BUCKINGHAM DESIGN CODE: 2024 - 2040

Created by Buckingham Town Council

With Roger Newall, ONH, The Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group and the residents and businesses of Buckingham

CONTENTS

Buckingham viewed from the west. *"This image was taken in the month of September and illustrates the importance of tree cover to the setting of the town. Increasing the tree cover both within the town, and in particular new developments within an extended urban area, will assist with the integration of new housing together with combating the effects of climate change."*

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY

The Buckingham Design Guidelines originate from 2001 and were partly adopted by the then local planning authority Aylesbury Vale District Council.

As we look to update the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan, the latest revised **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023** introduces the opportunity for Town/Parish Councils to produce design codes for their local area of responsibility, linked to Neighbourhood Plans. This draft Code is reflective of advice contained within the National Design Code Model. Applicants must also comply with **Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013 – 2033 (VALP) Policy BE2** and consider the additional guidance in the **Vale of Aylesbury Design SPD**.

A BUCKINGHAM DESIGN CODE

The Buckingham Design Code is a set of illustrated design rules and requirements which instruct, and may advise on, the physical development of new residential sites in Buckingham. The **CODE** uses the words **must**, **should** and **could**.

Where the word **must** has been used, this means the relevant code must be complied with. It is not expected that exceptions will be made.

Where the word **should** is used, this means in general it is expected that the code will be complied with, but it is recognized that there may be exceptions made due to specific circumstances. It does not imply the code is optional. If an applicant considers that their case is an exception, then they should include information explaining the reasons why they consider such an exception should be made. This would generally be due to physical constraints.

Where the word **could** is used, this means the code is a recommendation. Compliance is optional and up to the discretion of the applicant.

This draft design code has been prepared jointly by **Buckingham Town Council** and **The Buckingham Society** and replaces the previously adopted Buckingham Design Guidelines. Its purpose is to provide a coherent framework to future development of land throughout Buckingham and to define the character of new developments and give clear guidance on what will be considered acceptable to the local community and will be included as an Appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. Where images are used these should be considered examples of good practice in relation to the relevant code area, unless otherwise specified.

Bourton Park

LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

This is essentially about places and people's relationship with them; it is as much about the commonplace as about the rare, about the everyday as much as the endangered, and about the ordinary as much as the spectacular.

Definition of local distinctiveness is intricately linked to the environment, the economy, and the social ambience of a place and has been defined as that which makes a place special, differentiating it from anywhere else. Local distinctiveness is the essence of what makes a place special to us; it is the sum of landscape, wildlife, archaeology, history, traditions, buildings and crafts – everything that makes somewhere truly unique, and of course peoples' memory of a place.

While this code is intended for use in relation to new residential development and not householder development – all new developments, be they houses, extensions or employment buildings, should have their design influenced by local distinctiveness, form and style.

However, outside the conservation area and setting of listed buildings, this SHOULD NOT preclude contemporary designs, including modular buildings, provided they reflect local distinctiveness and/or the surrounding environment, then they should be encouraged.

Inside the conservation area, and within the setting of listed buildings, there COULD be opportunities for modern design solutions, but they must show how they conserve and enhance its heritage significance.

LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

USE OF LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS IN REDEVELOPMENT

The images below are provided as an example of how the principles of local distinctiveness were used to restore a building within the Buckingham Conservation Area during development.

During the 1960s several sections of historic town centre buildings were replaced insensitively. The 1960s Natwest bank on Market Hill was an example of this, the materials form and roof type of the 1960s building were out of keeping with the historic setting and nearby listed buildings. In the 2020s the exterior and interior of the building were redeveloped, the approved design uses exterior materials, window and door reveals and window heads that are sensitive to the local vernacular and direct setting.

1960s bank – originally NatWest, on Market Hill, Buckingham, inside the conservation area

Finished redevelopment in 2022

CONTEXT

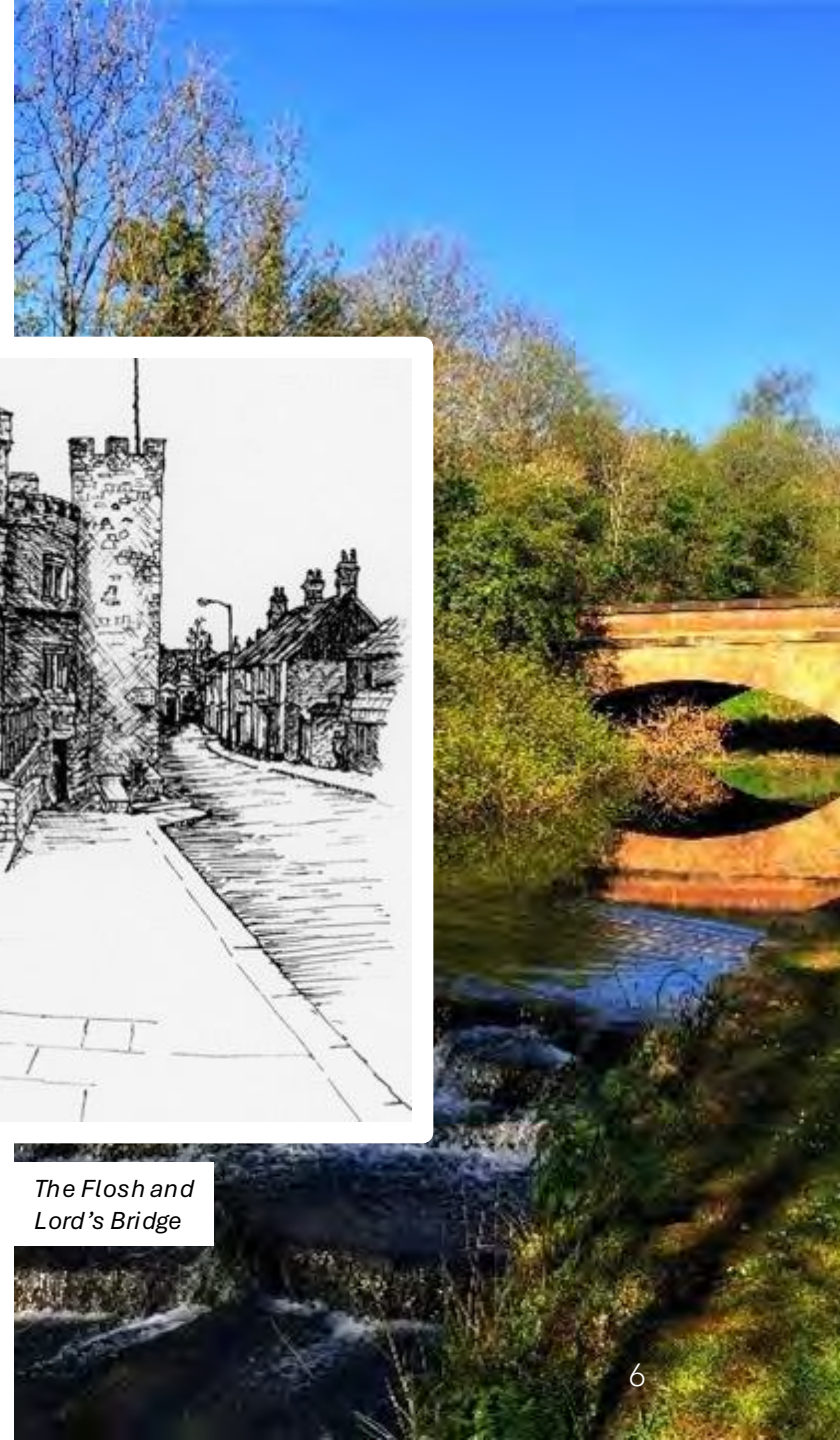
Buckingham is a market town located in the north of Buckinghamshire approximately 17 miles north-west of Aylesbury and 12 miles south-west of Milton Keynes. The historic core of Buckingham was designated as a Conservation Area in 1971 and the boundary was revised in 2005.

The historic core of Buckingham is situated on a raised promontory and is largely contained within a sweeping bend of the River Great Ouse. The winding form of the river, its floodplains and crossing points have shaped the physical character of the town and defined its strategic and economic importance.

There are many changes in levels within the town form, an important element of its character and former strategic importance. Rising ground gives emphasis and grandeur to individual buildings such as the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul and allows expansive views across the surrounding countryside. In contrast, the lower-level ground along the river has a much more intimate character.

Although there is an overall 18th century flavour to the town, many of the individual streets have quite an eclectic character, with buildings varying in scale, height, roof form, width of elevation and architectural detailing. In addition, interesting juxtapositions exist between the grander public structures and town houses and the smaller and much simpler domestic dwellings.

Buckingham Old Gaol - Rukiah Macey



The Flosh and Lord's Bridge

CONTEXT

Key elements in the historic character of Buckingham are the materials used in the construction of buildings and street surfacing. The geology of the Buckingham area consists of limestone, clay and cornbrash deposits and these materials provide the basic elements in the construction of historic buildings prior to the 19th century when the arrival of the railway and canal introduced cheaper, mass-produced building materials, such as slate.

Several buildings within the town are rendered or painted, which provides an interesting contrast in surface treatment and textures.

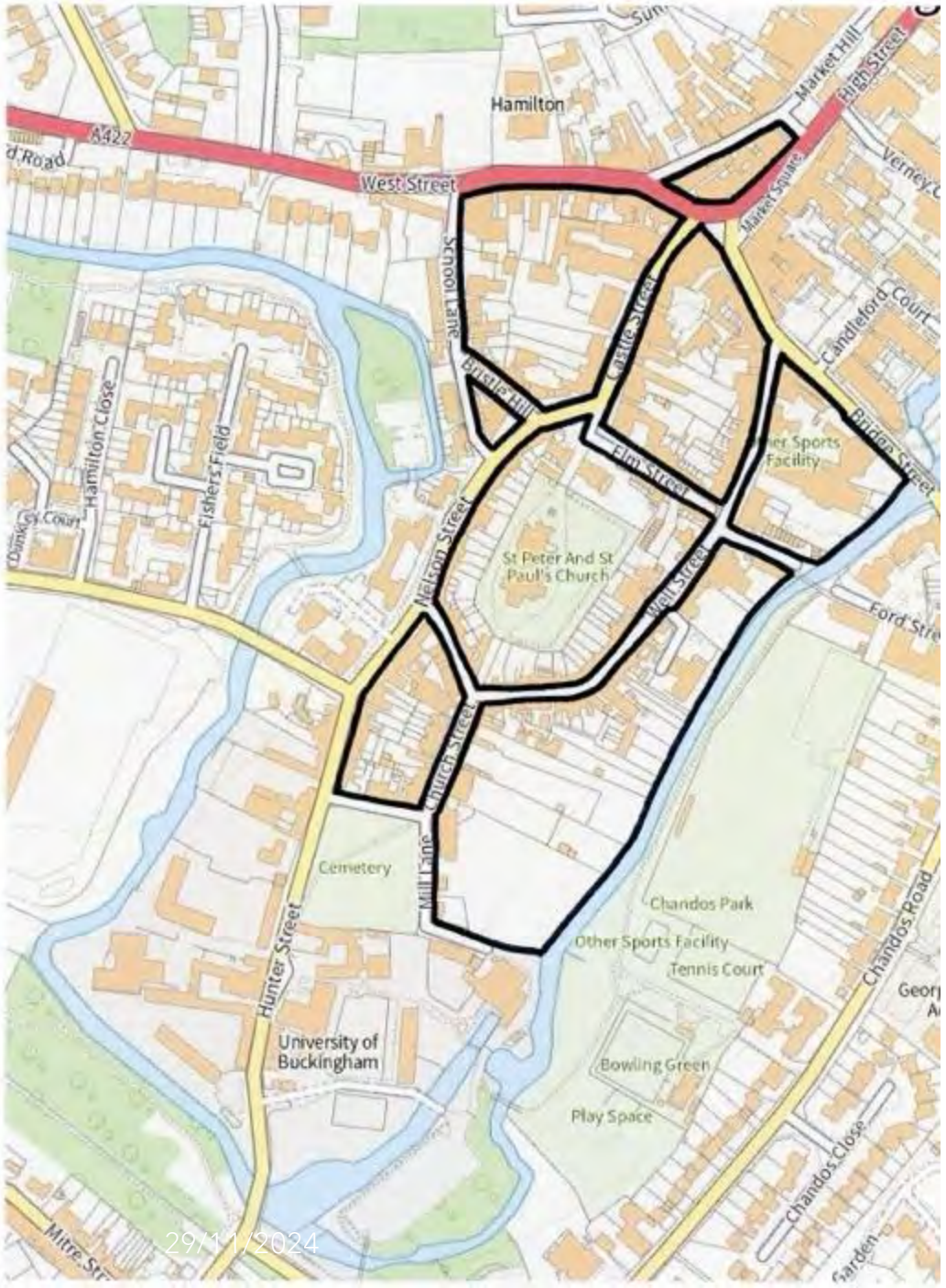
New estate developments post 1945 have occurred within and adjoining the town and its historic core, many of which have paid little or no attention to the characteristics or local distinctiveness of Buckingham. These draft design codes are an attempt to redress the balance so that new developments respect that which makes Buckingham special.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Applicants within The Buckingham Conservation Area should also consider and comply with The Buckingham Conservation Area Appraisal 2005, and future versions.

The Tanlaw Mill, University of Buckingham

The New Inn, Bridge Street.



CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: BUILT FORM

URBAN MORPHOLOGY: TOWN CENTRE

The map shows the typical block structure and historic street pattern of the centre of Buckingham. It highlights how the town developed in this form with all buildings fronting onto the street/s or River Great Ouse, together with the regular and diverse plot sizes in differing locations.

High Street - varied dwelling/plot widths and depths. Perimeter blocks with carriageways through to mews/developments behind

Parts of **Nelson Street** and **Well Street** - perimeter blocks with more regular plot width and depth

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: BUILT FORM

BUILDINGS WITH CARRIAGE ENTRANCES

Carriage entrances are a common feature within the long-built terraces of Buckingham; two examples are shown here.

Castle Street

High Street

CORNER BUILDINGS

Buckingham has a wealth of uniquely designed buildings sited at corner locations; two examples are here, one historic and one contemporary.

Well Street

Whitehead Way

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: ROOFSCAPES

TILES

The roof covering most widely used in Buckingham is plain clay tiles. Several later buildings have natural slate roofs, which also allows the provision of shallower roof slopes. This variation should be reflected within new developments at Buckingham.

Natural slate tile and plain clay tile

RIDGE HEIGHTS

Ridge heights are generally uniform however, many of the individual streets have quite an eclectic character with buildings varying in scale, height, roof form, width of elevation and materials. Many buildings in the town have dormer windows, which are traditionally proportioned and do not dominate the street scene.

As illustrated in the images all dwellings shown have chimney stacks, chimneys are a consistent feature throughout Buckingham.

Dormer windows positioned away from ridge

High Street – variety of ridge heights

Nelson Street – ridge lines follow slope of the land

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: WALLS

The most common wall finish within Buckingham is brick, particularly of an orange/red hue. Historically these have been laid in Flemish bond, and this practice has been continued within recent developments at Moreton Road, Lace Hill, and Summerhouse Hill.

There are many examples of decorative brickwork throughout Buckingham, particularly from the Victorian era. The former Lloyds Bank building in the town centre and the image from Chandos Road shown below are examples of this practice.

Yellow bricks have been used but to a far lesser extent, most notably at Markhams Court and Villiers Hotel annexe.

Local limestone buildings are also interspersed throughout the town, whilst painted brickwork of varying colours can be seen along with stucco and render.

Flemish bond with vitreous headers

Flemish bond with pale headers

Flemish bond

Painted English bond brickwork

Yellow bricks laid in Flemish bond

Coursed limestone rubble

CONTEXT

COARSE URBAN GRAIN

Buckingham was identified in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Design SPD 2023 as having a coarse grain urban context. An important part of Buckingham's local distinctiveness is variation in design throughout a development.

Landmark buildings, in prominent positions, are frequently constructed in contrasting material to their setting.

Decorative Victorian brickwork, Chandos Road

The coursed limestone of the Listed Old Gaol Museum contrasts with render and brick of neighbouring buildings in Market Hill

Tudor restaurant takes a landmark position at the corner of Moreton Road and the High Street, contrasting terrace of stucco/render and brick buildings

Flemish bond brickwork with pale headers at the Banking Hub, Market Square, in contrast to nearby render buildings

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: DECORATION

PARGETING

Pargeting is a decorative form of external plaster work or waterproof plastering applied to building walls. There are some examples of this practice within Buckingham, most notably in Castle Street, as indicated by the image below. This is achieved by placing several pins in a board in certain lines or curves, and then pressing on the wet plaster in various directions, to form geometrical figures, and commonly found in panels of timber framed buildings.

The Coach House, Castle Street

STUCCO

Stucco is seen most commonly within Nelson Street, Bristle Hill, Hunter Street, and Church Street. Stucco consists of lime, sand, and water, and within Buckingham is commonly 'decorated' with incised masonry patterning. Many stucco finishes have been painted a variety of colours as can be seen in the images below,

The incised masonry pattern

Nelson Street

Bristle Hill

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: DOORS AND WINDOWS

The above image shows door and window styles found throughout Buckingham; the bay window is extended to ground level, a 6 panel door with a simple canopy, and Georgian style sash windows.

A flat arch voussoir is above the ground floor window whilst the upper floor window heads are directly below the eaves. Also shown are door and window reveals. First floor window heads adjoin the eaves.

Windows in Market Square – note the curved frames and how openings decrease in size on the upper floors.

Flemish bond brickwork, decorative cornice, flat arch voussiors, and deep window reveals to recently constructed building at Buckingham University, details that reflect the local distinctiveness of Buckingham.

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: CHIMNEYS

Buckingham has a wealth of differing chimney styles, and it is possible to reflect this within modern house designs.

Historic twisted chimney attached to grade 2* listed building and dating from the 16th century.

Modern interpretation of the historic chimney erected in 2012.

Wharf house eastern elevation
Buckinghamshire County Council Archive

Wharf house western elevation

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: CANAL SIDE

The site location relates very much to the history of the Buckingham branch of the Grand Union Canal.

The canal arm from Cosgrove to Buckingham was opened in 1801 and terminated at Wharf Yard to the east of the town centre. After initial commercial success, it was abandoned in 1964.

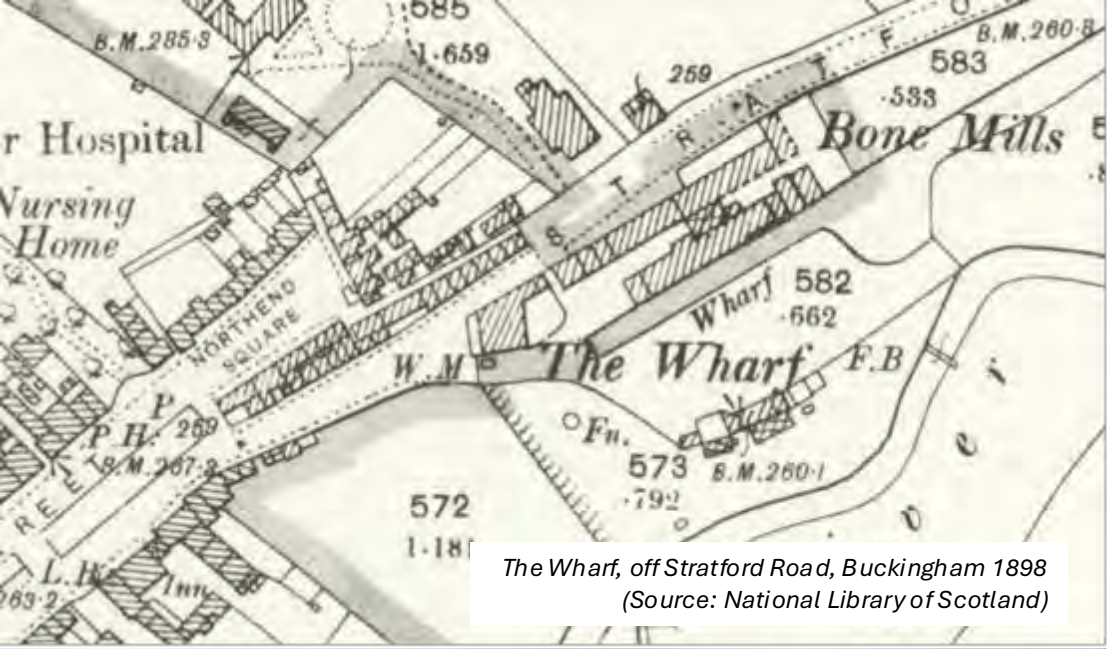
Many of the buildings associated with the canal have since been abandoned or demolished. However, there are three remaining buildings in the town, together with the more general early 19th century development of the town, that provide an appropriate design cue for the new canal area.

The first is wharf house, which sits in a prominent location on stratford road at the entrance to the former canal wharf, now used for various commercial enterprises. Wharf house is listed as a non-designated heritage asset and is within the buckingham conservation area. The building is of a grander scale in its form, height and tall chimneys, with pronounced bay windows. It has a large, double hipped slate roof and the red brick common to the town.

Buckingham Canal

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: CANAL SIDE



The Wharf, off Stratford Road, Buckingham 1898 (Source: National Library of Scotland)

The Grand Junction, Google Street View © 2024

Wharf Motors, Google Street View © 2024

The second is the range of buildings that also survive in the former wharf area, which are occupied by Wharf Motors. The range is smaller in scale, also in red brick but with a lower, clay tile roof.

The third building is The Grand Junction public house at 12-13 high street, which is contemporaneous with the opening and operation of the canal and is grade II listed. It is of a similar scale to wharf house, with a half hipped slate roof and painted (red) brick frontage with coursed limestone rubble. Its listing description associates the building With the canal and wharf house.

The three buildings are of typologies, the use of which in the canal area scheme will reassert the history of the canal with the town. The typologies will offer the opportunity to create a range of terraced and detached building forms of a variety of heights within a two storey form. The use of similar building materials in the palette for the area will also make a subtle cross reference to its association with the town even though the site itself lies beyond its easternmost boundary.

CONTEXT

LOCAL CHARACTER ANALYSIS: CONTEMPORARY AND OTHER INTERPRETATIONS OF HOUSE DESIGN

Flats, Verney Close

Examples of contemporary house design within the Buckingham area.

Lace Hill dwellings reflecting almshouse design

As with all design guidance and codes, the standards and requirements should be regarded as setting the design brief for a proposal, but the applicant may depart from them where it can be justified in the circumstances.

Not all of the codes will be relevant to an application and the code does not set out a prescriptive list of design features that must be slavishly incorporated into every scheme. Rather, the burden will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the codes have been acknowledged, understood and responded to in a way that is appropriate to the location and nature of the proposal.

This is particularly relevant in relation to contemporary house design choices.

For further street analyses refer to the area studies contained within the adopted Buckingham Conservation Area document dated 27 April 2005, or any future update that amends this.

MOVEMENT

M.2.ii. JUNCTIONS & CROSSINGS

ROAD JUNCTIONS

Junctions **MUST** have minimum junction radii acceptable to ease pedestrian crossing and slow traffic speeds consistent with Manual for Streets.

The kerb, design speed and carriageway widths illustrated below **SHOULD** be complied with in relation to Road Junctions.

Kerb

Conservation style

Design speed

10 mph

Carriageway (width)

4.5m minimum

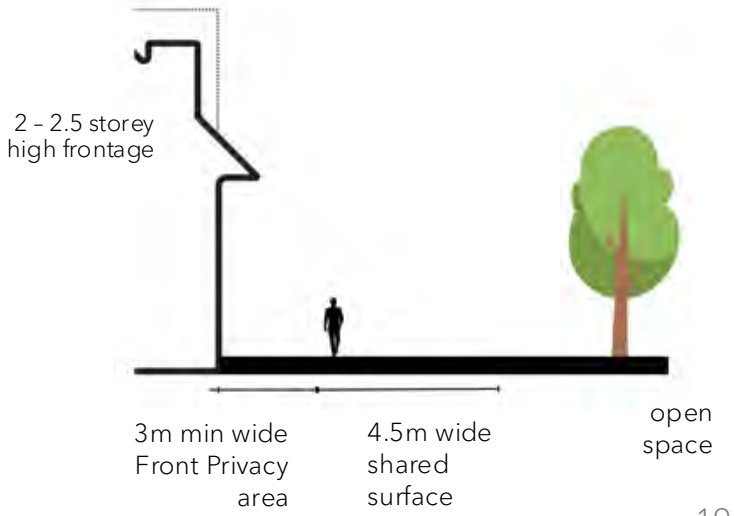
FORWARD VISIBILITY

Consistent with current best practice advice buildings **SHOULD** define and enclose streets. Positioning of buildings can be used to limit forward visibility and therefore assist in the reduction of vehicle speeds.

SHARED PRIVATE DRIVES

Shared private drives are shared surfaces with a change in surface materials to define their extent. Each drive **MUST** serve no more than 5 residential units.

These mostly occur at the end of roads where the development meets open space.



MOVEMENT

M.3.i. PARKING

ON-STREET

Mainly informal street parking for use by visitors or overflow parking for residents; It will be overlooked by surrounding houses and have a traffic calming effect, separating pedestrians from moving traffic.

To discourage parking on grass verges measures MUST be designed into landscape proposals with various methods explored such as edge posts and planting.

IN CURTILAGE

Within residential areas most house types should provide off-street parking. The parking SHOULD be provided within garages and hard or permeable surface areas and be located to the side of dwellings.

Flooded sloped entrance to underground carpark, Candleford Court, Buckingham

UNDERGROUND PARKING

Underground parking MUST NOT be used in Buckingham, due to the flooding risk.

PARKING COURTS

Parking courts should be avoided where possible. Where they are proposed, parking courts SHOULD:

- be used equally between free market and affordable housing
- have an entrance that provides a clear demarcation between public and private space
- be small in scale (maximum 10 spaces in each court, 12 for flats)
- be well lit
- have submitted with the application details of maintenance and utility arrangements
- located to the front, rear, or side of dwellings and ensure surveillance and security of vehicles. The image to the right indicates how a parking court to the front of dwellings can be achieved.
- rear and side parking courts design should be entirely enclosed with 1.8m high brick walls and have direct access from the court through lockable gates to the properties they serve.
- be surfaced in permeable surfaces, to assist in reducing surface water run-off and the vehicular entrance demarked by a change in surface.

Indicative Arrangement: On-Street Frontage Courtyard

Coopers Wharf, Buckingham

1) Parking court as part of a courtyard/cul-de-sac arrangement

2) Residents can easily view and access their cars

3) Cars stored away from street frontage

4) Street trees COULD be used to help screen view of parked vehicles

MOVEMENT

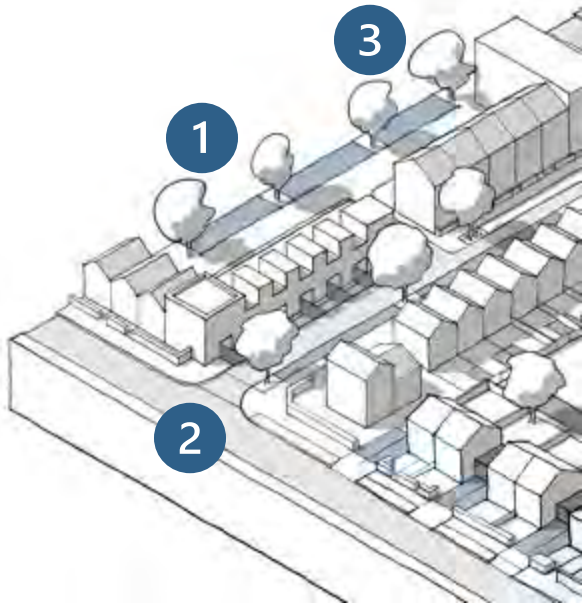
M.3.i. PARKING

Further examples of how parking **COULD** be arranged in Buckingham are illustrated below:

GARAGES

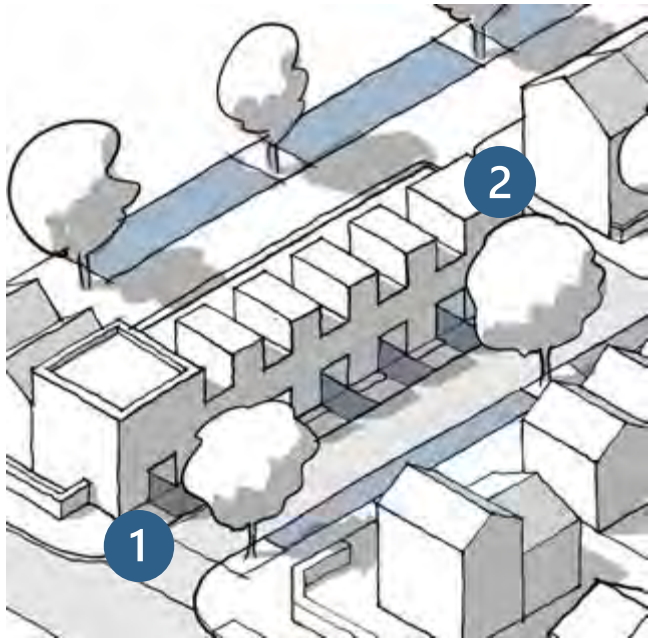
All single garages **MUST** be 6m x 3m (internal). All double garages **MUST** be 6m x 6m (internal). Garage doors **SHOULD** be a minimum 2.5m wide to enable a vehicle to access and exit with ease and to encourage their use.

Indicative Arrangement: Formal On-Street Parking



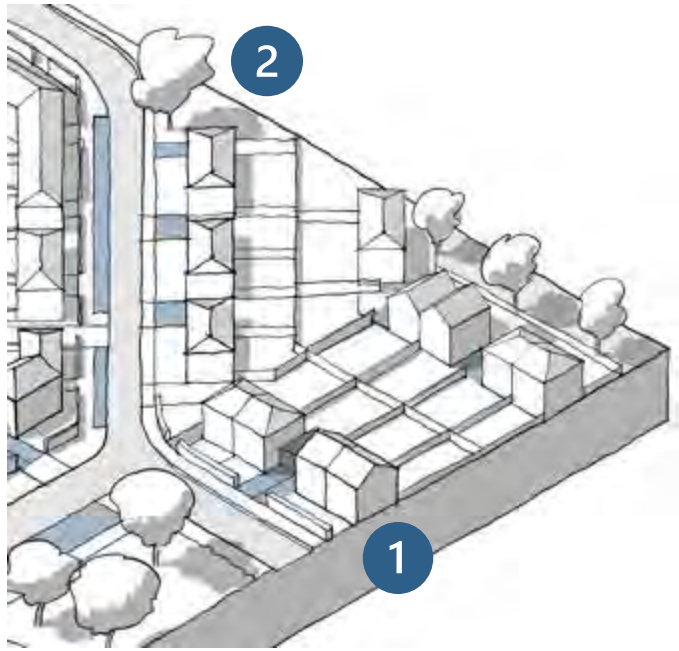
1) Parallel parking to the frontage as part of a parking bay and landscaping.
2) Residents can easily access and view their cars.
3) Street trees will help demarcate the parking area and soften the view of parked cars

Indicative Arrangement: On-Plot Undercroft



1) Buildings designed to allow for ground level parking space within the building footprint. This could lead to a garage at the rear of the plot.
2) Design solution helps to create a continuous building line and stores vehicles away from the frontage.

Indicative Arrangement: On-plot



1) Drive to the side or rear of the plot, which could lead to a garage
2) Space for vehicle to safely pull in from the carriageway

MOVEMENT

M.3.iii. SERVICES & UTILITIES

STREET NAMEPLATES & LIGHTS

Nameplates **SHOULD** be fixed to buildings, walls, or railings.

Street Lights **SHOULD** be attached to buildings where possible.

Wall streetlights in the Buckingham Conservation Area

Street nameplates in the Buckingham Conservation Area

AEDs: DEFIBRILATOR ACCESS

In order to ensure no individual in Buckingham is further than 400m from an Automated External Defibrilator, new developments further than 400m from an existing device **SHOULD** lay suitable infrastructure to a publicly accessible point that could be used to install a defibrillator in the future. The best locations are accessible, well lit and easily described. Infrastructure should comply with latest recommended standards.

BIN STORAGE

Inconvenient bin storage for residential properties, particularly long paths to the back of properties or involving steps, are rarely used as intended. Instead, residents will leave bins at the front of properties, close to their collection point. This can cause obstructions to paths and reduce access widths.

Convoluted access paths **SHOULD** be avoided, and sensitively designed bin storage as part of the house frontage **SHOULD** be used as an alternative.

House frontage bin storage good practice example. (Image credit: Oxford County Council Street Design Guide.)

Collection point to highway	Residential store to collection point
25m maximum	30m maximum

Heron and wildflowers in Bourton Park Buckingham

NATURE

The appearance and treatment of spaces between and around buildings is of equal importance to the design of the buildings themselves. New development should have a spatial and planting structure that reflects and complements the surroundings of the site. Landscape considerations should be the starting point of the design and layout.

NATURE

N.1.ii OPEN SPACE PROVISION

VALP standards, or any replacement thereof, as set out in policy I1 and I2 for quantity, location and types of open space provided, following ANGSt guidelines, should be followed.

Mini woodlands COULD also be included on large sites

Bourton Park

N.1.ii. DESIGN

There MUST be a clear distinction between public and private space, particularly in locations that adjoin the public realm. Secure access is required to all private internal and external areas.

A Landscape Strategy for each proposed development SHOULD be prepared to reinforce the urban design and enhance the ecological and amenity value of the sites and their immediate surroundings. The key landscape design principles of this strategy will be that the proposal:

- responds to the character of the site and its surroundings and local open spaces.
- reinforces a hierarchy of avenues and open spaces.
- strengthens site permeability and integrates pedestrian, cycle, and vehicle movements.
- identifies opportunities for communal/allotment/amenity spaces for their significant townscape value.

NATURE

N.1.iii. OPEN SPACE DESIGN

Cycleways and footways in open spaces

Consideration **MUST** be given to the appropriate standards recommended by Active Travel England and **(LTN) 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design** to make all short journeys easily accessible via active travel. This **SHOULD** include:

- Additional width to paths in open spaces to allow park users, using a variety of transport modes, to pass.
- Cycleways and footpaths through open spaces to be well lit. (see **Policy P.3.i. Secured by Design**)
- Biodiversity friendly lighting to be used where appropriate.
- Cycleways and footways should follow desire lines to town centres, schools, shops and other community infrastructure, linking existing paths in a logical manner.

Play areas

- New play areas **MUST** be overlooked by surrounding homes and buildings.
- Play areas **SHOULD** be LEAP and NEAP sizes only.
- Play areas next to roads, of any size, **SHOULD** be fenced. Where fencing is used there **MUST** be a minimum of two gates for access.
- Play areas sited as part of open space, away from roads and cyclepaths, **COULD** be unfenced.
- Across each neighbourhood, play equipment **SHOULD** be included for children from infants to teenagers and adults. Play area layout and design **MUST** be attractive to users of the appropriate age to use the play equipment at that site. Particular care **SHOULD** be given to include equipment appealing to users who rarely use existing facilities, for example swings and benches for teenage girls (see Make Space for Girls) and equipment accessible to disabled users, of all ages.
- Older children's play equipment **SHOULD** be separated from equipment for young children.
- Play areas designed for teenagers **MUST** be unfenced.
- Play equipment **MUST** comply with RoSPA and Fields in Trust, or latest equivalent codes.
- Where play areas are to be built on sites liable to flooding, flood resilience measures, including ease of cleaning **SHOULD** be considered.

Layout

Areas designed for sports, leisure, nature or play **SHOULD** be well defined and suitable for the assigned uses. Placement of seating and bins **SHOULD** reflect and not obstruct the planned layout.

Images of play equipment in Bourton and Chandos Parks

PLAY

Natural, fun and challenging, spaces to play and socialise for children and adults, young and old, are part of the context of Buckingham.

NATURE

N.2.ii SUDS

See also Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan Policy I1 Water management and flood risk

In addition SUDs **COULD** be incorporated with street trees on primary and secondary streets.

Use of SUDs at individual properties **COULD** include permeable surface driveways, green roofs and walls, rain capture devices, soakways, rain gardens and other similar approaches.

Reedbeds and wetlands for nature use and flood attenuation **COULD** be used alongside the river, particularly in areas identified as also bringing environmental benefits.

Flooding at Cornwalls Meadow Carpark Buckingham

N.2.iii FLOOD RISK

Resilient design approaches **MUST** be used where there is some risk of flooding.

Resilient approaches **MUST** consider the practical consequences before, during and after a future flood:

- Stilts or parking garages at risk of flooding **MUST** consider how any underground levels can be cleaned post-flooding eg SUMP & PUMP incorporated into design.
- Potential hazards including electricals, boilers or other fire or gas leak risks **MUST NOT** be sited in parts of the site identified as at flood risk.
- Residents and vehicles **MUST** be able to leave the property if a flood is imminent or in process through a safe emergency access route. "safe refuges" are not considered appropriate.

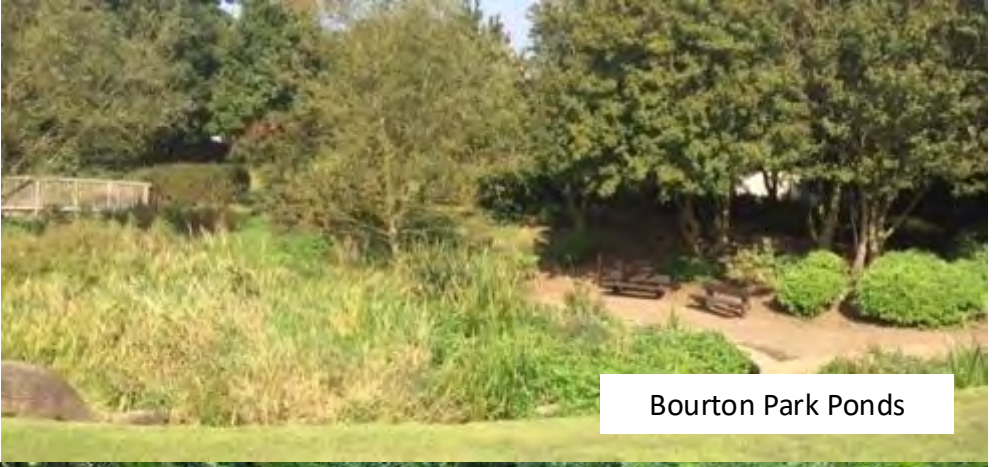
N.2.i. WORKING WITH WATER

Buildings near the river **SHOULD** face the water.

VALP Policy NE2 River and stream corridors is supported. Additionally, the ecological buffer zone **MUST** allow for watercourses and banks to be maintained and for current and potential future flood defences.

Walking and cycling routes directly alongside watercourse are a feature of Buckingham and **MUST** be included along the entire stretch of River Great Ouse and **SHOULD** be included alongside other watercourses. Bridges **COULD** be added to allow a public foot or cyclepaths along the river.

De-culverting, reinstating meanders and restoring and naturalising river beds will all be supported where appropriate.



Bourton Park Ponds

Railway Walk

Riverside Walk

NATURE

N.3.i. NET GAIN

Where Biodiversity Net Gain cannot be delivered on site opportunities identified in the Ecological Assessment evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan should be considered for offsite Biodiversity Net Gain. See also Neighbourhood Plan policy ENV2 Green and Blue Infrastructure.

The following sites are owned by Buckingham Town Council, who would welcome discussions about their use for offsite Biodiversity Net Gain.

- Ponds at Bourton Park
- Railway Walk
- Riverside Walk

NATURE

N.3.ii. BIODIVERSITY

DESIGN APPROACHES

See also Neighbourhood Plan Policies ENV1 Buckingham Green Ring and ENV2 Green and Blue Infrastructure; for planting see Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENV3 Urban Greening.

The design approaches for developments **SHOULD:**

- Be designed around or incorporate existing landscape features, such as mature trees, hedgerows, and other landscape elements worthy of retention.
- Retain and enhance opportunities for wildlife penetration into developments by the reinforcement and retention of local habitats.
- Develop opportunities for wildlife corridors through sites.
- Provide safe and secure environments for inhabitants through the disposition and detail of landscape elements.
- Reinforce any existing perimeter vegetation with appropriate native planting to establish an effective buffer between proposed developments and adjacent areas.
- Concentrate soft landscaping areas within the site.
- Handle and store topsoil carefully to preserve and re-use this valuable resource.

PLANTING

Plant species, along with sizes and locations, within new development schemes in and adjoining Buckingham are critical to support the rich biodiversity and landscape character of the local area.

A multi-layered planting strategy is required across all sites; trees, hedgerow boundaries, open spaces, gardens, and grassland verges, to allow for a range of vegetation heights and habitats across the development informed by site specific landscape character assessments.

- ✓ Native hedging plants and shrubs which can be coppiced, such as hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose, dogwood, and field maple.
- ✓ Orchard type trees such as apples, crab apples, and cherries.
- ✓ ‘Structural’ hedgerow and specimen trees such as oak, hornbeam, field maple, and birch, including new mature trees. Black poplar should be included where appropriate.

Front garden hedges adjacent to footways can be successfully created from a mixture of hornbeam, beech and hazel for example, to maintain a locally distinctive, semi-rural character in new developments.

- ✗ Areas of the ubiquitous, ‘estate’ planting of ornamental ground-cover shrubs (such as Berberis, Pyracantha, Photinia and Mahonia) are not appropriate in developments within Buckingham.
- ✗ Non-native or invasive species such as laurel, leylandii, buddleia, European bluebells, rhododendron should also be avoided.

NATURE

N.3.ii. BIODIVERSITY

DWELLINGS

All new dwellings SHOULD be fitted with Swift boxes or Swift bricks together with Bat boxes/bricks. Where options for swifts are not suitable, House Martin cups SHOULD be added. These shall be positioned as recommended within the applicants' ecology report/study and by Buckinghamshire Council's Ecologist.

N.3.iii. STREET TREES

Choice of street trees MUST be made on the basis of an assessment the site and use, rather than any other factor. Considerations MUST include:

- Consideration for flooding, drought, likely root size, form, deciduous and nearby structures
- Function of trees in each location should be considered eg, to clean air, to provide shade, to filter noise
- Services for utilities should not be positioned where they are likely to be disturbed by the growth of street trees
- Use of tree guards or fences can be considered where appropriate eg high traffic areas
- To aid biodiversity, and promote resilience from disease, a wide variety of street trees should be used. Repetitive use of the same small group of trees or hedging across a new development should be avoided.

Roundabout street trees	Open Spaces	Dwelling frontages and hedges
Extra heavy standard 18cm plus girth with necessary protection measures.	Semi Mature 35cm plus girth with necessary protection measures.	900mm tall at time of planting. 5 plants per linear metre.

Suitable trees and planting COULD include the following specimens:

Tilea Cordata 'Greenspire' (Small Leaf Lime); Acer Campestre 'Elsrijk' (Field Maple); Butula Pendula (Silver Birch); Prunus Avium 'Plena' (Wild Cherry).	Fagus Sylvatica (Common Beech); Acer Campestre (Field Maple); Malus Sylvestris (Crab Apple); Quercus Robur (English Oak), Quercus Rubra (Red Oak); Ulmus Procera (English Elm); Farxinus Excelsoir (Ash); Tilea Cordata (Small Leaf Lime).	Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Holly, Privet, Hornbeam, Beech, Hazel.

IDENTITY

I.1.i. LOCAL CHARACTER

BOUNDARY TREAMENTS

Boundary treatments heavily influence the characteristics of a street and demarcate division between the public and private realms.

The boundary treatments to be used within new developments SHOULD include:

- Metal estate railings painted black to front gardens (including gates).
- 1.8m high brick garden walls where plot boundaries adjoin the public realm.
- Close boarded fence to rear/side boundaries MUST only be used where they adjoin neighbouring gardens that do not front onto the public realm.

- Estate railing
- Black painted metal

Railings with planting behind; new planting should be native species only as recommended earlier in this document.

IDENTITY

I.1.i. LOCAL CHARACTER

WORKING WITH SITE FEATURES

See also Design Code Policy Nature N.3.ii Design Approaches

New development **MUST** respond to existing site features to create/retain character, such as:

- Including retained buildings into new blocks.
- Allow existing surface levels to suggest layout options.
- Utilise the placement of existing and new ponds and watercourses to provide pleasant outlooks and structure for the development.
- Use specimen trees as the focus for new developments.
- Retain existing hedgerows to create structure in new developments.
- Front new buildings onto established routes.
- Formalise informal routes through the site, including footpaths and desire lines.

The two images show an aerial and street view of Bernadines way. Houses were built in a curve around an existing mature oak tree, as a 'specimen tree' and focus for the development. Additional trees added by the developer are also now mature.

Aerial view, Bernadines Way Google Maps © 2024

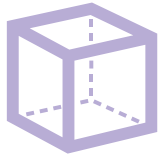
Oak tree and surrounding planting on Bernadines way.

IDENTITY

I.2.i. DESIGN OF BUILDINGS

To ensure that local distinctiveness is realised within proposed housing developments MUST abide by the following standards.

Where contemporary designs are proposed codes may be relaxed should the proposal reflect the local distinctiveness of Buckingham. See 'Local Distinctiveness' on page 4.



Span depths

5.5m min - 8.5m max

Ridge heights

7m min – 8.5m max

Brick bonding

the external face of 2 ½ and 3 storey buildings should be laid in Flemish bond

Stonework

Where used, stonework must be guillotine cut local limestone coursed as per local practice.

Height

Height from DPC to eaves shall be greater than height between eaves and ridge.

Angle of roof slope

maximum 35 degrees where natural slate is used and 50 degrees maximum where plain clay tiles are used.

Chimney

Chimneys on all dwellings with pitched roofs, which should be usable for venting purposes.

Window heads

1st floor window heads to adjoin eaves.

Window and door reveals

minimum 100mm

Flat brick voussiors

Flat arch brick voussiors to window heads (to match the brick used for the proposed building).

Round brick voussiors

Brick to match building. Window frames shall be curved at the top to fill the opening

Colour

Use of coloured window frames and front doors, such as green, blue, grey, and black (and red for doors), as opposed to 100% white, to add variety.

IDENTITY

EXTERNAL MATERIALS

Red/orange brick, occasional yellow brick (that matches the local hue), natural limestone, stucco/render of varying colours, plain clay tiles, and natural slate to be used throughout all proposed developments.

As of 2024 external materials under 'Bricks and Stonework' and 'Roof Coverings' to the right of this page are **recommended** to accord with the local distinctiveness of Buckingham.

Where appropriate to the setting and size of the development applicants **MUST** show how they have sought to reflect variety of materials within the overall design of the site.

Where contemporary designs are proposed codes may be relaxed should the proposal reflect the local distinctiveness of Buckingham. See 'Local Distinctiveness' on page 4.

BRICKS AND STONEWORK

Natural Limestone – guillotine cut

Wienerberger

Waresley Orange Stock, Warnham Terracotta Stock, Smeed Dean Belgrave Yellow Stock

Ibstock

Eclipse Leicester Red Stock, Elliston Leicester Orange Stock, Leybrook Imperial Red Stock

Leybrook Imperial Yellow Stock, Parkhouse Mellow Regent Stock

ROOF COVERINGS

Redland Rosemary Clay Plain Tile – Burnt Blend

Natural Slate Tile e.g. Passaro SS65F Blue/Grey

New dwelling within Lace Hill designed and built to reflect the local distinctiveness of Buckingham in terms of design features and materials.

Example of variety of materials including coursed limestone and render used at landmark locations to reflect variation of local materials in Radtsone Fields development in Brackley, Northamptonshire.

PUBLIC SPACES

Active travel options MUST be inclusive and accessible to all, including but not limited to: pedestrians, wheelchair and mobility scooter users, pushchair users and cyclists.

Where relevant, developments MUST include active travel links to the existing network to enable residents to move safely through the town, whether walking or wheeling, creating easy access to Buckingham's parks and open spaces together with schools, retail, sporting and employment areas. Consideration MUST be given to the appropriate standards recommended by Active Travel England and (LTN) 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design to make all short journeys easily accessible via active travel. See also CLH1 Active and sustainable travel.

Footpaths SHOULD be continuous along streets to limit crossings of the carriageway.

P.1.i. PRIMARY

The primary street will provide direct vehicular access to the residential area as a whole. It also plays an important function within the public transport network, as a bus route may be accommodated. The primary street SHOULD be defined by a tree lined avenue. The primary street SHOULD also include a combined or segregated footpath and cycleway to one side.

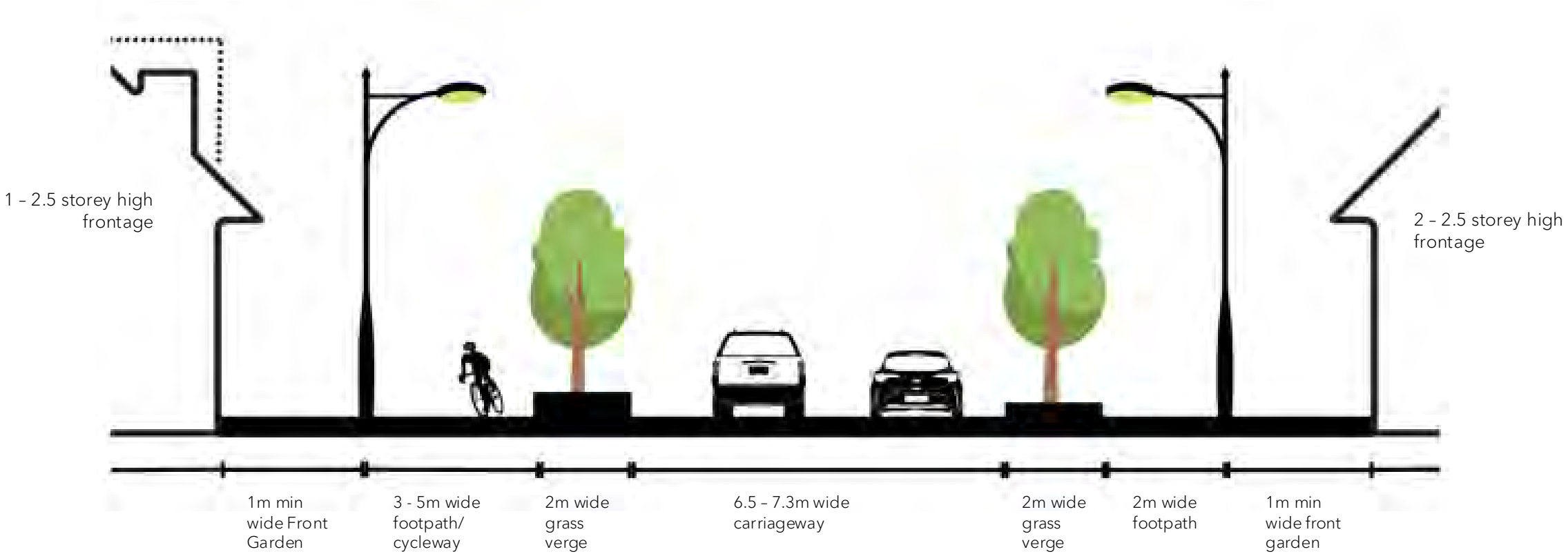
Example conservation style kerb.

Primary streets SHOULD abide by the following standards:

Design speed	Carriageway (width)	Kerb	Footpath (width)	Combined Footpath/ cycleway (width)	Swept path requirement (minimum)	Planting
20/30 mph	6.5 – 7.3m minimum	Conservation style	2m minimum	3 - 5m minimum	Refuse collection vehicles, emergency vehicles and public transport vehicles	Native tree species, grass verges, both sides of the carriageway

PUBLIC SPACES

PRIMARY STREET LAYOUT

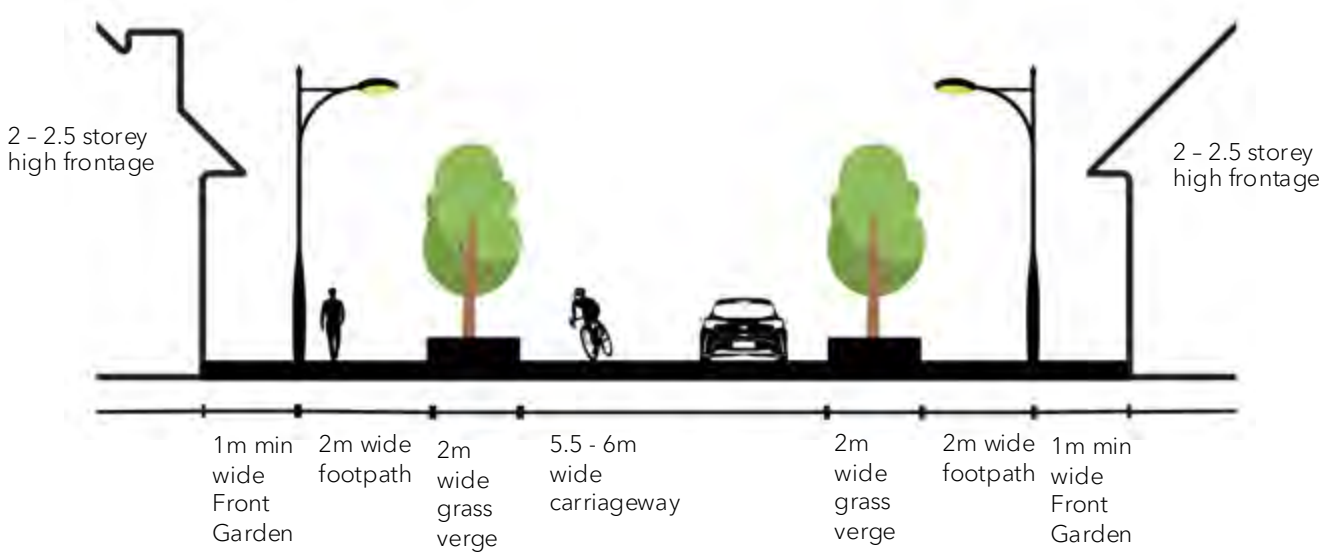


PUBLIC SPACES

P.1.ii SECONDARY STREETS HIERARCHY

These roads link neighbourhoods and feed the lower order roads. The secondary street SHOULD be defined by informal trees planted in the verge and occasional tree planting in grates within a widened footpath.

Secondary streets SHOULD abide by the following standards:



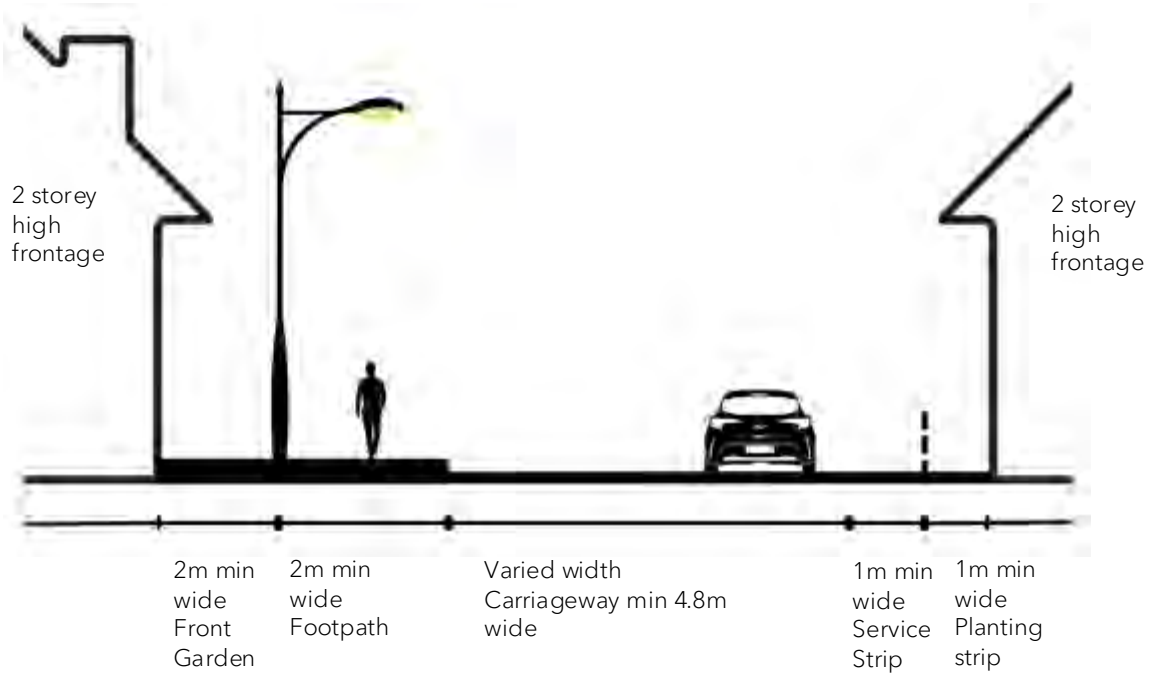
Design speed	Carriageway (width)	Kerb	Footpath (width)	Traffic calming	Swept path requirement (minimum)	Planting
20 mph	6m minimum	Conservation style	2m minimum	through carriageway alignment, junction surface treatments, and changes in priority.	Refuse collection vehicles, emergency vehicles	Native tree species

PUBLIC SPACES

P.1.iii. TERTIARY STREETS HIERARCHY

More informal roads serving a limited number of dwellings. These will have a footpath on at least one side of the carriageway and a service strip where there is no footpath on the other side.

Footpaths may be required on both sides of the carriageway, if both sides have houses facing the street.



Examples of surface changes to delineate private space, Buckingham

Surface changes and street furniture **SHOULD** be used to clearly delineate boundaries between public and private spaces where railings or fences are not used. Planting and landscape elements designed **COULD** be designed into street layout as traffic calming measures.
Tertiary streets **SHOULD** abide by the following standards:

Design speed	Carriageway (width)	Service strip	Footpath (width)	Swept path requirement (minimum)	Planting
20 mph	Variable minimum 4.8m	1m minimum	2m minimum	Refuse collection vehicle and emergency vehicles	Native tree species

PUBLIC SPACES

P.2.iii. HOME ZONES

Shared surface streets, defined only be surface changes, will not normally be supported.

Example of use of physical features and planting as chicanes to slow traffic speeds and prevent vehicle access, National Model Design Code

Home Zones MUST be places where people and vehicles share the street space safely, with quality of life taking precedence over the movement of traffic. In order to do this, vehicle speeds must be reduced to walking pace.

Home Zones COULD form part of a 'Play Streets' approach.

Physical barriers to slow traffic speeds and prevent access by vehicles to walking and wheeling only areas MUST be used in proposed Home Zones. The preferred approaches are:

Street furniture: can also create seating opportunities

Planting: planters, trees and other green features

Signs: should clearly mark the entrance to the zone and, where relevant, children crossing

Surface changes alone MUST NOT be used.

PUBLIC SPACES

P.3.i. SECURED BY DESIGN

Key footway and cycleway routes, whether on or off road, **MUST** be well lit. Where appropriate, biodiversity friendly lighting **COULD** be used.

P.3.ii. COUNTER TERRORISM

Vehicle access **MUST** be restricted at the edge of open spaces and around community buildings. Removable bollards should be used at key points for maintenance and emergency access.

P.2.i. MEETING PLACES

Meeting places, also referred to as local centres, provide a community focal point for new developments. Meeting places **MUST** be surrounded by active frontage. Depending on the size of the development, examples of active frontage include: school, community centre, shops and cafés. The majority of on-site community infrastructure **SHOULD** be centered around this meeting place.

Meeting places **SHOULD** include play facilities as well as substantial green space as a meeting place for other users including open space and benches. The size of the play area **MUST** correspond with the guidelines quoted under Open Space Design, with a minimum of ¾ of the remaining space allocated for other green space purposes.

Where shops are proposed are part of the meeting place, some parking **SHOULD** be provided in front of shops, separated from the meeting place.

The enclosure ratio of all meeting places **MUST** be such that the shortest side of the square is at least twice the height of the surrounding buildings

Village Green | Town Squares | Garden Square

Village Greens and **Garden Squares**, illustrated above, would be supported due to their focus on landscaping and open spaces. **Town squares,** which use majority hard standing surfaces, **MUST NOT** be used, except within high density communal courtyards eg student accommodation or flats. Where Town Squares are proposed, green elements **SHOULD** also be included through planting, trees, benches and water features.

Power supply and lighting **MUST** be present at key visibility points in all meeting places for example, entrances and path crossings.

HOMES AND BUILDINGS

H.1.i SPACE STANDARDS

As a minimum all new dwellings shall accord with the Nationally Described Space Standard dated March 2015 and any subsequent variations thereof.

H.1.ii ACCESSIBILITY

The requirements of VALP H6c are supported, however it is considered that Buckingham also has a need for M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair User Dwellings in open market homes as well as Affordable Homes.

The introduction of this requirement will contribute towards improving the overall housing stock of Buckingham and will enable more residents to live independently for longer in their own homes. This will help provide an improved range of housing that meets the needs of current and future generations.

Accessible and adaptable dwellings are required for households of any age that experience disability or frailty, or who need homes that can accommodate intergenerational living. Such dwellings are also well suited for people looking for retirement living accommodation which in turn will lead to the release of existing family homes onto the market. The provision of level access bungalows and level access flats/apartments, that promote and maintain people's independence is particularly likely to capture demand from these groups. The specific measures incorporated into schemes will need to demonstrate compliance with the relevant accessible and adaptable standard.

Buckingham Town Council encourages proposals for houses, bungalows and apartments/flats that COULD improve accessibility beyond the minimum policy requirements set out above to do so. Provision of 15% M4(3) homes on site is recommended subject to local needs evidence.

HOMES AND BUILDINGS

H.2.i LIGHT, ASPECT & PRIVACY

SPACE BETWEEN DWELLINGS: FRONT TO FRONT

Where 1 or 2 storey buildings face a building of similar height a minimum distance of 22 metres SHOULD be maintained between the principal windows of the dwellings.

These standards repeat those contained within the Design Guide for minimum external space standards adopted by Aylesbury Vale District Council in July 2012

Where one or both facing dwellings are more than 2 storeys high the minimum distance between principal windows SHOULD be 28 metres plus an additional 3 metres setback for each additional storey.

FRONT/BACK TO SIDE

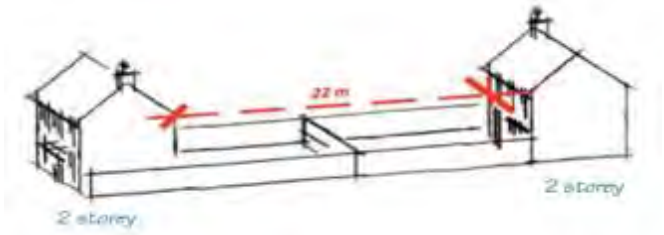
Where principal windows face the wall of a 2 storey dwelling that contains no windows, or windows that contain obscured glass (e.g. bathrooms) the minimum distance SHOULD be 14 metres. If the facing wall is 3 storeys high (with no windows) the minimum distance shall be 17 metres, increasing by 3 metres for each additional storey.

HOMES AND BUILDINGS

See Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENV4 Private Outdoor Space

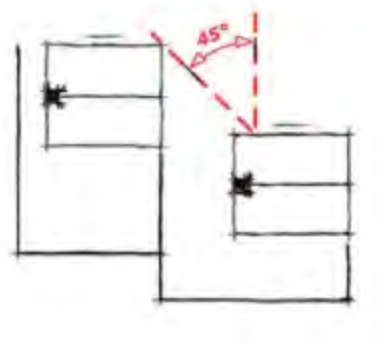
BACK TO BACK

Where the rear elevation of a 1 or 2 storey dwelling faces the rear elevation of a 1 or 2 storey dwelling a minimum distance of 22 metres SHOULD be maintained. If one of the dwellings is 3 storeys high then a minimum distance of 28 metres SHOULD be maintained, increasing by 3 metres for each additional storey.



45 DEGREE RULE

New buildings that are sited close to the principal windows of existing properties SHOULD be designed so that there is no obstruction to daylight beyond a horizonal angle of 45 degrees, measured on plan view, from the nearest jamb of the principal window of an adjoining property.



New buildings that are proposed to be sited facing principal windows of existing properties SHOULD be designed so that there is no obstruction to daylight beyond a vertical angle of 45 degrees measured from the nearest jamb of the principal window(s) of an adjoining property.

BALCONIES FOR FLATS/APARTMENTS

Whether these are located internally from the face of the building, or attached externally, balconies MUST have a minimum floorspace of 4 square metres to allow functional use.

HOMES AND BUILDINGS

H.2.iii. GARDENS AND BALCONIES

Please see Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENV4 Private Outdoor Space

MINIMUM SPACE STANDARDS - EXTERNAL

The distance between dwellings and the treatment of spaces around them have an important effect on the appearance of an area and the quality of life for residents, and for the development's distinctiveness. Sufficient space MUST be provided to meet the outdoor needs of the household including children's play, hobbies, outdoor relaxation, drying of washing and greenery.

Outlook from a dwelling is allied to privacy and both are necessary for quality of life in dwellings. An adequate standard of privacy may be achieved by the use of walls, fences or planting.

Consideration will need to be given to the outlook that would then be achieved, as an enclosed or cramped outlook from habitable rooms is likely to be oppressive.

The provision of enclosed private outdoor amenity space should be incorporated in the early stage of the design process. Amenity space for all dwellings SHOULD be:

- Private, useable, functional, and safe.
- Easily accessible from living areas.
- Orientated to maximise sunlight.

Private amenity space SHOULD NOT be steeply sloping or awkwardly shaped to prejudice its function to accommodate relaxation and leisure activities of residents.

MINIMUM RECOMMENDED OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

RESOURCES

R.2.iv. WATER

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOODING

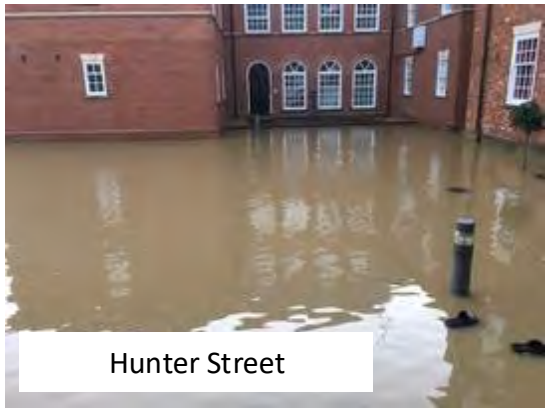
More intense rainfall in recent years has led to more regular flooding within Buckingham, **see Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan Policy I1 Water management and flood risk.**

In addition the following applies:

a) Development **SHOULD NOT** culvert, building over, creating structures or crossings in, or altering watercourses in a manner which may harm the physical environment, ecology, or hydrology of the watercourse wherever practicable; and

b) Development **SHOULD** encourage catchment management through the removal of existing culverts and other hard engineering structures and the introduction of natural flood management measures including river restoration, appropriate tree planting, upstream flood storage and wetland habitat creation.

Stratford Road


Hunter Street


Stratford Fields


Ford Street


Chandos Park


Well Street

RESOURCES

R.2.iv. WATER

All proposals for development **MUST** include design features that reduce water consumption and/or waste within the development design in order to reduce overall water usage .

WATER RECYCLING

Proposals for reduction of water waste **COULD** include greywater recycling.

Water used in homes has long been thought of in terms of clean drinking water (known as potable water) coming into the house from the mains and sewage going out. However, the wastewater from baths, showers, washing machines, dishwashers and sinks is referred to as greywater, which typically makes up between 50-80% of a household's wastewater. If recycled properly, greywater can save approximately 70 litres of potable water per person per day in domestic households.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Water efficiency methods **SHOULD** be introduced within building designs to reduce the overall water usage of the building.

Devices that **COULD** be used include low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats.

RAINWATER HARVESTING

Rainwater harvesting (or 'capture') systems **SHOULD** be installed in all new developments.

Rainwater harvesting system collects rainwater falling on roofs and other surfaces, filters it and diverts it into a rainwater storage tank. Devices that COULD be used include direct and indirect pumped, and gravity systems. The rainwater can then be used for other purposes. This could include pumped options that divert the rainwater around a dwelling for use in flushing toilets, supplying outside taps, or washing machines.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

SUBMISSION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

At the relevant planning application stage, the prospective developer MUST provide a statement, explaining the approach they have taken to compliance with these codes.

Where they are unable to do so the onus will remain with the applicant to explain why.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

In relation to other developments including extensions, shop fronts etc, supplementary planning guidance can be found within the Buckinghamshire Council website under Planning Policy.