint of a property are a key element of the areas character. The images below show examples of why it is important to often retain the characteristics of development plots.





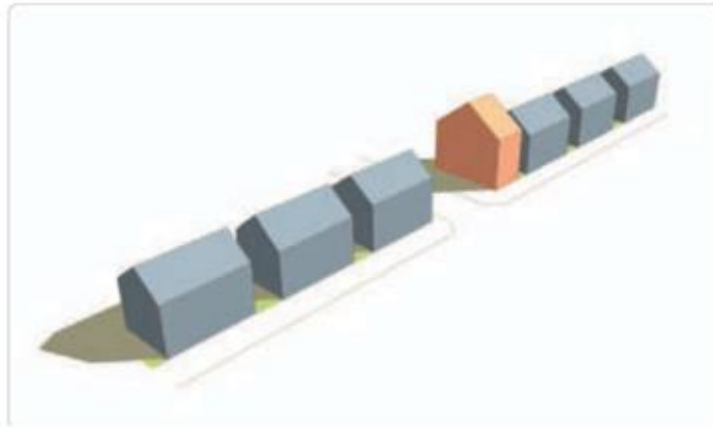
Figure 14 - Hatfield historic core - showing a clear planned medieval linear pattern of plots retained by piecemeal property replacement, set perpendicular to a main street



Figure 15 - Harlington village is a good example of the extent to which historic character can be lost with late 20th century redevelopment. Suburbanisation has frequently reduced the legibility of historic farms via amalgamation of historic plots for infill development.

### Layout and street-scene

- 3.4.2. The site layout should reflect the original development of the area. This is particularly important within older established residential areas where a uniformed plot layout and street-scene has been created. In circumstances when a site is to be cleared to create a cul-de-sac, the established street-scene needs to be respected and the house or houses at the entrance should face the original road frontage, and be similar to adjacent properties in terms of height, scale, massing, siting and appearance.
- 3.4.3. Respect for established building lines is usually a key consideration when assessing a development's impact on the street-scene. Developers may be requested to submit mock street-scenes or visualisations, to show how the development will assimilate into the street frontage.



*Figure 16 - Designs which are out of keeping with the established street - scene will not be accepted, particularly where new access points are created*

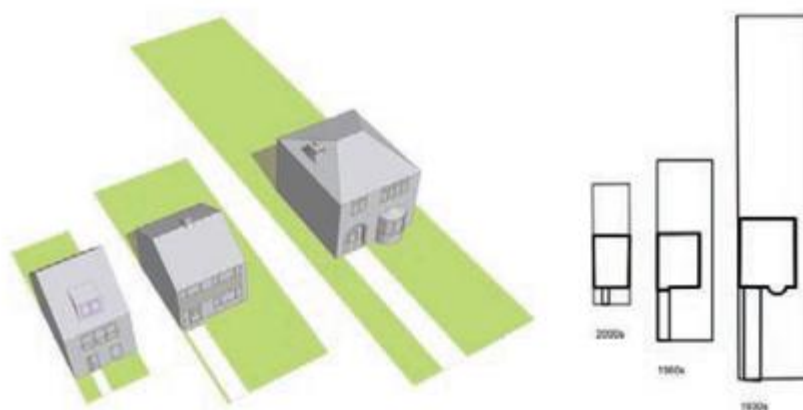
### **Access and Parking**

- 3.4.4. Vehicle access to a backland or infill residential development can be problematic. Access by foot or by vehicle should not cause adverse amenity effects on neighbouring dwellings; the effects include noise, vibration, road safety and visual amenity. Access arrangements that will cause significant nuisance to these dwellings or cause safety problems to the existing road network will be resisted. Access to the site for emergency vehicles and refuse collection can also cause problems. Adequate turning circles and passing points may be required dependant on the size of development.
- 3.4.5. Neither backland nor infill development should lead to inadequate provision for car parking, or allow car parking to have negative effects on the areas character. If insufficient land is available within the plot to provide parking, the Council will need to be satisfied that a reasonable alternative location would not adversely affect or aggravate existing road safety of the locality or cause amenity or parking issues for existing residents. All access requirements will need to be explained within the access section of the Design and Access Statement. Only sites that are located on routes with good public transport infrastructure, or within town centres will be allowed to reduce car-parking requirements for that development. Highways development management officers will be able to provide site-specific highway design advice.

### **Garden Amenity**

- 3.4.6. New developments on parts of large gardens are becoming increasingly common. Gardens are often in excess of modern lifestyles, many are well beyond the needs of their existing owners and maintenance can be a burden not a pleasure. Notwithstanding this, in some areas large gardens are a defining characteristic of the place, usually where frontage development predominates. In these areas piecemeal backland development will usually be resisted.
- 3.4.7. The Council regard garden space to be an essential part of the delivery of new dwellings. The Council will try and ensure properties with larger gardens (which are increasingly becoming rare due to increased density demands and backland / infill developments) are delivered as part of the overall housing mix in the city. The garden size should reflect (in size and layout) the type of house that is to be delivered and its locality. The aim is to provide an area of recreational space that is private, sunlit and does not have excessive

overshadowing. South facing gardens are desirable dwelling features and would be welcomed, where this does not compete against other design considerations. Gardens provide numerous health, social and physical benefits for homeowners, and make a contribution toward sustainable development by providing space for ecology, the drying of clothes, cycle storage, composting, rainwater collection, amongst other uses.



*Figure 17 - Garden sizes have generally decreased in size during the post - war period*

- 3.4.8. Gardens provide other functions at a neighbourhood level that the Council see important. They allow the infiltration of water into the ground, reducing the amount of surface water run off a site produces and with the inclusion of trees shrubs and flowers aid in the biodiversity of the area. In areas of flood risk, when large sites are proposed, or where significantly increased run off will be generated an assessment into the impact will be required. A flood risk assessment and Sustainable Urban Drainage System statement explaining all mitigation measures may be sought by the Council. Where a garden is rich in biodiversity an assessment will be required to ascertain the value of the flora and fauna. For further guidance on how biodiversity is measured, maintained or enhanced on a site.
- 3.4.9. In order to meet these functions, it is essential that there is sufficient amenity space provided for a dwelling. The area of private garden space delivered should normally be at least that of the footprint of the house, i.e. if the house occupies a footprint of 100 square metres then the size of the private area of garden should be a minimum of 100 square metres. In some areas, for example in some conservation areas, the garden size should be much larger than the footprint of the house in order to retain the characteristics of that area.
- 3.4.10. Shared amenity areas are appropriate for the delivery of certain dwelling types, such as flats, particularly where there is a shortage of good quality open space within easy walking distance of the development. The private garden space requirement might be relaxed in certain town centre locations where higher development densities are warranted. In these situations alternative forms of open space may be more appropriate (e.g. roof terraces, balconies, courtyards, etc).

## Front Gardens

- 3.4.11. Front gardens are a valuable resource for many residents. The size of the front garden, its boundary treatment and building line set back are also all important aspects that help to determine the character of a street. Front boundary walls, hedgerows, and fences in particular make an important contribution to the street-scene in addition to demarcating the interface between public and semi-private space. The Council will resist proposals that will lead to the loss of a front garden, or will result in adverse impacts on its character, at odds with the prevalent street-scene.



*Figure 18 - Insensitive positioning of this garage block to the front of the property has had a negative impact on the character of the street by introducing a prominent structure in otherwise open front gardens*

- 3.4.12. A common issue in this respect relates to parking, specifically where developers wish to utilise front garden space as areas of hard-standing, or introduce garage blocks within this space. The Council will resist development in such instances, as it introduces alien elements to the street-scene forward of the building line, and reduces opportunities for natural surveillance from the host dwelling onto the street. Hard standing also contributes towards surface water flood risk. The government has removed permitted development rights to pave over front gardens. Householders wishing to lay impermeable surfaces over 5 square metres need to obtain specific planning permission.

## Daylight and Overshadowing

- 3.4.13. Backland and infill development has the potential to badly affect neighbouring properties if development radically reduces the amount of daylight available through windows, or obstructs the path of direct sunlight to a once sunny garden or window. Blocking direct sunlight from reaching neighbouring properties can be detrimental to the solar performance of that building (by overshadowing). The passive solar performance of development should not be underestimated, as energy costs for heating and lighting would be affected. Overshadowing is governed by the topography of the site and the size, position and orientation of the development within. Overshadowing is more likely to occur when taller buildings are positioned to the south of smaller buildings, in late



afternoon and early evening, and times when the sun's path is low (winter). The Council will assess the affect the proposal will have on the amount of daylight and overshadowing neighbouring properties receive. Similarly, the Council will assess the proposed building designs to ensure that each room receives an adequate amount of day-lighting using the rules described previously in table 2 of this document. Developers may be requested to submit a sun path analysis to help assess the impacts and ensure that development does not seriously affect a neighbour's daylight or outlook.

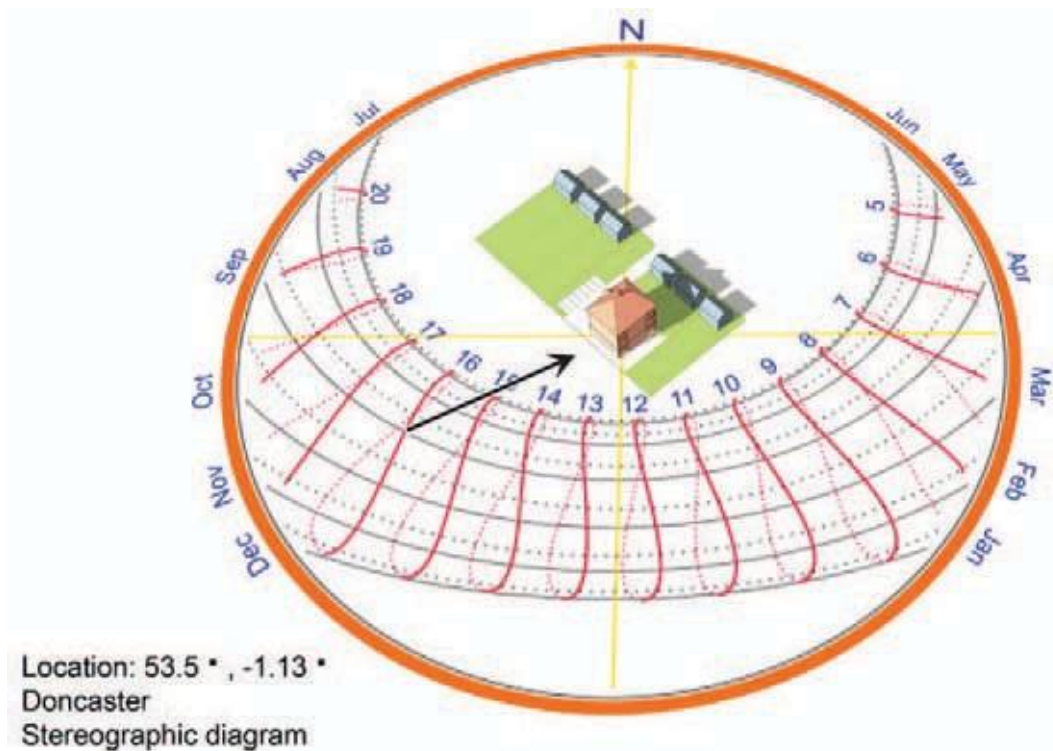


Figure 19 – New backland or infill development which results in overshadowing of existing properties (or their private amenity space) will not be supported. This example sun-path analysis shows how a 3 storey backland apartment block will overshadow existing properties and their gardens. This image shows the sun position at 4pm in September. The Council may request a number of diagrams showing effects throughout the year

- 3.4.14. New backland or infill development which results in overshadowing of existing properties (or their private amenity space) will not be supported. The example in Fig 19 sun-path analysis shows how a 3 storey backland apartment block will overshadow existing properties and their gardens. Fig 19 shows the sun position at 4pm in September. The Council may request a number of diagrams showing effects throughout the year.

### Privacy and overlooking

- 3.4.15. High occupancy areas, such as living rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, dining rooms and certain garden spaces are most sensitive to overlooking, where as lower occupancy areas such as landings, hallways, utility rooms or less used garden areas are less sensitive. Although to a certain extent a degree of overlooking is unavoidable, the extent of overlooking to a certain space will be assessed in order to ascertain whether this will be acceptable or not.

- 3.4.16. There should be sufficient separation between the proposed development and existing dwellings to overcome the difficulties of overlooking and disturbance. It will not be acceptable for a proposal to have windows that overlook other dwellings high occupancy areas to an unreasonable degree.
- 3.4.17. A housing development's greatest potential for unacceptable overlooking comes from the upper floor windows. The impact of overlooking alters by the distance (window to window), the positioning and angle of windows, the type of room the window is for, or overlooks, and the type of glazing installed. These factors will be assessed in order to protect neighbouring residents privacy. Planning permission could be granted subject to a number of conditions, such as the inclusion of obscure glazing, the positioning and angle of certain windows or preventing the future installation of windows by the removal of Permitted Development Rights. Obscure glazing to high occupancy rooms (such as bedrooms) should be avoided, as this can create a poor internal living environment. Overlooking from ground floor windows can usually be avoided. Careful screening by walls, fences or planting can sometimes solve these issues of ground floor privacy.
- 3.4.18. In order to maintain a reasonable relationship between the new dwelling and existing property, the minimum distances set out in table 2 (pp. 12) should be followed, but these are minimum and may need to be increased to respond to the specific character of the site.
- 3.4.19. In respect to infill development, it may be appropriate to reduce these distances in certain instances in order to preserve the character of a street, for example in a historic village centre where medieval street widths are still prevalent it might be appropriate to have closer front to front distances across the street. In these instances designers need to carefully consider the internal layout of the property, window size and design to minimise overlooking.
- 3.4.20. The diagram below shows minimum separation distances between existing 2 storey (blue) and new 2 storey (red) properties in a backland scheme. There will be circumstances where these distances will need to be increased in response to the particular characteristics of a site or the wider character of the area

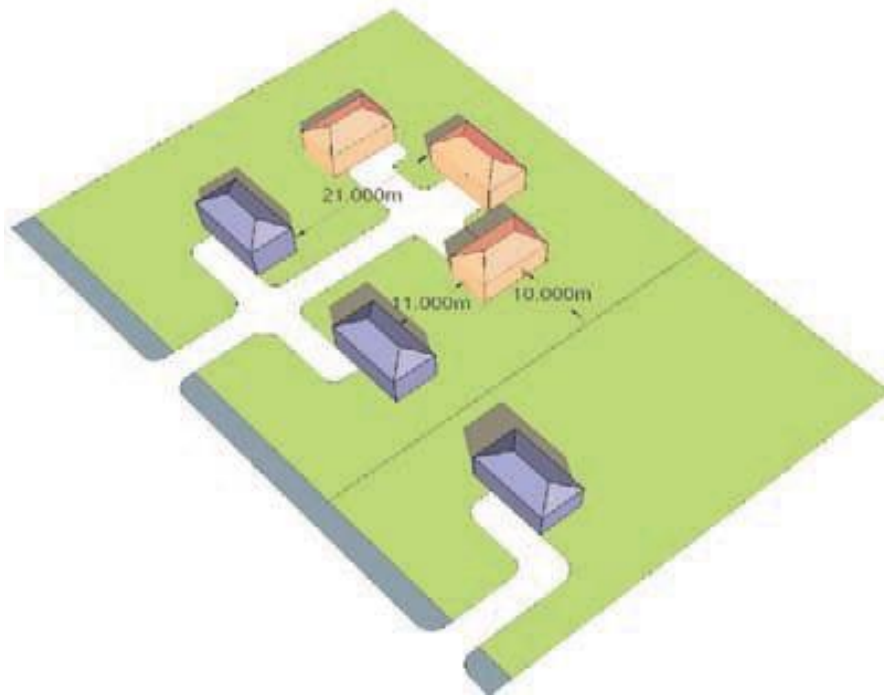


Figure 20 - This diagram shows the minimum separation distances between existing 2 storey (blue) and new 2 storey (red) properties in a backland scheme. There will be circumstances where these distances will need to be increased in response to the particular characteristics of a site or the wider character of the area.

### **Amenity**

- 3.4.21. The planning system operates in the wider public interest. Over time, the owners of dwellings change and the requirements of people change. It is important to have a consistent approach in the determination of applications.
- 3.4.22. The fact that the occupier of an existing dwelling subject to backland or infill development would be prepared to tolerate a lower level of amenity would not come as a surprise. The financial incentives can outweigh amenity for some. This however is not sufficient reasoning to permit a proposal that would create substandard or unacceptable amenity for future owners of these properties. People spend a large proportion of their time at home and pleasant living conditions with some outdoor space are sought after. The Council must consider whether a proposal would affect amenity to an unacceptable level for the good of the local community.

### **Trees and hedgerows**

- 3.4.23. Many large gardens accommodate mature trees or hedgerows which are important in shaping an areas character. For example, in certain parts of the city mature trees appear above rooflines and as a 'green' backcloth to frontage properties. The Council's view is that where possible they should be retained.
- 3.4.24. Planting along boundaries to plots is also important as it often has high amenity value to local residents and helps to create privacy within plots. Trees and hedgerows also provide linear habitats for ecology and movement networks of wildlife corridors across residential areas. New development should not be sited close to existing trees, as it may

result in overshadowing of the building or damage to the root structure. Where a proposal will be affecting existing or protected trees, the Council's Tree Officer's should be contacted from the outset.

- 3.4.25. Trees of sufficient age may also provide roosting opportunities for bats. A survey for bats may be necessary if buildings are to be demolished, particularly if there are records of bats in the area, suitable habitats nearby or the buildings contain access points for bats.



*Figure 21 - Trees and hedgerows provide a variety of aesthetic and ecological functions within residential areas, therefore wherever possible the Council will seek to retain these features*

### **Conservation areas and listed buildings**

- 3.4.26. Doncaster Council has a statutory duty to preserve and enhance the historic environment within the city. The city has a very significant built heritage and this makes a vital contribution to local character and quality of life to the local residents.
- 3.4.27. There are 46 conservation areas and over 800 Grade I and Grade II listed buildings within the city. Presently 'conservation area appraisals' are being carried out to explain these area's special features and/or interests. It will be important that proposals take account of these appraisals when they have been adopted to ensure new development will be in sympathy with the surrounding area. The most up to date conservation area appraisals can be found on the [Council's website](#).





*Figure 22 - Infill in conservation areas and other areas with character require an in depth appreciation of the character and qualities of the area, so the new buildings sit comfortably in it. The top example is appropriate in terms of its form, but the materials (especially fencing) are at odds with the prevalent stone used in the conservation area. The bottom example is better in terms of material and detailing*

3.4.28. Any development proposal in a conservation area will be assessed for its impact on existing character and appearance. To aid our understanding of any proposal, the design and access statement and / or heritage statement should explain how the development will achieve the requirements set out in NPPF chapter 16 on the Historic Environment. To achieve an acceptable development that will affect a conservation area or listed building, views of the Council's conservation officers should be sought. This process should happen at the earliest possible stage so as to avoid complications in the processing of the application.

### **Sustainable development**

3.4.29. A number of brownfield sites are isolated from required services, such as bus or train routes, a variety of shops, schools, or by a lack of electric, gas or water utilities. It is reasonable for the Council to refuse such applications due to the site location. Proposals that address these issues, and can be conditioned through the granting of planning permission, could be looked at more favourably.

3.4.30. Flood risk is also an important consideration when assessing the sustainability of a site and can be used as a reason to refuse planning permission. If after careful consideration, a development is allowed to take place within a flood risk area, it must be safe and not cause flooding elsewhere.

## **Sustainable construction**

- 3.4.31. We now live in a climate that is changing, and generally, all the research points that this is not for the better. Buildings are being expected to become more carbon neutral and to future proof against our predicted changing weather patterns, which may produce extremes of temperature and increased surface water run off. To achieve a low carbon building with more resilience to climate change requires using modern construction methods and technologies. Invariably proposals of this type can sometimes look different to existing housing. If the proposal brings a number of environmental and amenity benefits that outweigh a departure from local character, then these may be looked at favourably.
- 3.4.32. The Council will give support and encouragement to new and innovative designs which encapsulate sustainable construction techniques. Whilst the consistency of visual design and materials is an important consideration, outside conservation areas the Council may relax these requirements where new properties include techniques / materials that are conducive to energy efficient design. Many of the relevant design principles set out in this guidance document, such as those relating to access and parking, layout, scale, garden amenity, day-lighting, overshadowing, privacy and overlooking should remain unaffected by sustainable construction, but architectural features and building materials may need to change to a degree in order for sustainable principles to be incorporated.

## **3.5. Detailed design requirements for backland development**

- 3.5.1. It is often very difficult to design a satisfactory form of backland development, due to issues of scale, access, overlooking and separation distances. Removal of existing mature trees is often proposed which can also have negative impacts on an area's character. These developments are mainly planned in existing residential areas where residents and neighbours enjoy a certain level of amenity. In some instances a more satisfactory form of development can be achieved by packaging a number of land parcels together to develop a more appropriate scheme.

### **Design**

- 3.5.2. Backland sites are usually landlocked, such as rear gardens and private open space. By its nature, backland development should largely be out of view and not dominate the frontage property, but still be partly visible so people can find it. This however cannot be an excuse for poor design. Designers should ensure a backland development or property is subservient (i.e. smaller in size, massing and scale) to the frontage property. Such development will also require particular care in its design and layout to avoid conflict with neighbouring residential development. This design process requires explanation through the design and access statement.

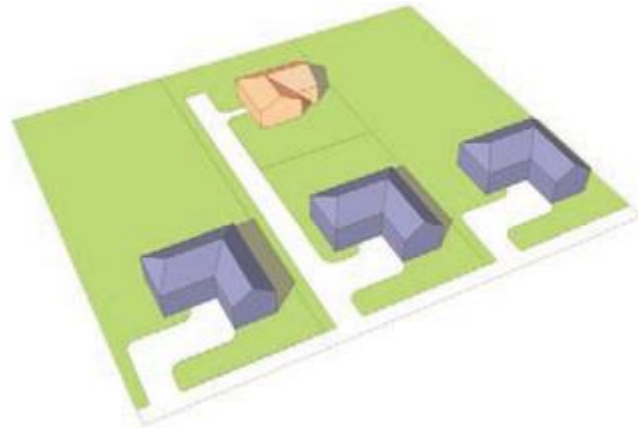
### **Piecemeal development**

- 3.5.3. Given the value of backland sites in contributing to the delivery of the city's supply of housing land, a development should not be delivered in a piecemeal manner. Proposals could hinder the future development of other adjoining brownfield land, creating an

unsatisfactory outcome. Proposals that hinder the delivery of future housing need would be resisted.

### **Tandem development**

- 3.5.4. A tandem development is a backland development, where new dwelling is placed immediately behind an existing dwelling, on sites that occupy smaller sized plots or share the same access. Due to the problems of overlooking, noise and traffic disturbance, loss of amenity, cramping and the adverse impact on local character, the Council would normally resist such proposals, unless in exceptional circumstances where all of these issues can be adequately addressed.



*Figure 23 - Example of a tandem backland development where a new property is placed immediately behind the existing property on the same plot*



*Figure 24 - Backland properties should not be larger in height, massing, scale and volume than the host dwelling, as in this example where the property is highly visible behind the host bungalow and creates overlooking from first floor windows*

- 3.5.5. Exceptionally, on very large plots, it may be possible to achieve sufficient separation between dwellings to overcome these difficulties. Similarly there will need to be sufficient separation distance between the host dwelling and access road as not to cause amenity issues. Tandem development will only be permitted provided that the amenities of the surrounding dwelling, together with the 'host' dwelling can be safeguarded, there is no

possibility of a more comprehensive scheme, and the design of the tandem property is subservient to the host.

### Site assembly

3.5.6. It may be possible to assemble sufficient land from a number of adjoining rear gardens to enable a small group of houses to be developed. In such an occasion, a small cul-de-sac or courtyard could achieve an acceptable separation between public and private space, and safeguard against unwanted overlooking. However, the Council will need to be convinced that the new development will not have any detrimental impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties, including their private amenity space, and the access to the cul-de-sac will not impact negatively on the character of an existing street. In particularly sensitive areas, such as conservation areas, the principle of backland cul-de-sac development may be resisted particularly where this type of layout is not a common characteristic of the area.



Figure 25 - Assembling a number of backland sites and developing them comprehensively can result in a more satisfactory form of development than would be achieved by individual competing backland / tandem schemes on neighbouring plots

### Backland access

3.5.7. Backland development brings to it an instant problem of access, how can the new dwellings link with the existing road network? Access roads must be designed to avoid any adverse disruption to the appearance of the street-scene. Where possible existing access points should be used. The Council will resist backland development that creates multiple access points where this will have a detrimental appearance on the street



frontage. Proposals for the demolition of existing buildings, or even parts of a building that would result in a gap between buildings can be possible allowing for circulation space. However, in areas that have a continual street frontage where this forms part of the character of the area, proposals that create gaps will generally be discouraged.

- 3.5.8. Access to the existing road network should be safe and convenient to cyclists, pedestrians and drivers; these roads should comply with standards outlined in South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide.
- 3.5.9. Access routes should be located at an appropriate distance away from existing dwelling so not to have a detrimental effect through noise and visual disruption. Routes should usually have a minimum separation distance of 3 metres from the edge of the access road to the edge of the nearest effected house, together with the appropriate boundary treatment to screen the access road from dwellings. In some instances, for example where habitable rooms and windows are closest to the access, this minimum separation distance may need to be greater. In other instances, where the nearest part of the house contains non-habitable rooms (e.g. a garage) the planning officer may use their discretion regarding the separation distance. The access should also avoid excessive disturbances or loss of privacy to neighbouring residents, for example, an unreasonably close access road passing too close to an adjoining dwelling. The likely frequency of use by vehicular traffic and the suitability of the access for service vehicles and the emergency services will also be material considerations.
- 3.5.10. Where access roads exclusively serve 5 dwellings or more the access road will need to be to an adoptable standard as agreed by the Local Highways Authority. A private drive serving 5 dwellings or less must take account of the servicing requirements of refuse collection and emergency vehicles. Shared drives can be a solution for particularly constrained sites, however in general the Council will resist such proposals as they can lead to domestic disputes and legal issues between the host dwelling and the backland property over which the Council has no authority to intervene. Proposals for shared drive solutions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In some instances the Council will request that a bin collection area for the backland development is provided to the front of the host dwelling, to enable easy refuse / recycling collection. The bin collection areas need to be carefully sited and designed so as not to have a detrimental effect on the street-scene or create amenity issues.



*Figure 26 - Two poor quality, piecemeal backland developments have created multiple access points on this street frontage, increasing the prominence of the properties to the rear. The access road to the development on the right is located too close to the host property. In both developments, the new backland properties are significantly taller than the host properties and have little relevance to the traditional*

### **Developments serviced by backways**

- 3.5.11. Doncaster has a number of areas that include backways. It is normally terrace housing that were built with these small access roads that run at the rear of gardens, some properties have existing garages, parking spaces or fencing present. Backland development where parking spaces rely solely on accessing these backways will generally be resisted on highways safety and amenity grounds.

### **Mixed uses**

- 3.5.12. Backland sites can deliver more than just residential development, in certain circumstances they can accommodate different uses, for example new workspace, live/work units or community facilities. Each proposal will be assessed on the amenity of the existing area and whether the proposal has benefits for the community that would outweigh detrimental effects.

### **Good quality public and semi-private spaces**

- 3.5.13. Access ways and other public or semi-private areas within a development plot should be pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly, and be designed to encourage low traffic speeds. Buildings should be sited to encourage natural surveillance of these spaces from adjacent properties. These spaces should be laid out so it is clear which property is responsible for managing what area. Any shared areas can often be maintained collectively on behalf of residents by a management company. It is unlikely the Council will wish to adopt these areas unless they serve 5 dwellings or more and are designed to an adoptable specification.

## **3.6. Detailed design requirements for infill development**

- 3.6.1. As infill development will be visible and will not be obscured by other dwellings all infill developments should respect the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of the neighbours. It should re-enforce the uniformity of the street by developing in proportion to its neighbouring properties, where architectural features and building materials should be reflected. This is important in re-enforcing the local context and ensuring that the character of the street-scene is not adversely compromised. Earlier parts of this document set out how to undertake a character appraisal. Key factors in the local area that should be assessed and reflected in new infill developments, include:

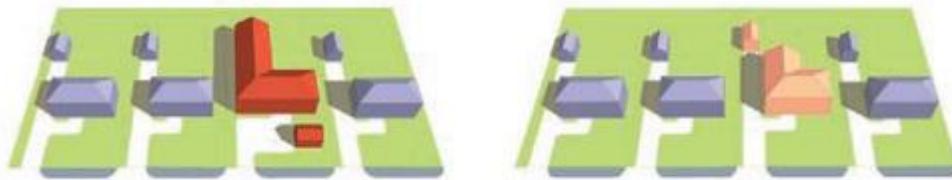
- Plot Width
- Building Line Build Up
- Building Set Back
- Front Boundary
- Landscape Setting and Features
- Plot Format
- Parking
- Plot Access

- Building Format
- Key Dimensions
- Key Features
- Roofing Materials
- Wall Materials
- Window Format
- Typical Details

3.6.2. Below are some of the key considerations which will be taken into account when appraising an infill development proposal.

### **Plot width**

3.6.3. Plots must be sufficiently wide enough to site a building or buildings of an appropriate size that allows adequate separation between dwellings. The width of the plot and the width of the proposed development should be similar to that prevailing within the immediate local area. There is a need to provide adequate circulation space between properties for rear access and maintenance.



*Figure 27 - In the left example, the infill property is too wide for the plot, and the rear extension causes overlooking and overshadowing of the neighbouring property. The width of the property results in parking and a garage to the front, which is out of character with the street. The right example shows a more sympathetic form of development*

### **Building conformity**

3.6.4. The height, form and construction materials should reflect that of the prevailing street frontage. This is particularly important on main roads and areas of special designation (e.g. conservation areas).



Figure 28 - Top: Insensitive contemporary infill includes: Plot width not respected; space created to the side of the property; House set back from existing building line; Depth of the property results in inappropriate roof pitch; Dormer window uncharacteristic of street; Open plan front garden not appropriate. Bottom: Sensitive contemporary infill: Plot width, building height, depth and roof pitch respected; No gaps between properties, building line maintained; Contemporary building elements mirror existing character; Full height bays and gables reflect existing; Fenestration pattern and rhythm compliment frontage; Front gardens and boundary treatment reinforce street.

### Visual separation

- 3.6.5. New dwellings must retain similar spacing between dwellings to that commonly found on the street frontage. Similarly, when there are no separations on the street, for example terrace housing. The new development should either have a small separation distance (e.g. 1metre) or join the existing property to continue the street- scene.

### Established building line

- 3.6.6. Where it is a particular feature of the area that there is a prevailing depth of frontage, new development should respect and conform to the appearance. If a street has varying depths of frontage then the neighbouring properties frontage, which is closed to the road will be used as a level.

### Building fenestration and rhythm

- 3.6.7. The established pattern of windows, projecting bays and recesses should generally be respected, to continue the repetition and pattern of frontage character along a street.





Figure 29 - Left image: the contemporary architectural style contrasts with the prevailing style to create variety within the streetscene. Whilst architecturally different, the infill development conforms to the general plot width, building height and building line of the street (from 'Building in Context', English Heritage & CABE, 2001); Right image: this infill development is sensitive to the traditional, semi-rural character of the street in terms of its visual separation and form. It follows the established building line and features restrained fenestration and detailing appropriate to this character.

### Access Requirements

- 3.6.8. Satisfactory arrangements need to be made for parking and access. Where possible, existing access arrangements should be used to serve new developments, this will aid in reinforcing the appearance of the street-scene. It may be possible for new dwellings to share driveways.

### Parking requirements

- 3.6.9. Parking areas (particularly those to the front of the property- e.g. on front gardens) will be avoided where these are detrimental to the character of the area. Areas of hard- standing are often at odds with the open nature of soft landscaped gardens.

### Boundary treatment

- 3.6.10. Boundary treatment along the frontage will be required to closely match the prevailing within the street-scene, for example, if there are low walls along a street then this should be replicated.

## 3.7. Design checklist

- 3.7.1. The following key questions can be used by designers and Development Management Officers as a checklist when considering new backland or infill developments:
- Has there been a robust analysis of the site and surrounding area, have the findings been related to the new development?
  - Has the scheme been designed in response to the context?
  - Does the development affect the plot size and shape, is the scale of development appropriate to the plot size without resulting in over-development?

- Are buildings positioned within the plot to allow sufficient separation between properties and avoid problems with overlooking and overshadowing?
- Does the development respect established building lines and heights, property spacing, fenestration materials and boundary treatments?
- Will properties have decent private amenity areas that benefit from good daylighting?
- If a backland development is proposed, is there scope for a more comprehensive scheme? Are properties to the rear of the plot subservient to the host dwelling and is there sufficient separation between them?
- Are access points well located? Will the access point(s) result in damage to the street frontage?
- Are parking areas and garages well designed and discreetly located?
- Does the scheme retain and enhance existing trees, hedgerows and other boundary planting?
- Is a flood risk assessment and / or ecological / bat survey required?
- How does the scheme perform against Building for a Healthy Life?

## **4. Design Guidance – Commercial, Retail and Mixed Use Development**

### **4.1. Introduction**

4.1.1. Local Plan Policy 46 seeks to improve the design quality of non-residential developments. It requires all non-residential and commercial developments, including extensions and alterations to existing properties, must be designed to be high quality, attractive, and make a positive contribution to the area in which they are located. The key design criteria for these development types are set out in Policy 46 with additional guidance in relation to key issues provided below.

### **4.2. Big Box Architectural Design**

4.2.1. The scale, massing and visual impact of large floor-plate and 'big box' buildings such as retail warehouses, distribution units and industrial sheds, can be reduced in a number of ways. Breaking the building mass into smaller volumes, relating to structural and functional parts of the building is a key technique which is often also used to improve the legibility of the building and its constituent parts. Larger elevations can be reduced in scale through the use of different materials, and addition of glazing or ventilation bays. The roofline of these building typologies is also important to consider against the skyline and surrounding topography. Often background / muted coloured materials are better at higher levels in order for the building to be less prominent in these respects.

4.2.2. Techniques can be utilised to add more interest to big box developments and industrial / warehouse sheds, particularly the front elevations which will be more prominent. A greater degree of modelling to the elevation, variation in roofline, and articulation of features / detail such as solar shading to windows can improve the architectural interest. The use of better quality more robust, human scale materials for prominent parts of the building and at ground floor can provide a greater degree of permanence to these building typologies, opposed to larger format sheet cladding materials. Designers should focus attention on the office elements and prominent elevations, as these will often be the most visible and used parts of large floor plate building types.

4.2.3. For larger buildings such as those described above, the council may request that applicants undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment to inform the design process (for example siting and massing of buildings, architectural treatment, landscaping proposals, etc.) and support any subsequent planning submissions. This may include requesting accurate photo-montages and visualisations from certain viewpoints to assess the implications of the proposals.

### **4.3. Landscaping**

4.3.1. High quality surroundings are likely to contribute to the overall image of a commercial development in the eyes of customers, clients, visitors and other stakeholders, including neighbours and local communities. Most commercial developments will therefore benefit from, and will be required to provide, details of a hard and soft landscaping scheme to include appropriate planting to soften the impact of new buildings and car parking areas,

structure planting with large canopied trees and shrubs on spine and estate roads and details of employee amenity areas.

- 4.3.2. Parking areas should include generous landscaping and tree planting, either between the runs of bays, or the runs of bays should be split up with planted areas. If not these spaces can be dominated by car parking, or appear as a sea of tarmac at less busy times. Parking spaces can be treated in an alternating coloured tarmac and pedestrian routes defined with better quality block / slab paving to further break up large expanses of black-top.
- 4.3.3. Wherever possible, landscape proposals should take account of the established landscape character of an area and, as a guideline, should aim to devote at least 20% of site curtilage to “soft” landscape treatment in the interests of sustainable urban drainage, visual amenity and environmental quality.
- 4.3.4. Screening is often an important issue for larger floorplate, commercial development and buffer zones comprising of grass, shrubs and trees; structure planting belts; sympathetically graded earth bunding; walls or fencing; or a combination of these may be required to screen the site from neighbouring land users, or to soften the urban edge (particularly on sites that abut the green belt / countryside policy area, or are within a green wedge).
- 4.3.5. Further information relating to landscape, trees and hedgerows for non-residential developments can be found in section 5 of this guidance.