

Development Guidelines

Please note that policies referred to throughout the text are to those of the deposit draft North West Leicestershire Local Plan.

Layout of housing areas

A.1. The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Environment and Housing policies of this Plan.

(a) Layouts should provide a clearly defined and functionally effective road hierarchy, which contributes to the safety, convenience and appearance of housing areas;

(b) Local community facilities, including shopping areas and schools, should form an integral and focal part of the overall development scheme, with various uses well-related to each other, to open space, landscaping and footpath networks;

(c) Larger detached dwellings should be sited on main road frontages and entrances to housing areas, set back from the road with extensive landscaping;

(d) Smaller semi-detached or terraced housing, including social housing, should be sited within the body of the housing area, closely associated with schools and other local facilities;

(e) Specialist housing should be closely related to local community facilities and to bus routes;

(f) Dwellings, garages, fencing and other structures and landscaping should be so positioned and arranged as to safeguard privacy, freedom from overlooking or visual dominance, and adequate day lighting and sunlight;

(g) Rear gardens to residential development should normally have a minimum length of 11 metres, Where a site abuts existing rear gardens the back to back distance between houses should not be less than 22 metres;

(h) Where a principal window of a habitable room faces the blank wall of an adjacent dwelling, the distance between the dwellings should be at least 14 metres. Where both dwellings are single-storey buildings, however, 11 metres will normally be acceptable ([Sketch No.1. 1.3mb](#));

(i) All dwellings should normally be provided with a private garden area in accordance with the following requirements ([Sketch No.2. 1.3mb](#)):-

House Size.....Private garden area

1 bedroom 1-2 persons....	70 sq metres
2 bedroom 3-4 persons....	80 sq metres
3 bedroom 4-5 persons....	100 sq metres
4 bedroom 5-6 persons....	115 sq metres
Larger.....	150 sq sq metres

(j) Private gardens should be screened from public areas by the erection of walls or close boarded fences at least 1.8 metres high;

(k) All parts of the private garden areas should normally be accessible from the public

circulation area of an estate without the need to pass through the habitable room of a dwelling;

(l) Proposals should also take into account the need to accommodate changes in levels when checking distances between buildings/boundaries, etc.

(m) Where appropriate, proposals should reflect existing informal groups of buildings and/or maintain existing building lines.

Extensions to dwellings

A.2. The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with Policy H19 "Extensions to dwellings":

(a) Ground floor rear extensions within 1 metre of the common boundary with an adjoining dwellinghouse should not normally exceed 2 metres in length (external measurement) ([Sketch No.3. 1.3mb](#));

(b) First floor rear extensions within 1 metre of the common boundary to an adjoining dwelling should not normally exceed 2 metres in length (external measurement) ([Sketch No.4. 1.3mb](#));

(c) Extensions should not result in a distance of less than 22 metres between windows of habitable rooms. This distance may be reduced for single- storey development where a substantial barrier exists or is proposed between the houses ([Sketch No.5. 1.3mb](#));

(d) Extensions of two-storeys or more in height should not result in a distance of less than 14 metres between the extension and a habitable room window to an adjacent dwelling ([Sketch No.6. 1.3mb](#));

(e) An extension should not either in itself, or if repeated on the adjoining dwelling, result in the visual linking of the dwellings in such a way that an impression of continuous building results which would be detrimental to the visual qualities of the street scene ([Sketch No.7. 1.3mb](#));

(f) The proposals should not set a precedent that could readily and practicably be emulated by other householders in the same development, the cumulative effect of which would be detrimental to the visual qualities of the street scene as a whole;

(g) Gaps between dwellings which afford views of interest through and beyond the development as a whole should be retained ([Sketch No.8. 1.3mb](#));

(h) Where the dwelling forms part of a development designed expressly to appear in one particular form, the extension should not harm or disrupt that form ([Sketch No.9. 1.3mb](#)).

A.3. The following guidelines will also apply to loft conversions:-

(a) Large "box" like dormer windows which cover the majority of the roof will not normally be acceptable on frontages ([Sketch No.10. 1.3mb](#));

(b) Dormers should be kept small and unobtrusive and should reflect the traditional style and materials of construction of the building in question ([Sketch No.s 10 and 11. 1.3mb](#));

(c) Dormers should not exceed the height of the ridge line ([Sketch Nos. 10 and 11. 1.3mb](#));

(d) Possible loss of privacy is of primary importance, and loft conversions should not result in any substantial loss of privacy for neighbouring properties.

Footpaths

A.4. The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with Policy T12 "Pedestrians and cyclists" and Policy L15 "Footpath diversions".

(a) Footpaths and cycleways should be designed so that they form an integral part of the site layout and provide safe and convenient routes which are short, direct, well lit, overlooked and avoid potential hazards. They should not "dog-leg" through or round the housing layout, nor should they be straight line routes ([Sketch No.12. 1.3mb](#));

(b) Particular attention should be given to the issue of crime prevention in terms of the layout and nature of the landscaping proposed, and the routing and visibility of the footpath itself. Blind corners should be avoided and landscaping should not be capable of concealing potential attackers. The route and design of a footpath should not in any way compromise the security of nearby properties by providing secluded access for criminals, and should minimise the opportunity for trespass and vandalism ([Sketch No.13. 1.3mb](#));

(c) Footpaths should be to a width of 2 metres (ie. wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs, pushchairs, etc) and set within a landscaped corridor of at least 2 metres planting or grass either side. They should not abut screen walls or fences directly or flank walls of dwellings. Fences and walls adjoining footpaths should be vandal resistant in design, materials of construction and positioning ([Sketch No.14. 1.3mb](#));

(d) Gradients and surfacing should not present difficulties to those with restricted mobility. Dropped kerbs should also be provided at suitable locations.

Landscaping

A.5. The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Environment and National Forest policies of this Plan, together with the specific requirements for housing, employment and other sites. Policy E7 requires the provision of general and peripheral landscaping in connection with new development proposals, where appropriate. Landscaping schemes should be provided in such cases with:-

(a) Substantial block planting on the periphery of the site where it adjoins countryside or principal roads, or where necessary to reinforce the physical separation of land uses;

(b) Comprehensive planting within the development area itself to create a series of interesting linked spaces and to soften the visual impact of new development;

(c) Planting to break up the outline of large buildings;

(d) Planting to divide up and provide relief for large parking and service areas;

(e) Hard landscaping, together with amenity planting, street furniture and signposting, in areas of Intensive pedestrian activity, such as town centres;

(f) Open operational or storage areas positioned to the rear or side of buildings

screened by permanent walls or fences and landscaping.

Re-use and adaptation of traditional rural buildings

A.6. The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with Policies H14 and E23:-

(a) General conditions

- (i) Proposals should aim not only to bring the building back into use but also to convert it to that use with a minimum of alteration;
- (ii) Original walling materials should be retained. Any restoration should use traditional methods and local materials;
- (iii) Proposals should respect the form and character of the original building to blend with the rural scene;
- (iv) Original features should be retained;
- (v) There should be no change in the height of the original building;
- (vi) Landscaping proposals should be simple and comprise Indigenous species. Schemes should not create a feeling of domestication.

(b) Roofs

- (i) There should be no material alteration to traditional roof constructions. Where recladding is required, traditional materials shall be re-used;
- (ii) New chimneys, where they did not previously exist, should be avoided. Where necessary, vents or flues may be an acceptable alternative;
- (iii) Dormer windows and rooflights, where they did not previously exist, are inappropriate and normally unacceptable. However, rooflights which lie flush with the roof may be appropriate on rear/private elevations.

(c) External features

- (i) Wherever possible external features should be retained, for example, external staircases, openings, stone detailing;
- (ii) New openings should be small, simple and limited in number;

(d) Internal features

- (i) Internal features should be retained and wherever possible be left open to view, eg. structural beams;
- (ii) Wherever possible, the original interior height should be retained. Subdivision should be kept to a minimum. The layout of proposals should be adapted to suit the building rather than vice versa, for example, through the use of split staircases and galleries. This may require there to be less rooms within the building than in another structure the same size.

(e) Setting

- (i) The setting of the building should be kept simple and essentially rural. Where open courtyards exist they should not normally be subdivided. Curtilages defined by wooden or wire fences, walls in non-traditional materials, which create a suburban domesticated

effect will not normally be acceptable;

(ii) In residential developments, the setting should not be over domesticated;

(iii) hard and impervious vehicle hardstandings and accesses should be avoided;

(iv) vehicle hardstandings, oil tanks, service areas, etc should be sited in visually unobtrusive locations;

(v) all services should be underground wherever possible.