BF. Built Form

The following section outlines policies that should be considered by developers when creating new development within Penn Parish. Some of the following guidance is directed at development on existing plots, such as extensions, though many can be applied to both new and existing development.

In general, infill developments in all of the settlements have generous size plots with extensive external spaces. While this is appropriate when development or redevelopment occurs in those areas, other, newer, areas should be developed in a coherent form with modern best practice. That is, there should be a proportional relationship between size of plot, dwelling and spaces between the dwellings. In general however, Penn Parish exhibits a low density with heights averaging 2 storeys and a generous space between dwellings. The following illustrative diagrams show this intention and new proposals would need to demonstrate that this has been observed.

As well as this it is important to recognise that Penn, Penn Street and Winchmore Hill lie in GB4 and GB5 areas as per the Chiltern Local Plan. This impacts certain developments within these areas.

The structure of the following codes generally starts with policies on a larger scale and subsequently moves to codes related to specific built form details.

Figure 74: 2 storey terraced housing located within the parish.

Figure 75: Detached flint house located in Penn Street.

BF 01- OVERLOOK PUBLIC SPACE

In order to provide a sense of security and natural surveillance, the windowed front elevation of a dwelling should face the street where this is in keeping with local character. The rear boundaries facing the street should be avoided as this has a negative impact on the character of a street and reduces levels of security and natural surveillance. Rear boundaries should provide a soft transition into the natural environment such as at the settlement edge in Knotty Green, or back onto other property backs. Rear gardens represent green corridors that enhance wildlife and biodiversity net gain.

The density and appropriate size of front and rear gardens should be commensurate with the surrounding properties, and enhance and fit in with the local vernacular and this should be demonstrated by future proposals.

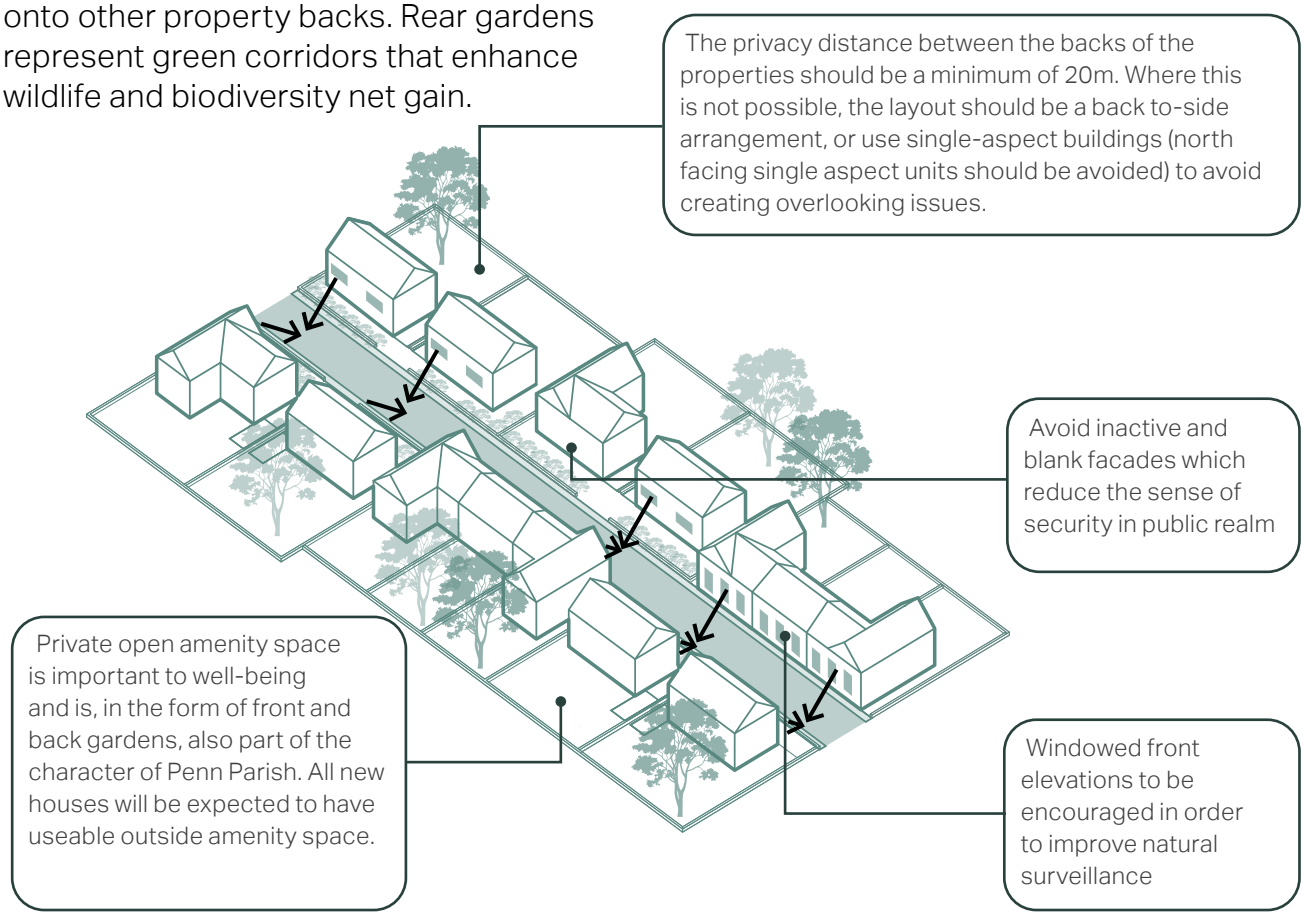


Figure 76:
Diagram to highlight the importance of natural surveillance to improve security and sense of safety

BF 02- DEFINE FRONT AND BACK GARDENS

The ratio of garden space to built form within the overall plot is exceptionally important to ensure that the sense of openness and green space within the parish is maintained.

Front gardens should be a minimum of 5-6 metres.

Back gardens should be a minimum depth of 10m and provide a minimum area of 50m^2 of useable amenity space.

North facing back gardens should exceed 10m in length to ensure sunlight is maximised.

BF 03- MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT BUILDING LINE

The use of continuous building lines and setback distances contribute to the overall character of the area and the sense of enclosure of the streets and public spaces. Continuous building lines with a minimum gap create a strong distinction between public and private spaces, and provide definition to the public realm. Where buildings are more generously set back from the carriageway, the threshold spaces should be well landscaped.

- To ensure sufficient street enclosure, private front thresholds should have a modest depth and accommodate a small garden or area for planting;
- Low to medium densities in residential areas can vary setbacks in order to respond to the landscape context and the more open character of the area; and
- Front gardens can be much deeper where the topography requires so or to respond to the existing character area. It also helps to create a softer transition between countryside, green spaces and built environment.

Figure 77: Subtle changes in building lines within Penn village.

Figure 78: Building lines align in the cul de sac in Penn Street.

BF 04- DESIRED HEIGHT PROFILE

- Development building heights should accord with the settlement character of one and two-storey dwellings;
- Roofs in the village tend to be generally traditionally pitched, with some hipped examples. New roof types and pitch should reflect this. The use of red pantile and plain clay tile is widespread and should be the main roofing material for new development in the parish along with other appropriate roof materials;
- Innovation which explores the integration of green roofs and solar tiles should be encouraged;
- Where they do not take away from the character of the settlements innovations such as solar panels and green roofs should be explored;
- The scale of the roof should always be in proportion to the dimensions of the building itself. Flat roofs for buildings, extensions, garages and dormer windows should be avoided; and
- Chimney type and height should be congruent with the typical parish chimney precedent examples.

Figure 79: 2 storey semi-detached building with a pyramid hip roof style and a large chimney stack.

Figure 80: Scandinavian style 2 storey detached building located in Knotty Green.

BF 05- ESTABLISH A CONSISTENT PROPERTY BOUNDARY

- Buildings should ordinarily front onto streets. The building line can have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions, but will generally follow a consistent line;
- Buildings should be designed to ensure that streets and/or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from adjacent buildings. This can be achieved by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows facing the street; and
- Natural boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the character of the area. Hedges should be preferred to fencing or boundary walls, which should be made of sustainable local materials, and front planted wherever possible.

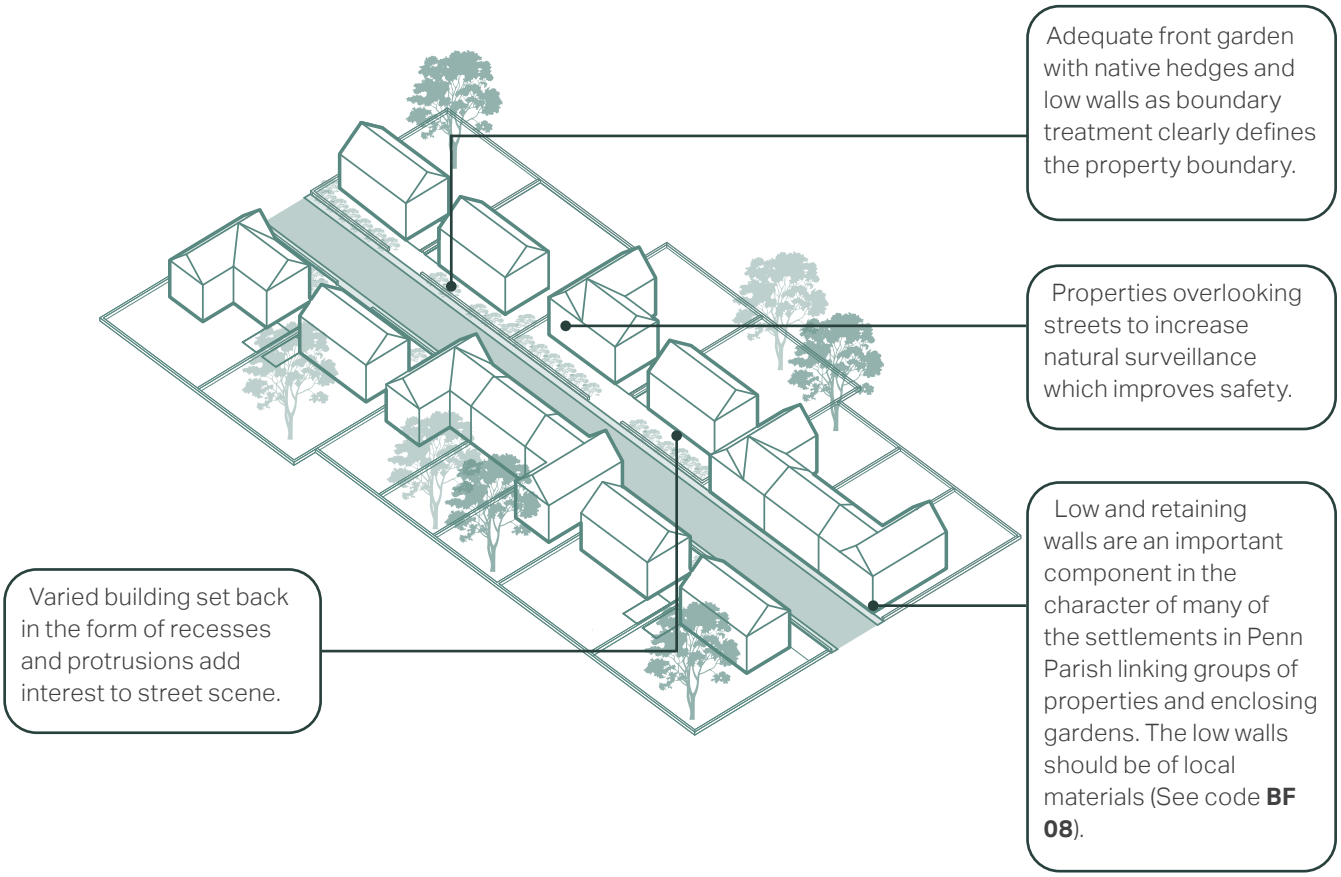


Figure 81: Illustrative diagram showing boundary treatments

- Front gardens/soft planted shallow setbacks should be provided in most instances, although it is recognised that there are some parts of Penn Parish where the prevailing character and form is one where buildings sit to the back of the footway/ highway;
- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the property. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers; and
- Locally distinctive landscape features and planting, such as low wall boundary and hedges of native species should be used in new development to define boundaries. Any material that is not in keeping with the local character should be avoided.

Figure 83: Vegetation is a common boundary in the parish and this is an example in Penn.

Figure 82: Low timber fencing creates a soft boundary to The Plough pub in Winchmore Hill.

Figure 84: A combination of a red brick wall, hedgerows and other vegetation within the parish.

BF 06- EXTENSIONS

There are a number of principles that residential extensions and conversions should follow to maintain character:

- Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights and therefore do not need planning permission;
- The original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless of the scale or number of extensions. The newly built extension should not overwhelm the building from any given viewpoint;
- Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the privacy of the surrounding dwellings for example from overlooking; and
- Designs that wrap around the existing building and involve overly complicated roof forms should be avoided.

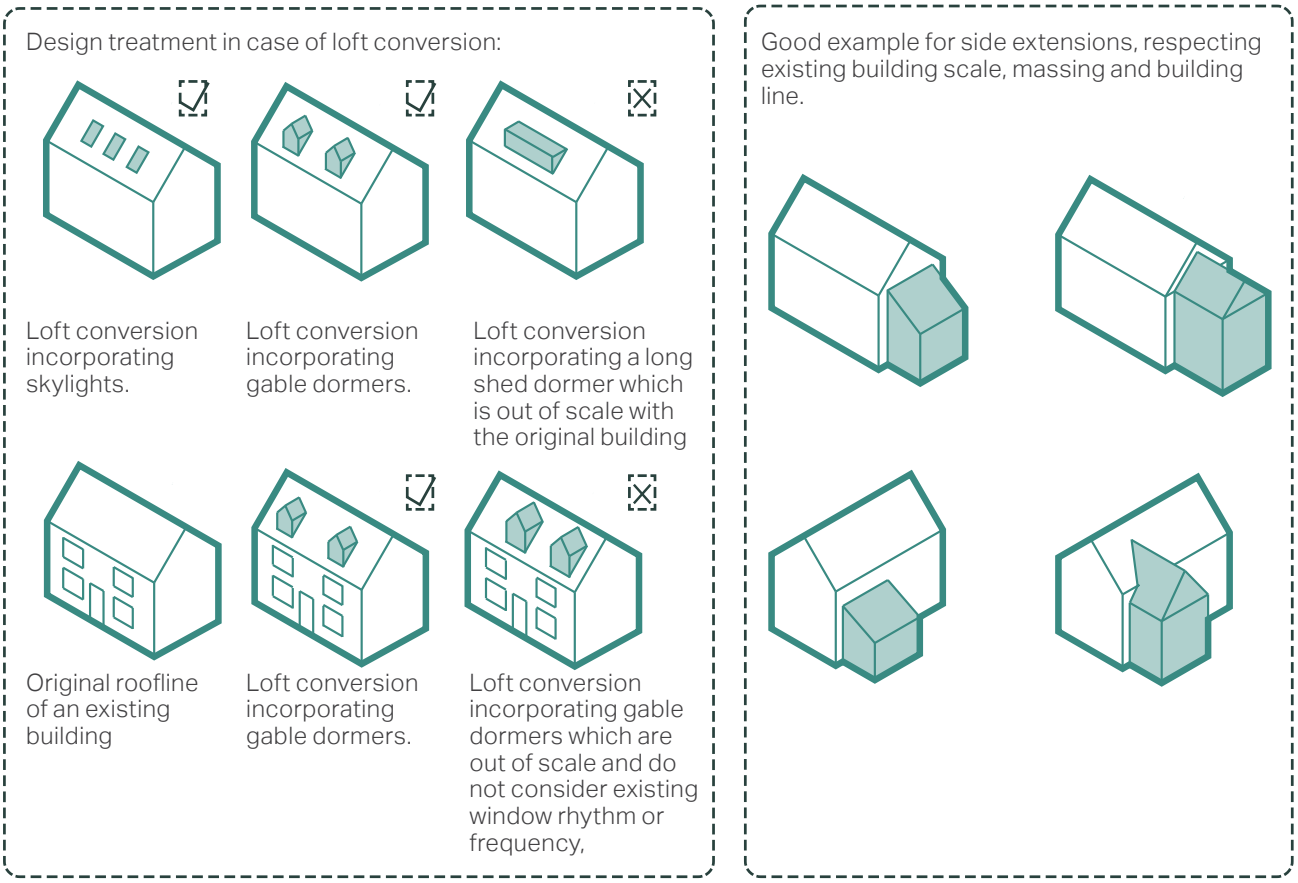


Figure 85: Some examples for different type of building extensions

BF 07- INFILL DEVELOPMENTS

Infill sites will vary in scale, context and location within a settlement. Any new infill can have significant impact on the character and appearance of the built environment. The following principles should be applied in any future infill site:

- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be inserted. It does not need to mimic the existing styles but its scale, massing and layout need to be in general conformity with the existing (this is particularly ridge/eave heights, especially for terraced or dense groupings of buildings);
- The building line of new development should be in conformity with the existing. Very often, with terraced or dense groupings, the building line will be exactly the same, but in other cases it might be acceptable that it closely aligns with the existing arrangement of buildings where there is an irregular, meandering building line;
- The density of any new infill development should reflect its context and its location in the village (centre or edge), or in a smaller settlement nestled in a wider landscape. The optimum density will respond to its surroundings.
- Where there are opportunities for infill development, proposals should demonstrate that existing views and vistas between buildings and along view corridors have been considered and the aim should be that they are retained, wherever possible. The sight lines, light and views between buildings is crucial to retaining character where infill development is proposed.

Penn, Penn Street and Winchmore Hill lie in GB4 and GB5 areas as per the Chiltern Local Plan which has the following ramifications on infill development:

- The width of the development site is closely similar to the widths of existing adjoining sites as assured along the row of dwellings and other substantial buildings;
- The curtilage for each dwelling is of a size and shape comparable to existing adjoining development; and
- The siting, scale and appearance of each dwelling is compatible with the character of existing dwellings in the vicinity of the development site.

BF 08- ARCHITECTURE DETAILS, MATERIALS AND COLOUR PALETTE

Whilst much of Penn Parish's housing stock was built in the 20th century, and there are numerous examples of earlier 17th and 18th century buildings. In particularly sensitive locations traditional materials should be employed in ways that are locally distinctive. These are especially important in the Conservation Areas in both Penn and Penn Street.

When deciding the type and colour of materials to use for a new building it will be important to study older buildings nearby. The aim should be to ensure that the new building complements the character of nearby buildings and integrates well into the landscape. This means that the design of new buildings in Knotty Green may be different to those in Penn Street.

Some buildings have modern extensions and alterations. New developments should respond to its surroundings and is sympathetic with its Chiltern village context while seeking opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems powered by a renewable or low carbon source and associated infrastructure, including community-led initiatives.

Figure 86: Red brick house with grey tiles on the roof and red tiles on the facade.

Figure 87: New housing in Winchmore Hill using red brick and flint which are common materials throughout the Chilterns.

Figure 88: Semi-detached house with white render and red clay peg tiles.

New developments should strive for good quality design that meets climatic targets for CO2 emissions and that can be constructed sustainabily, maximising opportunities for recycling.

The special character of buildings in the historic Penn, Penn Street and Winchmore Hill character areas arises from the mixture of red brick, lime render, flint and weatherboarding. This is supported by the Conservation Areas in Penn Street and Penn as well as the various special areas of character across the parish.

Informed by the local vernacular, the following pages illustrate acceptable materials and detailing for future housing developments in the parish. The use of traditional construction finishes should be specified for all new development and repair work. Material specification, quality for repair, replacement and modern developments should be maintained. The requirement for additional housing in the parish should not trump architectural quality and character of the area.

Future developments should carefully apply this code to avoid creating a pastiche of the existing local vernacular. Detailing can be interpreted using contemporary methods to avoid this.

Figure 89: Traditional timber framed red brick building in the parish.

Figure 90: Black weatherboarding is used on Penn Street business park to try to create a barn aesthetic.

In the case of a conversion of an existing historic building into a residential use, this should look to preserve and enhance any existing heritage features, to maintain the integrity of the original building. Any new fenestration should be positioned carefully to maintain the character and balance of the building and reflect the existing design through use of complementary materials and finishes. These buildings create the opportunity to provide large single dwellings or can be split into a series of smaller dwellings.

Wall materials

For centuries, locally produced 'red' bricks were the basic building blocks used in the Chilterns. Flint has also been a building material for centuries but it was only towards the end of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries, that it was much more commonly used. Within the parish wall materials used include: red brick, flint, white render, stone and timber cladding .

Fenestration materials

There are various materials and styles used for windows and doors in the parish such as sash, casement, wall dormer and bay windows, and apex pitched and flat porch roofs. In the Chilterns, windows are typically coloured white which matched well with the typical red brick and flint walling materials. Some windows have additional detailing. For example, above window detailing is a characteristic of Penn Street.

Poor examples of uPVC windows exist within the parish and it is important to match the profiles of historic windows as best as possible. For this reason inappropriate choice such as zinc cladding should not be permitted with new developments.

Roofs

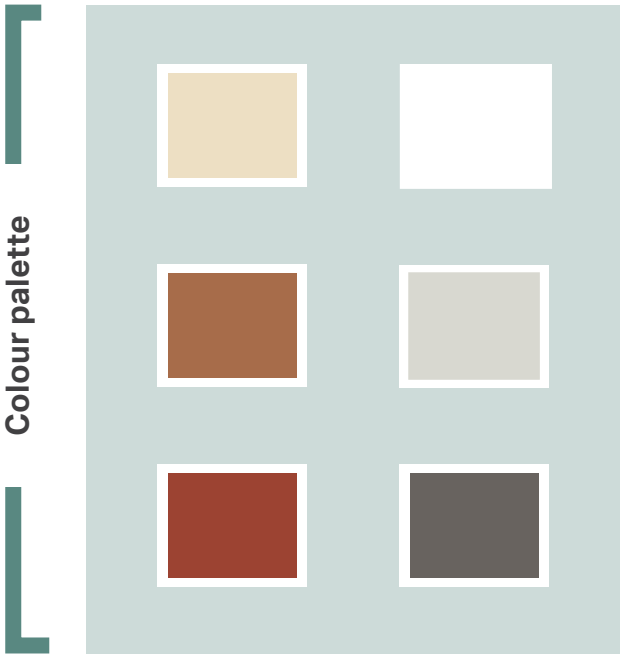
Of those roof materials in the parish, red pantile and plain brown tile are more often used. The Chilterns Building Design Guide states that pitch of a roof should where practicable be chosen to complement local examples, although, as a general rule, a lower pitch will reduce the visual impact of a large modern building.

Ground surface materials

Generally gravel, grass and cement are used in majority of ground surfaces within the parish.

Boundary treatment materials

There are a wide variety of boundary treatments in the village such as hedgerows, mature trees, low walls with red brick, soft landscaping and fencing.



Wall

Red brick

Timber framed render

Light colours of render

Red brick and flint (found parish wide)

Timber/ weatherboarding

Yellow brick

Fenestration

Casement window

Bay window

Sash windows

Coloured windows

Muntin detailing

Roof dormer

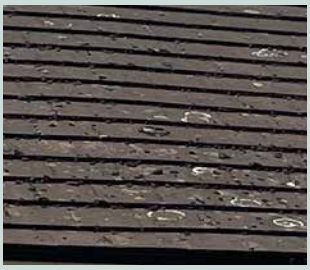
Apex porch

Flat door canopy

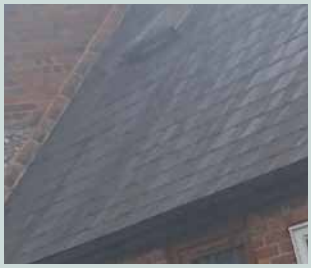
Roof

Thatched (scattered parish wide)

Red pantile (parish wide)



Plain brown tile (parish wide)



Slate (parish wide)

Corrugated iron (employment sites)

Dutch brick work and red pantile (Penn)

Ground surface

Tarmac

Gravel

Grass verge

Mix of gravel and paving

Herringbone brick paving

Cobblestone