



Space around Dwellings

This guidance note amplifies policies in development plans on residential amenity. It applies to the construction and conversion of new houses and will form a material consideration in the determination of all relevant planning applications.

It is desirable to make the best possible use of land by increasing housing densities. However, residents are entitled to enjoy a reasonable degree of space, privacy and daylighting in and around their homes - factors that are usually termed 'residential amenities'. This note sets out a series of guidelines, to ensure that new development protects residential amenity.

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This leaflet is available in alternative formats

Distances between dwellings

New houses should benefit from a satisfactory degree of privacy and daylight. The residents of existing houses should also not be unduly affected by the development.

To achieve this, minimum separation distances should be maintained between houses, and in particular, between windows lighting habitable rooms. Habitable rooms include living rooms, bedrooms, studies and kitchens. They do not include halls, stair landings, passageways and utility rooms.

- *Where two habitable rooms face each other such that direct overlooking is physically possible, the windows should be 22 metres apart.*

- *Where a window in a habitable room faces a blank wall, the height of which exceeds the top of that window, there should be a distance measuring a minimum of 13 metres between them.*

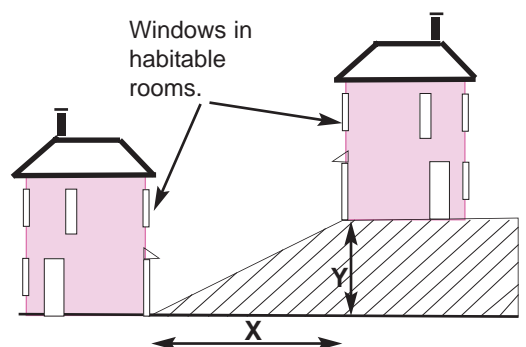
In the case of a kitchen window, these standards may be relaxed provided suitable screening is in place.

These standards apply on flat ground.

Where the ground slopes, an increased distance will be required, so that for every half metre difference in height, the distance in the standard is increased by one metre. Developers will be required to indicate on their plans the finished floor level(s) of their building(s) in relation to a fixed datum point and, where there are windows on adjacent existing properties, the levels of these properties.

Separation Distances On Sloping Ground
In the case of three or more storey developments adjacent to single or two storey development, the 13m/22m standard shall be increased by 2 metres for each additional storey (in addition to any increase due to differences in ground levels).

Separation Distances On Sloping Ground



e.g. if level difference (y) is 1.5m, separation distance (x) must be increased by 3m



Garden areas

All new houses should benefit from private garden space, for drying clothes, accommodating pets, children's play, quiet enjoyment, etc. Front gardens do not constitute private garden space. The following standards should be followed, to ensure that the garden space reflects the size and function of the proposed house. Appropriate screening with hedges, walls or fencing may be necessary to ensure that the garden space is not overlooked from surrounding houses or gardens. Private spaces must be designed so that residents have a reasonable amount of sun/daylight. They should not be closely bounded by high wall or buildings.

- For dwellings designed to accommodate 3 or more people, the minimum private garden area is 50 sq.m.
- For dwellings accommodating up to 2 people, the minimum private garden area is 30 sq.m
- For flats/maisonettes, a balcony or private space at ground level is desirable, adequately screened and measuring a minimum of 10 sq.m in area.

The above are minimum standards. Larger garden plots will be encouraged, as they can support sustainable development by enabling residents to grow some of their own food and to compost domestic waste.

Bins

Provision must be made on site for the storage of waste/recycling bins. This should be suitably screened



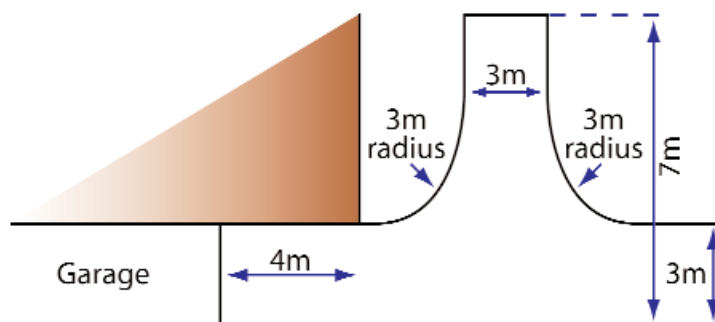
Car parking

Where on-site car parking is being provided, parked vehicles should not project into, and interfere with the use of the road or pavement. To achieve this, all new driveways should measure at least 5.5m in length. Garages should be set far enough back from the road to enable the garage door to be opened and closed whilst a car is parked within the driveway.

Planning permission is required to construct a vehicular or pedestrian access into the grounds of a dwelling from a classified or trunk road.

Where access proposals are deemed acceptable on highway safety and visual grounds, a vehicle turning space will also be required. This is to ensure that cars are not forced to reverse into the road or pavement. The turning space should follow the example set out in the diagram below.

However, large expanses of tarmac or concrete at the front of properties are usually unsightly and it is better to locate them behind the line of the building. Appropriate planting and the use of different materials can break up the parking area and also minimise the impact of parked cars from the road and from the property.



Car turning space within dwelling curtilage



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