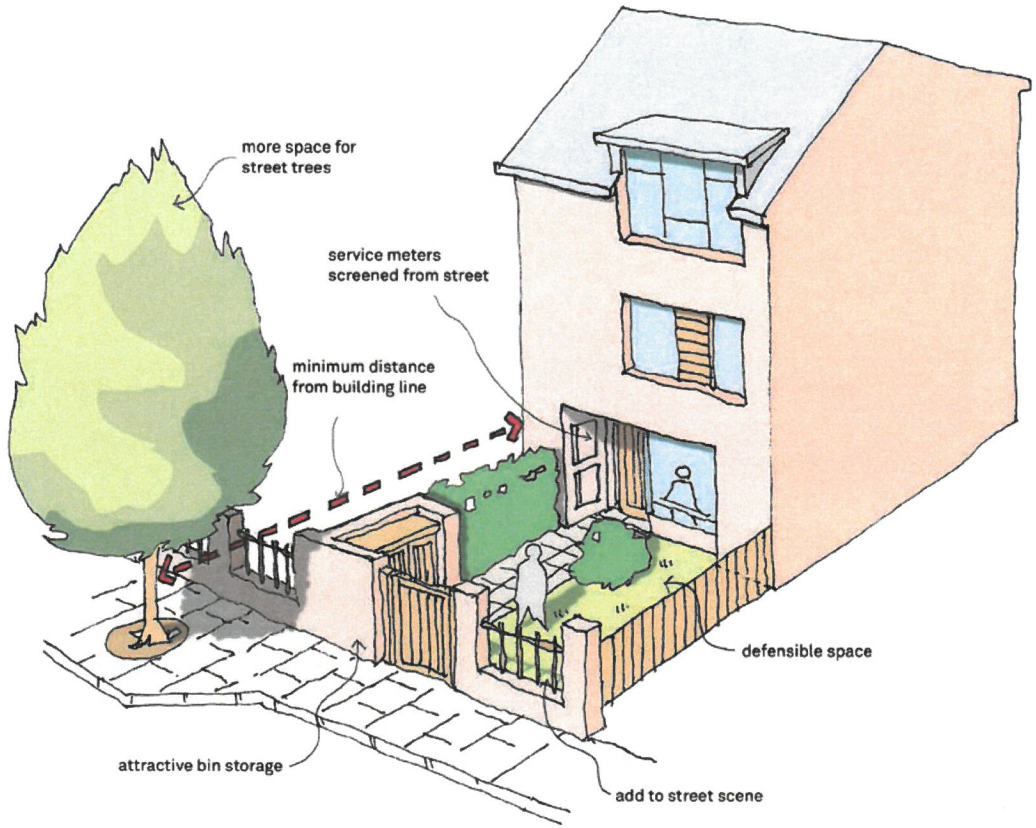
EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Quality Places

Supplementary Planning Document





ADOPTED

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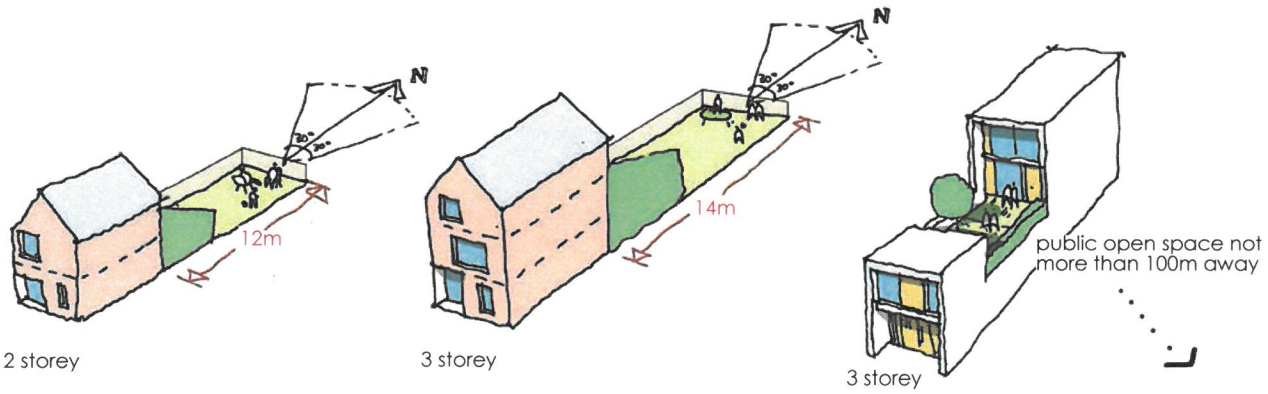
Fig.43: Minimum north-facing garden length and interior gardens near public open space



Residential Front Gardens:

Front gardens are an important contributor to the landscape design of the street as well as providing opportunities for social interaction.(See fig.40)

In some situations front gardens are not provided (where there is a local tradition of houses fronting directly onto the pavement or in a 'homezone' or mews street) and 'defensible space' must be provided through other means.(See fig 41)

Residential Rear (or Side) Gardens:

- Back gardens facing within 30 degrees of north should be a minimum length when measured from the house of 12m for 2 storey house and 14m for 3 storey houses to compensate for excessive shade from the house.

- Where there is easy access to local public recreation space (within 100 m), useable gardens integrated within the fabric of individual houses may be an acceptable alternative to the provision of conventional private rear gardens.

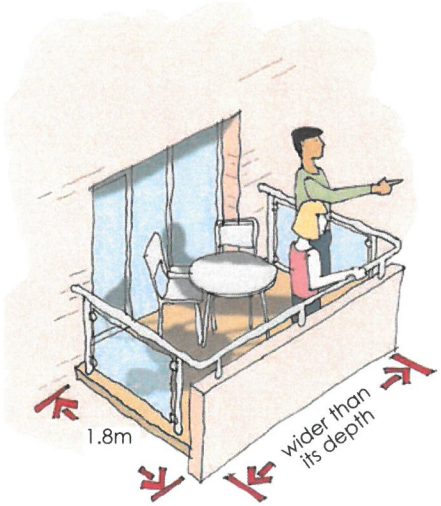
Balconies:

The provision of balconies on new buildings can make a positive contribution, in providing outdoor sitting space, where views out will not adversely impact on the privacy of existing buildings and private space.

- New balconies would be inappropriate for most existing dwellings in the borough due to an unacceptable loss of privacy to adjoining properties.
- Where flats front onto open space, balconies will be encouraged.

Balconies should be integrated within the design of the building and therefore should be considered early in the design process.

Fig.44: Appropriate balcony dimensions



A Design & Access Statement should show on a layout plan, street scene elevations, or in 3 dimensional street scenes and in building floor plans:

- the area of private amenity space for each residential unit ensuring that at least minimum standards are met
- where the proposed front gardens or other defensible space will be located and what the typical design approach will be for them.
- the location of all proposed roof terraces, interior patios and balconies
- the general design approach, including the provision of privacy;
- access arrangements.

Residential Communal Garden Space

For flats and accommodation for older people, the provision of individual private gardens may not be possible, so private communal space will be required to provide an appropriate area of semi-private space. This can also provide an attractive setting for the building within the local context.

- The amount of communal space provided with flats and accommodation for older people should be determined by the local context,

Balconies and roof terraces will be assessed as part of BfL Qs 10 & 15 (providing good passive surveillance of routes and public spaces) and in BfL Q17 (architectural quality).
Residential Communal Garden Space

Residential Amenity

Private Residential Amenity

External private amenity spaces need to be sunny and well connected to interior spaces to encourage use and to allow for supervision of young children.

Minimum provision:

- An important component of good quality residential design is the provision of useable outside private space where residents can take advantage of fresh air and direct access to the natural environment. This is different from semi-private communal space (which is shared by residents).

- External private space can be provided by back or side gardens, roof terraces, or balconies. In the case of ground floor rented flats this can consist of a portion of the communal space screened off by suitable hedge planting (see communal gardens sub section below).

- The private outdoor space must be easily and directly physically accessible for all physical abilities but accessible to only those residents for which it is designed to be used.

- To qualify as usable private space it will need to allow for
  - at least 2 people to sit out in comfort
  - a certain measure of privacy (e.g. not directly overlooked by neighbouring outdoor sitting areas or living rooms).

- For flats, private amenity space of *3 square metres per unit or *2 square metres per bedroom (whichever is the greater) will be required. This figure may be subtracted from the minimum amount of communal space provided for these dwellings.(*at least)

- For houses, the absolute minimum for private amenity space of at least 60% of the floor space will be required. This minimum may be reduced in urban areas when the dwelling is within 100m (by safe and convenient route) of a publiic open space.

The size will need to increase where:

- the local context requires it (i.e. in more suburban, 'leafy 'areas)

- excessive shading renders significant areas of the garden unusable due to neighbouring buildings or other structures, trees and orientation

- mature trees are to be retained within the garden space.

Private residential amenity space may sometimes not be appropriate where constraints exist which, even when mitigated would result in unsafe or uncomfortable environments.

For other design reasons (e.g. privacy requirements or the need to take account of the local context) minimum back garden sizes may need to be significantly larger.

Fig.41: The benefits of front gardens

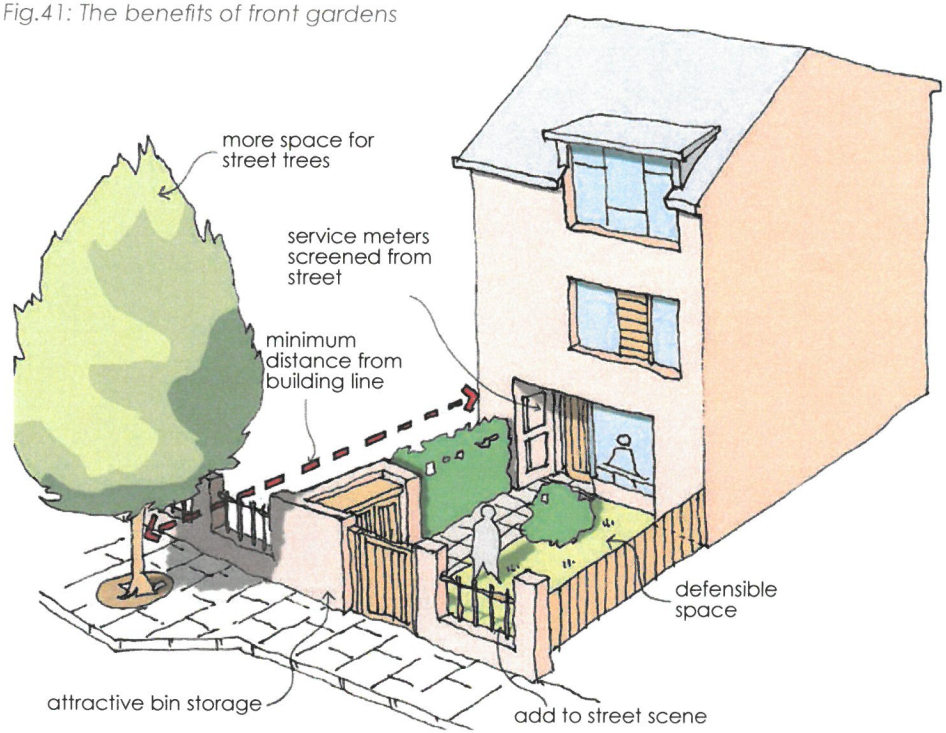
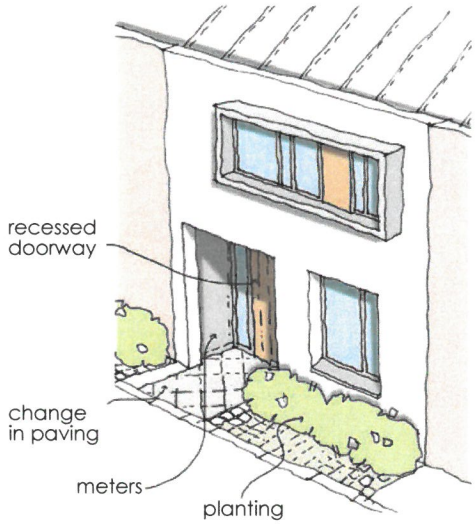


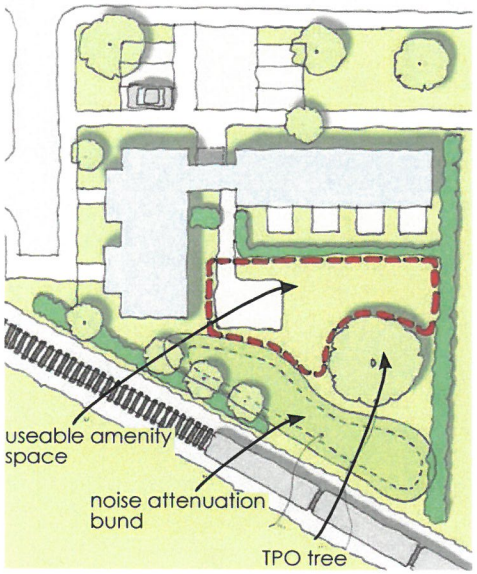
Fig.42 Defensible space where front garden not provided.



BfL Q18 will assess whether back gardens are large enough to allow the possibility of ground floor extensions. The provision of well-designed front gardens with attractive and robust boundary structures will contribute to a positive assessment in several Building for Life questions including BfL Q6 (design specific to the scheme), Q8 (place with distinctive character) and Q17 (includes good detail where building meets ground).

but as a guide, a minimum of 25 sqm of amenity space per dwelling should be provided.If the flatted development is directly adjacent to a useable recreation space or within an area of very good local facilities, such as a town centre, in which case this requirement may be waived. The minimum amount of communal external space for older people's accommodation cannot be waived due to the different needs and lower mobility of these residents. The area separately provided for private amenity space (balconies, roof terraces, ground floor flat gardens etc.) can be counted as part of this provision.

Fig.45: Useable amenity space excludes narrow strips of land, areas subject to excessive shade and noise attenuation bunds



- Communal space for flats should be provided with enclosure and some privacy, while including some overlooking by residents, and should have robust boundary design.
- Communal open space should be allocated in proportion to the building, to make this space comfortable and not over-dominated by the mass of the building (see fig.12)
- The amenity space provided should be suitable for normal domestic activities, including sitting out and drying clothes and should not merely act as a grassed setting for the building.

Public/Private Distinction

Private space for houses should be located at the rear, where possible,

A Design & Access Statement should show on a layout plan and in the text:

- the location of all proposed new areas of communal garden space;
- the means of access to this space for the intended users;
- the broad landscape design approach including any privacy protection for ground floor residents;
- future management arrangements.

and ideally should back on to similar private garden space with no public access. This arrangement is best for property security and allows for relatively tranquil and sheltered spaces.

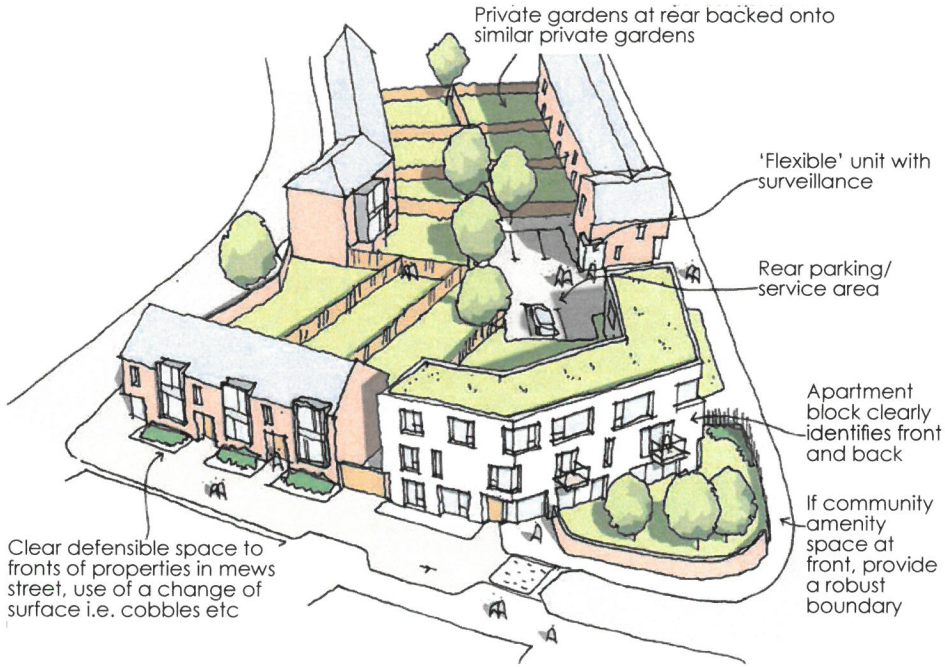
- The street elevation should have windows to habitable rooms and doors, allowing for natural surveillance.

Apartment blocks and non-residential buildings also need to clearly identify their fronts and backs. These buildings need to concentrate the main entrance or entrances on the street frontage and sides. The more private or service areas should be hidden from the street or its visual impact (of car and cycle parking or a delivery zone, bin storage, etc) mitigated by good design.

A Design & Access Statement should indicate on a plan:

a development concept showing in broad terms where the private areas and public areas of the development will be located through the site in the context of surrounding existing development.

Fig.46: Public/private distinction



The quality of architecture and the spaces around them is assessed (among other things) in BfL Q8. Whether streets are defined by a coherent and well structured layout (which includes the need for good private/public distinction) is assessed in BfL Q 10.