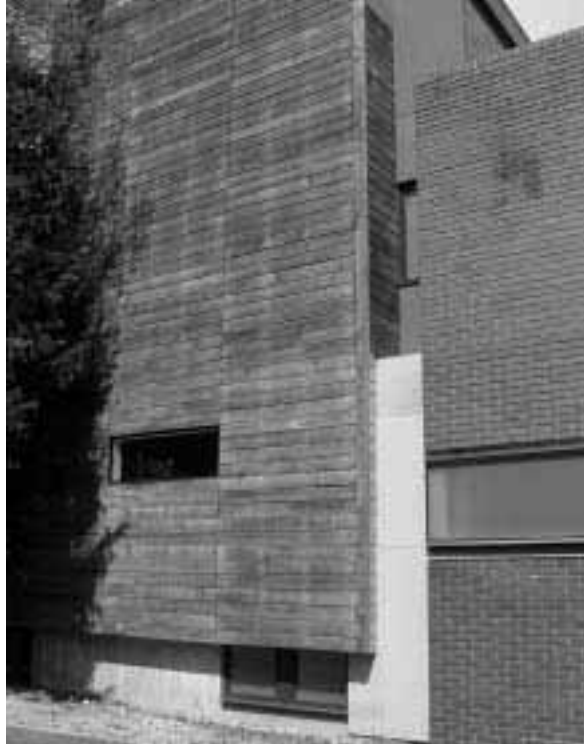MERTON UNITARY
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SPG

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTES

Design

September 2004

merton
moving ahead

MERTON UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE

Design

SEPTEMBER 2004

Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design

Explanatory Note

This SPG has been prepared in conjunction with the Merton Unitary Development Plan (October 2003). It does not form part of the UDP. It has been presented for public consultation, and after consideration of comments, and consequent amendments it was approved by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in September 2004. The SPG will be taken into account by the Council in determining planning applications.

Except where indicated all reference to the UDP policies refer to the Merton Unitary Development Plan October 2003.

SEPTEMBER 2004

www.merton.gov.uk

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 This SPG

The purpose of this guide is to promote better design in new development in Merton. The Council is keen to promote a culture of investing in design. It also means that developments will need to be designed for a particular place, and that the needs of future users need to be taken into account. Quality design is seen as playing a crucial role in delivering better urban areas.

This SPG identifies the Council's requirements in relation to the design of new development schemes in the Borough, from the points of view of "design of buildings" and "urban design", (see section 1.6 for definition of these terms). The SPG will be regarded as a material consideration when the design aspects of development proposals are assessed.

This is one of a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes (SPGs) available on a diverse range of subjects, and which should be read in conjunction with the Merton Unitary Development Plan (UDP). It is proposed that these SPGs will be updated as and when necessary, to reflect any changes that may occur in Government guidance and advice. Other SPG documents which may also have relevance to design matters are listed in under Contacts and Further Guidance in section 12 of this document.

The guidance has Borough-wide applicability. The Council is preparing Design Guides for each of its Conservation Areas, following the completion of Character Assessments for each area. The advice in this SPG therefore needs to be read in conjunction with the Design Guides.(see section 5.3).

Small developments can, cumulatively, change a place dramatically. In many cases small development schemes are designed by people with little or no formal training in design. Improving the design quality of our environment will in large measure be dependent on encouraging the people behind small development projects to make more use of suitably qualified and skilled designers.

Good design helps to create lively places with distinctive character, streets and other public places which are safe, readily accessible, pleasant to use, human in scale and which inspire.

The best way to promote successful and sustainable regeneration of an area is to consider issues of urban design from the outset. Leaving this to a later stage of the development process can make the planning process slow and frustrating for developers, and is unlikely to produce the best outcome. Urban design requires the collaboration of professionals from town planning, architectural, landscape architecture, surveyors and civil engineering backgrounds.

1.2 How to use the SPG

Developers and property owners who wish to carry out development schemes will need to refer to this SPG when commissioning design work. In addition architects, urban designers and landscape architects may, by using the SPG, feel more confident in influencing clients, as to the design and quality of development schemes which will be sought by the Council.

A bibliography is provided at the end of this SPG, which sets out sources of more detailed design advice. This SPG is largely based on the advice set out in these documents.

- This SPG is divided up into a number of different subjects. However it should be read as a whole.
- Developers are advised to apply its contents at a very early stage in the design process.
- The SPG does not provide a set of hard and fast rules, it should not be seen as a textbook which provides a standard solution to be followed slavishly when development proposals are being formulated.
- The ideas in the SPG are not exhaustive.
- The SPG can not be used a substitute for the involvement of qualified architects, planners and landscape architects. To achieve successful design solutions the designer's imagination has to be directed towards the specific site to be developed.
- The SPG should therefore be seen as providing guiding principles, which allow scope for individual solutions to site specific problems and constraints.
- It is intended that the SPG will encourage flair, inspiration and creativity, rather than cramping these qualities.

The key sections of the SPG are:
- Section 6 which sets out the importance of understanding the context of a development site, and the full range of different context factors that may need to be taken into account.
- Section 7 which sets out the main factors relating to each aspect of development form, which any proposed development will need to consider.
- Section 8 which does a similar job in respect of building design

The guidance set out in this SPG will be also used by the Council when assessing planning applications for new development. It will be relevant to all forms of development (both large and small, and relating to all uses) which involve new buildings, and may also be applicable in some schemes which involve adaptation of existing buildings. The SPG will therefore be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Council has the assistance of the wider community in seeking better quality design.
The Council's Conservation and Design Advisory Panel (CADAP) is charged with the task of (amongst other things)
- promoting good design, urban design and conservation, and providing advice on these subjects
- to advise on design and conservation based area regeneration
- advising on the care, maintenance and enhancement of the Borough's built heritage

1.3 Planning Permission and the need for Other Permissions

This SPG deals mainly with aspects relating to planning permission. However, it should be always remembered that other permissions may be needed, such as Building Regulations Approval, permissions or notifications relating to work to trees, permissions for crossovers and dropped kerbs, and Listed Building Consents. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all the relevant permissions or notifications have been obtained or been given.

It is therefore necessary to check with the Council what consents or notifications are required. Although one type of permission may be granted, it does not necessarily mean that other permissions are included, or indeed imply that they will be granted. A large number of building projects will require Building Regulations approval, but not necessarily planning permission, others will require both.

The extension, conversion or alteration of a Listed Building will require additional Listed Building Consent, in addition to any planning permission that might be required. An extremely high quality scheme will be required in such instances, and applicants are therefore strongly advised to contact the Environment and Regeneration Department when first considering such a proposal (see contacts list for works to Listed Buildings).

Buildings in Conservation Areas also require additional consideration, including detailed design matters in relation to alterations and extensions. Special powers are available for the protection of trees within Conservation Areas.

Trees, both within and without Conservation Areas, may also be protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). In order to find out if trees are protected, enquiries should be addressed to the Council's Tree Officer (see Contacts and Further Guidance, Section 12, for works to trees).

Building Regulations ensure the sound construction of buildings, making them safe to use. This is different from planning control, which is concerned more with the use or appearance of land and buildings. If advice is required on Building Regulations, then the Building Control Section of the Environment & Regeneration Department should be contacted (see contact list for Building Regulations).

1.4 Government vision

The Government vision on sustainable development is set out in the Urban White Paper. This is founded on the principles of
- People shaping the future (people must come first)

- People living in attractive, well kept towns and cities which use space and buildings well
- Good design and planning which make it practical to live in a more environmentally sustainable way

The Government created the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in 1999, and gave it the task of taking the campaign for quality in the built environment to the heart of Government, and to the outside world.

1.5 National and Regional Planning Guidance on Design and Urban Design

National Government provides planning guidance on a range of subjects. These are known as Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), and Regional Planning Guidance Notes (RPGs). This guidance provides the basis for planning policies preparation and development control implementation undertaken by Local Planning Authorities. This section outlines the main design related issues covered in national and regional planning guidance.

Planning Policy Guidance Notes are being updated and replaced by Planning Policy Statements (PPS). A consultation draft of PPS1 has recently be produced and this will replace the guidance referred to in PPG1 below.

The appearance of proposed development, and its relationship to its surroundings are material considerations when consideration is given to planning applications. Good design should be encouraged by all engaged in the development process (PPG1).

Applicants for planning permission should be able to demonstrate how they have taken account of the need for good design in their development proposals. Applicants for planning permission should, as a minimum, provide a short written statement, setting out the design principles which have been used to guide the design process. Illustrative material submitted with a planning application will need to show the development in its wider context (see section 9 for guidance). The level of the detail required will vary in accordance with the scale of the development proposed, and the sensitivity of the site (PPG1).

Local Authorities should reject poor designs, especially where planning policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance supports such decisions, and especially when the poor design is evident in terms of inappropriateness in relation to the context. It is appropriate for a Local Authority to ensure that the design of a development will promote or reinforce the local distinctiveness of an area (PPG1).

Rejection of proposals on design grounds should however not be done in an arbitrary way, eg. on the basis of an arbitrary imposition of an architectural style. Furthermore Local Authorities should not concern themselves with matters of detailed design, except where they may have a significant effect on the character or quality of an area (PPG1).

PPG1 also envisages that the achievement of high design standards for new developments will largely depend on upholding such standards through the planning system.

A large proportion of new development in the Borough relates to the provision of housing. PPG3 deals with the issue of housing development. It established that priority should be given for the re-use of previously developed land within urban areas, bringing empty homes back into use, and converting existing buildings. This type of development is preferred over the use of green field sites. PPG3 also encourages the widening of housing opportunity and choice, and the creation of mixed communities, and it promotes mixed-use developments.

New housing development and residential environments should contribute to the promotion of an "urban renaissance". It should improve the quality of life by creating attractive, high quality living environments, where people live by choice (PPG3).

The green dimension of residential environments is important. This can enhance environmental quality, assist with the issue of permeability of land surfaces (in order to reduce flood risk), and promote biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken for existing trees and shrubs to be retained and for adding new planting (PPG3).

Improving the quality and attractiveness of residential areas is a Government objective. In order to meet this objective imaginative thinking on the part of both developers and planning authorities is needed in respect of designs and layouts which make more efficient use of land, without compromising the quality of the environment (PPG3).

New housing development, whether large or small scale proposals, must be informed by the wider context. This includes not only the immediate neighbouring buildings but also the townscape and landscape of the wider locality. Places and spaces need to be created which:
- have the needs of people in mind
- are attractive and have their own distinctive identity, whilst respecting and enhancing local character.
- are safe, reduce the potential for crime, and promote public safety
- focus on the quality
- give priority to the needs of pedestrians, rather than to the movement and parking of vehicles
- avoid inflexible planning standards
- reduce road widths, traffic speeds and pedestrian safety
- promote energy efficiency (PPG3).

PPG15 provides guidance relevant for the design of development of "the historic environment". This confirms the desirability of preserving Listed Buildings, their setting, and the architectural or historic features that they have, and the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area.

Strategic design guidance is provided in Regional Planning Guidance Note 3 (RPG3). This indicates that an improvement in the quality and attractiveness of London's urban environment is needed, in order to benefit those who live, visit, work and do business in London. RPG3 sets goals for achieving urban quality in London, these seek a city which:
- Is well designed and visually rich
- Has quality open spaces
- Is a distinctive place and has identity
- Has a human scale skyline and wonderful views

- Has a rich mix of uses and diversity of attractions
- Has ease of access for all
- Has high amenity value especially in its heritage areas
- Has pedestrian friendly environments and transport corridors
- Has safe and sustainable environments especially in residential areas
- Is well managed and maintained throughout

The Mayor of London has published the London Plan (February 2004). This Plan replaces the existing strategic London Guidance (RPG3). The London Plan emphasises the importance of good design.
This Plan emphasises the following:
- Maximising the potential of development sites
- Creating or enhancing the public realm
- Creating or enhancing the mix of uses
- The creation of environments which are accessible, usable and permeable for all users
- The creation of developments which are sustainable, robust and adaptable.
- The creation of environments which are safe for users and the public at large
- Promotion of respect for the local context and local communities
- Inspiring, exciting and delightful developments, which are both practical and legible
- Connecting with the natural environment

The London Plan also commits the Mayor to promote world class architecture and design in London. This commitment includes working with partners towards the following:
- Preparing design guidelines for London
- Preparing SPGs on inclusive and accessible environments
- Preparing SPGs on sustainable design and construction
- The production of a public realm strategy for London to improve the look of London's streets and spaces
- The promotion of improvements to London's public realm through the Mayor's "100 Spaces for London" programme
- The promotion of community involvement, competitive selection of designers and design led change in key locations

1.6 Definitions of Design and Urban Design

As referred to above the appearance of a proposed development is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This consideration may encompass both the design of buildings and urban design matters. Urban design is the art of making places for people. This includes the way they work, as well as how they look. PPG1 sets out the scope of urban design, as follows:

- the relationship between different buildings
- the relationship between buildings and the streets, squares, parks, waterways and other spaces which make up the public domain
- the nature and quality of the public domain itself
- the relationship of one part of a village, town or city with other parts
- the patterns of movement and activity which are established by that relationship
- landscape design

The treatment of the front elevation of a building is an area which lies both within the field of urban design, and of building design. The alignment of a building frontage, rhythm of buildings and spaces, and building heights and proportions are matters which may have urban design implications.

Other design matters generally fall outside the scope of urban design, and may be considered in terms of the "design of buildings". These will generally involve building elevations and internal layouts.

1.7 What is good design

The results of achieving good design should be the creation of economically vibrant, attractive, sustainable and safer places, which use land and energy resources in a more efficient way. Good design encompasses the three principles of sustainable development, namely meeting social, economic and environmental needs.

For new development proposals good design is not a supplementary consideration, that can be ignored, or one that can be treated as an after thought.

PPG3 lays down a challenge to house builders and to local authorities to take design seriously. This should not however be limited to housing developments. Good design is "central to creating more attractive living environments and central to delivering sustainable developments through

- making more efficient use of land
- promoting better accessibility to local facilities and public transport
- supporting crime prevention and community safety
- creating more socially inclusive communities
- promoting energy efficiency" (from "By Design" DETR/CABE).

The design of a development needs to be approached "in the round". Approaches which give too much emphasis to any one issue (usually the issues of traffic and parking) have often failed, because they fail to take account of the broad scope of design principles.

1.8 Good Design and Planning, Parking and Highway Standards (UDP policy BE.17)

The poor quality of design, which is evident in many developments undertaken in the past, has partly been the responsibility of the developer and partly of local authorities. Developers have too often relied on a limited range of building types and layout forms which pay inadequate regard to the characteristics of the locality. Local authorities have often been guilty of being overly rigid in the application of planning and highway standards. Developers therefore need to achieve a better understanding of design principles which contribute to successful environments. To do this they need to invest in design skills, and to bring these skills to bear at the right stage in the development process.

The Council is keen to move away from reliance on the application of planning standards, particularly those which relate to road layouts and car parking provision. Standards give specific prescriptions for the design of development (for example by specifying the distances between buildings in order to provide privacy). Imaginative designers can however address many issues by using design solutions.

Achieving good design is however ultimately dependent on the skills, imagination and flair of the designer. Where the Council is satisfied that the relaxation of density policy and/or planning, parking and highways standards will lead to a better urban design solution, or to a development more in keeping with the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, then it will not oppose the development on density or planning/highways standards grounds. Such relaxation will however need to be seen to be directly related to the achievement of high quality and good urban design, and should not be incidental to them.

1.9 High Density Development and the "Design Led" Approach

Achieving higher densities and making more economical use of land can be achieved through better attention to design. The study prepared by Llewelyn Davies on "Sustainable Residential Quality" (see bibliography) concluded that intensification at higher densities can be achieved without compromising quality, in particular by adopting a "design led" approach. It recommends that:

- the ability to achieve higher densities is greatly influenced by planning policies and planning and highways standards, which govern design
- the design led approach produces better residential development than tends to be possible through application of planning policies and standards
- density and car parking standards need to be varied in relation to a public transport availability index
- the relaxation of planning standards, and the use of a site specific approach, could unlock the potential of sites

The "design led" approach is one which allows the architect the opportunity to respond to the particular character, opportunities and constraints of the site, in a creative way, rather than working in a straight jacket of rigidly applied standards. This approach seeks to reflect the concerns which in the past would have been addressed by means of uniformly applied planning standards, but to address them in other ways, which take account of established building practice in the locality.

The Llewelyn Davies study concludes that achieving high density development, through the application of a "design led" approach is capable of producing better residential schemes, than those which would be likely to be produced through a traditional approach involving inflexible application of standards. Consideration can for example be given to terrace or deep-plan housing or apartment design, use of light wells, roof gardens, balconies, quality communal gardens, and increasing the emphasis on non-car travel modes.

2. Merton's Planning Policies and Guidance

2.1 The Merton UDP

The Merton UDP contains the Council's planning policies on what it considers should and should not be given planning permission. These policies should therefore be complied with when formulating any development proposal. The proposals relating to design matters are mainly contained within the "Safe Green and Healthy" section of the Plan, although there are many other policies throughout the Plan which deal with a wide range of issues, and which will have a bearing on the design of development proposals. The Council will have regard to the principles of urban design, and to the appropriateness of building design when decisions are made on planning applications.

The most important specifically design-based policies in the UDP are:

ST1   which is a strategic policy on sustainable development

ST.17 which is a strategic policy on design and quality

HP.4 which sets out the residential density policy, including opportunities for high density housing

HS.1 which deals with housing layout and amenity

HS.2 which deals with sustainability in housing development

NE.1 to NE.12 which deal with the natural environment

BE.1 to BE.3 which set out policy for Conservation Areas

BE.4 which sets out policy for Areas of Distinctive Character

BE.5   to BE.12 which set out policy for Listed and
        Locally Listed Buildings

BE.15   which deals with daylight, sunlight, privacy
        and visual intrusion issues

BE.16   which deals with urban design issues, includ-
        ing urban design statements

BE.18   which deals with protecting gardens

BE.19   and BE.20 which deal with high buildings

BE.21   which deals with local views, panoramas and
        prospects

BE.22   which deals with the design of new
        development (design of buildings), including
        the submission of design statements

BE.23   deals with design of building alterations and
        extensions

BE.24   deals with design of roof extensions and
        dormer windows

BE.25   which deals with sustainable development
        and conservation of natural resources

BE.31   deals with design of new shopfronts

BE.33   deals with urban design - street furniture

2.2 Merton's Supplementary Planning Guidance

The Council has also prepared Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes on a wide range of subjects. SPG documents which may also have a bearing on design matters are listed in Contacts and Further Guidance, (section 12) at the end of this document.

2.3 Planning Briefs

Planning Briefs are prepared by the Council on a site specific basis. These are also treated as Supplementary planning Guidance to the Development Plan, and as such they amplify the Plan policies and proposals (PPG12 "Development Plans" refers).

The deployment of planning briefs at the commencement of the development process is encouraged in the interests of setting the right tone and direction of a development project. They are particularly useful in informing the Council, its officers, landowners and prospective developers as well as the general public about the Council's ambitions for a development site along with its characteristics, constraints, transport regime, and the policy context applying to it.

Building design and urban design issues are included in briefs to provide guidance to architects and designers about the form and content for a development scheme which the Council would wish to encourage. PPG3 ("Housing") stresses the importance of planning briefs in raising the design standards. Further information on the role of planning briefs in the design process is available in "By Design" section 3 "Urban Design and the Planning Toolkit" (DETR, 2000).

2.4 Pre-application Advice

The Council is willing to provide design and other advice at a pre-application stage. If a sketch proposal is prepared, and submitted to the Council, then informal, officer views on that proposal will be provided. This process may help to speed determination of the application, by alerting a developer to possible problems, and by highlighting the main issues which will be relevant to the proposal. It may avoid time being wasted on detailed design work when planning issues have not been fully addressed.

If it is decided to take advantage of this opportunity, then sketch proposals (including if possible photographs of the site and its context) should preferably be sent to the Council in advance of any meeting with officers (see Contacts and Further Guidance - Section 12).

2.5 Design Awards

The Council attaches importance to securing a high standard of design in all developments, and it runs a Merton Design Award scheme on a biennial basis to highlight and to give recognition to the best designed new schemes in the Borough. For the same reasons the Council also fully supports and assists with the running of the national Civic Trust Design Scheme Awards.

3. Relationship of Design/ Urban Design to Sustainability

3.1 Aspects of Sustainable Development

Urban design is a key to creating sustainable developments. As such it contributes to the creation of flourishing economic life, to the prudent use of natural resources, to high quality environments, and to social wellbeing.

Design and Urban Design issues can make an important contribution towards the achievement of sustainable developments. The Council's SPG on Sustainable Development sets out a series of 11 broad headings under which sustainability features can be incorporated into development proposals. These are:

- Energy
- Water conservation, water quality and flooding
- Land use and transport
- Site Layout and internal layout
- Pollution
- Materials
- Waste management
- Robustness
- Ecology
- Equity, inclusiveness, health and economic well being, and
- Urban design, archaeology and the built environment

The achievement of a sustainable development in terms of each of these headings will have implications for the design of a proposed development. The guidance set out in this Design SPG bears most closely on issues of land use and transport, site layout and internal layout, robustness, ecology, equity and urban design. Other SPG documents prepared by the Council provide guidance on these and other sustainability features.

3.2 Merton's Sustainability Checklist

All applications for development over a certain size will be assessed from a sustainability point of view by the Council. The LB Merton Sustainability Checklist is used for this purpose.

Issues of character, appearance, urban design and local distinctiveness feature in the checklist. In the case of "major" development schemes the Council requires that the developer should submit a sustainable development statement (UDP policy ST1a).

Copies of the Sustainability Checklist are sent out with application forms by the Council, and developers are invited to submit their own assessment of the sustainability qualities of their proposals (however large or small the proposals may be) with submitted planning applications. Copies of the Checklist can also be obtained from the Council (see Contacts and Further Guidance, Section 12).

4. Urban Design Objectives

The objectives of urban design have been summarised in the publication "By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards a Better Practice", (Dept. of Environment, Transport and the Regions, and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment). This sets out seven objectives, they are:

4.1 Character - A Place with its Own Identity.
This objective is about promoting character in townscape and landscape, by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture. Where local distinctiveness is ignored, new development may reflect only the marketing policies or corporate identities of national or international companies, the standard practices or products of the building industry, or the latest fashions amongst design professionals. Local distinctiveness requires a reconciliation of local practices on the one hand, with the latest building technologies, building types and needs on the other. Character and innovation can go together. There is normally no need to disguise the one as the other. The positive features of a place, and its people contribute to its special character, and sense of identity. Where there are no significant local traditions, the challenge to create a distinctive place will be all the greater.


Fig.1

Use of natural features
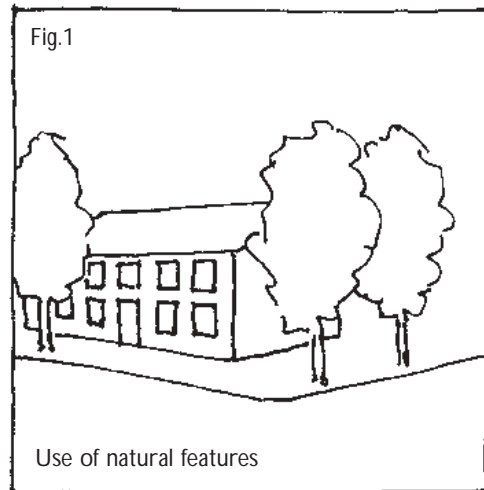
Consideration should be given to:

- **Land form and character.** Natural features can provide the basis for layout and massing of a new development. Conserving natural features provides a better relationship between a new development and its environment. Local ecology can also help to determine character and identity.

- **Integrating new development into its landscape setting.** Integration reduces impact on nature and reinforces local distinctiveness. Use of structural planting, (either existing or new planting), allows a development to integrate into the wider landscape. Use of plant species that are common in the area will reinforce the natural qualities of the place. Integrating new and existing development at their common boundary maintains continuity of urban form and landscape.

- **Responding to existing building layouts, streets and spaces.**

Fig.2

Responding to existing building layouts
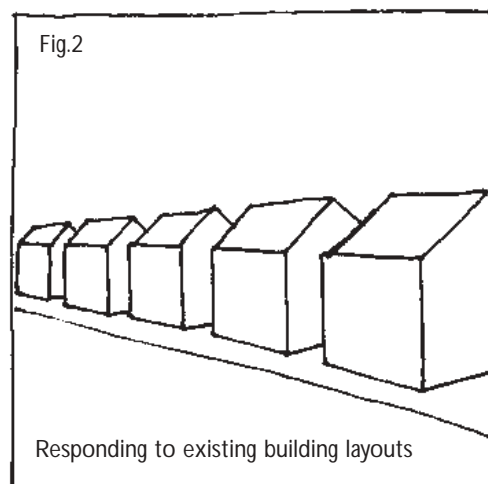
This ensures that adjacent buildings relate to one another, that streets are connected, and that spaces complement one another. It can also involve the retention of buildings of local distinctiveness, or historic or townscape merit. Use of narrow plot widths tends to encourage more active frontages, and an increased sense of enclosure. It also allows higher densities.

Fig.3

Standard solutions are rarely acceptable
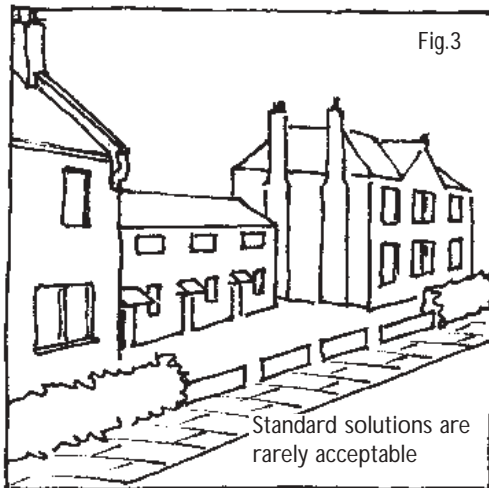
- **Building forms and patterns.** Local building forms and details contribute to local distintiveness. This need not restrict the scope of the designer. Standard solutions are rarely acceptable. Local building forms include distinct housing types, boundary treatments, building lines, roof slopes, window types and gardens. Responding to building forms should only be at the appropriate scale, and inflating traditional domestic forms to larger scales should generally be avoided.

- **Local materials and building methods.** Consideration needs to be given to the scale, texture and colour of building materials. Every element of the street scene contributes to the identity of a place, including sculpture, lighting, railings, litter bins, paving and street furniture. Local art or craft traditions can also be used. They should not be add-ons, or afterthoughts, but should be part of the design from the start.


Fig.4

Landmark buildings
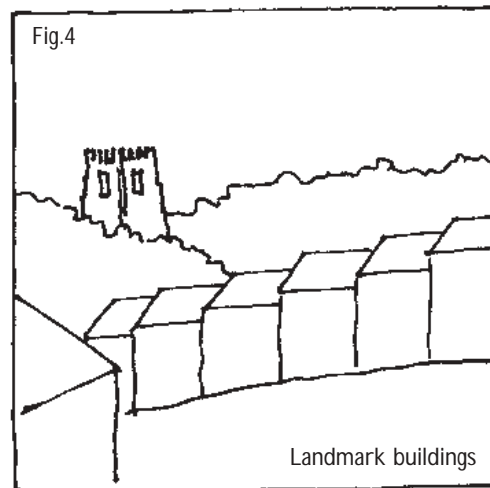
- **Scale massing and height.** New buildings need to be related to the general pattern of building heights in the area, though this need not preclude a degree of variety. Slopes can be accommodated by sitting the building on the real ground and stepping it up the hill. Consideration must be given to the creation of or preservation of distinctive skylines. A building should only stand out from the background of buildings if it contributes positively to views and vistas as a landmark.

4.2 Continuity and Enclosure - A Place Where Public and Private Spaces are Clearly Distinguished

This objective is about making a coherent urban fabric, and avoiding bits of leftover space. Successful urban spaces (including streets) are defined and enclosed by buildings and landscape. The key is the relationship of one building to another, and that of the building to the space. Buildings which follow a continuous building line around a street block, and which contain private space within the centre of the block are often more successful than an individual building that stands in the middle of a site. The live edges of buildings (eg shopfronts, entrance doors), and buildings where the upper windows look out directly to the street make places feel safer. (see also fig 12 page 16). Consideration should be given to:

13

- **Building lines.** Development which follows the boundary of the street block creates an unambiguous distinction between public and private spaces. Respecting the historic building line helps to integrate new development into the street scene. Continuity of building frontages minimises blank walls, and maximises informal surveillance of the street. (see also figs 38, 46, 47 & 48 on page 42). Bays and entrance features may project forward or back from a building line, without undermining the principle of continuity. Where a building steps back from a common building line, it can create usable, attractive space for pedestrians.

Distinguishing between public and private spaces

Fig.5
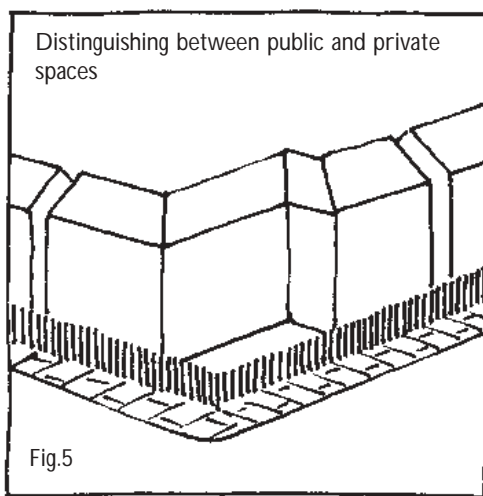
- **Main entrances.** Building entrances need to be clearly identifiable. They are where people move between public and private space, and they should be conveniently located accordingly (see also fig 85 page 54). Entrances create activity on the street, and frequent entrances,

Fig.6   Identifiable entrances
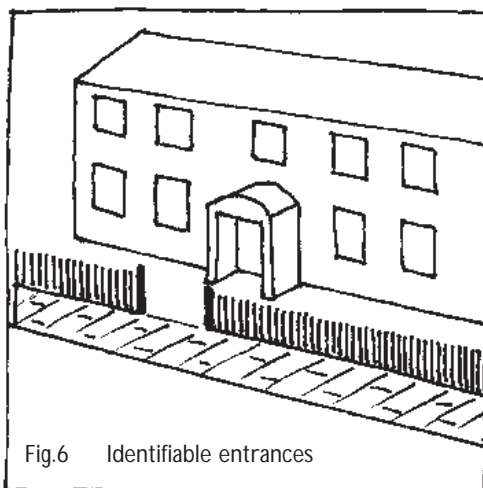
rather than fewer grouped entrances make for more lively streets. Access to private or communal backland areas (eg for parking) requires careful control by means of gates or overlooking.

- **Fronts and backs of buildings.** Locating the less private rooms (eg living rooms) to face the street means that the front of a building can have a direct relationship to the street. Private rooms (eg bedrooms and bathrooms) by contrast tend to deaden the street frontage. Buildings should not present their backs to the street. This includes situations where high fences and walls are presented to the street (see also figs 48 and 64, pages 42 and 48). Such cases reduce surveillance of the street.

Locating public rooms and private rooms

private
public
private
public

Fig.7
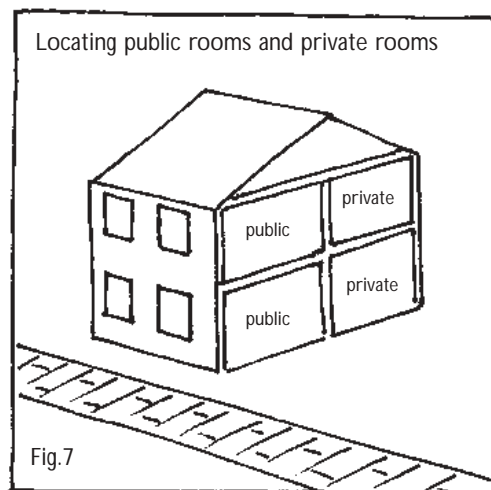
- **Defining and enclosing private space.** Private spaces, such as gardens, courtyards etc. are best enclosed by the backs of buildings. Gardens of houses are more secure if they

Enclosing private space

public space

private space

public space   Fig.8
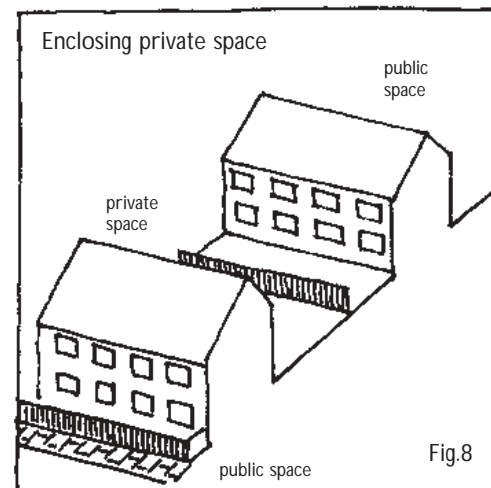
adjoin other gardens rather than adjoining side roads, service lanes or footpaths (see also fig 63 page 47).

- **Scale.** The height of buildings should relate to the width and importance of the space which they enclose (see also fig 50 page 43). Buildings at a street corner can "turn" and enclose the corner visually (see also fig 80 page 53), and shallow building depths can be used to allow sunlight and daylight to penetrate, without interrupting the continuity of the building line. Setbacks of one or more floors at the upper level of a building making the upper part less visible from the street, allowing increased density without an increase in the sense of scale (see also fig 73 page 51).
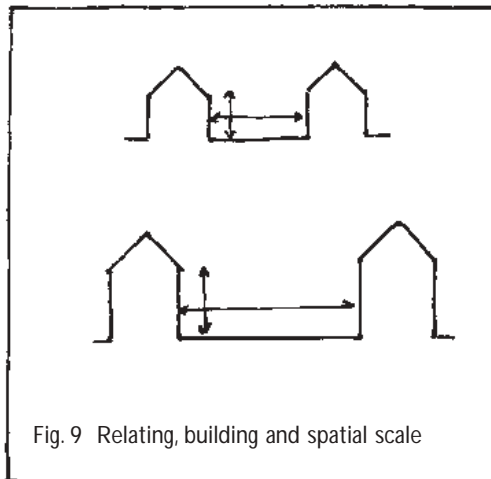

Fig. 9 Relating, building and spatial scale

- **Relating the fronts of buildings to the street.** The extent of private ownership needs to be clearly demarcated, through the use of wal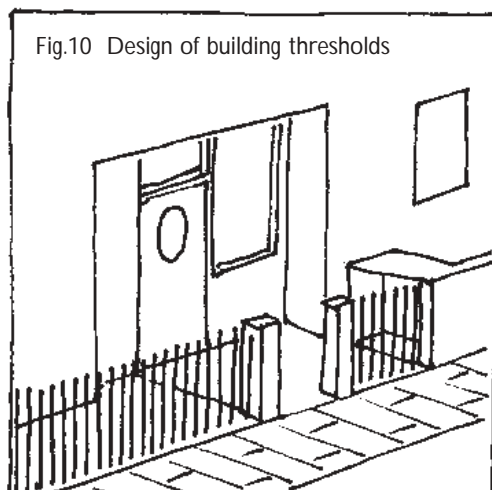ls, fences, railings, gates, arches etc. Detailed design should be used to indicate whether spaces are public or private (see also figs 5 & 54, pages 14 and 44).

4.3 Quality of the Public Realm - A Place with Attractive and Successful Outdoor Areas

This objective is about achieving promoting public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and that work effectively for all in society, including elderly and disabled people. The public realm is the space which is available to the public without special charge. It includes streets, parks, squares, arcades and public buildings. Anyone who is designing a building or other structure is helping to shape the public realm. The kind of issues which influence the quality of the public realm are:

- **A system of open and green spaces.** Spaces help to create the character of an area in the same way that buildings do. Spaces need to respond to the economic, social and cultural needs of the area that they serve. Spaces are part of a network of pedestrian routes, which need to cater for all users, including elderly and disabled people. Streets and street junctions that are designed as public spaces (rather than being designed just as traffic routes) are likely to be more convenient for all users (see also fig 64 page 48). Street trees and street lighting can be used to reinforce the character of a space, as can its natural assets (eg water, slopes and other planting).
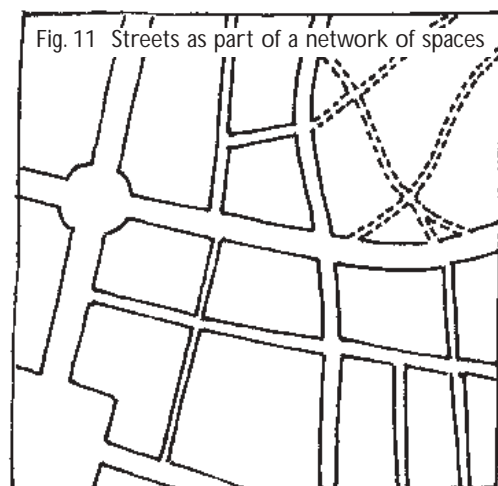

Fig.10 Design of building thresholds

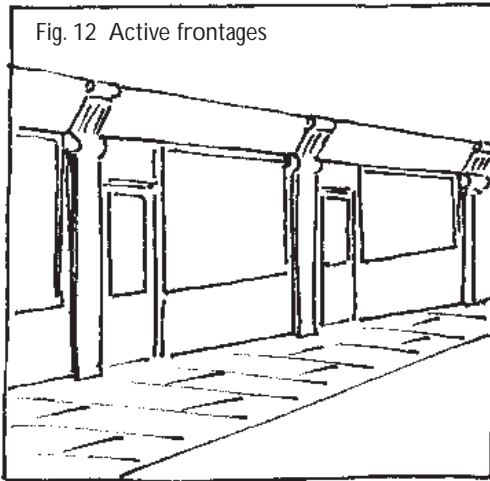Fig. 11 Streets as part of a network of spaces

15

Fig. 12 Active frontages

- **Ground floor uses.** The façade of buildings can be enlivened for passers by through active uses (eg shops etc), frequent building entrances, colonnades and windows. These help to make the function of the building apparent. Privacy for ground floor residential uses which face the street can be maintained by raising the floor level above street level (see also fig 45 page 41). Buildings at key positions (eg busy street corners) can be used to accommodate special uses (eg shops or restaurants) to contribute to local identity (see also fig 40 page 40).

- **Spaces with a purpose.** Public spaces should be designed with a purpose in mind. Spaces which are left over areas after development, lack a function, they are a wasted resource, and they will detract from a place's identity and will be abused.

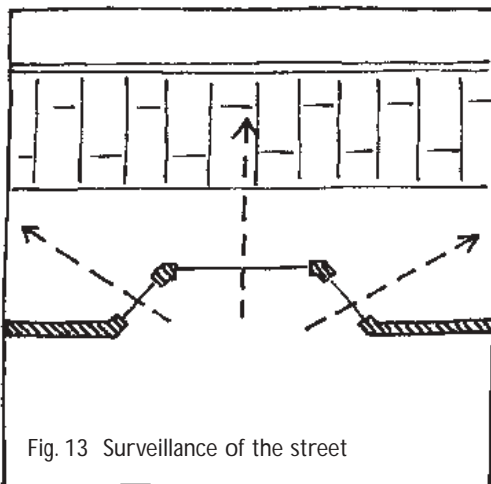- **Surveillance of streets and spaces.** Buildings which front towards and address public spaces and streets contribute informal surveillance, and increase the feeling of safety(see also fig 45 page 41). Surveillance also benefits play spaces and car parking areas. Living areas over shops or other ground floor commercial uses also helps to strengthen surveillance, especially when commercial uses are closed. Separated footpaths and cycle paths need to be well overlooked by windows, and they need to be as direct as possible (see also figs 47 and 48, page 42). Lighting and planting are also important factors which can influence surveillance (see also fig 49 page 42).

- **Micro climate.** Local climatic conditions should be taken into account in the design of spaces. This will include sunlight and shading, wind effects and down draughts, frost pockets, and filtered sunlight and pollution from trees and other vegetation.

- **Works of art and street furniture.** Co-ordinated street design avoids street clutter and confusion. This includes lighting, signage, railings, bins, paving, seating, shelters, cabinets, bollards, kiosks, cycle racks and works of art. The need for maintenance, resistance to vandalism and access to underground services need to be considered.
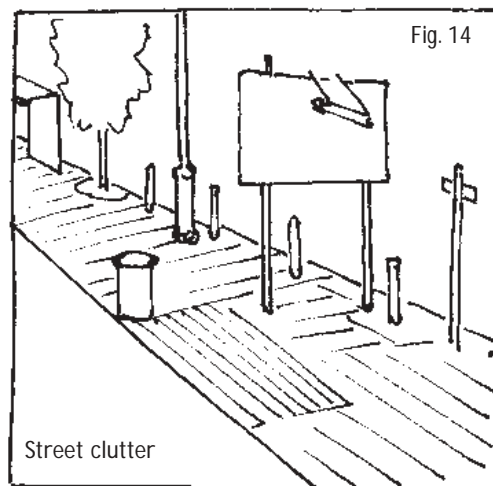

Fig. 14

Street clutter

Fig. 13 Surveillance of the street

## 4.4 Ease of Movement - A Place that is Easy to Get to and Move Through

This objective is about promoting accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, generally putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport. The kind of issues which influence ease of movement are:

Fig. 15

Relating Pedestrian routes to bus services
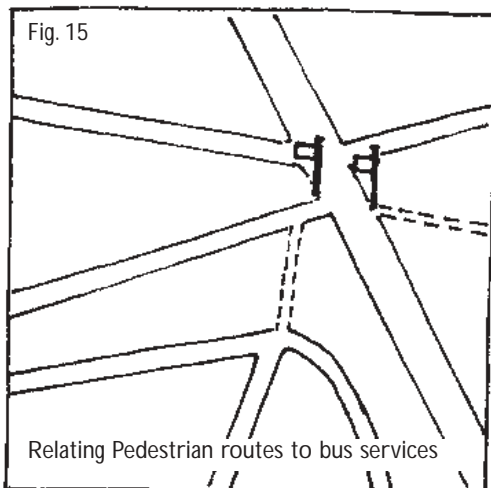
- **A network of directly connected spaces and routes.** New routes should readily connect into existing movement patterns (see also figs 33 and 34, page 38). Public transport should be designed as an integral part of the street layout. The network of routes should minimise walking distances to local services and transport facilities. Junctions can be designed as a point of entry, and can help to identify a place (see also fig 37 page 39).

Fig. 16 Streets designed as public spaces
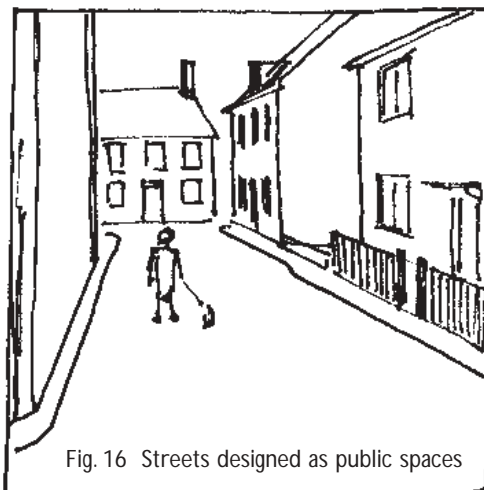
- **Urban design quality.** Streets should be designed as public spaces and not just in response to engineering considerations (see also figs 55 and 64, pages 44 and 48). Boulevards permit continuous frontage development whilst accommodating a high level of traffic capacity. Traditional high streets allow for stopping, parking and slow traffic movement provides an effective way of accommodating local shopping and economic activity.

- **Fine grain or coarse grain.** A fine grain of routes, defining small street blocks makes a place more accessible, and encourages walking and cycling. Finely grained streets and blocks are more typical around busy commercial areas.

Fig. 17 Fine grain/coarse grain

Fig. 18

Use of buildings and spaces to slow traffic
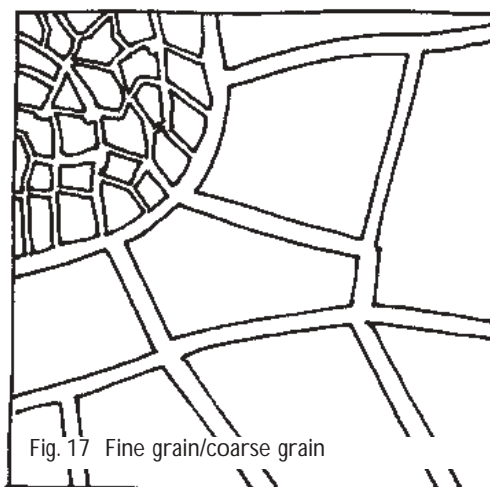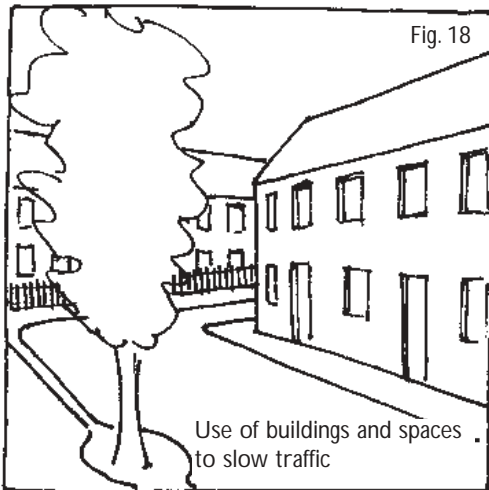
- **Encouraging slow traffic speeds.**
  Traffic speeds can be reduced by the arrangement of buildings and spaces, including limiting forward visibility (see also fig 36 page 39). Physical traffic calming measures (see fig 89 page 57) should be secondary, but considered as an integral part of the design. Changes in materials and the use of "gateways" at an entrance (see fig 37 page 39) can reduce traffic speeds. Small corner radii can be used to encourage careful driving.

4.5 Legibility - A Place that has a Clear Image and is Easy to Understand

This objective is to do with promoting legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, focal points, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around. The kind of issues which influence legibility are:
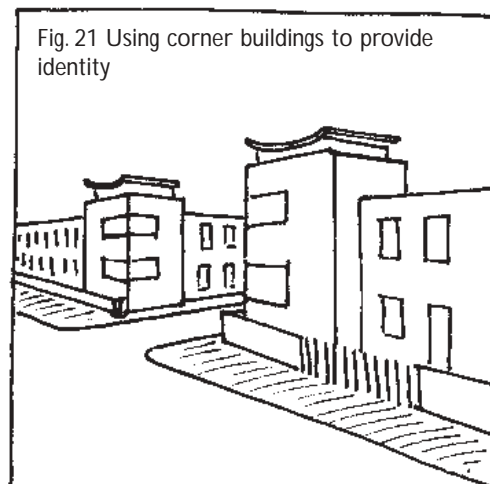
- **Views and vistas.** Views and vistas can be used, or created to assist with legibility. They should focus on important routes, memorable

Fig. 19 Views and focal points
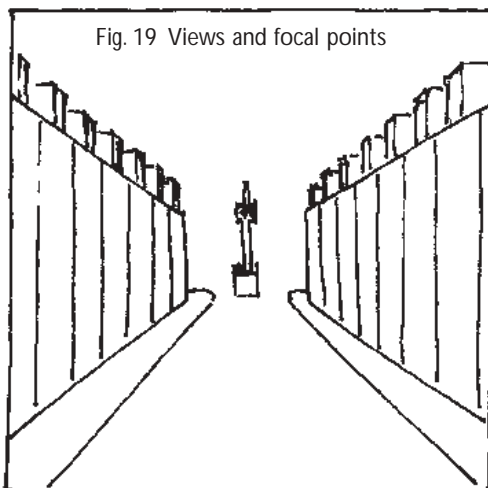
buildings (see also fig 62 page 47) and landscape features. Bespoke design, for example of street furniture can also contribute to distinctiveness and character.

Fig. 20 Bespoke design
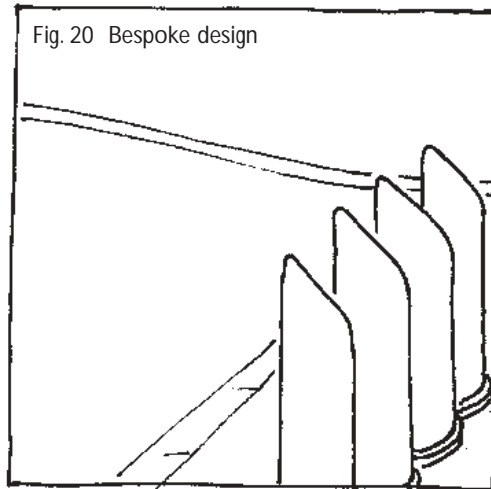
- **Design, function and location of buildings.**
  The most active uses should be concentrated in the most prominent places, adjacent to the main routes and spaces, and at focal points (see also fig 40 page 40). Ensuring that the function of the building is readily apparent to passers by, and that its main entrance is easily identifiable (see also fig 6 page 14) also contributes to understanding a place.

- **Corners.** Corner buildings can be designed to provide strong identity, and a point of orientation, as well as providing visual interest. Making a corner building higher than its neighbours will emphasise its importance (see also fig 82 page 53). Locating public uses such as shops, services etc. on busy street corners enhances activity and identity (see also fig 40 page 40).
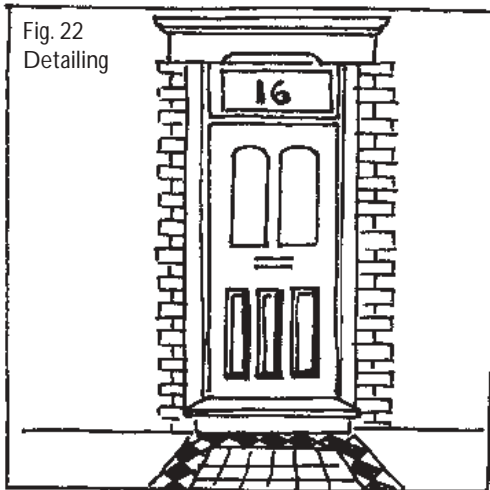

Fig. 21 Using corner buildings to provide identity

Fig. 22
Detailing

Floor to ceiling heights.
Building depths

Fig. 23

- **Detailing and materials.** Attention to detailing can help to reinforce legibility, especially on important buildings, where there are important uses, and on building entrances. Rich detailing is best seen close to ground level. The choice of distinctive materials, the design of signage, works of art and lighting can be used to the same end.

4.6 Adaptability - A Place that can Change Easily

This objective is about designing for changing social, technological and economic conditions. The most successful places have prospered through changing circumstances. The physical fabric of a place therefore needs to be founded on unchanging patterns of human life, rather than being inflexibly tailored to a very specific purpose. If a place can adapt to changing circumstances, then it can avoid the problems associated with blight, dereliction and large-scale redevelopment. Adaptability can be considered at every scale, whether it be for the design of a single house, or for a whole city.
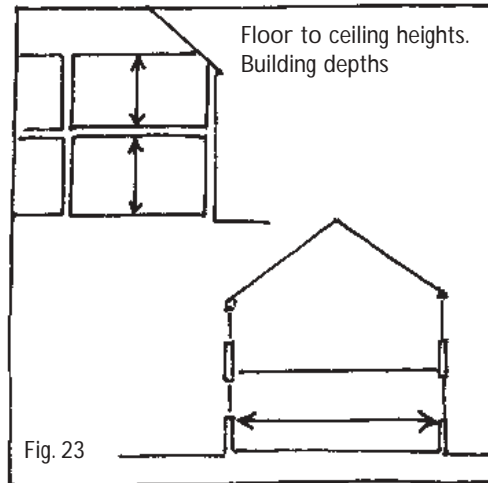
- **Building form.** Buildings can accommodate changing requirements through consideration of floor-to-ceiling heights, building depths, adaptable ground floors in prominent positions on busy streets. Housing can be designed to respond to the changing needs of occupiers.

Balconies to relate buildings to the public realm
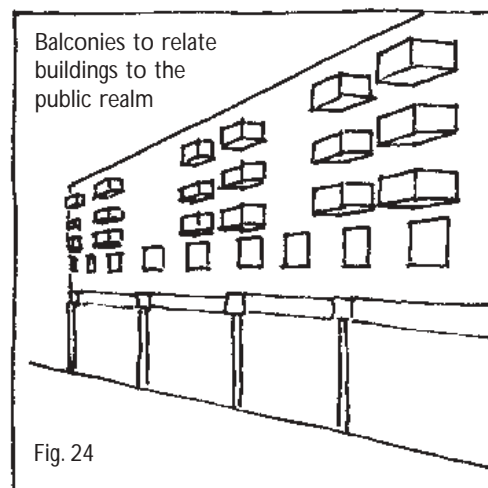
Fig. 24

- **Different activities.** Well designed public spaces will accommodate a range of different uses. Development can be related to the public realm in ways which encourage flexible use of buildings and spaces. Balconies and forecourts can be used imaginatively to this end. Buildings can accommodate a mix of uses by means of providing different access arrangements at different times.

- **Flexible layout and design.**
  Fine grain development layouts are more adaptable than coarse grain layouts (see also fig 17 page 17). Roads which are built to

adoptable standards will allow a greater variety of uses to be accommodated over time than roads which are locked into estate management agreements. The layout of infrastructure (eg water supply, electricity, sewerage etc) should take into account foreseeable changes in demand. Consideration needs to be given in the design of buildings to possible future uses, and to possible future needs to expand. This may have implications for the means of escape, the position of a building on a site, and floor-to-ceiling heights. Narrow fronted buildings (see also fig 25 page 20) also allow greatest adaptability to changing needs.

4.7 Diversity - A Place with Variety and Choice

This objective is about promoting diversity and choice through a mix of compatible buildings, spaces and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.
The mix may be provided within a building or within a street or neighbourhood. The mix of uses is likely to be wider, and at a finer grain within town centres or local centres, than elsewhere. High-density development can be used to provide a wider mix of uses within a given area, partly through provision of extra space to accommodate the range of uses, and partly by provision of a larger local market for services.

- **Attracting people to an area.** A mix of uses can attract people to an area to live, to work and to play. The mix of uses can be within a single building, within a street, or within a neighbourhood. Different uses can attract people to use an area at different times of the day.

- **The right mix.** Uses need to be compatible with one another. A range of uses can help to create a balanced community, which enjoys a good range of local services, which can be accessed without reliance on the car.

- **Layout, building form and tenure.** Buildings of different sizes and types can accommodate a range of different uses over time. Social housing should be mixed in with market housing, and it should not be distinguishable by its design. Subdivision of large sites into smaller plots can help to create diversity,

especially if different design approaches are used in each plot. Narrow fronted plots allow small-scale shopping and commercial activities to flourish, and allow scope for maximum diversity within one street.

Fig. 25

Narrow fronted premises for maximum diversity
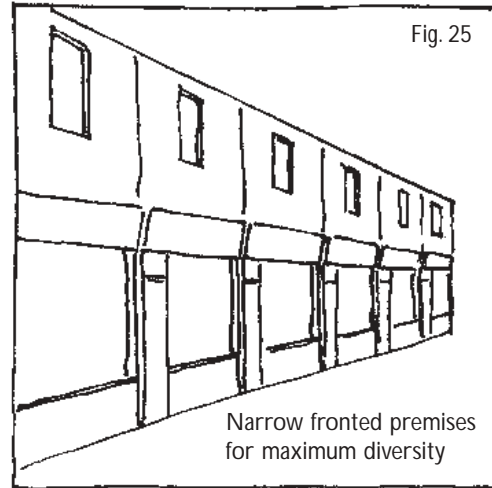
5. Areas Of The Borough

5.1 Historic Development

Merton has developed from a series of small mediaeval villages, based mainly on an agricultural economy, and surrounded by associated with open fields and commons. In the 17th and 18th centuries there was a phase when areas were developed as country estates for rich London merchants.
There was a parallel development over many centuries of industry in the Borough, initially largely based on the exploitation of water power of local rivers. Following the arrival of railways, trams and buses, there was an explosion of suburban development, dependent on the availability of jobs largely in central and inner London.

This began after about 1870. The suburban development phase was largely over by the 2nd World War, and since then there has been a phase of intensification of development, through a process of in-filling spaces, piecemeal redevelopment and large-scale redevelopment. This process continues today.
The great majority of the Borough has been the subject of development at a period when local traditional vernacular architecture, and locally sourced materials had ceased to influence or constrain building work. Such features are now only seen in the remaining fragments of pre-industrial villages such as Wimbledon Village, Mitcham Cricket Green, Merton Village and the old Morden Village.
These circumstances mean that a large part of the Borough does not display any particularly distinctive local building design characteristics, or use distinctive local materials.
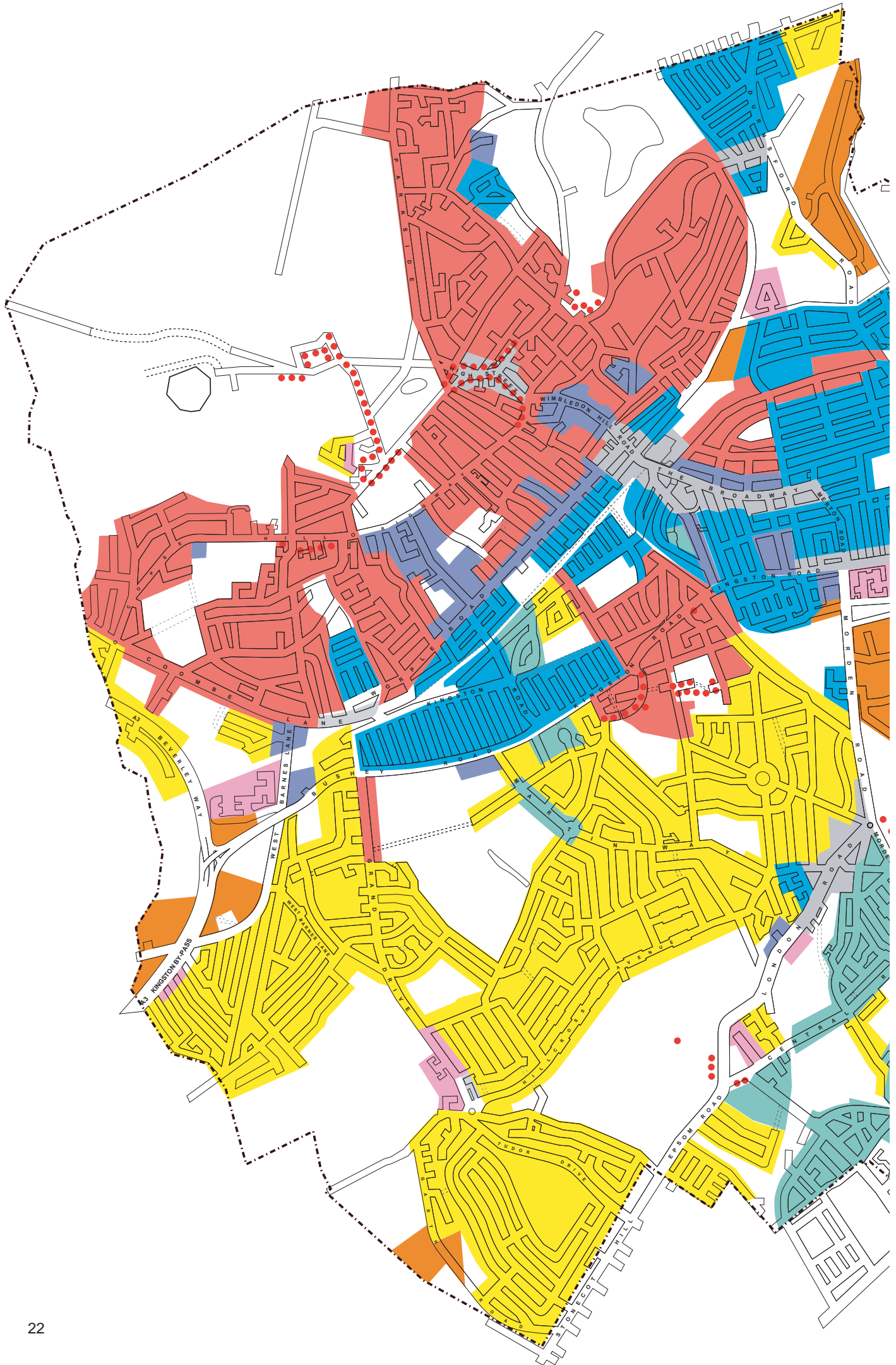
More typically building design and materials used are common to London as a whole, or common to the south east region, or even the country as a whole. Variations of design and materials within the Borough do however occur, but they relate more to the period of construction, and layouts, designs and materials which were typical of that period, rather than to geography.

Certain parts of the Borough are nevertheless considered to possess "a special character or appearance", which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. This special quality may be related to the building designs, or the design or organisation of spaces. They are designated as Conservation Areas, and are identified in the UDP.

Good design is not a consideration limited to conservation areas, or to other especially sensitive areas, it is an important aspect of development across the whole Borough. It is central to the whole concept of good planning.

5.2 Distinctive Areas of the Borough

Despite the above, in certain areas of the Borough, there are special considerations relating to design of buildings and urban design matters which need to be considered. These distinct areas are indicated diagrammatically in the map on pages 22 & 23. They are described on pages 24 to 32, with a broad assessment of each of their characteristics. Inevitably this provides only a broad overview, and examination of local circumstances will usually reveal some variations.

KEY

- 🔴 Pre Suburban Settlements
- 🟦 "Grid Iron" Terraces
- 🟪 Areas with Blocks of Flats
- ⬜ Commercial Centres
- 🟪 Post 1945 Council Estates
- 🟩 Inter War Garden City Layouts
- 🟨 Medium Intensity Suburban Development
- 🟥 Loosely Structured Suburban Development
- 🟧 Large Scale Industrial Warehousing and Retail Parks
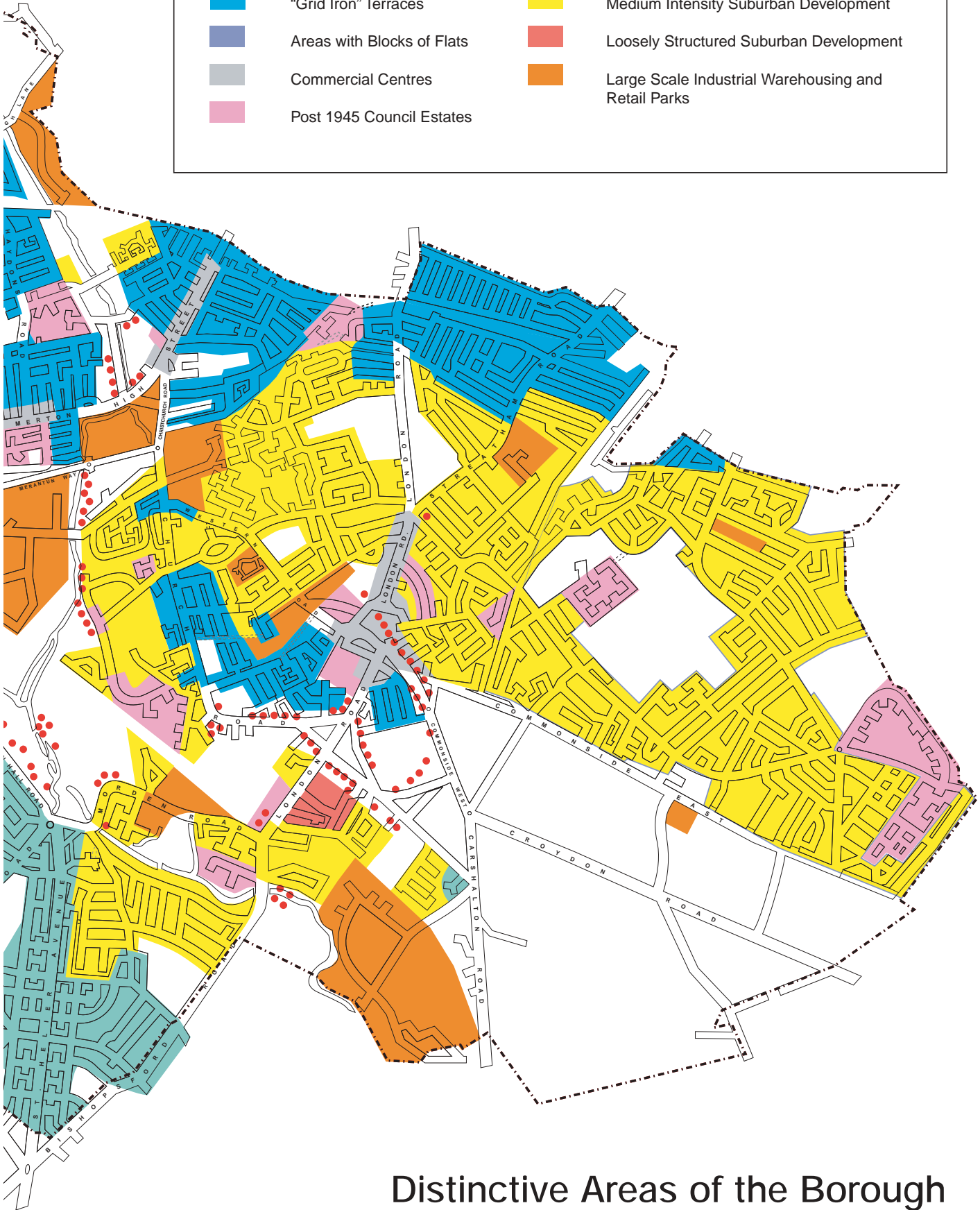
Distinctive Areas of the Borough

Pre suburban settlements

- **Pre suburban settlements.** These are small fragments of pre suburban village, or industrial development which may be seen in a few locations in the Borough. The buildings date mainly from the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, though the general layouts and property boundaries may be much older, and they can be important in defining the character of the place. Most notably they include parts of Wimbledon and Merton villages, the original Morden Village core, Mitcham Cricket Green, and parts of the Wandle Valley. These areas present a clearly distinct and "village-like" character from their later surroundings, with typically more organic (non geometric) form. They include both small scale, tightly knit buildings and layouts, and also larger scale buildings within large, generally well landscaped, grounds.
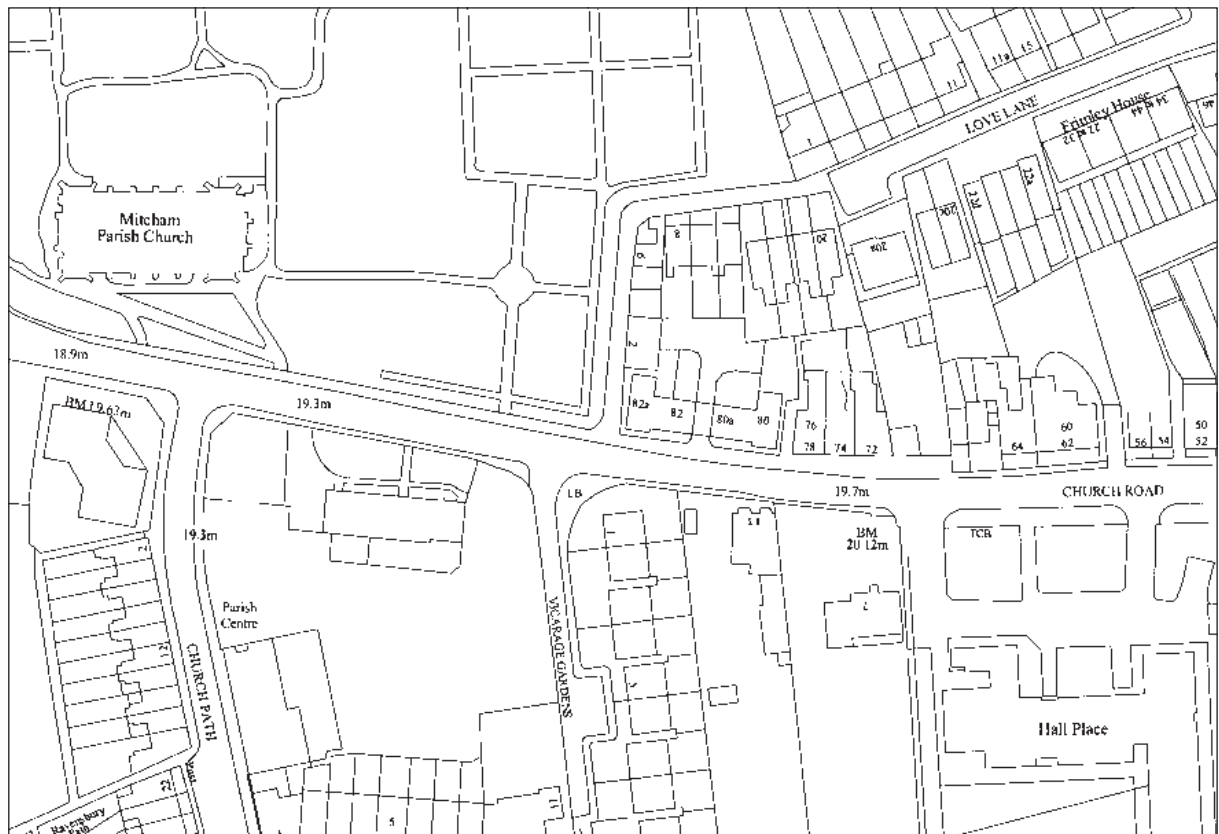
Tightly built up "grid iron" terraces

- **Tightly built up "grid iron" terraces.**
  These areas mainly comprise late 19th or early 20th century by-law housing areas, and are to be found mainly in the north of the Borough. They are notable for their straight, grid-iron street layout, which is usually based on a fine urban grain (the intensity of the network of streets). Buildings are typically intensively developed with mainly 2 storey terraces, which are sometimes quite long, and which typically have little separation (back to back or flank wall to flank wall) one from another. They tend to have small front garden areas, and usually fairly small rear gardens, and a high proportion of the site areas are devoted to building foot-print. They have predominantly on-street parking. Some areas have narrow pedestrian alleys which give access to backland areas, but vehicle access to these areas is unusual. These areas often have a strong sense of architectural cohesion, and an urban feel. The quality of street works is usually high.

Loosely structured suburban development

- **Loosely structured suburban development.** These areas date from the late 19th or early 20th centuries. They occur mainly in the north west of the Borough. Compared to grid iron terraces they have a much looser structure, based on a larger scale urban grain (or network of streets), larger building plots and gardens, larger houses, and have a less regimented arrangement of buildings (typically 2 or 3 storey, detached or semi detached). Building designs sometimes vary significantly, and often there is no clear rhythm of buildings and spaces which may mean that there is a less strongly cohesive architectural character to the area, though this is not always the case. Building coverage of the site is usually fairly low, and landscape features are important or very important. Parking is usually provided off street. There is usually emphasis given to richly detailed buildings, and they often display high quality building materials and workmanship. Some areas display serpentine "Victorian carriage drive" highway layouts, with wide foot ways and carriageways. The quality of street works is usually high.

Medium intensity suburban development

- **Medium intensity suburban development.**
  These areas occupy middle ground between the grid iron terraces and the loosely structured suburban development. They occupy large parts of the south and east of the Borough. They largely comprise 1930's "suburbia". These areas generally have a fairly large urban grain. They comprise almost universally 2 storey, semi detached or short terraces (typically 4 to 8 houses). They are more loosely structured than the grid iron terraces, and generally have medium sized front and rear garden areas. Landscape features are also rather more important here than in by law housing areas, but these features are not developed to the same extent as in the more loosely structured suburban development. These areas usually have a regular rhythm of buildings and spaces, and mainly have a strong sense of architectural cohesion. Vehicle access to the backland areas is often provided by means of narrow unmade tracks, and these provide off street parking within the rear gardens. However increasingly front garden areas are being altered to provide off street parking.

Areas with blocks of flats

- **Areas with blocks of flats.**

  These areas were often originally late Victorian or Edwardian low density areas, which have subsequently been subject to quite intensive redevelopment on a site by site basis, from the 1960's onwards. There are also some earlier examples of flats which are "first generation" developments (ie from greenfield sites). Typically they are found in small pockets in the north west of the Borough. Building forms are typically very diverse, and they may be quite high, usually being between 3 and 5 storeys. These areas appear quite distinct from their surroundings, and they can have significant landscape value.

Inter war Garden City layouts

- **Inter war Garden City layouts.**
  A large area in the south of the Borough has a very distinctive residential character, which stems from its comprehensive development in the 1930s by the London County Council, as an overspill residential development. This area is a typical example of inter war "garden city" planning, with careful integration of buildings, gardens and large and small public open spaces. Buildings are mainly 2 storey "cottage" type houses (semi detached or short terraces), but there are some higher flats and shopping parades. A few smaller examples of this type of development exist elsewhere in the Borough. These areas have a strong sense of architectural cohesion.

Post 1945 Council housing estates

- **Post 1945 Council housing estates.**
  These are mostly relatively small islands of high density redevelopment (flats and houses), which in terms of architecture are highly distinct from their surroundings. They tend to be scattered throughout the Borough.
  The landscape quality of open spaces, and the grouping of buildings around green spaces are usually notable features. Building heights typically range from 3 storeys to medium or high rise.
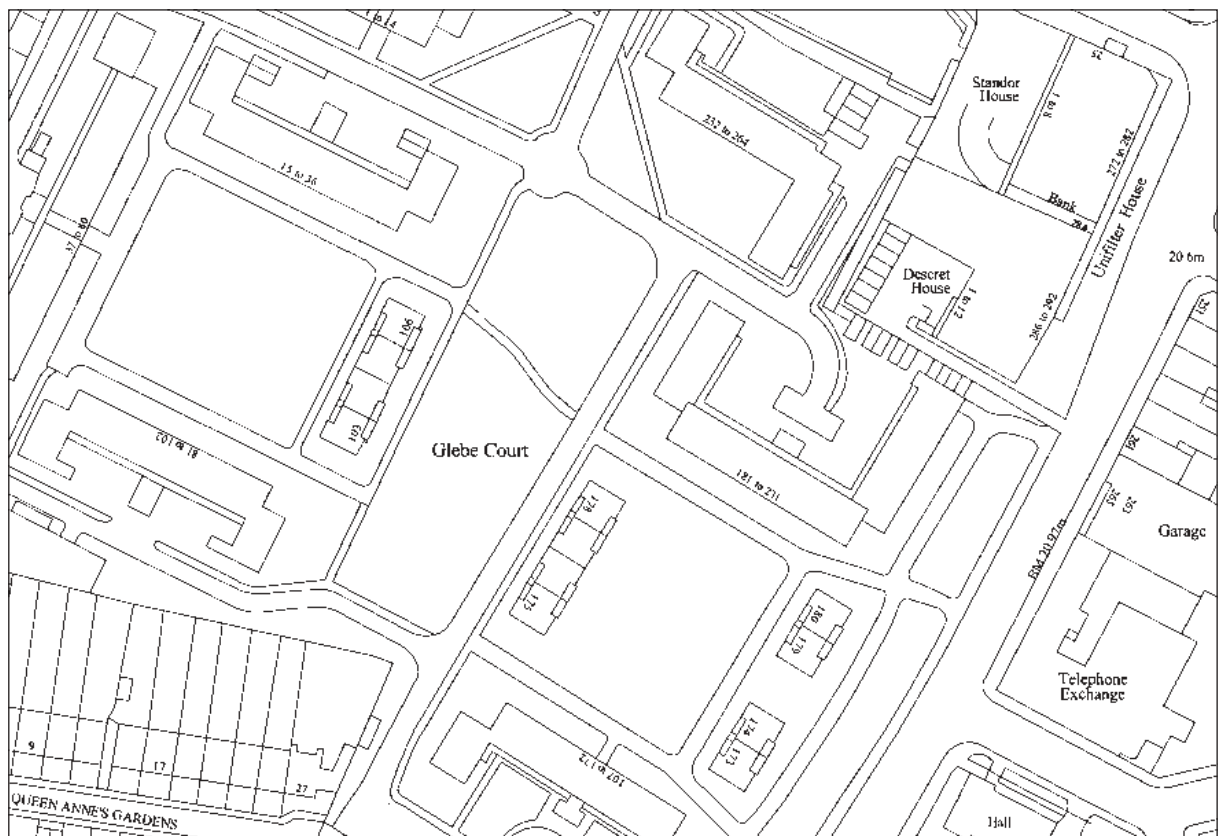
Commercial centres

- **Commercial centres.** These are medium or high density commercial areas, with mostly medium to high rise development, and very diverse building forms, and a wide mixture of uses. They combine buildings from the late Victorian period with areas of post war redevelopment, and relatively few buildings from intervening period.

Large scale industrial, warehousing and retail parks

- **Large scale industrial, warehousing and retail parks.** These are inter war or post war trading estates and retail estates, with large scale commercial buildings, often surrounded by car parking areas.

5.3 Influences on the Design of Future Development

The implications of the policies in the UDP suggests that certain areas of the Borough are likely to be subject to more intensive changes, and other areas are likely to be protected from major changes. Areas likely to experience more intensive change are:

- **Sites within town centres and areas within 10 minutes walk of a town centre.**
  Development within these areas will be likely to be at a high density, (higher within the town centre than in the surrounding area). It will be likely to have a more "urban feel" than may have been the case in the past. This may mean increased building heights, spaces which are more completely enclosed by buildings, building close to the highway, with reduced, or with no, front garden areas. The availability of a good range of local services within walking distance, will reduce car dependency, and therefore reduce the need for off street car parking provision (UDP policy HP.4 and UDP Parking/ Density matrix). These areas are indicated on plans on pages 66 & 67.

- **Areas along transport corridors and sites close to, but beyond 10 minutes walk from a town centre.** Development within these areas will be likely to be at a medium to high density, with a more "urban feel" than may have been the case in the past. This may mean increased building heights, spaces which are more completely enclosed by buildings, building close to the highway, with reduced, or with no, front garden areas. The availability of good public transport facilities within walking distance, will reduce car dependency, and therefore reduce the need for off-street car parking provision (UDP policy HP.4 and UDP Parking/ Density matrix).

- **Area for Intensification.**
  This concept derives from the Draft London Plan. They are areas which offer significant potential for increases in residential, employment and other uses, through development or redevelopment of available sites, and the exploitation of potential for regeneration, through higher densities and more mixed and intensive use. Policies for development should exploit accessibility and existing or planned public transport capacity. The area for intensification within Merton has not yet been precisely demarcated, however the London Plan indicates one such area in the Colliers Wood/South Wimbledon area, and it also makes reference to potential intensification around the area Mitcham/Willow Lane, and in Wimbledon Town Centre.

Areas which are likely to experience more intensive change, and are likely to be developed at a higher density will still need to maintain high environmental standards, and in particular will need to ensure that spaces between buildings are not overly dominated by cars. This will mean that either car parking provision must necessarily be very limited (ie below maximum car parking standards), or it will need to be located below ground level.

Areas likely to be protected from intensive change are:

- **Conservation Areas.** There are currently 28 Conservation Areas in the Borough. In these areas any new development will need to fully respect the existing character and appearance of the area. Development proposals will therefore be expected to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Council is preparing design guides and character assessments for each of the conservation areas in the Borough. These will provide specific guidance on the aspects of the area which give rise to its special character, and will therefore be useful to developers in terms of providing design guidance. These constraints on development will apply even when they fall within the 800 metre zones of town centres and public transport nodes (UDP policies BE.1 to BE.3). (see plan on page 67 showing the extent of Conservation Areas).

- **Areas of Distinctive Quality.**
  At the present time there are no Areas of Distinctive Quality designated in the Borough. These are areas which possess readily identifiable and distinctive characteristics.

In particular these are likely to relate to residential areas. It is possible that in the future such areas may be designated by the Council, especially as part of a wider review of Conservation Areas in the Borough.
If and when such areas are designated, the Council will seek to protect and enhance their established character and appearance (UDP policy BE.4).

The question will always arise as to the extent that the character and the design influences of surrounding areas should govern the urban design approach and the architectural design of new buildings. (NB see section 8.3 for context considerations governing architectural design issues).
The extent of that influence needs to be considered in the light of three factors:

- **The scale of the development itself, and whether it is large enough to sustain a separate identity of its own.** Where a new development is large then it is more likely to be capable of sustaining a separate design identity. By contrast where a development would essentially be read as part of an existing street scene, then it would be generally be better to work with the existing characteristics of that street scene.

- **The position of the development relative to surrounding buildings and spaces.** Where the new development would in general be viewed a separate entity from surrounding public spaces, then it is more likely to be capable of sustaining a separate design identity. By contrast where a development would for example essentially be read in the close context of existing buildings in a street scene, then it would be generally be better to work with the existing characteristics of that street scene.

- **The environmental qualities of the surrounding area.** These may vary considerably. In some areas, where a clear sense of character, or a clear sense of place is lacking in the surrounding area, it may be preferable to, create a distinctive development, with its own particular sense of place through a distinctive urban design approach for the new development.

6. Context of the Site

In order for a new development to be sustainable and to be successfully integrated into its surroundings, it is essential that the wider context of the site, including the site itself, and its surroundings should be fully understood.

Consideration of the context of the site is a stage that should be undertaken before any proposals are formulated. The Council may require the submission of a contextual analysis as part of a Design Statement (see Section 9 of this SPG).

Looking at the context of the site will (for larger development proposals) include assessment in terms of its relationship to the nearest commercial centre, and in relation to the area within 10 minutes walking distance (approx 800 metres). For smaller development schemes the extent of the context can be correspondingly smaller. A simple house extension should for example be based on an understanding of the building to be extended and its immediate neighbours, the spaces between the building and its immediate neighbours, and an understanding of any regularity in the buildings and spaces in the immediate vicinity. This preliminary work can then guide subsequent design decisions.

Fig. 26

Context of the site for larger development proposals

Fig. 27

Context of the site for small development proposals
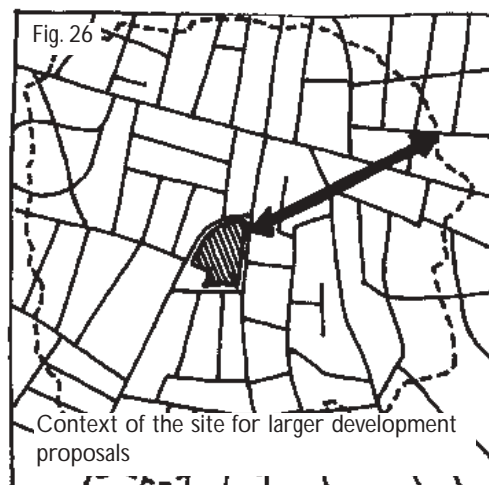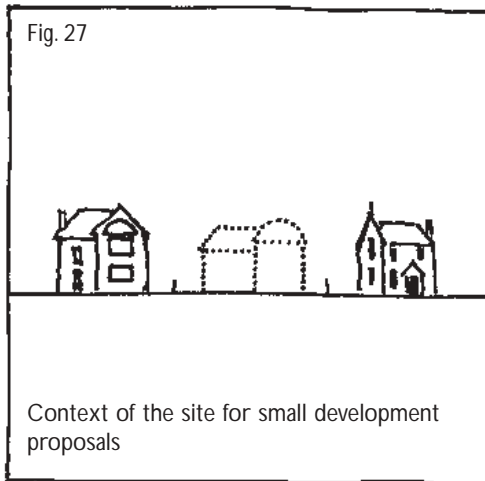
The contextual analysis needs to embrace

- Landscape features (within the site and its immediate surroundings), including trees and other vegetation, boundary and surface treatments.

- Potential open spaces within the site itself

- Ecology and landform (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- Physical constraints of the site (eg ground contamination, power lines, steep slopes etc.)

- Townscape (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- The arrangement of public and private spaces (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- Orientation of buildings (fronts and backs) (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- Problems edges (eg noise from roads or railways), bad neighbours (generators of noise fumes etc.), and edges with positive aspect (eg trees and open spaces)

- Views into, from, and through, the site

- Building heights (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- Landmark buildings (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- Building materials (within the site and its immediate surroundings)

- The scale of the urban grain in the vicinity of the site

- Linkages between the development and local services, both locally and within the wider area (including the capacity of the services to meet demand)

- Linkages between the development and the public transport network (including capacity)

- Linkages between the development and walking and cycling routes

- Pedestrian desire lines through and around the site

- Qualitative assessment of pedestrian routes within the site and the immediate surroundings (including safety, gradients, crossing points, widths etc.)

- Crime pattern analysis (to contribute to crime reduction)

Assessment of the site and surroundings can alter the perceptions of the development potential of a site. It can inform the design of the development and identify opportunities for integrating it to its surroundings. It can ensure that new community facilities are provided, which fit into the pattern of service provision within the wider area, so that gaps in services may be filled and undesirable duplication of services may be avoided. It will help to ensure that an appropriate density and level of car parking provision is used. The assessment can ensure that the development provides a suitable response to its surroundings in terms of building height, setback and alignment, use of materials and the urban grain. It can also ensure that it respects landscape features, ecology, and local views etc.

7. Urban Design Guidance- The form of Development (UDP Policy BE.16)

7.1 General

Policy BE.16 in the Merton UDP indicates that development proposals will be expected to achieve urban design objectives. These objectives are summarised in Section 4 of this Guidance.

This section deals with the form of development. In the following paragraphs each aspect of development form is related to the relevant urban design objective, in accordance with the following notations
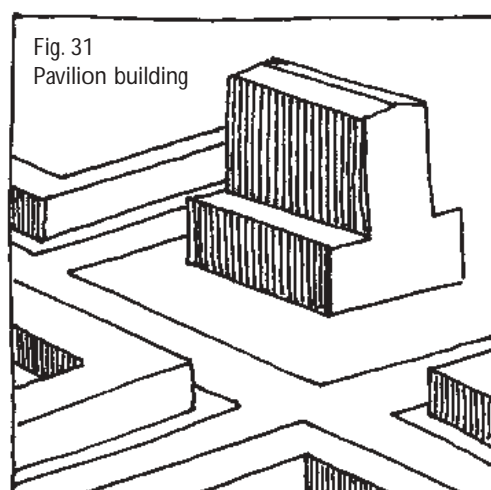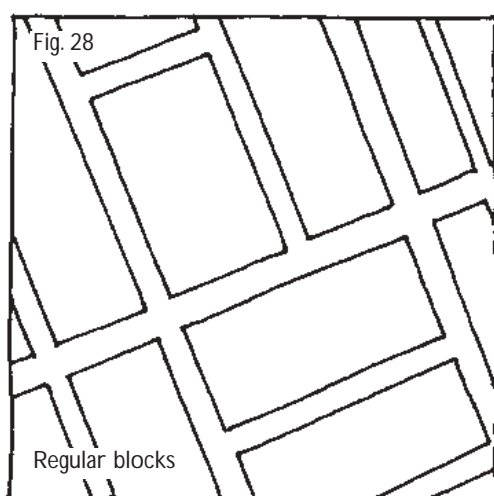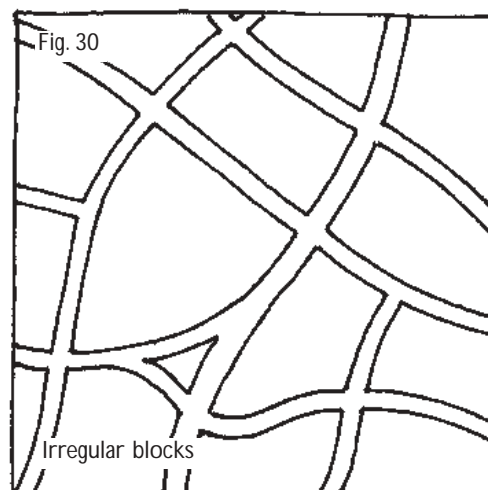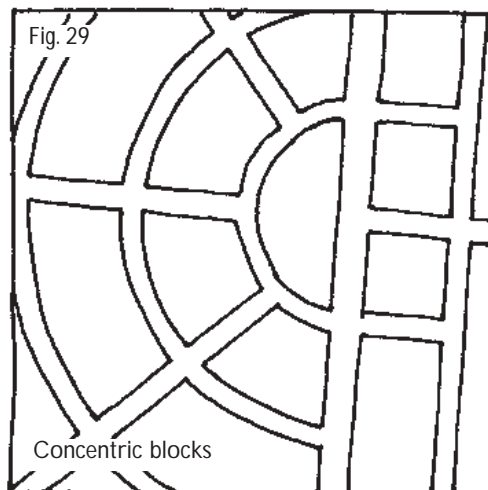
Urban Design Objective	See Reference Letter
Character	(A)
Continuality and Enclosure	(B)
Quality and Public Realm	(C)
Ease of Movement	(D)
Legibility	(E)
Adaptability	(F)
Diversity	(G)

A summary of the main factors relating to each aspect of development form, which any proposed development will need to consider, is set out in the remainder of this section of the SPG.

7.2 Pattern of development

The best examples of urban and suburban environments demonstrate very clearly defined and coherent urban structure **(C,E)**. This structure is manifested by a coherent and interconnected network of routes for movement, which define the intervening street blocks of developed land, open spaces etc (see also figs 33 & 34, page 38) **(D)**.

The routes and the associated street blocks can take on a particular character, such as traditional street, boulevard, square, court, mews, circus or avenues. The scale can be intimate or grand, or somewhere in between **(A)**.

Fig. 29
Concentric blocks

Fig. 30
Irregular blocks

Fig. 28
Regular blocks

Fig. 31
Pavilion building

The most common, and generally the most successful structure has proved to be the perimeter block (see section 7.3 below). However other forms may work in special situations. These can arise where there is a particular site constraint, or where a "set piece" development, such as a pavilion building, is needed. (see fig 31 page 36).

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:
- Ensuring that the pattern of development is appropriate to its context **(A,B,D,E)**
- Ensuring that the grain of the development (the intensity of the mesh of movement routes, and the consequent street block size) is suited to the locality (see also fig 17 page 17), and that it provides good permeability **(D,E).**

7.3 The perimeter block

One of the simplest, commonest and most successful urban structures, is the traditional perimeter block. This arrangement usually comprises a square or rectangular pattern of streets defining the block, with buildings facing outwards towards the streets, and surrounding private spaces at the core of the block **(B,C,D,E).**

Fig. 32 The perimeter block
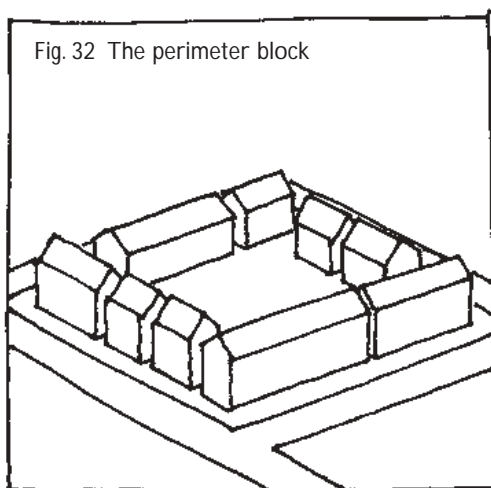
Perimeter blocks work well by providing clear, convenient and well defined routes for movement, making efficient use of land (with no "left over" land), providing good informal surveillance of public spaces, and in providing unambiguous definition of

public and private spaces **(B,C,D,E).** (see also figs 5,10, and 54, pages 14, 15 and 44).

Visual quality **(C)** derives not from the two dimensional layout, but from:
- The mix of activities
- The quality of detailing of buildings (see also fig 21).
- The landscaping
- The interfaces between public and private spaces.

The size of the street block may vary, but its size will affect the efficiency with which land is used, the convenience of routes through the site **(D)**, traffic management and traffic speed **(C,G),** the choices for locating car parking, and the uses that can be accommodated (depending on their spatial requirements). Most development schemes involve work within part of a street block, rather than developing an entire street block. However even the development of a small part of a street block may either strengthen or weaken its effectiveness in terms of urban design.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:
- Providing clearly defined routes, which are overlooked by the buildings (see also figs 45, and 68, pages 41 and 49). **(B,C,D)**
- Clearly relating building frontages to the network of routes. **(B,C)**
- Clearly defining public, semi public and private spaces, with private spaces being kept, as far as possible, away from public spaces (see also figs 5 and 63, pages 14 and 47). **(B)**
- Avoiding the creation of left over land **(C).**

7.4 Permeability

The success or failure of an area is closely related to its connection with its surroundings, and its access to local services **(D).** However no one form of movement should be given priority over all the others. Streets should be designed as public spaces, and the design should not be a response to engineering considerations in relation to vehicles (see also fig 64 page 48). This means that whole character of spaces should not be dictated by the
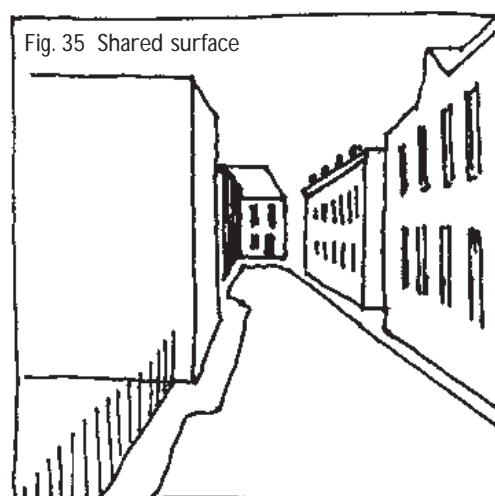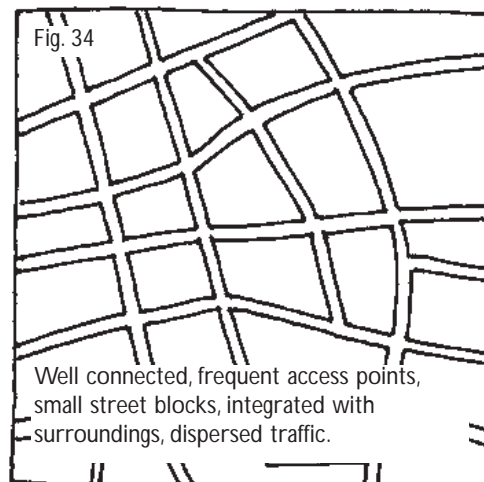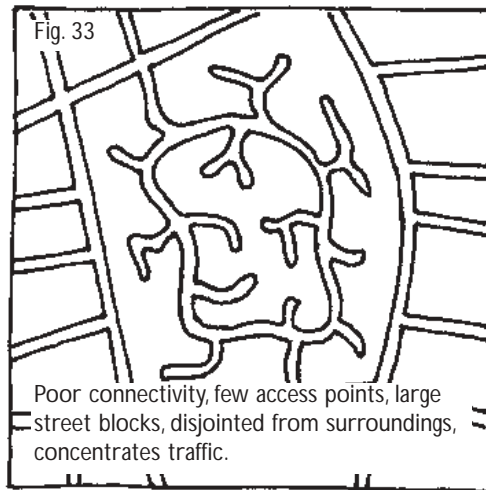
geometrical requirements of road traffic (see also fig 55 page 44). **(A)**.

There should be recognition of the fact that roads, streets and other routes have multiple functions. In particular they need to be designed at a human scale, with the needs of pedestrians and other non-drivers in mind **(C,D)**.

The physical requirements demanded by vehicles to move, to turn and to park cannot be ignored, however they can be catered for in a more subtle way, so that the design of a space does not appear to be dictated by these requirements. Equally reducing radii, visibility and space generally, may encourage vehicles to travel more slowly, whilst at the same time offering more space and greater safety for pedestrians, and cyclists and more space for environmental treatments and distinctive layouts (see also figs 18 and 36, pages 18 and 39). **(C,D)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Ensuring that the development is well connected, with frequent points of access into and through the area, to integrate with the existing routes in the surrounding area. Small street blocks are preferable to large ones, especially in areas of high activity and mixed uses. New routes within the development should connect easily with the existing pattern of routes in the wider area (see also figs 33 & 34, page 38). **(D)**.

- Layouts should encourage traffic dispersal across all routes, in preference to concentration onto a major route, which tends to cut one area off from another. **(D)**.

- Ensuring that there is satisfactory provision for cyclists and pedestrians. In order to do this, routes for these users should be short, convenient, safe and direct, forming a well connected network of spaces and routes (see also fig 47 page 42). Low traffic speeds (20 mph or less) will also create a more acceptable environment. The design of junctions and crossings is also critical. Pedestrian and cyclist routes which are completely separated

Fig. 33

Poor connectivity, few access points, large street blocks, disjointed from surroundings, concentrates traffic.

Fig. 34

Well connected, frequent access points, small street blocks, integrated with surroundings, dispersed traffic.


Fig. 35 Shared surface

from traffic routes are not usually necessary, except over short distances, and where they can provide a more direct route than can be provided by the road. However a street network which allows though routes for cyclists and pedestrians, but restricts vehicles can be effective. Shared surfaces for traffic, cyclists and pedestrians will work where only a few buildings are served by the route. (see fig 35 page 38). **(D).**

● Making satisfactory provision for public transport users. In order for development to be linked to the requirements of public transport, it should include high densities generally, and higher densities again close to bus stops, stations etc. Public transport routes need to follow the principle roads through the heart of an area. Stops and stations should coincide with the main areas of activity (eg shops, workplaces and community uses), and they should also serve as the focus on which walking routes and crossing places converge (see also fig 15 page 17). Bus priority measures can be considered in larger scale schemes **(D).**

● Designing to control vehicle movement and speed through the layout of the buildings, spaces and the street block structure, is preferable to supplementary ("bolt on") traffic calming measures such as road humps or chicanes (see also fig 89 page 57). This layout approach can include selective closures of streets to vehicles, road geometry constraints (including junction geometry and radii), and the
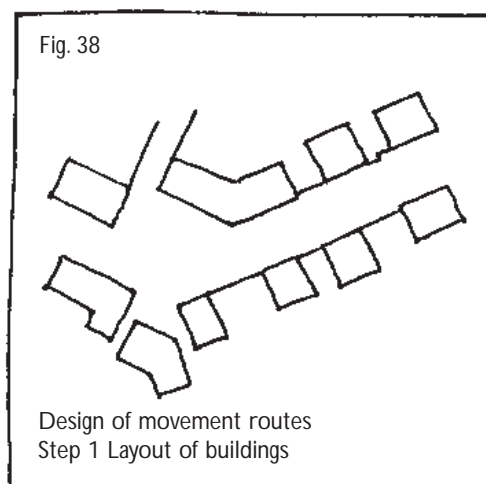

Designing for
low traffic
speed

Fig. 36
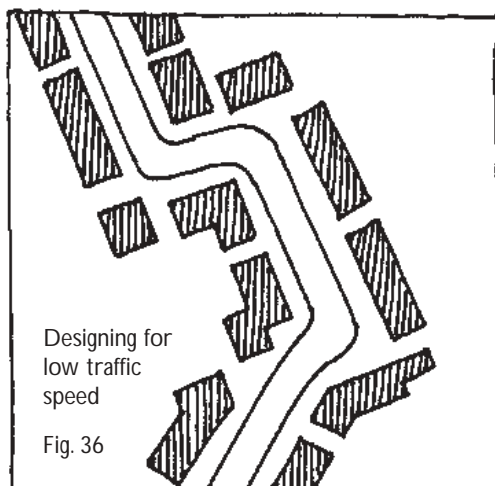
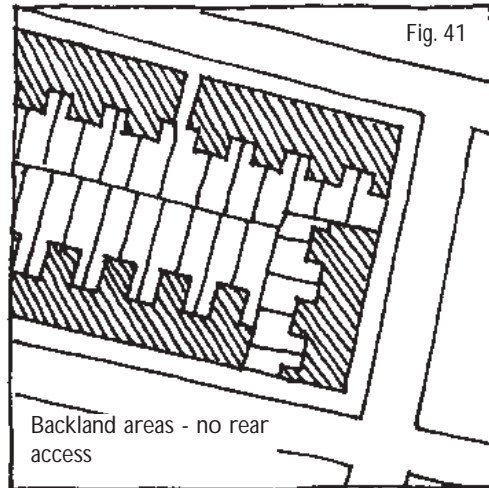restriction of forward vision, all of which induce drivers to travel slowly (see also fig 18 page 18). **(A,E).**

● Designing junctions as a point of entry to an area help to identify a place **(E)**, and can reduce traffic speeds **(D).**

Fig. 37   Designing a point of entry
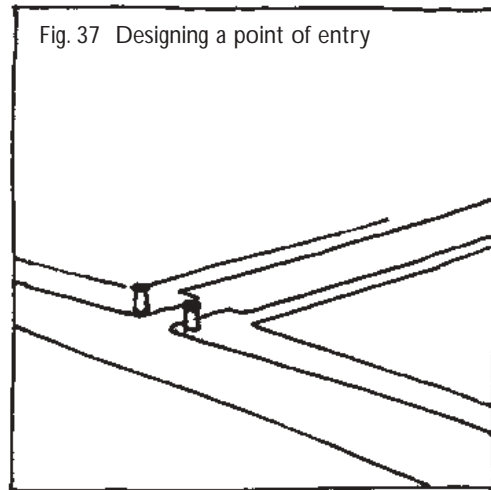
● Reinforcing or strengthening the character of a place, through the design of its movement routes. This can be achieved by giving the first consideration to the layout of buildings, so as to define spaces, after that, the carriageway is threaded through the spaces, with any required turning space. **(A,D,E).**

Fig. 38

Design of movement routes
Step 1 Layout of buildings

Design of movement routes
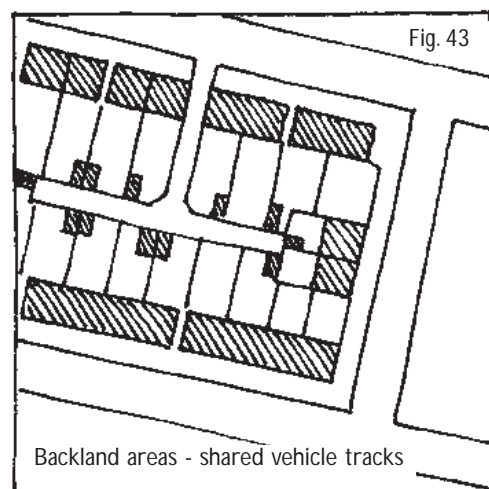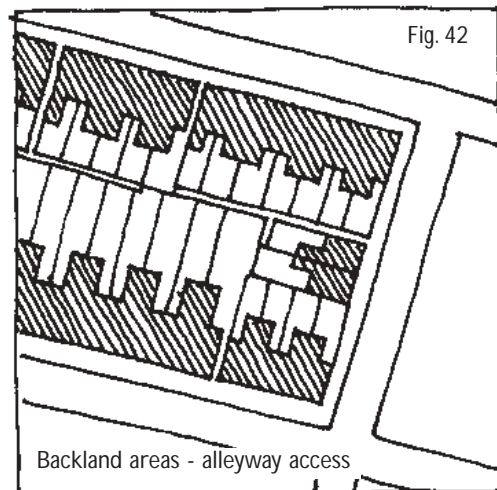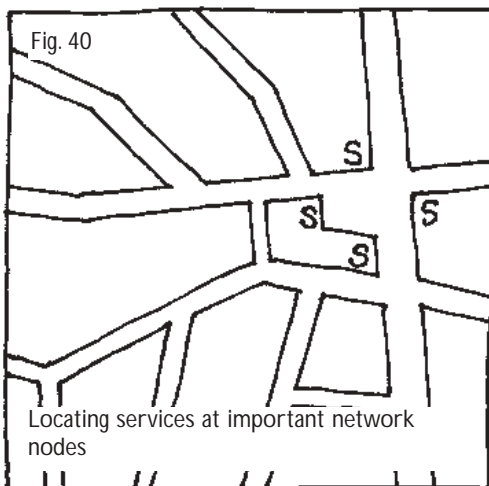Step 2 Threading the carriageway

Fig. 39

Backland areas - no rear access

Fig. 41
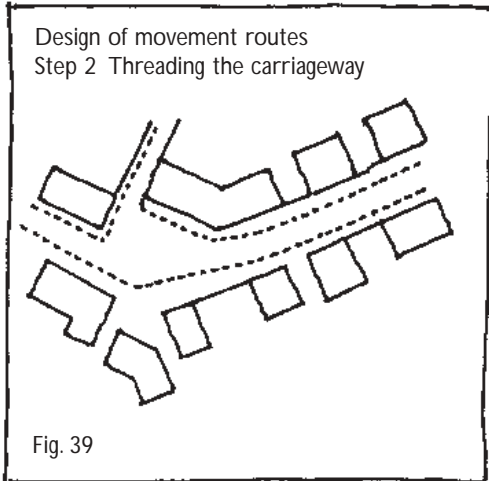
- Locating important services at nodes in the network so as to locate them in situations with the highest level of permeability (**D,E**).

Fig. 40

Locating services at important network nodes

Backland areas - alleyway access

Fig. 42

7.5 Access to backland areas

Access to the backland areas within the centre of each perimeter blocks is a further important consideration. The options here can range from:

- Fully enclosed back gardens with no access, except through individual houses or private gardens.
- Narrow alleyways providing shared access on foot to each rear garden
- Access for vehicles by means of shared vehicle tracks either to individual rear gardens, or to garage courts.
- Placing buildings within backland areas.

Backland areas - shared vehicle tracks

Fig. 43

40

Fig. 44

Backland areas -
Buildings within backlands

Fig. 45

Surveillance of the public realm
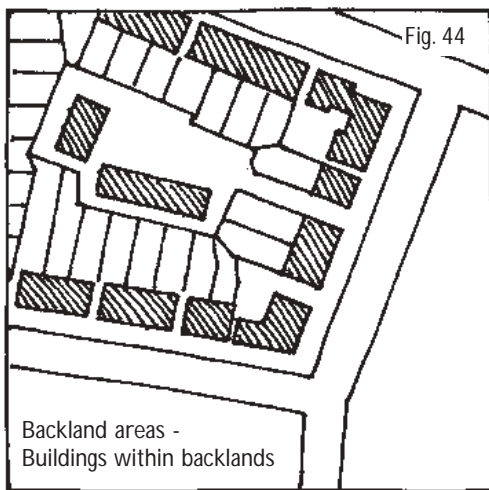
While attempts to remove parked vehicles away from the street frontages can bring benefits in terms of the quality of the street scene, there are clear disadvantages to introducing (either pedestrian or vehicle) access into backland areas.

These have to do with:

- reduced security to the backs of properties
- reduced environmental quality within the back land areas (arising from the introduction of vehicles)
- the danger that alleyways, access ways and garage courts areas may become open to neglect and to misuse
- the inconvenience of having parking areas located at the rear of properties.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Generally avoiding direct access to backland areas from the public domain **(D,E).**
- If access to backland areas is to be provided, then carefully considering how to overcome the potential problems referred to above.
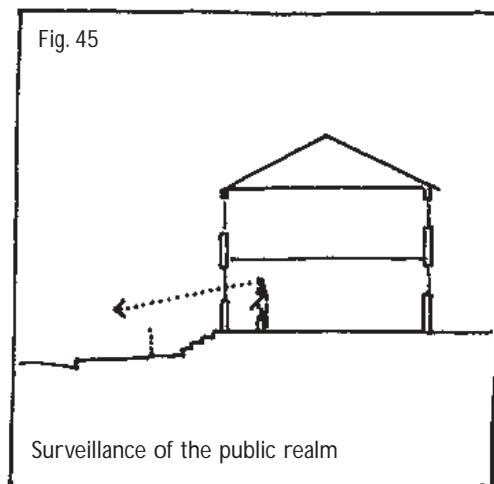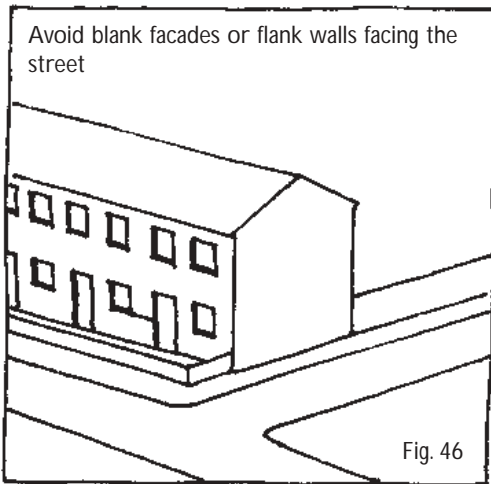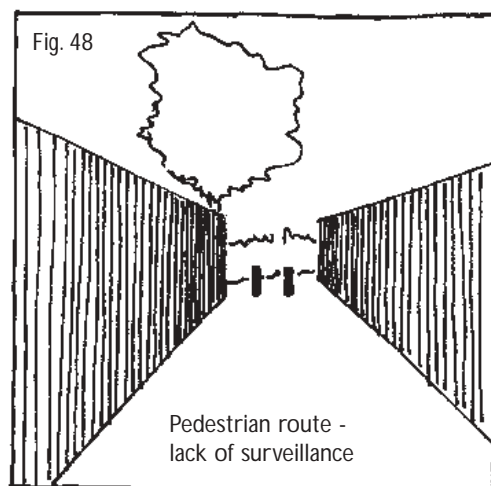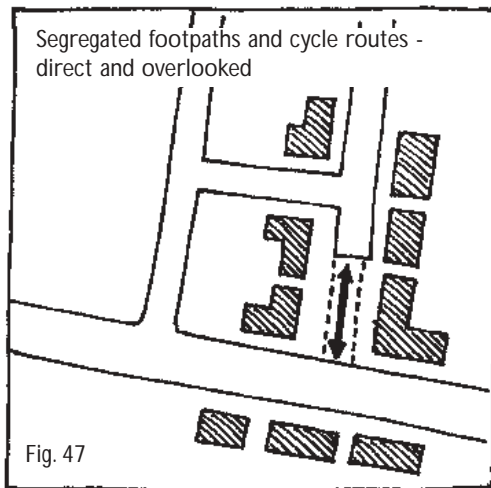
7.6 Health and community safety

Community safety and a sense of personal security can be assisted by good design. Surveillance of the public realm from the windows of buildings promotes community safety (see also figs 68, 46, 47,48,64 and 45, pages 49, 42, 48 and 41).

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- The degree of natural surveillance achieved over the street, other public spaces, and parking spaces, from the windows of buildings **(B).** Positioning rooms, such as living rooms and kitchens so that they overlook the street will assist surveillance. Presenting the backs or sides of buildings to the street (often resulting in high fences and walls adjacent to the street) is damaging from the point of view of surveillance (see also figs 48, 64, and 81, pages 42, 48 and 53).
- Providing a mix of uses which generates street activity and street surveillance throughout the maximum period of the day. **(G).**
- Positioning building entrances so that they face the street (see fig 6 page 14). **(B,D).**
- Provision of continuous frontages, including around the corners (see also figs 79 & 80, pages 52 and 53). **(B).**
- Avoiding a confused mix of public and private spaces **(B).** Private areas, such as private rear gardens are more secure if they adjoin other private areas, rather than streets, side roads, service lanes or footpaths (see also fig 46 and 64, pages 42 and 48).

Avoid blank facades or flank walls facing the street

Fig. 46

- Avoiding blank facades or flank walls which face towards the street. **(B).**

Segregated footpaths and cycle routes - direct and overlooked

Fig. 47

Fig. 48

Pedestrian route - lack of surveillance

- Footpaths and cycle routes which are separated from general traffic routes should be as direct as possible, and should be well overlooked **(B,D,E).**

- Play areas, open spaces, other communal spaces and car parking areas should also be well overlooked. **(B,D,E).**

Fig. 49

High and low level planting - visibility
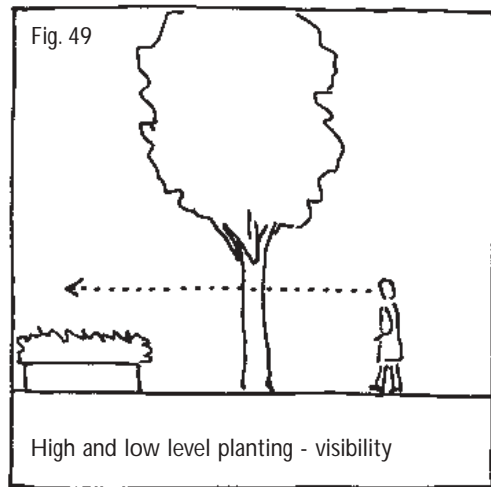
- Giving special consideration to planting proposals and other street furniture, in order to ensure good street level visibility. **(C).**
- Giving special consideration to lighting in public places. **(C).**

The Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Designing Out Crime gives more detail on these issues (see Contacts and Further Guidance Section 12).

7.7 Street widths and enclosure

Consideration of spaces between buildings purely in terms of the requirements of cars, and service vehicles has been a great failing of most recent development. Other movement and amenity requirements need to be taken into account.

Streets, parks and other public spaces can be defined by the buildings and trees which surround them (see fig 52 page 43).

The widths of space between buildings can vary considerably, without necessarily adversely affecting the sense of enclosure, but wider street spaces will work best with taller buildings. If an urban feel to an area is desirable, then a ratio between the height of buildings and the width of space of 1:2 or 1:2.5 may be appropriate. If a less intensive character is appropriate then the ratio may be 1:3.5 or more. In development of a more suburban character, land-

Fig. 50

Height: width 1: 1.35 - suburban character

Height: width 1: 2 - urban character

Enclosure of spaces - buildings and landscape features

Fig. 52
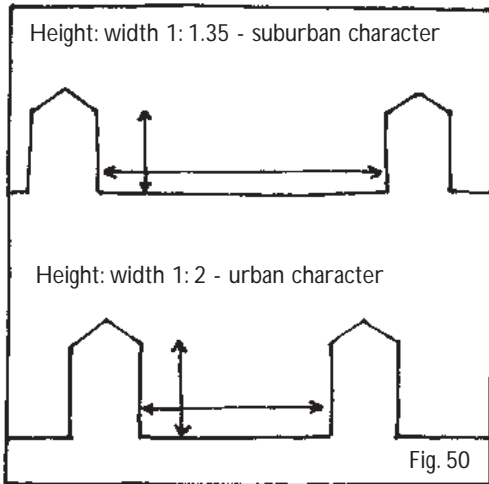
scaping may help to create a sense of enclosure, if the buildings and spaces are not able to do so **(A,B)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Achieving variety in the widths and proportions of spaces, in order to create spaces with a distinctive character, and to improve legibility for an area. **(A,E)**.

Varied widths and proportions of spaces

Fig. 51
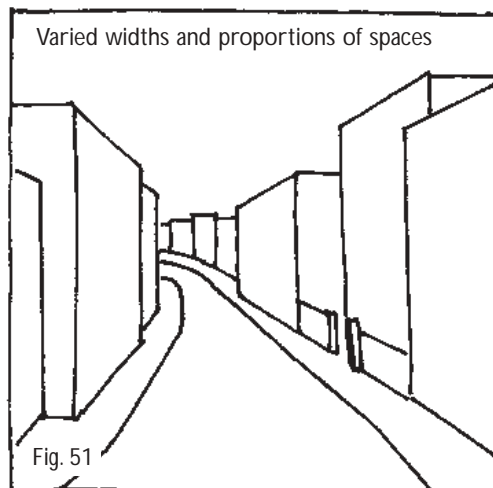
- Achieving a coherent relationship between the buildings and the street. **(A,B,C)**.
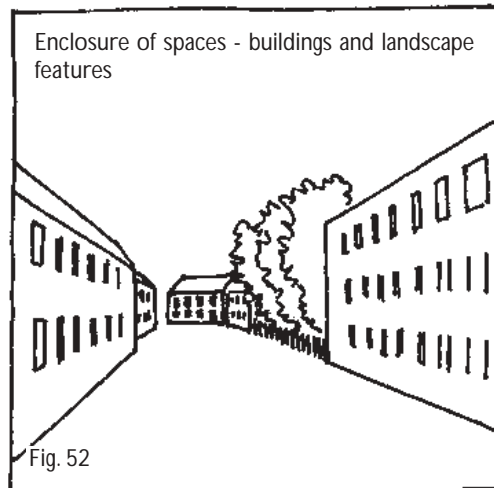
- Creating a sense of enclosure of spaces, by the positioning of buildings and major landscape features. **(B)**.

Frontage landscaping lost to car parking

Fig. 53
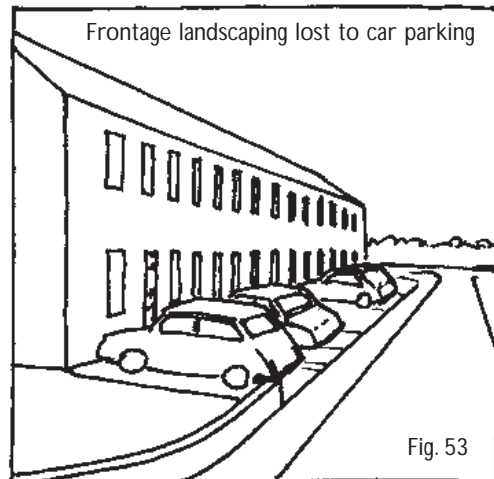
- Ensuring that frontage landscaping is not lost to hardstandings and frontage parking areas. **(B,C)**.

Providing front boundaries

Fig. 54

- Ensuring that front boundary treatments are provided (eg front garden walls, or hedges) to define public space and semi public space (see also fig 63 page 47). **(B,C).**
- Providing opportunities for major planting (see also figs 56 & 57, page 44). **(C).**
- Considering the aspect of spaces, and the extent to which they are shaded by buildings, together with the microclimate (wind, frost pockets, etc) (see also fig 87 page 55). **(C).**

7.8 Hierarchy of spaces

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

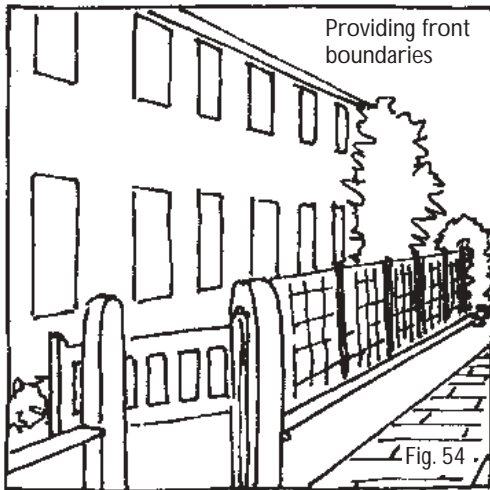- In order to create distinctive spaces, it is important to avoid rigidly applied and standard-ised design approaches to spaces. The design of different spaces needs to reflect the full range of their differing functional requirements. Design should not be based purely on the requirements of the motor vehicle (see also fig 64 page 48). **(A,C,D).**

Result of use of highway standards

Fig. 55
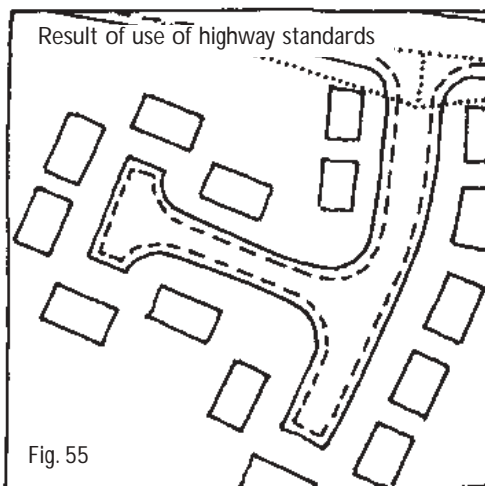
- Different spaces will have different priorities in terms of their functional requirements, and these differences should be reflected in differing designs and spaces of different and individual character. **(A,C,E).**
- Traditional street hierarchies recognise the differing importance of routes through an area. Retaining a range of different spaces or streets within an area (rather than around the edge of an area), at different levels of the hierarchy, helps to sustain a range of uses and a choice of connections. **(A,D,E).**

7.9 Landscape

Trees in relation to scale of buildings and spaces

Fig. 56

Trees in relation to scale of buildings and spaces

Fig. 57
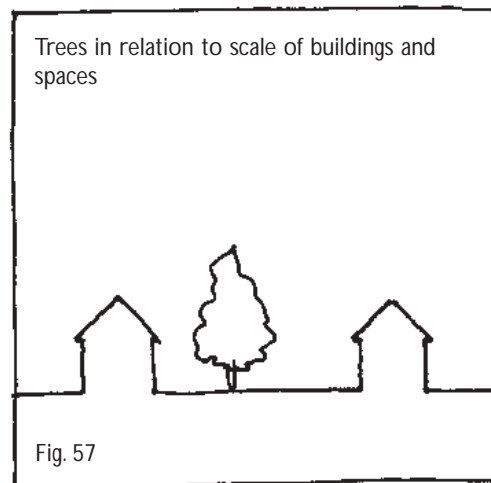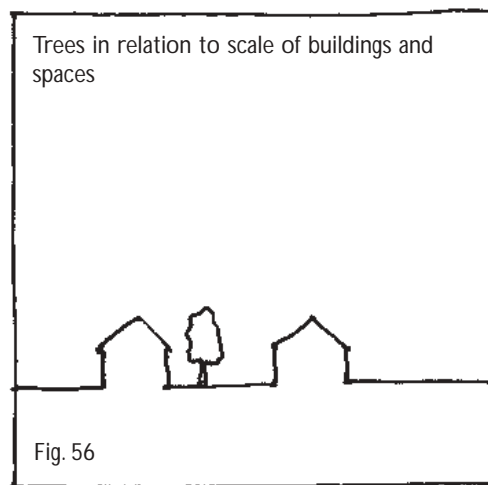
Quality in the public realm is always important, but it is of particular importance in the case of high-density schemes. A high quality public realm is dependent on retaining or developing the greatest possible biodiversity, good landscape work, including both hard and soft landscape elements, the former

comprising hard surfaces or hard structures within a space, and the latter comprising all types of planting (see also figs 1, 52, and 90, pages 12, 43 and 58). **(C).**

Good landscaping work can reinforce, or foster, the character of an area, it can improve biodiversity, develop its sense of place, and it can create quality environments **(A,C)**. Existing or new landscape features accommodated within the public domain help to ensure that such spaces are of a human scale, and are able to successfully accommodate a full range of activities, as opposed to primarily catering for the motor vehicle **(G)**. Distinctive landscape work will also improve the legibility of an area by incorporating prominent features which help orientation **(E)**.

The main factors which any development proposal

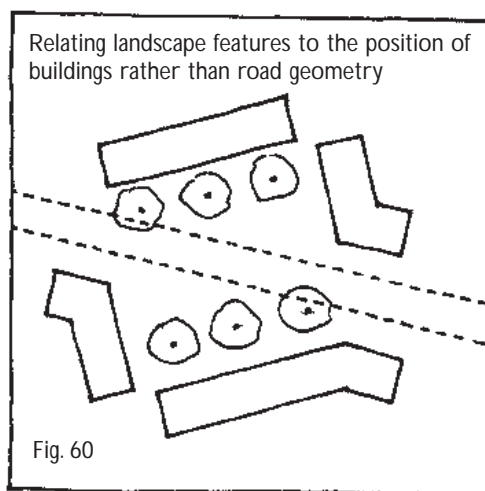The landscape of spaces needs to be considered at the initial design stage

Fig. 58
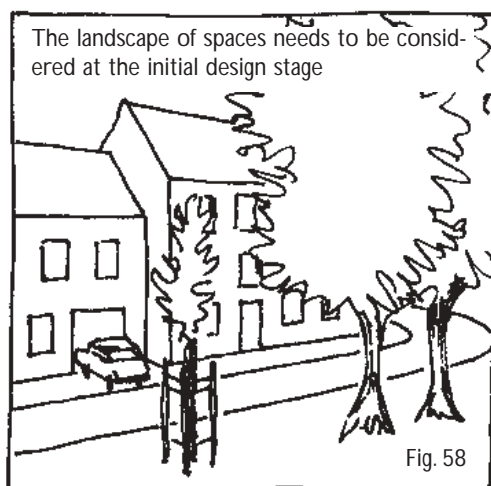
should consider are:

- Landscape work should on no account be treated as an afterthought to the design of a new development, in which new planting is fitted into otherwise unused spaces. Neither should landscape design work be marginalised. Rather the landscape architect must work jointly with the engineer and the building architect. The landscape potential of spaces should be considered at the initial design stage, so that the landscape proposals for a space can be considered with the overall scheme (its character and quality) in mind. All design elements (including landscaping) need to belong seamlessly together.

- Providing an adequate budget for external

works and landscape works.

- Resisting the temptation to cut these items as a means of cover overspend in other areas.

- Successfully accommodating subsequently identified requirements for the public realm.

- Selecting materials for external works as rigorously as the selection of building materials.

- Spaces should be kept as free of clutter as possible, and simplicity of design should be the general aim (see also fig 14 page 16). **(C).**

- Any necessary items of street furniture (eg signage, lighting, bins, cycle racks, seating, shelters, bollards, kiosks, cabinets, artistic and decorative features etc) should be co-ordinated in their design and positioning **(C,E)**. Bespoke design, including that for street furniture can help to create a sense of place, a place of character, and a place of identity (see also fig 20 page 18). **(A,E).**

Fig. 59

Formal landscape

Relating landscape features to the position of buildings rather than road geometry

Fig. 60

Fig. 61

Informal landscape
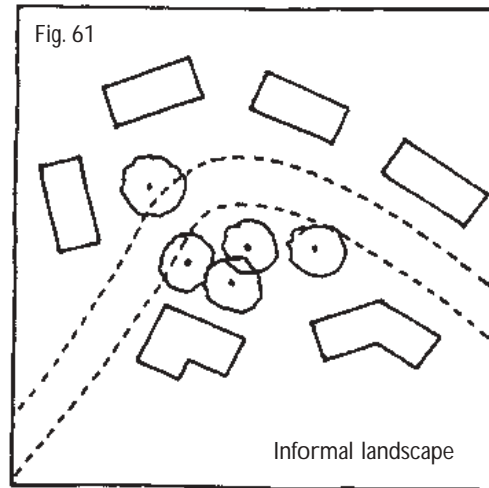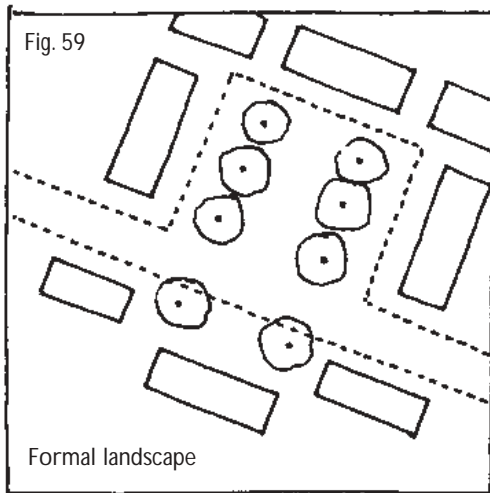
- Designing new landscape features so as to strengthen the particular character of the spaces which they occupy (eg street, square, boulevard, avenue, court or mews etc.) **(A).** Landscape treatment can emphasise the either formal or the informal character of an area, which may be fixed by the style and arrangement of the buildings which surround the space. Repetition of a particular landscape feature (eg a line of similar trees, or an arrangement of street lighting columns) can be used to give a feeling of continuity and cohesion to a street or an area. Landscape features are one of the major factors which demonstrate the quality of an area. **(A,C,E).**

- The design of spaces should always have regard to the ongoing maintenance requirements, and resistance to vandalism. **(C).**

- Landscape features are better related to the position of buildings which surround a space, rather than related to road geometry. **(C,E).**

- Where necessary using major landscape features to help to enclose spaces, where complete enclosure by buildings is not practical (see also fig 52 page 43). **(A,B).** It is important that such landscape features will be of a scale which relates to the scale of surrounding buildings (see also figs 56 & 57, page 44).

- Ensuring that planting proposals have regard to local conditions such as space, soils, light, drainage, and shelter. Where possible native species should be used. **(C).**

- Consider that use of deciduous trees and climbers can filter summer heat and pollution, whilst allowing winter sunlight in **(C).**

Developers are recommended to consider the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Planting, Landscaping and Nature Conservation (see Contacts and Further Guidance Section 12).

7.10 Accommodating the need for outdoor amenity space

The occupiers of buildings are generally likely to appreciate a private outdoor amenity area, which is easily accessible. This is particularly the case with residential development. Outdoor spaces can take a variety of different forms, and creative ideas on how this need can be met would be welcomed.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Finding creative solutions eg balconies, roof terraces and patios.
- Providing good quality space through natural landscape qualities and design. **(C)**.
- The aspect and privacy enjoyed by spaces (see also figs 26 and 87, page 55). **(C)**.
- As an alternative to full compliance with planning standards for on site provision of amenity space, consideration may be given to securing enhancement of nearby public open space.

7.11 Views

In considering issues such as the positioning, height or design of a proposed building, it is essential to take account of the possible impact that the building might have on important views (existing and potential). **(A,C,E)**.

Views may be long distance panoramic views, or they may be views at short distance, of special features such as a listed building, a landscape feature, or an important space.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Closing a view

Fig. 62
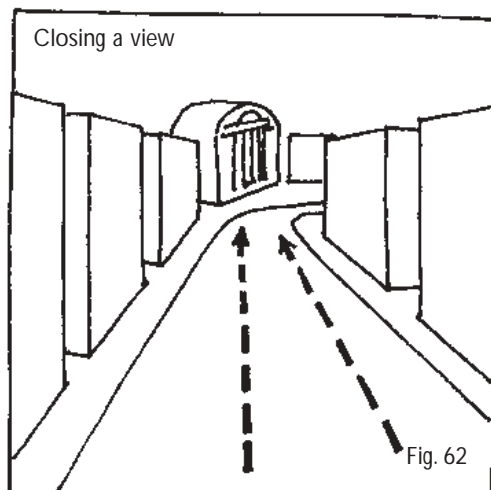
- A development proposal will need to have regard to protecting views where they already exist, and it may offer the opportunity to open up a view, where hitherto the view has been obscured **(A,E)**. Views should where possible focus on important routes, memorable buildings and landscape features.
- A development scheme may itself form a focal point within a view, as seen from elsewhere.

This will need to be considered where a new building would close a view, for example at the end of a street, or on the outer curve of a street. In such cases consideration needs to be given to a suitable architectural response to its important position, in order to enhance that view. **(A,E)**.

7.12 Public/private spaces and the Interface

The design of new buildings inevitably contributes to the shaping of the public realm.

The most successful environments provide clear distinction between public, semi-public, and private spaces. **(B,C)**. Public spaces comprise areas such as streets, parks, playgrounds, footpaths and cycle paths. Private spaces are for the exclusive use of the occupiers of a particular development. Semi-public space is private land, attached to a specific property, but which is in view of the public, from public spaces (an example is a front garden). Limited access by certain members of the public is acceptable into semi-public spaces (eg for people who have legitimate need to visit the premises to which the land is attached).

Fig. 63 Defining spaces

public space   semi public   private space
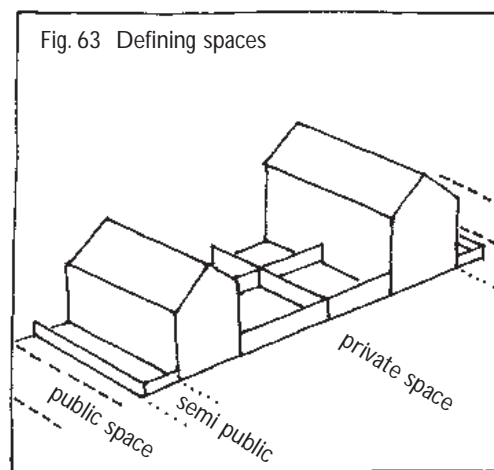
Usually the public or semi-public spaces are separated from the private spaces by buildings. This occurs in the traditional perimeter block, where public spaces occur around the outer edges (the streets), and the private spaces are within the centre of the block, segregated from public spaces by the frontage buildings. **(B)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- To ensure that buildings are used to define spaces. **(A,C)**.

- To ensure that public spaces function as part of the network of pedestrian routes, and provide for the needs of all users, including the elderly, and people with disabilities (see also fig 11 page 15). **(D)**.

Space designed purely as a traffic route

Fig. 64
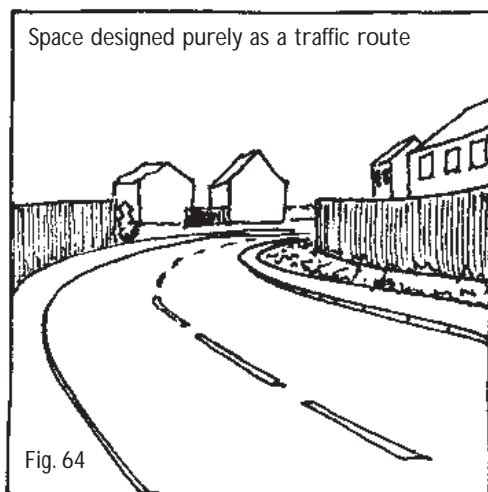
- Streets and street junctions should be designed as public spaces (ie not just as traffic routes) (see also figs 38, 39 & 55, pages 39, 40 and 44). **(A,C,E)**.

- To use street trees and street lighting as a way of reinforcing the character of the space. **(A,E)**.

- To use the natural assets of the space (eg slopes, trees, other planting and water as a way of reinforcing the character of the space, and promoting biodiversity (see also fig 1 page 12). **(A,C,E)**.

- Walls, fences, railings, gates, arches, signage and paving can be used to signal the extent, and the boundaries, of public, private and semi-public spaces (see also figs 10 and 54, pages 15 and 44). The height of any boundary treatment is critical, and in particular whether it allows people to see over the top. **(B,C)**.

Careful design of public/private interface

Fig. 65
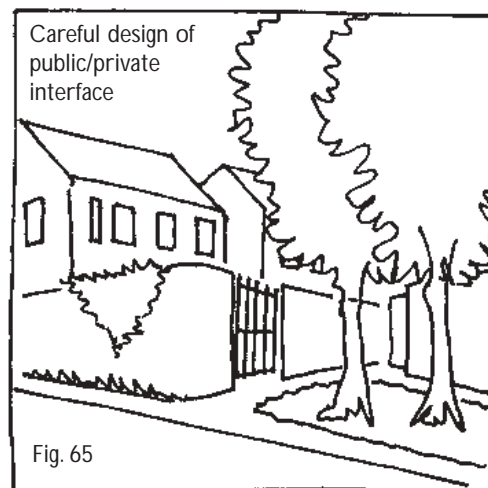
- To give great care to the detailed design of any interface of public and private space, so as to allow privacy and security, without creating hostility within the public space (see also figs 48 and 65, pages 42 and 48). **(B,C)**.

- To create enlivened facades to buildings through active uses (eg shops and restaurants) (see also fig 12 page 16), frequent entrances, windows offering views into buildings (for appropriate uses), and other architectural features. **(B)**.

Fig. 66

Interface area - designing for bin storage, cycles and meters
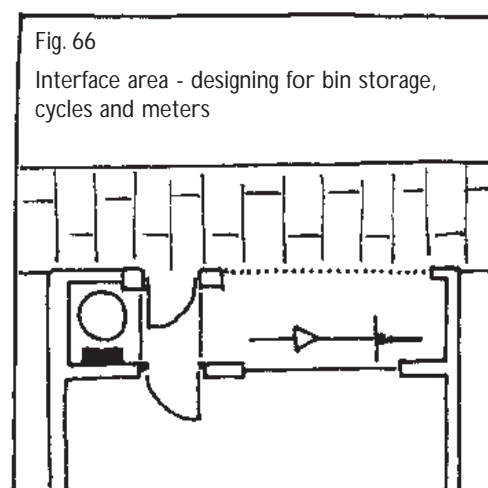
- To give great care to the detailed design of any semi-public space, or interface area (eg boundary treatment, planting, bin storage, cycle storage, accommodating meters, entrances, thresholds etc.) (see also fig 10 page 15). **(C)**.

- To consider raised ground floor levels where a building is adjacent to the street, and where privacy for the internal spaces is important.

NB. this may present problems of disabled access to buildings (see also fig 45 page 41).

- To secure the greatest possible degree of segregation of public and private spaces, for example by positioning buildings between the two (see also fig 63 page 47). **(B).**

- To aim to create a distinctive character for the spaces created by, or surrounding a building. **(A,C,E).** Developments should seek to provide diversity in the character of different spaces, and the character of the spaces should be related to the character of the buildings. Spaces should be consciously designed with a purpose, or purposes in mind, and not be treated as areas that have not been built on.

7.13 Relating Indoor and Outdoor Space

This issue involves appreciation of orientation, aspect, potential lighting for buildings, potential external noise or fumes, and making the most of views from the proposed development.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Ensuring that those rooms which would most benefit from direct sunlight are positioned to receive it, and so that they would do so at times of the day when it may be most valued (see also fig 86 page 55).

- Ensuring that there is adequate external space to allow daylight for both spaces and for lighting rooms
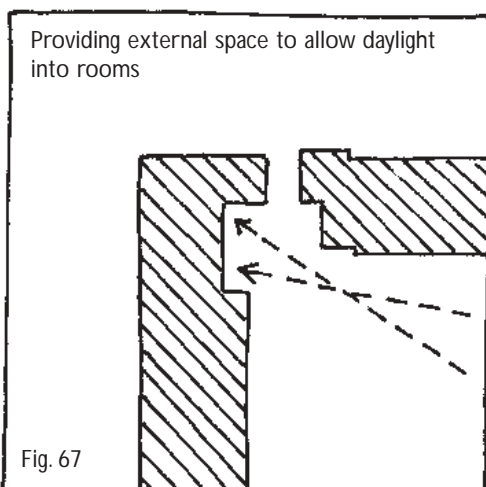
- Taking fullest advantage of the best views available, to give optimum outlook for the most important rooms

- Ensuring that the rooms which are most sensitive from the point of view of privacy are located in the most protected areas (see also fig 7 page 14), including consideration of raised floor plates (see also fig 45 page 41).

- Ensuring that the rooms which are most sensitive from the point of view of noise and fumes are located in the most protected areas

- Securing an active and interesting frontages towards the public domain (see also figs 24 & 46, pages 19 and 42). **(A,C,E).**

- Ensuring that windows of rooms are used to provide informal surveillance of the public domain **(B,C).**

Fig. 68

Surveillance of streets and public places

Providing external space to allow daylight into rooms

Fig. 67
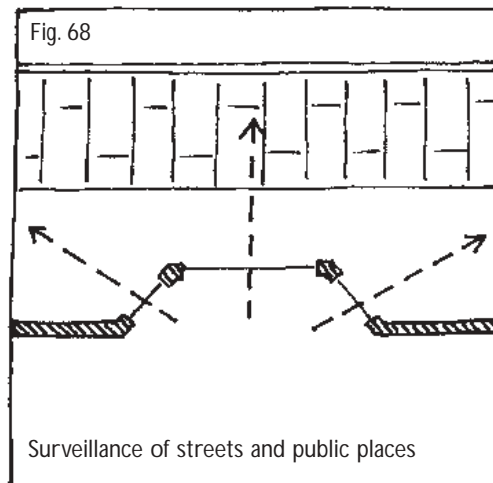
7.14 Rhythms of spaces and buildings

Some areas are characterised by a regular rhythm of building mass and spaces between buildings. The spaces between the flank walls of buildings, whether regular or not, may be important to the character of an area.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Fig. 69

Poor respect for rhythms of buildings and spaces
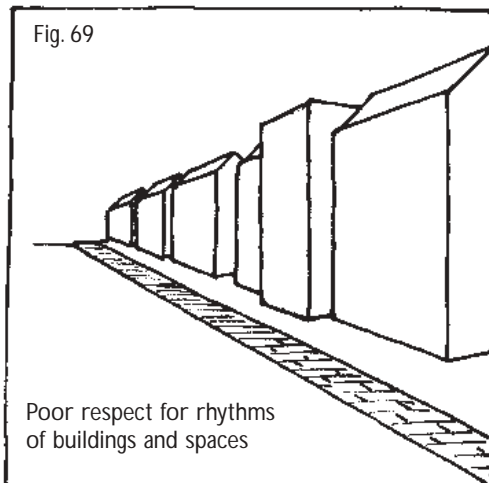
- Where such a rhythm is a feature of an area, it is appropriate that new development should respect it. This is likely to have implications for the spaces which separate the flank walls of buildings in a street. It may constrain the potential for side extensions, or the frontage width of new buildings **(A,B)**.
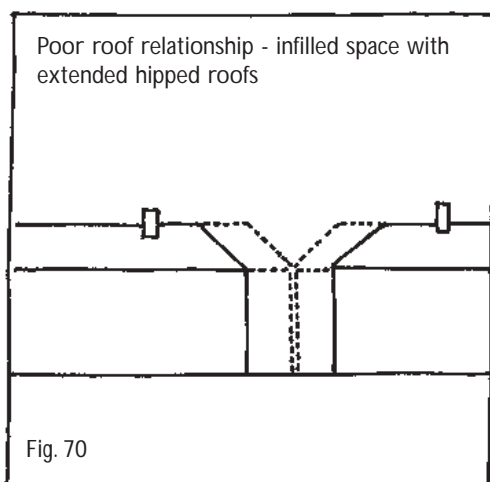- Even where spaces between buildings in a street are irregular, the degree of separation between buildings may give important glimpses from the street into backland areas **(A,B)**.

Poor roof relationship - infilled space with extended hipped roofs

Fig. 70

- Hipped roof forms need to relate to adjacent spaces, rather than being immediately adjacent to another building.

7.15 Setbacks

The degree of setback of a building façade in relation to the public space (the building line) is an important design consideration, which has important implications for the character of the space created. New development will often need to take account of typical setback arrangements in the vicinity.

Where a development site has a greater degree of separation from its surroundings, it can have greater freedom of choice in any building setback to be provided. Here considerations of privacy and achieving a clear and consistent character specific to the development will be decisive **(A,B)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Fig. 71

Inappropriate setback
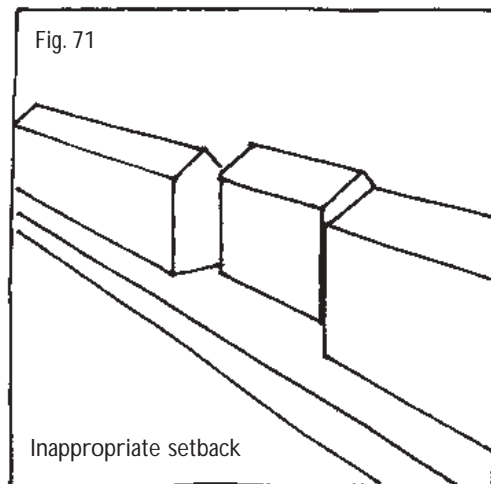
- Ensuring that the degree of setback is appropriate to its surroundings, when the frontage of the development will have a close relationship to surrounding buildings, frontages and spaces **(A,B)**.
- Using building setbacks to create privacy for building occupiers

Using setbacks to create character

Fig. 72
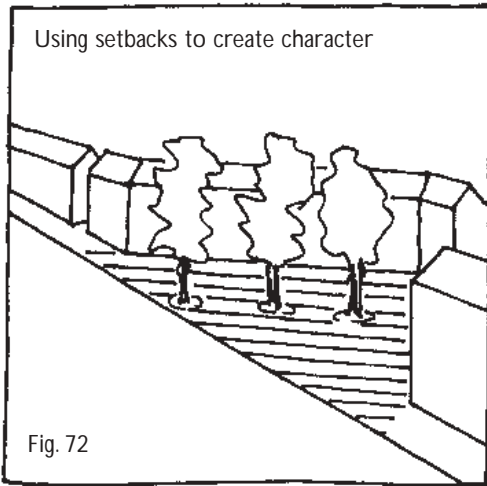
- Using building setbacks to create or enhance the character of the area **(A,B).**

7.16 Building Heights

High buildings may present problems where they would affect the character of Conservation Areas, Metropolitan Open Land, Historic Parks and Gardens, landmark buildings, other existing tall buildings or structures, Metropolitan Views, or Listed Buildings. Any proposal for a high building should be the subject of a contextual urban design analysis, which assesses impact on skylines, local, medium and distant views, places, neighbouring amenities and communities.

The apparent height of buildings can sometimes be disguised, as seen from street level, by setting back the upper floors.

Disguising the height of a building

Fig. 73

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Fig. 74
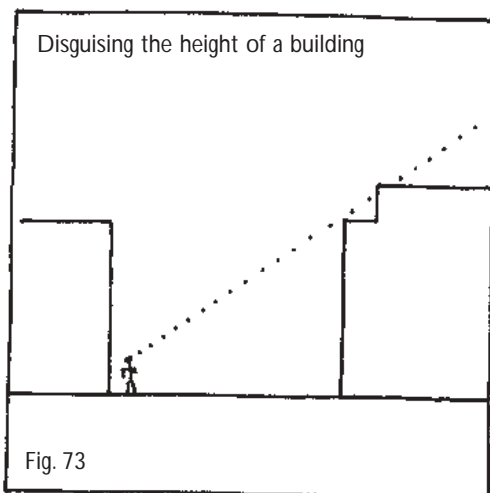
High buildings - emphasising a point of civic or visual significance
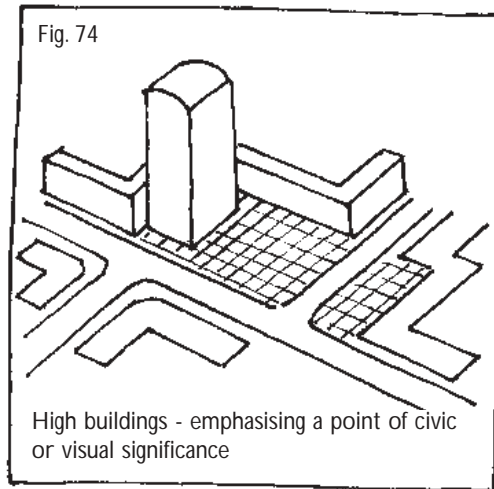
- Use of high buildings to emphasise a point of civic or visual significance, or a centre of urban activity or regeneration. **(A,E).**

- The positive interaction of the high building to its surroundings at street level, through hard and soft landscaping. **(A,C).**

- The creation of a building of outstanding architectural merit. **(A).**

Fig 75. Skyline features
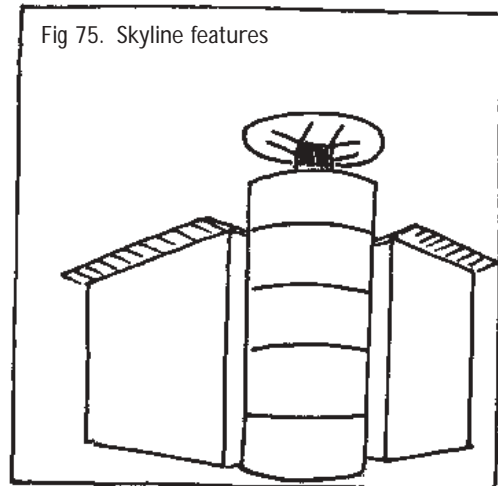
- The creation of a skyline feature. **(A,E).**

Fig. 76

Appreciation of the impact of a high building from nearby..............

..............and from far away

Fig. 77
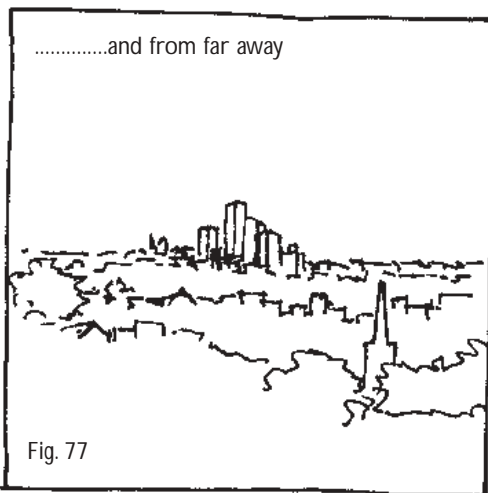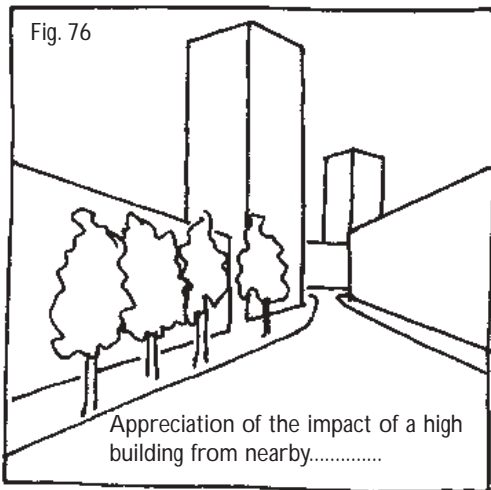
- Appreciation of the impact of the building from a variety of different positions (both nearby and far away), from which the new building would be seen. This would include the impact of the building on the view, its relationship to other key features in that view, and on skylines **(A,E)**.

- The potential for the building to contribute positively to the image of the locality, of the Borough or of London as a whole. **(A,E)**.

- The use of the intensity of the development to provide a rich mix of uses. **(G)**.

7.17 Turning a corner

Traditional Victorian corner layouts

Fig. 78
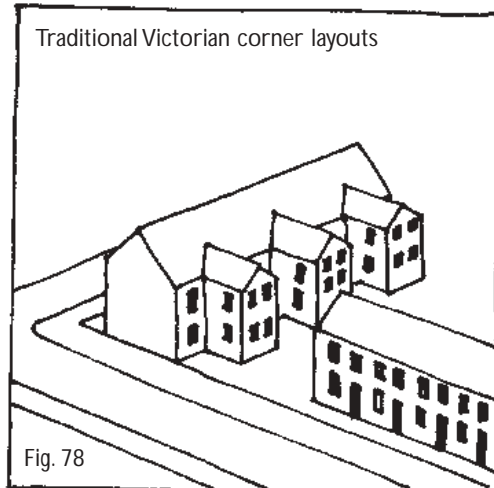
The successful design of corner buildings is not an easy problem to resolve. Traditional housing layouts from the Victorian or 20th century often demonstrated shortcomings in this respect.

Corner buildings are however important especially in traditional perimeter block layouts, in order to maintain continuity of building frontages towards the street or public place, thus avoiding gaps or blank walls, and to promote legibility (see also fig 21 page 18) **(B,C,E)**. Shallower building depths can be used to turn a corner, to allow sunlight and daylight to penetrate buildings. Relaxing standards for minimum garden sizes may also be necessary (see also fig 83 page 53).

Corners - maintaining continuity of building frontages

Fig. 79

Fig. 80 — Turning a corner
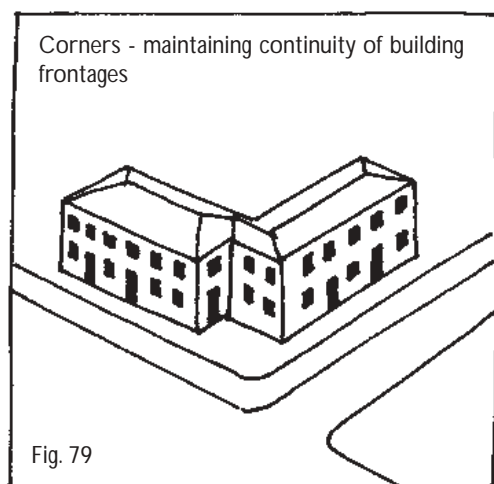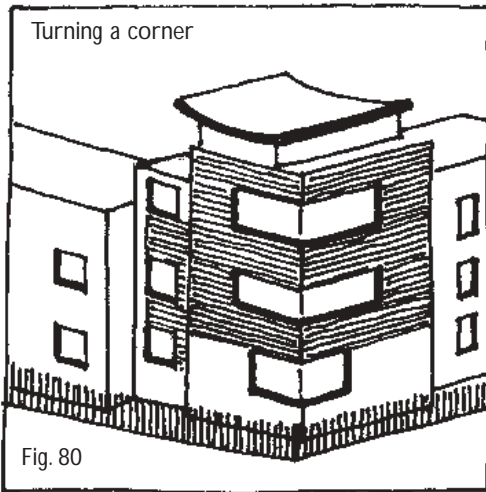
The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Maintaining continuous building frontages and surveillance of the public domain from the windows of buildings. **(B,C).**

Blank flank walls - facing the streets
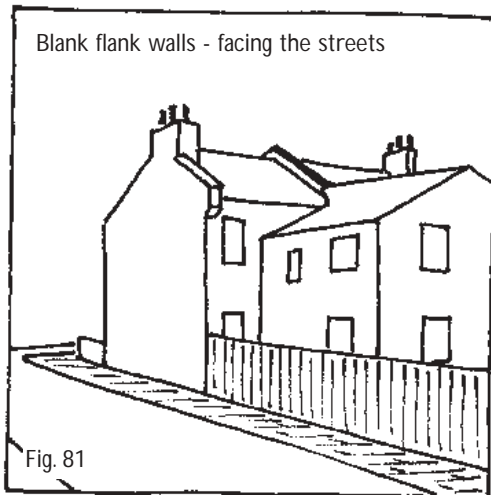
Fig. 81

- Avoiding blank flank walls which face towards the street. **(B,C).**

Fig. 82 — Emphasising corner buildings
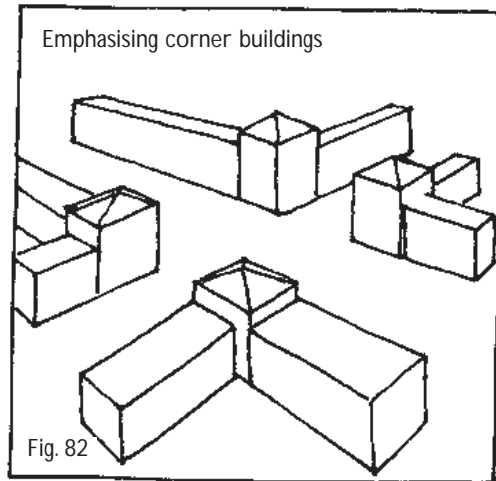
- Giving articulation to prominent junctions and nodal points in the street scene. Making corner buildings higher than their neighbours will emphasise their importance, and provide a point of orientation. **(E).**
- Important uses can also be accommodated in corner buildings (eg shops) also emphasises their importance. **(E).**
- Achieving a satisfactory relationship between habitable rooms and gardens

Fig. 83

Relating corner dwellings with gardens
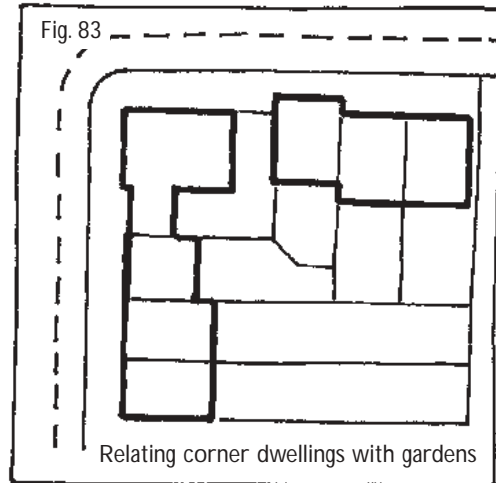
- Securing adequate privacy between windows within the angle of the corner
- Securing light penetration to rooms and spaces within the angle of the corner (see also fig 67 page 49)

- Considering the creation of single aspect buildings of shallow depth, facing outwards, in some cases without private gardens.

Use of single aspect dwellings at corners

Fig. 84
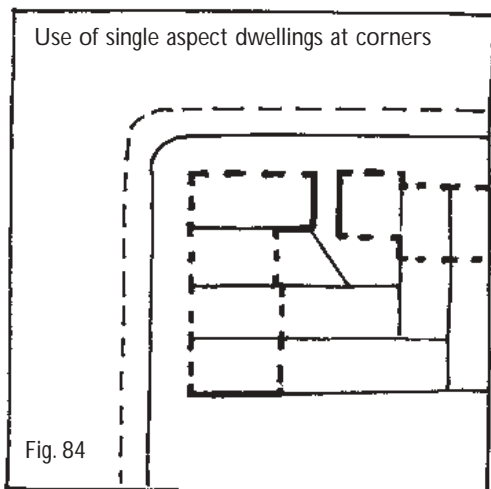
7.18 Building entrances

Building entrances can be located in such a way as to favour access on foot, access by bicycle or access by public transport users. This may involve a less convenient access for people arriving by car or other motor vehicle, who use an on site car parking facility. **(D).**

In practice this means that building entrances need to be close to footways, and close to pedestrian desire lines. In general pedestrian entrances will need to face the public street. Entrances which are convenient for car parking facilities, but less convenient for other visitors who do not come by car or other private vehicle, are not acceptable **(D).**

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Fig. 85

Unsatisfactory pedestrian entrance through car park
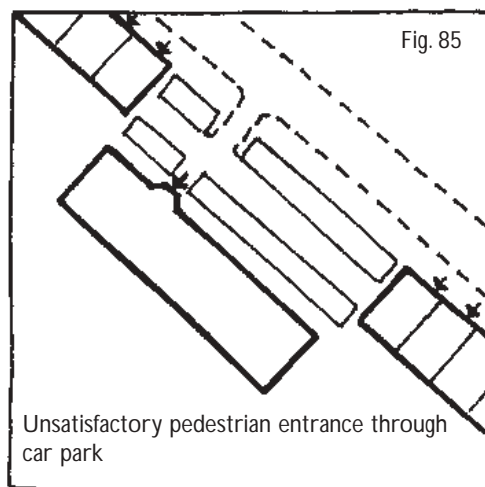
- Ensuring that the location and design of building entrances favour access for people who use the more sustainable means of transport, in particular those who arrive on foot **(D).**
- Ensuring that the main entrance of a building is easily identifiable (see also fig 6 page 14) **(D,E).**

7.19 Solar orientation

The orientation of a building relative to the sun is important both from the point of view of reducing energy requirements, and also from the point of view of optimising sunlight for its most important rooms and for outside amenity space.

Daylight reduces the need for artificial lighting, and passive solar gain reduces the need for space heating. Buildings can be positioned so that they can optimise the use of photovoltaic cells and solar panels. This can be considered even if such features are not to be provided at the outset. The former can convert solar radiation into electricity, while the latter can provide hot water.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- The best solar orientation for buildings, from this point of view is for buildings to be arranged in an east-west orientation, so that the main outlook is to the north and the south.

- The best solar orientation for the most important spaces (eg private amenity space, and important public spaces). Where garden amenity land is largely in the shadow of buildings, consideration might need to be given to creating longer gardens to compensate for this.

Locating principle rooms for sunlight.
Longer north facing gardens

Fig. 86

Fig. 87 Breaks in built form for solar penetration
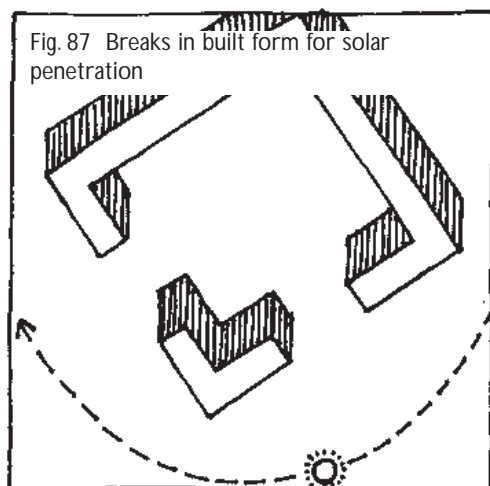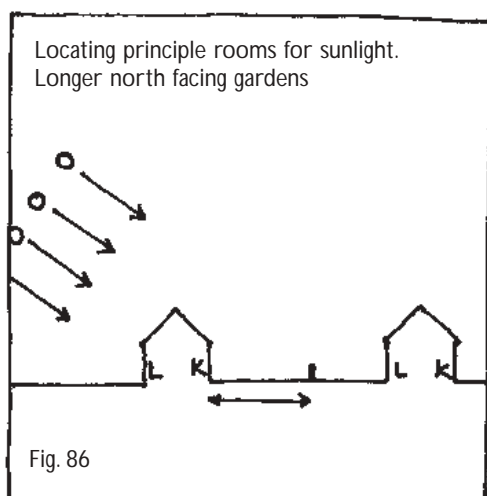
- Orienting building so as to take advantage of the sun, may however conflict with many other design and layout considerations, and careful thought must be given to possible disadvantages which might arise from securing a solar orientation benefit **(A,B,C,D,E)**.

- Where of necessity buildings are to be located more closely on a north-south alignment, then it makes good sense to position kitchens and bedrooms in such a way as to receive morning sun, and living and dining rooms to receive afternoon sun.

- Placing kitchens on the north or eastern side of the building, facing the public street can offer advantages in terms of providing an active frontage **(C)** and good surveillance of the street, providing comfort in use, and allowing the best solar orientation (on the other side of the building) to be available for the living rooms. Conversely on the opposite side of the street, it may be appropriate to place living rooms, front balconies, and front gardens (for privacy), on the street side of the building, with less important rooms at the rear.

7.20 Privacy

Traditionally the issue of privacy has been addressed by ensuring distance separation between windows and windows, and between windows and sensitive outdoor areas. Design can however often play an important part in providing for privacy, and in so doing, more distinctive and varied building lay-outs can be created **(A)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Positioning windows at oblique angles

- Positioning rooms which are less privacy-sensitive in the more exposed situations (eg kitchens, living rooms, halls, stairs etc. in relation to the street or other public areas, or in relation to private but communal spaces).

- Adjusting window sizes, (or sill heights), with smaller windows (or high level windows) in areas which are more open to view (however the window size also needs to have regard to the need for light and for outlook, which are greater in for example living rooms).

- Using frosted glass for either the whole window, or for part of the window

- Using level changes to increase privacy (see also fig 45 page 41).

- Using screening and landscaping to increase privacy **(C)**.

7.21 Robustness

The most successful places have prospered through changing circumstances. Such places are grounded in unchanging patterns of human life, rather than being unalterably fitted to some specific purpose. Building to last means considering future uses and future expansion.

Certain types of building form lend themselves to adaptation. Adaptations can include conversion of houses to flats, or vice versa, or conversion between residential and commercial uses. Successful places can therefore adapt in order to avoid the destructive trauma of large scale blight and dereliction, and comprehensive redevelopment.

Areas which have buildings which lend themselves to such adaptation prove to be more robust over time, than those which are more closely tailored to a specific use, or a specific occupier **(F)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Simple robust building forms (as opposed to tightly designed buildings designed for a specific purpose) allow for the greatest variety of possible future uses to be accommodated **(F)**.

- Fine grained development is easier to adapt than large scale megastructures **(F)**.

- Making use of narrow plot frontages, so as to allow small-scale shopping and commercial uses to flourish and to adapt to changing needs **(F)**.

- If roads within a development are designed to an adoptable standard, then this will avoid the need for estate management agreements, which may inhibit change **(F)**.

- The infrastructure layout of the development, including services (eg water supply, sewerage, drainage, gas, electricity, cable, telephone, foot-paths, cycleways and parks) should be considered in terms of foreseeable changes in demand **(F)**.

- Floor to ceiling heights, and building depths, need to be considered in the light of the need for flexibility to allow later conversion of a building to other uses (see also fig 23 page 19) **(F)**.

- Adaptable ground floors on busy corner locations can allow different uses to be accommodated over time **(F)**.

- Frame construction techniques, which create broad spans are able to accept reconfiguration of internal space, better than cellular construction which use load bearing walls **(F)**.

- Vertical stacking of kitchens and bathrooms can simplify the provision of additional services **(F)**.

- Compact vertical circulation with easy means of escape can make large houses more suitable to convert to flats or other uses **(F)**.

- Solid floor construction reduces noise transmission and increases the range of acceptable neighbour uses **(F)**.

- Buildings can be related to the public realm in ways which encourage the flexible use of both buildings and space, this can be done through imaginative use of terraces, balconies and fore-courts **(F)**.

- Well designed public spaces allow for a variety of different uses (eg events and markets) **(C,F,G)**.

- Consideration needs to be given to determining the nature of future maintenance requirements and responsibilities, and putting them in place. This is particularly true for landscape work **(C)**.

Adaptability can be built into development at every scale. The needs of an individual household are likely to change over a period of time, giving rise to the need for more or less space, and for the use of space for different purposes, and to cater for reduced personal mobility **(F)**. "Lifetime homes" is a design concept which is addresses such requirements (see SPG on Accessible Environments - see Contacts and Further Guidance Section 12).

In terms of designing for individual households, the main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Fig. 88 — Extending into the roof - staircase position
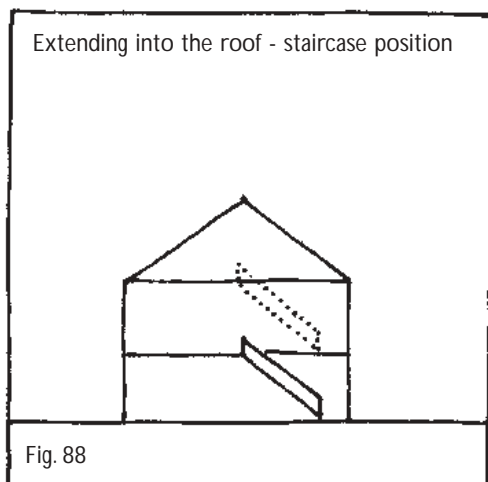
- designing homes which are capable of being easily extended, to the rear, the side or into the roof space (with implications for staircase position and roof slope) **(F)**.
- designing homes where individual rooms can be reconfigured easily **(F)**.
- providing a stair lift **(F)**.
- providing a room downstairs which could be used as a bedroom **(F)**.
- providing access to a downstairs toilet which would be capable of incorporating a shower **(F)**.
- skirting ducts can also be provided which could later accommodate "smart technology" suited to support independent living for elderly or less mobile people **(F)**.

7.22 Traffic management through urban design

The variety of activities which take place in streets provide interest, but there may also be potential conflict between them, this is particularly the case between vehicle uses and other uses **(D,G)**.

Resolving problems of traffic management through urban design solutions to encourage cautious driving has two benefits, which are:
- it helps to create distinctive spaces and distinctive enclosure of space **(A,B)** and
- it reduces artificial traffic signage and clutter associated with conventional traffic calming schemes **(C)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:
- Limitation of traffic speeds through careful design of street blocks and layout. This will include the length of streets/size of street block, street geometry, on street parking areas, natural pinch points, limiting forward vision for vehicle drivers, corners and junction spacing (see also figs 18 and 36, pages 18 and 39) **(D)**.
- Priority in the design of spaces should be given to considerations of urban design (see also fig 16 page 17), including the enclosure of spaces by buildings, and after that the carriage way may be threaded through the spaces which have been created **(A,C)**.
  This technique is known as "tracking" (see also fig 38 & 39, page 39 & 40).
- Management of traffic flow
- In the context of new development schemes traffic calming measures should not be added as "bolt on" measures, (such as speed humps and artificial chicanes), but should be considered as an integral part of the basic layout and design of the development **(A, C)**.

Fig. 89 — 'Bolt on' traffic calming
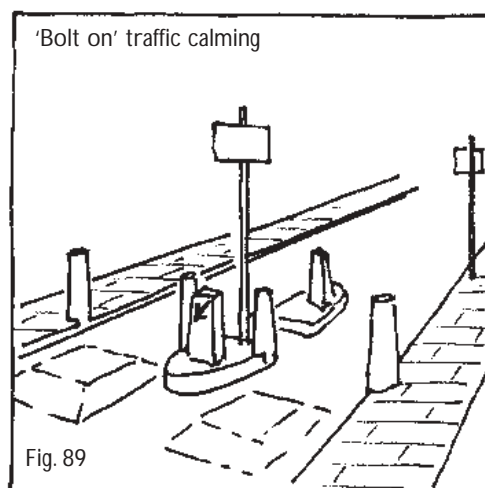
7.23 Accommodating parking, cars and cycles

Car dominated environments result in poor urban design **(A,B,C,D,E)**. A space which is to be used for vehicle parking should be designed firstly as a place with a distinctive character. The design requirements which relate to vehicles need to be incorporated in a subtle way, so that vehicular design requirements do not appear to drive the overall scheme.

Car parking provided within forecourt areas (or front garden areas) can often lead to the following problems:

- Loss of landscape and planting potential (see also fig 53 page 43) **(C)**.

- A blurred distinction between public and private space by the abandonment of traditional front boundary definition (see also figs 5 and 54, pages 14 and 44) **(B)**.

- Removing on-street parking opportunities, with consequent loss of flexibility in respect of variations in car ownership levels between different occupiers.

- Creating conflict between pedestrians and vehicles which have to cross the footway to access parking areas **(D)**.

On street parking can work very successfully in many situations:

- It is conveniently located for users **(D)**.

- It is subject to intensive surveillance from buildings, and from passers-by **(B)**.

- It operates on a communal basis, rather than being allocated for exclusive usage

- It does not compromise the clear distinction between public and private space (see also figs 5 and 54, pages 14 and 44) **(B)**.

- It does not compromise landscape treatment in front of buildings (see also fig 53 page 43) **(C)**.

- It avoids conflict between pedestrians and vehicle movements **(D)**.

- It can be used for traffic calming **(D)**.

Fig. 90

Combining on street parking and landscape
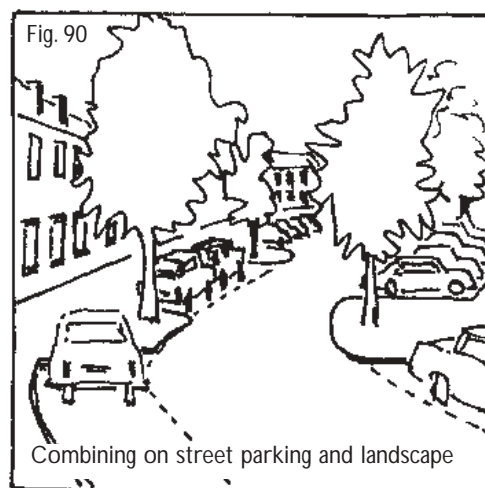
- It can be designed into the street in such a way as to cater for pedestrian desire lines, and to accommodate landscape treatment **(C,D)**.

The dominance of car parking in the environment can be diminished. The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- The provision of parking places can be lower in locations which are well served by public transport, or where a range of services are available by trips made on foot, or on bicycle **(A,C)**.

- Choosing a level of parking provision significantly lower than the maximum parking provision standards set out in the SPG on Transport Planning (see Section 12 Contacts and Further Guidance **(A,C)**.

- Providing car parking on a communal basis, rather than on a basis exclusive to a particular property. This makes better use of any spaces provided, and it accommodates different car ownership levels **(A,C)**.

- Using the potential for on street parking in many areas (see advantages above) **(B,C,D)**.

- Recognising that certain types of development the demand for parking is likely to be less **(A,C)**.

- Resisting the introduction of off street parking provision in building conversion schemes **(A,C)**.

- Car clubs may offer a future means of reducing parking standards, and as a consequence achieving an increase in densities **(A,C)**.

Parking within courtyard areas behind the frontage buildings can be considered, but the details for this form of parking needs to be most carefully considered. The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

Courtyard parking designed as a "place"
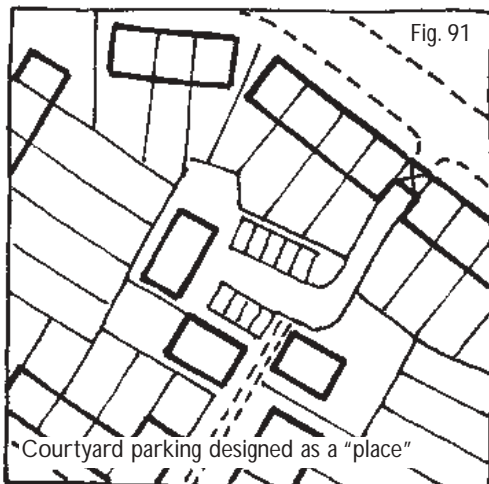
- They should be designed not as car parks, but as places which incorporate parking within them **(A,C).**
- They should be well overlooked from the windows of adjoining buildings
- They should be of limited size, approx 10 spaces maximum.
- They should ideally have more than one access point, so as to create a cross route through the street block **(D).**
- They should respect the privacy and security needs of surrounding properties.
- They should respect the environmental quality of surrounding areas **(C).**
- They should respect the impact of the entrance to the parking court on the continuity of frontages of buildings facing the front street **(B).** Narrow alleyway access can be considered, and it may be appropriate to build over the entrance.

Parking within the curtillage of the site may present design problems **(A,B,C,D,E).** The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Locating the parking or garage behind the frontage line of the building **(B).**
- Attempting to conceal parking or garage as

part of the boundary wall **(B).**

- If garages integral to the building are proposed, then recessing the door behind the front facade of the building **(B).**
- Where the economics of the scheme allows, parking can be provided underground. By using underground space (which would otherwise be unused), higher densities may be achievable, and as a result the increased construction cost may be justifiable. However the dimensions of

Use of underground car parking to achieve high density
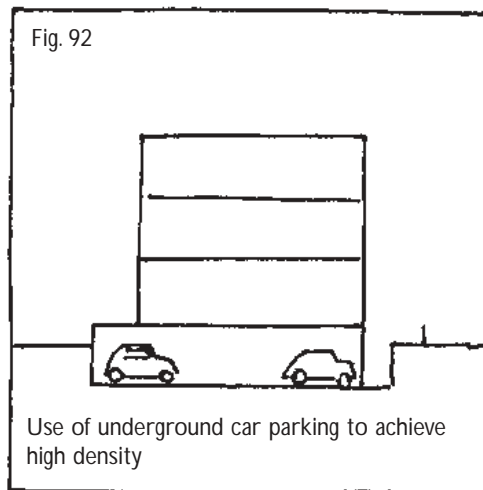
parking bays beneath the building should not be allowed to dictate the shape of the building above. Considerable skill is needed to design the entrance to underground parking areas, in such a way as to preserve street frontage character **(A,B).**

7.24 Access for all

Provision should always be made for the convenient movement around the area for everyone.
This includes taking account of the special needs of people with visual or mobility disabilities **(D, G).**
From and urban design point of view this has particular relevance in the design of footways, crossings, parking spaces and access to front doors. More detailed guidance on this aspect is set out in the SPG on accessible environments (see Contacts and Further Guidance, Section 12).

7.25 Creating Mixed Communities

The most successful neighbourhoods provide a wide mixture of uses, and cater for people of different ages, different economic status, different

lifestyles, and different levels of mobility and independence **(G)**.

Mixed uses may be provided within one building, within a street or a wider area. In a building different uses may be separated vertically or horizontally.

The advantages of designing for mixed communities are the:
- generation of a more balanced demand for community services, such as schools **(G)**.
- creation of communities that are attractive for a person's whole lifetime **(F)**.
- avoidance of large concentrations of the same housing or building type **(A)**.
- reducing the need to travel long distances to reach shops, services employment opportunities etc. **(D)**.
- greater scope for community self help
- round the day surveillance of the area, through mixed uses which attract people at different times of the day, or which provide for informal surveillance at different times of the day **(B)**.
- more variety of building forms **(A,B)** (eg residential flats are useful in design terms to turn buildings at a street corner)
- making the fullest use of development potential of a site (and achieving high densities in locations well served by public transport), by for example developing and using space above shops.
- community buildings can be used to give added emphasis to focal points within an area **(E)**.

An understanding of the context of the site (see section 6 above) will reveal the types of local facilities which are lacking within walkable distance for the wider community, and which could possibly be provided as part of the development.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:
- The provision of a mixture of different uses, with facilities to serve different needs and requirements **(G)**.

- Providing the finest grain of mixtures of uses in locations which are well served by public transport **(D,G)**.
- Ensuring that the selection of mixed uses is geared to attracting people throughout the maximum period of the day, and to uses which interact with one another positively **(C,G)**.
- Making use of narrow plot frontages, so as to allow maximum diversity of uses within a small area (see also fig 25 page 20) **(G)**.
- The provision of different dwelling types (eg houses, flats, sizes of dwellings, different tenures, market and affordable housing) **(G)**.
- Fully integrating the varied uses and components, rather than segregating them one from another within the site **(G)**.
- The most active uses are best concentrated on the main movement routes and around focal points, in order to promote legibility and vitality **(D,E,G)**. This can include civic and community buildings. (see also fig 40 page 40)

8. Architectural Design Of Buildings (UDP Policies BE.22, BE.23, BE.24)

8.1 Situations where Architectural Design is an Important Planning Consideration.
Section 7 has dealt with issues of urban design. This section relates to the architectural design of the buildings themselves. There is an overlap between urban design and design of buildings, in particular in terms of buildings heights and the frontage elevation of buildings. This section of the Guidance refers to the detailed building design for both new buildings and for building extensions.

The influence of planning policy on the architectural style of buildings is rather less than is the case with urban design. However there are instances where the architecture of a building or an extension will be considered to be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application, and may lead to the refusal of permission on design grounds.

Detailed architectural design considerations of the

context of a site are likely to be an important planning issue in the following situations:

- where uniformity of building architecture contributes significantly to any special character in an area. Often this is the case in Conservation Areas, but it can occur elsewhere.

- where development would affect a Listed Building, or its setting.

- where development is to take place in the close context of a street frontage or the frontage to a public place. This includes extensions to existing buildings which may be seen from the street or a public place.

Conversely there will be greater freedom for individual architectural expression in the following situations:

- where development is envisaged in an area where there is a wide variety in the designs, architectural styles and detailing of the buildings in a street or an area

- where development of a large site is proposed, which would be large enough to accommodate its own individual design identity.

- where the proposed development would not readily be seen in the context of surrounding buildings or public spaces, (for example a backland area within the centre of a street block).

8.2 Traditional or Contemporary Architecture

A contemporary architectural approach is likely to be acceptable in most situations. The context of the site, and the scale of the development and its relationship to its surroundings will determine its acceptability (see section 8.3 below - Relating the Design to the Context).

In general high quality contemporary design can provide an acceptable solution for most development proposals, and it does not have the design problems associated with the traditional approach (see paragraph below). A wide range of modern materials can be used in contemporary design, where they would be inappropriate in a traditionally designed building.

Traditional design - (Victorian)

Contemporary design

In a few cases a traditional architectural approach may be required. However this approach can often present design problems, which if not fully addressed can lead to second rate architecture. Any new building project following the traditional approach needs to be very exact and accurate in terms of scale, proportions, materials and even minor details, if the finished result is to have any architectural credibility.

This will involve the most painstaking research, and specifying very specialist building materials. Without extremely careful consideration of these aspects, the result will be likely to be seen as a very poor and unconvincing pastiche, which, even at a glance can be seen to be something other than it pretends to be. By contrast contemporary design has a sense of honesty about it.

8.3 Relating Architectural Design to the Context

As stated above in most situations contemporary architecture is likely to provide an acceptable design solution, and it will also provide a more practical design approach, given the potential pitfalls of the alternative traditional approach.

However a traditional approach is likely to be required if the character of the area, or the building group is dependent on its architectural cohesion and traditional design approach. This will particularly be the case when the property is within or close to a Conservation Area, or when it relates to a group of Listed Buildings with evident architectural cohesion. Not all development that relates to a Listed Building would necessarily need to follow the traditional design approach.
A traditional design is also likely to be appropriate for most building extensions, especially for extensions of a cohesive group of properties such as a terrace of properties. Here the relationship between the extension and the parent building will be so close that mimicking the original building style can be justified.

Where a contemporary architectural approach is appropriate, then a suitable relationship can usually be achieved between a new building and its context if the broader features of surrounding buildings are studied, and important elements picked up and interpreted in the design of the new development. This approach is not outright copying of an architectural style, but is a rather a more subtle way of relating development to its context.
This would involve consideration of the following:

- building materials (type/colour/texture),
- building alignment,
- building and spatial scale,
- roof shapes and slopes,
- rhythms of building form (such as bays, gables or frontage widths),
- verticality or horizontality in elevational emphasis,
- rhythms of building mass and spaces,
- landscape and boundary treatment.

8.4 Standard of Design

A high standard of design, whether traditional or contemporary will be expected in all new developments and all extensions to buildings.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Use of high quality materials in both buildings and in the spaces between buildings, including the use of modern materials
- Giving particular attention to planting and boundary treatment
- Ensuring that the design is functional, and well suited to its purpose.
- Promoting honesty and integrity, and avoiding artificiality, in design, (ie design or materials which pretend to be something other than what they are)
- The most critical areas of building design are often where it meets the sky (consideration of the skyline), and where it meets the ground, (the ground level footprint, entry point and surroundings).
- Design can incorporate features to distract the eye from any necessary negative elements in a development (eg accommodation of car parking).

Fig. 93

Using strong architectural features to draw the eye from intrusive features
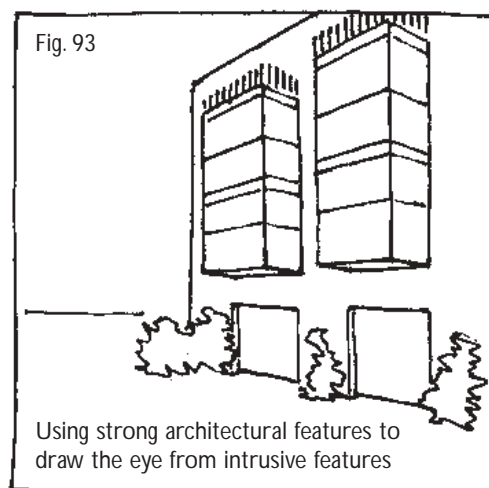
8.5 Neighbour Amenity

The design of a new development needs to respect the amenities of neighbouring properties. These amenities are of particular importance where the neighbouring use is residential. The amenity issues which are most likely to arise are ones of privacy /overlooking, daylight, sunlight, visual intrusion, noise, vibration and smell/fumes. The issues of privacy daylight and sunlight may apply to the interior and exterior spaces of a neighbouring property.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Wherever possible use innovative and imaginative architectural solutions to overcome neighbour amenity problems, rather than relying on distance separation (eg window size, design, opaqueness and orientation as a means of influencing privacy).

8.6 Access for all

Design has a fundamental part to play in providing conditions which allow full access to buildings and sites for people who have mobility or sensory disabilities. More detailed guidance on designing for people with disabilities is provided in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Accessible Environments, (see Contacts and Further Information, Section 12).

8.7 Designing to Minimise Environmental Impact

The architectural design of a building can also offer opportunities for the minimisation of the consumption of scarce or non-renewable resources, including ecological resources. The Council has prepared Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Development and on Planting Landscape and Nature Conservation. (see Contacts and Further Information, Section 12).

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- To exploit opportunities for creating habitat on the buildings, for example through the use of green roofs, climbing plants on the walls, and by fixing bird and bat boxes onto buildings.
- To make fullest use of recycled materials.

- To select materials which involve least energy consumption.
- To select locally sourced materials
- To include features in the design of a building which will minimise the consumption of energy and other natural resources in the lifetime of the building.
- To include features in the design of a building which will generate energy for its occupants and for others
- To include features in the design of a building which will minimise the consumption of water.

8.8 Detailing for Buildings

The legibility of an area can be promoted through the architectural detailing and the quality of materials in new buildings **(E)**.

The main factors which any development proposal should consider are:

- Legibility is often dependent on close attention being paid to the detailing of, for example, shopfronts and building entrances (see also fig 22 page 19) **(E)**.
- Richness of detail is particularly important at ground level, where people can see it at close hand **(A)**.
- The choice of materials can add interest and can aid legibility. The use of varied natural materials express their intrinsic interest and uniqueness **(A,E)**.
- The quality of signage, including that used on shops and other commercial premises is important, and it can enhance identity and legibility **(A,E)**.
- Lighting schemes for important buildings can also enhance identity and legibility **(A,E)**.

9. Design and Urban Design Statements (UDP Policies BE.16, BE.22)

9.1 Guidance Note on Design Statements.

The Council's planning policies indicate that design statements and urban design statements may be required to accompany planning applications.

The Council has prepared a Guidance Note for use by those who submit planning applications. This guidance is called "Guidance Notes for Applicants and Agents - Delivering Good Design and Urban Design". It provides help and advice about how to go about preparing Design Statements. It covers issues such as what are design statements, when are they required, how will a design statement help, and a step by step guide on what needs to be done. A checklist is also provided in order to confirm that all necessary steps have been taken.

The Guidance Note can be obtained from the Design and Conservation Team, (see Contacts and Further Guidance, Section 12).

10. Information needed in a Planning Application

10.1 Checklist

When you reach the stage where you are ready to make your application for planning permission you need to make sure that you have all the information the Council will require to enable it to reach a decision on whether or not to grant permission. The following is a checklist to help ensure you have this information; -

- the name of the applicant or his/her agent

- a signed and dated application form, with all questions on the form answered

- a signed and dated certificate of ownership

- a site identification plan identifying the site for development and any other land in an applicant's ownership or control

- a clear statement of what is proposed including

its design, materials, impact, accessibility and environmental effects

- clear plans of the proposed development at a suitable scale and in sufficient detail to allow the proposal to be assessed, for most applications this will mean plans and elevational drawings at a scale of 1:200, 1:100 or 1:50. Elevational drawings should be annotated to indicate materials to be used on the various different parts of the building. Close up drawings may be required to indicate more clearly specific areas of detailing, eg window details, details of brickwork etc. Plan drawings should always show all existing trees and important vegetation features and should clearly indicate trees and vegetation to be removed or to be cut back, and trees and vegetation which would be retained. Both plans and elevational drawings should indicate the layout and elevations of neighbouring buildings on adjoining sites, and for larger development proposals a general street elevation drawing for up to 100 or 200 metres on either side of the development site may also be required, depending on the scale of the development proposals.

- a building design statement, and an urban design statement, prepared accordance with the Council guidance "Delivering Good Design and Urban Design" (see section 9)

- a statement of planning policies in the Unitary Development Plan/Local Development Framework which refer and the development's compliance with them

- a statement of any action plan policies, development briefs or land use designations that apply and the development's compliance with them

- a flood risk assessment is required for all developments greater than 1 hectare, or for developments involving additional households within a flood plain

- details of sustainable urban drainage systems should be provided. Such systems are required where a development scheme would increase the impermeable area significantly (eg. by more than 1 or 2 houses). Site plans should also indicate the location of any watercourse where

one exists on or near to the development site

- a copy of the notice served on the owner if this is different from the applicant
- a statement of what consultation has been carried out and the originals of all correspondence with anyone affected by the proposed development who has been consulted
- a statement of consultation with any statutory and non-statutory consultees and their response
- reasons in support of the application

11. Bibliography

- "Responsive Environments" Bentley Alcock Murrain McGlyn and Smith.
- "By Design: Better Places to Live" Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions 2001.
- "By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards better Practice" Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions 2000.
- "Housing Layouts: Lifting the Quality" Planning Officer's Society, House Builders Federation and Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions 1998.
- "Sustainable Residential Quality: New Approaches to Urban Living" Llewelyn Davies Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, Government Office for London, and London Planning Advisory Council 1997.
- "Urban Design Compendium" Llewelyn Davies English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation.
- "Places Streets and Movement, a companion guide to Design Bulletin 32" Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions 1998.

12. Contacts and Further Guidance

Advice on Conservation Areas
(Telephone 020 8545 3074 or 020 8545 3055)

Advice on Listed Buildings
(Telephone 020 8545 3055)

Development Control (including arranging for pre application advice)
(Telephone 020 8545 3238)

Advice on Trees
(Telephone 020 8545 3815)

Building Control advice
(Telephone 020 8545 3123 or 020 8545 3145)

Advice on UDP design policies
(Telephone 020 8545 3074)

Obtaining "Guidance Note for Applicants and Agents - Delivering Good Design and Urban Design"
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Design and Urban Design
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Planting, Landscaping Nature Conservation. (Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG New Residential
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Resid Alterations/Extensions
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Designing Out Crime
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Accessible Environments
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Transport Planning
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Shopfront Design
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Sustainable Developments
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining SPG Listed Buildings
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)
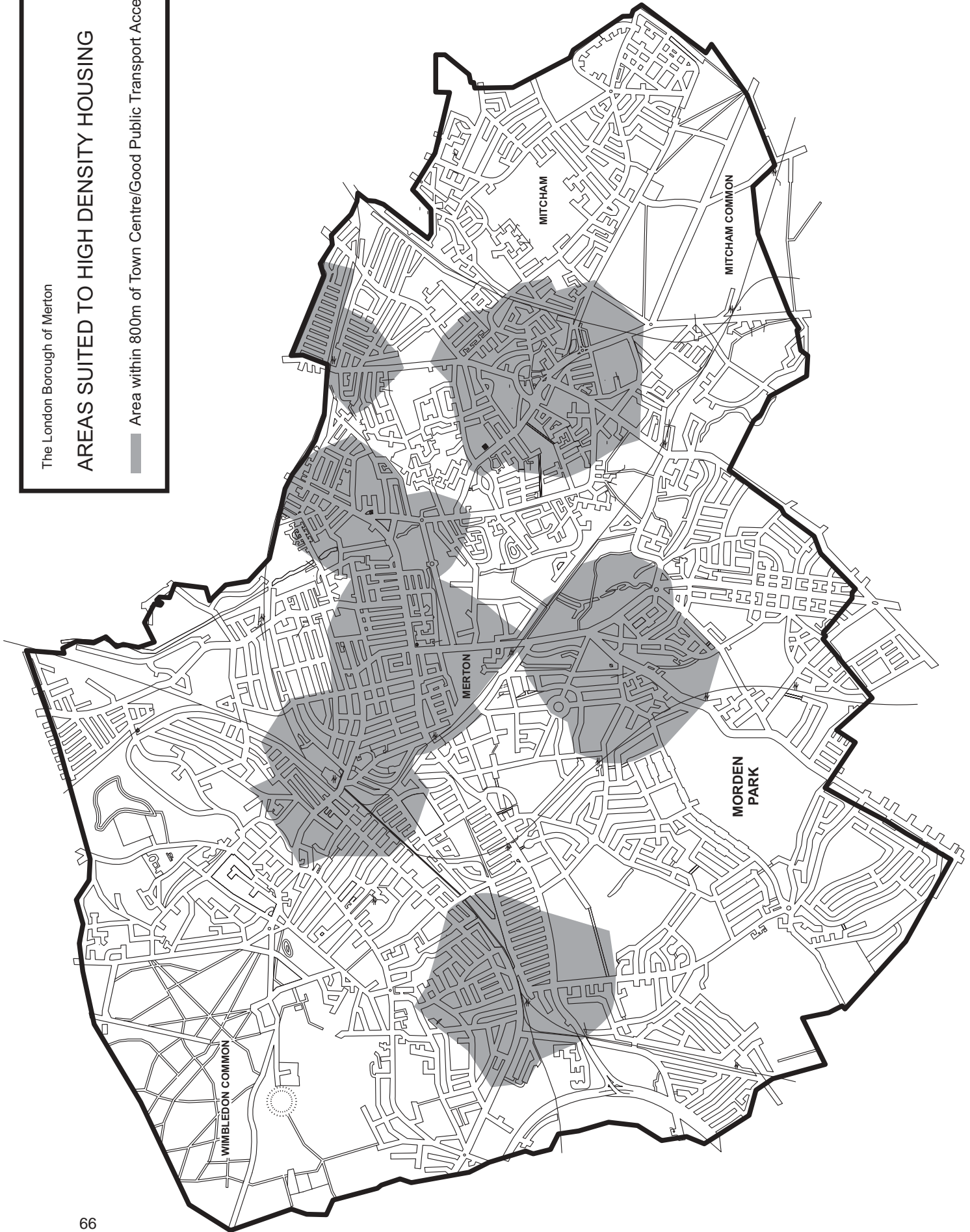
Obtaining SPG Mitcham Urban Village
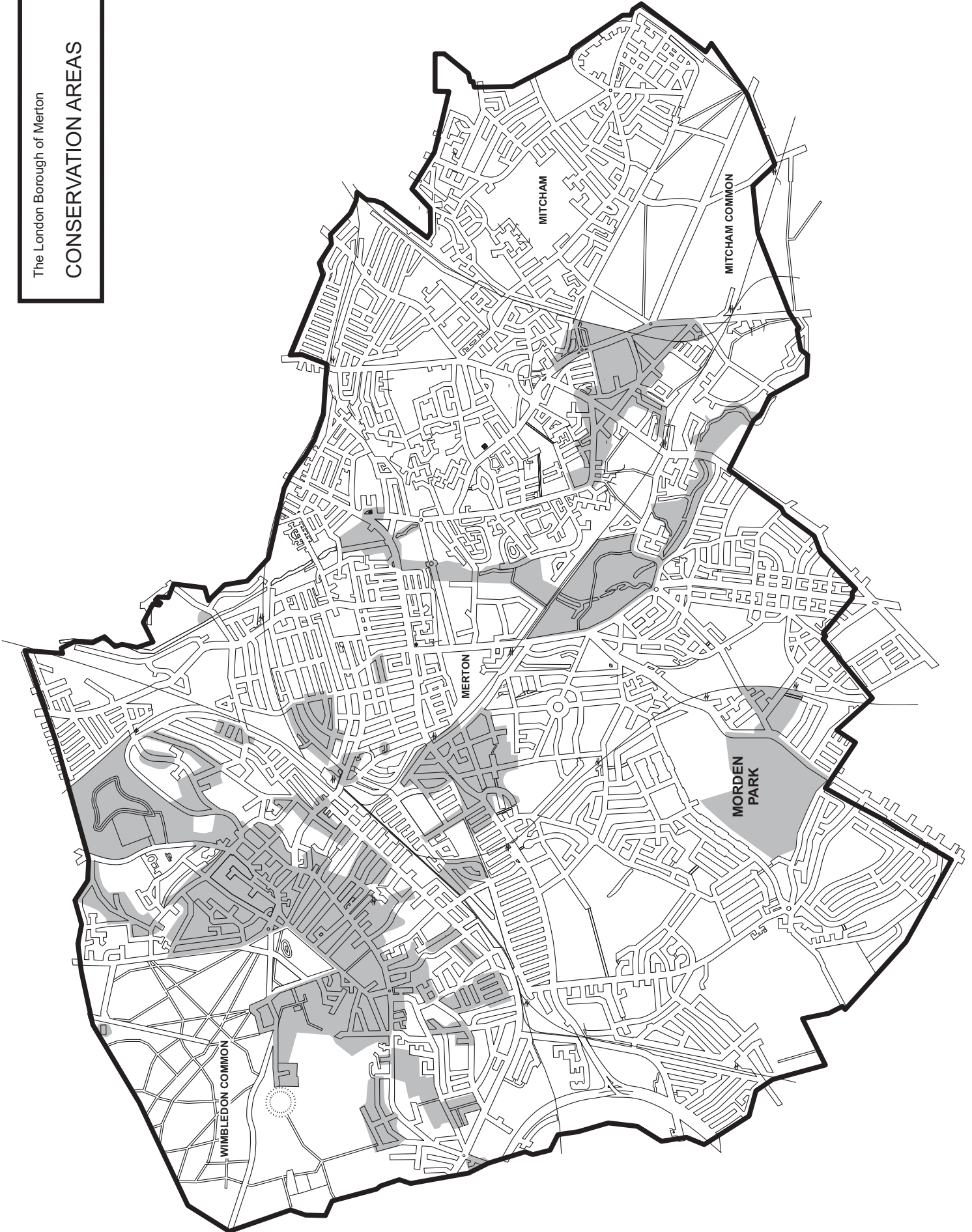(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

Obtaining Merton's Sustainability Checklist
(Telephone 020 8545 3041)

The London Borough of Merton

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please contact us at the address shown in the bottom box.

Bengali

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চান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ
করুন, তলার বক্‌ সে আমাদের ঠিকানা রয়েছে।

Chinese

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French

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veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

Gujarati

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તો કૃપા કરીને નીચે અંતમાં આપેલા ખાનામાં દર્શાવેલા
સરનામે અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Panjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ
ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Somali

Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku
soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira
cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

Spanish

Si usted desea mas informacion en su propia lengua, por favor
contactenos en la direccion al pie del formato.

Tamil

உங்கள் மொழியில் மேலதிக தகவலைப் பெற
விரும்பினால், அடியிலுள்ள பெட்டிக்குள்
தரப்பட்டுள்ள விலாசத்தில் எம்முடன் தொடர்பு
கொள்ளுங்கள்.

Urdu

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