

Isle of Wight Council

Supplementary Planning Guidance

# Residential Infill



August 2004

**This is one of a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Documents. The Isle of Wight Council adopted this Guide August 2004, following public consultation. It is published by Isle of Wight Council, Directorate of Environment Services.**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide advice on the details the Council will consider and the standards that will be applied when determining a planning application for 'residential infill'; which is defined as:

*"The infilling of a small gap in an otherwise substantially built-up frontage."*

- 1.2 A small gap is one that would normally be filled by one or two dwellings. If a plot can accommodate more than this, its development could not be correctly termed as infill. Infill sites are generally inside development envelopes but may occur outside development envelopes where there is otherwise a built up frontage and development would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area. Planning applications will primarily be considered against the policies of the Unitary Development Plan. The purpose of this guidance is to supplement these policies with more detailed information. However, the guidance has been prepared in consultation with the public and is the subject of a Council resolution, which means that weight can be attached to it in the development control process.
- 1.3 There is always a steady flow of small potential sites coming up in or near small village centers. It may be an old garage site, or farm buildings, or some old workshops/sheds. They are nearly always fairly open sites rather than built up, so any development could seem intrusive. Handling development on such sites with care is a real challenge, partly because of their important setting, partly because they are usually quite small and oddly shaped.

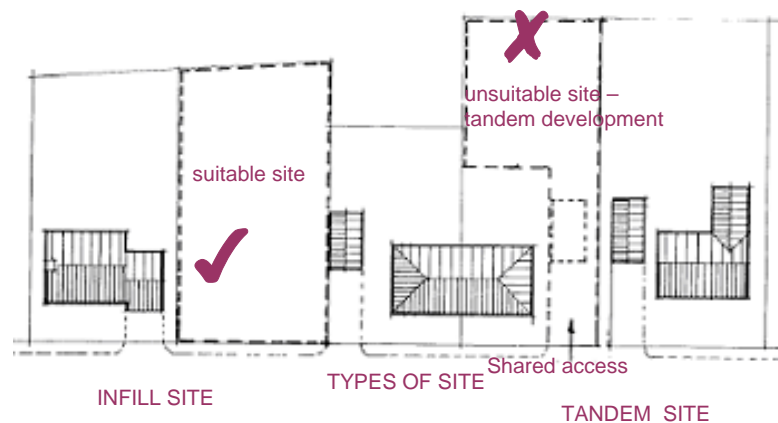
UDP Policies:

H5

H9

## 2 Infill sites

- 2.1 Infill sites are a small gap in an otherwise substantially built-up frontage. Vacant 'backland' sites in established residential areas may be appropriate for development provided it would not harm the character and quality of the local environment. Such sites should have a proper means of access, adequate parking and not have a detrimental effect on the amenities of adjoining residential properties in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy or disturbance. Guidance on land assembly for 'backland' sites is given in a separate Supplementary Planning Guide called Residential Layouts. 'Tandem' development consisting of one house or more immediately behind another and sharing the same access is not considered to be a suitable 'backland' site and will not usually be permitted.



- 2.2 A new 'infill' dwelling should have an independent access with satisfactory visibility onto an existing highway. Occasionally it may be acceptable for a site to share an existing access with a neighbour provided this would not facilitate 'Tandem' development.

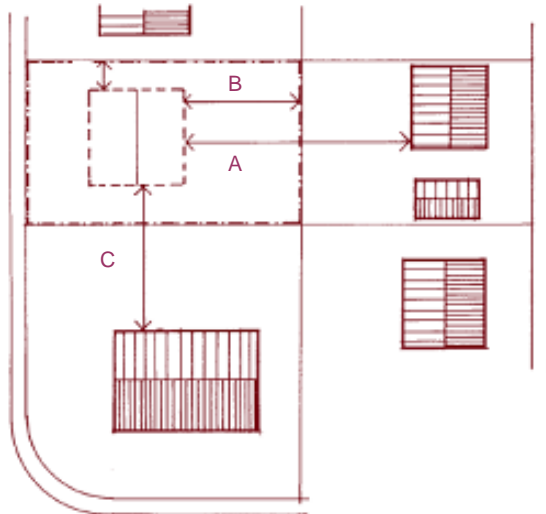
## 3 Parking and garage space

- 3.1 Parking and garage space should in most cases be provided behind the building line of the proposed dwelling(s). In addition to this, if a garage is built, then the driveway leading to the garage from the highway must be capable of accommodating an additional parked car. The Council will require a clear space between the back of the pavement and the front of the garage to prevent highway dangers occurring from parked vehicles jutting out onto the pavement.
- 3.2 In cases where a site can only be accessed from a classified road you may also be required to provide a vehicle turning space within the site

to enable cars to enter and leave the site in a forward gear in the interest of highway safety.

#### 4 Garden space

- 4.1 In most cases a garden should be provided to both the front and rear of the proposed dwelling, with the rear garden generally being used as the main private space. Whilst minimum standards for the size of gardens are not being prescribed, sufficient space should be provided to accommodate various domestic and leisure activities, provide adequate levels of privacy and ensure that a satisfactory appearance to the overall development is achieved.



ENCOURAGED STANDARDS FOR GARDENS

To help meet this requirement, the standards set out below will be encouraged. However, there will be circumstances where the standards may be relaxed, for

example houses that turn external corners or are required for townscape reasons to be on restricted sites and can not be provided with a private garden to the recommended standard. The size of the garden should be related to the size of the dwelling and meet the likely needs of the occupants.

4.2 Where the private garden space allowed is significantly below that which is prescribed by the standards, it may be appropriate to remove the 'permitted development' rights on the dwelling(s) in order to control any subsequent extensions.

##### Measurement A

A distance of 21 meters will be encouraged between the main elevations of dwellings.

##### Measurement B

A distance of 10 meters between the main window of a habitable room and the facing boundary plot in all two-storey houses will be encouraged.

This distance can be reduced to 7 meters for bungalows.

##### Measurement C

A distance of 14 meters between a main elevation containing windows to habitable rooms and a gable elevation to an adjacent building will be encouraged.

## **5 Site characteristics**

- 5.1 The Council will closely look at the impact on neighbouring residents and will not allow development that is likely to have an adverse impact on their amenities. Special care must be taken to ensure that there is adequate space between new and existing dwellings to allow reasonable standards of daylight and prevent any loss of privacy or amenity from overlooking. This can be particularly problematic where the ground levels vary and in such circumstances the Council may require detailed sections to accompany any planning application to show how the development relates to adjacent properties.
- 5.2 Other factors that affect amenity include existing natural means of enclosure in the form of trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Such features can help reduce visual intrusion and because they are not easily replaced, great care should be taken to retain as much as possible.
- 5.3 It should be noted that if a site lies within an area shown as being within a flood plain, any application should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment.
- 5.4 The possibility that land may be contaminated due to its previous use should be considered when deciding whether the land is suitable for development.
- 5.5 Consideration should be given to protecting any existing surface water courses on or adjacent to the site to prevent pollution or flooding.

## **6 Spaces of townscape importance**

- 6.1 Within the towns and villages of the Island there are open spaces formed by paddocks, orchards, river corridors, wetlands and gardens that make an important contribution to their character and appearance. Some of these sites are identified within the Unitary Development Plan as "open Space", and it is the policy of the Council to prevent the infilling of such spaces as it would lead to the erosion of the character of the settlement.

## **7 Trees**

- 7.1 Trees can make a significant contribution to the pleasant character and appearance of residential areas and in some cases where attractive specimens are situated on an 'infill' site, the Council may resist development in favour of the retention of these trees provided they are not dead, dying or dangerous. In such cases a Tree Preservation Order may be made to give the trees in question protection.
- 7.2 Some infill sites may also be unacceptable for development because of trees situated close to the site. Tree root systems can be as extensive as the tree's crown and if they are damaged from foundation work or ditch digging the tree may become unstable and die. In such cases the tree is again likely to be protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- 7.3 Solutions which attempt to avoid the root systems of trees by siting the property further away from them, may not necessarily prove acceptable due to other important considerations such as the need for development to relate to the established building line and fit into the street scene.

## **8 Development in conservation areas and close to listed buildings**

- 8.1 The Council has a statutory duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas and protect the setting of listed buildings.
- 8.2 Proposals for new development affecting a conservation area or a listed building must be of the highest possible standard in relation to scale, design, siting and materials. The Council may not accept a proposal in outline due to the usual lack of detail in such applications and you are advised to submit details in full. You may also find it helpful to discuss your proposal at an early stage with a member of staff from the Council's Development Control Section.

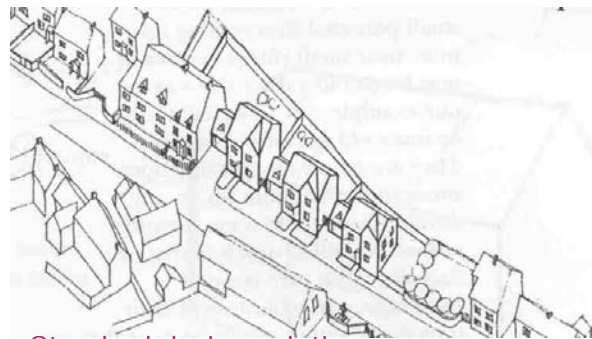
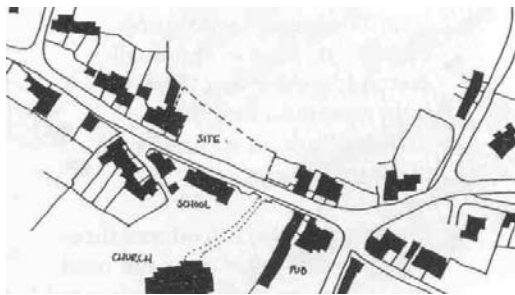
## **9 General characteristics of towns and villages**

- 9.1 The towns and villages of the Island show similar elements of plan form in the way they are laid out. It is how these elements are combined together that gives different places a distinctive character and helps to provide the historic grain of the town or village and provide the essential characteristic of the place. All towns and villages, even some hamlets and individual farmsteads on the Isle of Wight have developed from historic cores that date back to at least medieval times, some Roman and others prehistoric. The Council is required to seek to protect any surviving buried or structural archaeological remains associated with these settlements and early consultation with the County Sites and Monuments Record to inform strategies to mitigate the impact of

development proposals will be required. Contact the Council's Archaeology and Historic Environment Service for more information.

9.2 New development must respect the distinctive character of towns and villages through careful design and should complement the area. The main features to consider are as follows: -

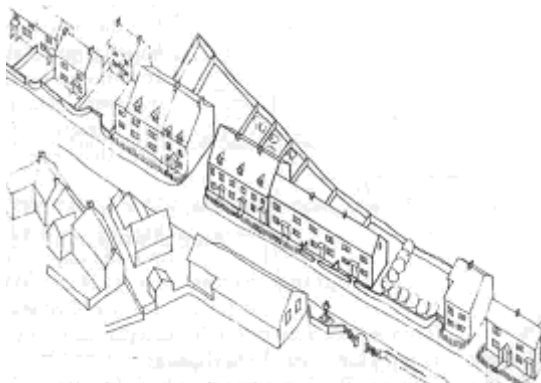
- The height and massing of neighbouring properties - where the height and massing are out of scale with neighbouring properties the proposal is unlikely to be acceptable. Massing is the effect created through the grouping of buildings.
- Building lines - certain villages have very distinct 'building lines'. These are formed by a number of dwellings which are each set back from the main road at the same distance. Where there is an established pattern, it will often determine the siting of new infill development.



Standard design solution

9.3 This example site is very small: only 0.11 hectares.

The standard design solution is to produce a proposal for three large houses along the frontage, making a density of nearly 27 per hectare. They are all 4-bedroom, providing five bedspaces each, with double garages for 6 cars. No acknowledgement is made of the setting or context.



Well-designed solution that fits within the existing character

9.4 By contrast this example makes the proposed development look like the natural, appropriate density. The division into plots is more in tune with the local pattern. At one end of the site the larger houses, with smaller dormer windows, link to the older houses to the left, while to the right the scale drops down to two storeys. The actual density is increased to 54 houses per hectare!

- 9.5 Architectural detail - features such as roof pitch, window and door style must be respected where an infill site is situated in an area of cohesive architectural style e.g. Georgian or Victorian rows and terraces.
- 9.6 The main materials are primarily brick and stone and it is usually the case that one type will dominate in a particular village. New development should therefore use materials common to the locality.
- 9.7 Some villages are developing Village Design Statements, and any infill proposals within villages that have a Village Design Statement will be expected to take note of the guidance in the VDS.

**Area Characteristics:**



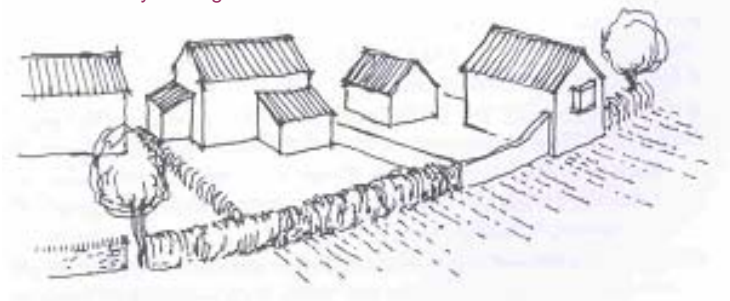
Continuous frontage



Semi-continuous frontage



Low-density frontage



Green edge frontage



## **10 Summary of points to remember when applying for residential infill development**

- 1 The plot must be large enough to accommodate all of the necessary requirements.
- 2 The plot should have its own independent safe access to a highway.
- 3 The plot should be capable of providing a parking space in addition to a garage space and may also require a turning space.
- 4 Sufficient garden space should be provided.
- 5 Consider the amenities of neighbours likely to be affected. Proposals should not adversely affect their privacy or levels of daylight.
- 6 Retain as much natural boundary enclosure as possible as this can help screen the proposal.
- 7 Do not carry out works to trees on or adjacent to the site without first checking if they are protected.
- 8 The development of designated spaces of "open space" will be resisted.
- 9 Respect the architectural style or character of the locality in terms of neighbouring property, building lines, architectural detail and materials.
- 10 Respect the 'form' of the village. Avoid proposals that would create 'tandem' or unsatisfactory 'backland' development.
- 11 Development in conservation areas or AONB must be of the highest standard and to help achieve this you may have to submit a full planning application or supplement an outline application with additional sketch detail.

## 11 Summary of Contacts

The Development Control Section is part of the Council's Planning Services Department, which is located at:

Seaclose Offices, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, and PO30 2QS Tel: (01983) 823552

The Planning Reception is open Monday – Thursday 08:30 – 17:00 and Friday 08:30 – 16:30. Planning Officers are available to give advice between the hours of 08:30-12:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

The Councils Building Control Section is also located at the address above.

County Sites and Monuments Officer  
County Archaeological Centre, 61 Clatterford Road, Newport, Isle of Wight,  
Tel: (01983) 823810

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The assistance of the following Local Authorities and organisations in supplying information used in the publication of this Supplementary Planning Guidance Note is gratefully acknowledged:

- Hambleton District Council
- North Cornwall District Council
- London Borough of Kingston Upon Thames
- Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council