



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE 10 BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Backland is land which lies behind existing houses which front one or more roads. It may be land comprising large garden areas, neglected land, land in other uses or a mixture of these.
- 1.2 The existence of large gardens does not necessarily point to scope for development. The size and appearance of gardens can be of great importance to the character of a neighbourhood. In other cases however, gardens can be overlarge for today's requirements and development, providing it is to proper standards, may be appropriate.
- 1.3 Unfortunately, backland development can present a range of planning problems. These centre around the provision of access, impact on frontage development and the pressure for uncoordinated development of land in different ownerships. Such problems are typified by 'tandem' development, the development of one house immediately behind one another, and sharing the same access.
- 1.4 These guidelines relate to the development of backland and should be read in conjunction with Policy HS7 of the Unitary Development Plan.

2. ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 If an area of backland is developed by more than three dwellings, an adoptable road will be required. New residential development with a proper road frontage is preferred to development served by private drives for the following reasons:-
 - It is possible to achieve the same standards of privacy in private amenity areas, and to a large extent for dwellings, while achieving much higher densities. This is because there is a clear distinction between public and private sides of a dwellings; private amenity areas back into each other; and "sides" of dwellings, which exclude habitable room windows, can be placed close together without detriment to amenity.
 - There is clear public access to the front of the dwelling. With a private drive, visitors may think twice before taking a car or other vehicle to the dwelling particularly when it is not visible from the road.
 - Dwellings served by private drive can be more difficult to find.
 - Private drives are not designed for heavy goods vehicles and can present difficulties for refuse collection, deliveries, furniture removal and contractor's vehicles.
 - Private drives involve long detours for postal and delivery rounds.

- A turning head is required to serve each dwelling rather than many dwellings in the case of a road. Roads moreover have the advantage of providing a reservoir of overflow parking space for dwellings on them.
- Adoptable roads can ensure a better standard of maintenance and therefore access in the long term.

2.2 In order to minimise the need for private drives, to safeguard the quiet character of residential backland areas and to allow for the provision of turning areas backland development should be confined to large plots.

3. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT

3.1 These guidelines follow from the principles set out above and apply only to proposals for the erection of from one to three dwellings, served by a private drive, behind the frontage development.

General

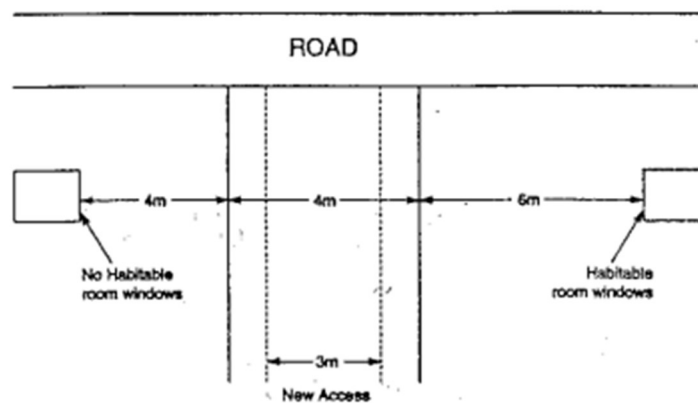
- i. Any existing dwellings which stand to lose part of their gardens must retain sufficient garden space to remain in keeping with standards prevailing in the neighbourhood allowing where appropriate for other potential backland development.
- ii. Except in areas of very low density, dwellings should be erected on plots generally larger than prevailing plot sizes for similar types of development (e.g. detached, semi-detached) in the immediate vicinity. Plot sizes do not include access strips.
- iii. Comprehensive development of an area of backland is clearly preferable to a proliferation of unrelated developments with poor access;
- iv. Backland development should not be proposed where it would prejudice the development of other backland with potential for development;
- v. The erection of the dwelling(s) themselves should not significantly affect the amenity of existing dwellings through noise, general disturbance or loss of privacy. All development should abide by the minimum distances of 21m between overlooking windows and 14m between windows and 2 storey blank gables. These are minimum distances and may need to be greater in low density areas.

Access and Parking

- vi. The access proposed must be of sufficient width to provide a private drive 3 meters wide together with an amenity strip on one or both sides (unless this is clearly not needed because of adjacent planting) and adequate passing places. To achieve this the access corridor should generally be a minimum of 4m wide. The access must be properly formed and hardsurfaced, and have adequate sight lines and visibility splays at its junction with the existing road. Where the junction is with a main road, the width of the junction should allow two vehicles to pass;

vii. The use of the access must not significantly affect the amenity of the existing dwellings through noise, general disturbance or loss of privacy. As a minimum it will be necessary to achieve the following :-

- A minimum distance between frontage dwellings at 12m for an access to the rear;
- Minimum distance from frontage dwellings with blank gable or windows to non-habitable rooms only – to boundary of access strip: 4m
- Minimum distance from frontage dwelling and habitable room windows on side elevation – to boundary of access strip: 6m



The noise and disturbance likely to arise from the use of an access running next to garden boundaries, especially where the garden is small or narrow, must be taken into account.

- viii. The access should not serve frontage properties as well, unless a spacious layout, screening or screen planting would ensure no loss of amenity;
- ix. The appearance of the access (and any for which it might be a precedent) must not have seriously detrimental impact on the street scene, through loss of walls, trees and planting which contribute to the character of the area;
- x. Dwellings should have a turning area and adequate parking/garage provision.

Design of Dwellings

- xi. In many circumstances a single storey dwelling will be more acceptable than a two storey. Occasionally however, two storey dwellings would better reflect the character of the locality.

Landscaping

- xii. Any development should retain as many trees as possible, particularly boundary trees.

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