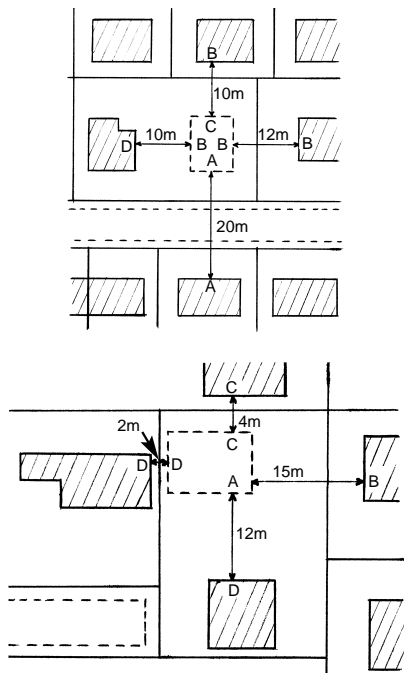


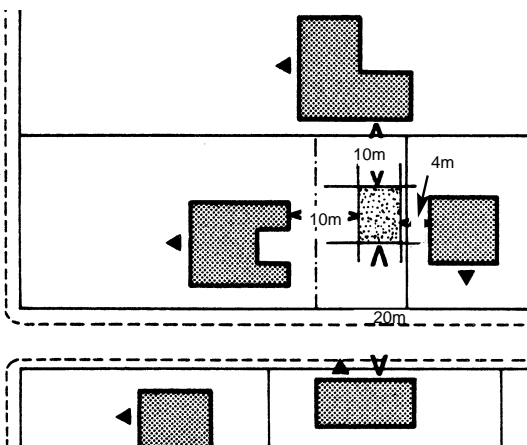
In the diagrams below, which illustrate the application of most of the above rules, the following notation has been used:-

**A** - Main Living Room Window    **B** - Other Habitable Room Window  
**C** - Non-Habitable Room Window    **D** - Blank Wall



**Note:** Where the relevant windows are at an angle to each other, the distances may be reduced commensurately. As a guideline, the distance may be halved where the centre point of the two windows are at 45o to each other.

Conditions will often be imposed upon outlined planning applications to ensure that these standards are met. This will often define the site area available within which the house must be located and in rare instances it may prove too small for the desired house style or, indeed, any style. If the applicant cannot meet the conditions then obviously the proposal is an impractical one.

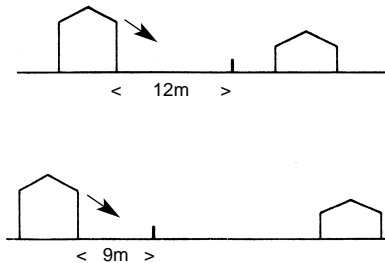


Building on a boundary will not be acceptable, at least a one metre gap must be provided to allow for maintenance etc. Exceptions might be made for lock-up garages where it is not practical to leave a gap.

Overlooking of private amenity space, particularly of existing houses should also be taken into consideration in designing the layout. As a general rule no window to a habitable room should be closer than four metres to a boundary. For first floor windows in two storey houses, significantly greater distances will be required (see below).

**Screening:** Most of the above distances can, if desired, be further alleviated on the part of the affected property, by the erection of screening and in certain circumstances this may be specified by the

Planning authority. Even with the erection of screen fences, distances should not be so reduced as to create an overly-cramped environment. For instance a two metre fence or wall erected closer than two metres to an existing neighbouring window, is unlikely to be acceptable as a means of overcoming a deficient window to window distance. Of course, screening cannot be effective where a second floor is concerned and this is the cause of much discontent amongst existing proprietors affected by such proposals. Accordingly, where a second and overlooking storey is involved, the distance between the main windows of the proposed house and the mutual boundary should be at least 12 metres. In higher density areas or where the adjacent rear garden is particularly generous this could be relaxed to a minimum of nine metres.



#### GARAGES

Too often garages are an afterthought in the design process. Problems can occur when endeavouring to fit the garage into a pre-developed site. Therefore, even if a garage is not to be built at the outset, the layout should allow for their later erection. For instance, 30% plot coverage should not be the objective of a new house with no garage accommodation; avoid a situation where the garage would have to be built on the boundary or, worse still, in front of the house.

On the subject of garages in front of houses, it is strongly recommended that this be avoided. Developments visually dominated by garages sited in front of the residential accommodation will rarely be acceptable.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES

It is the intention of the District Council to implement this advice in a FLEXIBLE fashion. This, however, is likely to result in demands in excess of the minimum standards being more common than their relaxation. The guidance is not intended to produce a "planning by numbers" approach to housing layouts and even where the guideline figures have been attained, the planning authority reserves the right to insist on more stringent standards to, for instance, further mitigate the impact on neighbours or to produce a better quality development.

In designing a layout care should be taken not to prejudice future development in adjoining areas (for instance by building too close to boundaries or poor positioning of windows). In some instances this may not be possible but where this has occurred, the planning authority will not necessarily be tied to the guidance indicated in this Advice Note when dealing with future development proposals.

This Advice Note does not apply to sites defined as "backland", i.e. sites without a road frontage, for which applicants should refer to Advice Note 6 - Backland Housing Development.

**Angus Council**



**ADVICE NOTE 14**

**SMALL  
HOUSING  
SITES**

*For further information and advice contact:*

Planning & Transport  
 Angus Council  
 County Buildings  
 Market Street  
 Forfar  
 DD8 3LG

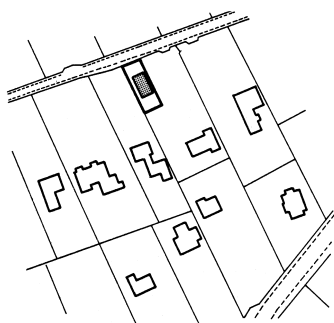
Telephone 01307 461460

## INTRODUCTION

This Advice Note has been prepared to provide guidance for applicants, developers and their agents designing layouts for small housing sites (comprising between one and four detached houses) WITHIN EXISTING BUILT-UP AREAS. For houses in the open countryside refer to Schedule 1 in the Housing Section of the Angus Local Plan. Although much of the guidance is relevant to semi-detached, terraced, linked or special needs housing, the requirements, particularly in respect of plot sizes, amenity space, etc. will be interpreted flexibly. The Advice Note does not concern itself with the visual appearance of the individual houses. Compliance with this guidance will be required in order to secure a planning consent.

## PLOT SIZE

The plot area of a proposal must bear some affinity with the surrounding plots, the Council will be reluctant to permit developments THAT DO NOT RESPECT THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA, for instance the insertion of a small house plot in a medium density area, if that development is likely to look out of place or "squeezed in".



As a general guide only, a MINIMUM plot area of 400 square metres is suggested. In areas of especially high density and where small plots are a characteristic or for some semi-detached houses, a lower MINIMUM of 350 square metres may be acceptable, dependent upon any unduly adverse effect that the proposal may have upon neighbours. Conversely, **in low density areas, a minimum considerably in excess of 400 square metres will be required.** 400 square metres will probably be too small to provide sufficiently useable garden space where awkward shaped sites are involved. Similarly, where existing trees have to be retained or new planting is required as part of a planning consent, a larger plot area will be necessary.

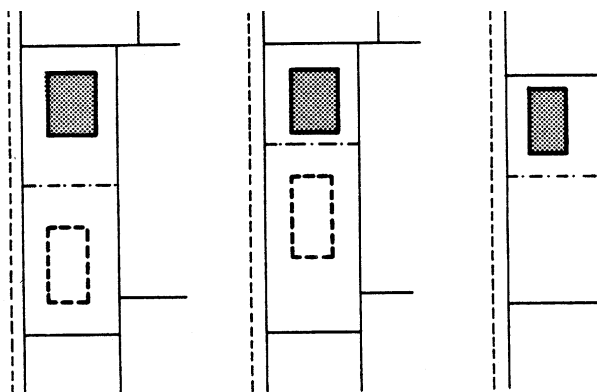


Regular shaped site of 1,200sm can accommodate 3 plots of 400sm, houses covering 30% of the plot and still provide at least 100sm of amenity space.

Awkward shaped site of 1,200sm. Fails to provide 100sm useable/private amenity space for each plot of 400sm.

This minimum plot area requirement will not only apply to the proposal but, where applicable (e.g. subdivision of an existing house plot), TO THE EXISTING HOUSE AND ITS CURTILAGE ALSO.

For clarification purposes, long driveways required to gain access to the plot proper or fingers of useless land will not count as part of the plot area.



Total Area = 820 s.m.  
Acceptable Sub-Division

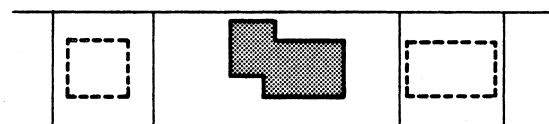
Total Area = 820 s.m.  
Unacceptable Sub-Division

Total Area = 750 s.m.  
Incapable of Meeting Standard

## PLOT COVERAGE

The character or spaciousness of a development is not solely determined by the size of the plot but also by the proportion of the plot that is covered by the building. Specifying a minimum plot size is of little relevance if the proposed house then fully occupies the curtilage, providing minimal living space around the dwelling.

In order to leave sufficient open space around a new house for outdoor activity, for the setting of the house and possible future extensions, the proposed house should not cover more than 30% of the plot. Again where it would be more in keeping with the character of a high density neighbourhood, this might be increased.



Plot Size = 420 s.m.  
House = 118 s.m.  
Coverage 28%  
Acceptable

Plot Size = 420 s.m.  
House 180 s.m.  
Coverage = 43%  
Not Acceptable

By the application of this standard, proposed developments on small plot areas in practical terms may be restricted to one and a half or two storeys, as these have a lesser ground floor area than bungalows. If the Council also feels it correct and proper to impose a bungalow only condition, then the proposed development of the site may not be feasible or could be restricted to a very small bungalow.

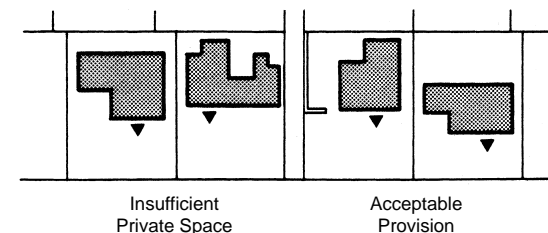
Consideration will also be given to the size of the proposed house. It may for instance, be inappropriate to site a large executive house on a small plot which just achieves the 30% plot coverage. As a general rule, large executive style houses should be sited on large plots producing considerably less than the 30% coverage. Similarly, a lower coverage might also be appropriate when an awkward shaped plot is involved in order to provide useful areas of garden ground.

## PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE

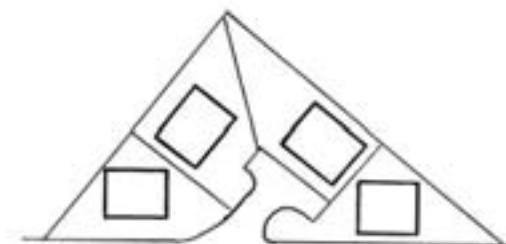
Applying the above standard to a new house development should ensure that around 70% of the plot remains open but all of this could be taken up by front garden, car space, drive etc., leaving none for the long list of private activities that gardens are required to cater for, such as sitting in the sun, playing with the children, eating out-of-doors on a nice day, drying clothes or even parking the kids bicycles.

To meet this requirement for modern day living, the Council will require a MINIMUM area of 100 SQUARE METRES to be allocated for PRIVATE amenity space. Where a good case can be made out, e.g. in character with the surrounding area, this may be reduced to 70 SQUARE METRES or in the difficult case of a corner plot with two road frontages, a reduction to 50 SQUARE METRES might be acceptable. These standards will require to be met where appropriate (e.g. subdivision of an existing house curtilage) by the existing house also.

Normally to qualify as private amenity space, the area will be out of public view, i.e. a BACK garden or well screened area at the side. It must also be a usable area, ten small leftover corners or strips of 10 square metres each will not be acceptable.



The diagram below illustrates the difficulties in achieving the minimum standards indicated above for private amenity space, plot coverage and plot size when an awkward shaped development site is involved. The scheme illustrated still produces plots of 400 square metres but lacks adequate usable private amenity areas and the development is overly congested producing a poor quality environment. One house is forced to breach the building line.



## DISTANCE BETWEEN BUILDINGS

Perhaps the greatest bone of contention with objectors to new house proposals, concerns the distance between the proposed dwelling and their own. It is also valid that the planning authority should aim for reasonable distances even in the case where there are no objections, for instance, where only the applicant's house is affected (in the case of existing curtilage subdivision) or to ensure a reasonable level of amenity within and between the new houses on the development.

In fact the distances regarded by residents as being most critical are where windows are involved, therefore, the following guideline MINIMUM distances are based on windows. While these guideline figures should ensure a reasonable degree of amenity and privacy, there will be instances where they may not be acceptable for townscape reasons e.g. out of character with the surrounding area, the presence of trees, etc. and conversely, in higher density, older areas, it may even be possible to reduce some of the distances specified.

### Main Living Room Window to:-

Main Living Room Window	- 20 metres
Other Habitable Room window	- 15 metres
Non-Habitable Room Window	- 12 metres
Blank Wall	- 12 metres

### Other Habitable Room Window to:-

Other Habitable Room Window	- 12 metres
Non-Habitable Room Window	- 10 metres
Blank Wall	- 10 metres

### Non-Habitable Room Window to:-

Non-Habitable Room Window	- 4 metres
Blank Wall	- 4 metres

### Blank Wall to Blank Wall

	- 2 metres
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### Definitions:

Habitable Room includes Kitchen  
Non-Habitable room includes bathrooms, utility rooms, staircases, halls, landings, stores, workshops, etc.