Brettenham
Design Guidance and Codes

October 2021

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Quality information

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
5	08/09/2021	Review and approval of draft report	Ben Castell, AECOM	Director, AECOM
4	31/08/2021	Review	Ian Poole	Planning Consultant, Places4People
3	18/08/2021	Review	Chris Clarke	Brettenham Neighbourhood Area Group
2	29/07/2021	Revision and approval of draft report	Ben Castell, AECOM	Director, AECOM
1	27/07/2021	Review	James Dee, AECOM	Principal Landscape Architect, AECOM
0	25/07/2121	Research, site visit, drawings	Ela Johnson, AECOM	Landscape Architect, AECOM

Copyright and Limitations

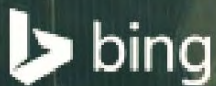# Table of Contents

Thorpe Green

Thorpe Morieux

Brettenham

Cook's Green

Cross Green

Brettenham Neighbourhood Area

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Kilometers

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1. Introduction

AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to the Brettenham Neighbourhood Group through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funded Neighbourhood Planning Programme, led by Locality.

This Design Guidance and Codes have been produced to inform new development proposed in the area. It presents a summary of the key characteristics of the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area. This information is then used to inform specific design guidelines to promote sustainable development.

The approach set out here is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which encourages local authorities to consider using design guidance and codes, to help deliver high quality outcomes for new development. It is important however, that guidance and codes find the balance between promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and allowing for innovation and originality. The NPPF suggests that '*design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics*' (NPPF, 2021).

The NPPF also emphasises that '*the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'* (NPPF, 2021). It is therefore important that planning policies and decisions should address the connection between people and places and how any new development will respond to and integrate successfully into the natural, built and historic environment.

The NPPF is supported by a suite of planning practice guidance that is relevant to both design quality and quality in delivery. The National Design Guide forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice. Alongside it, the National Model Design Code provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design.

1.1 Objectives

The main objective of this document is to establish principles so that new development is designed and planned regarding the existing character and context of the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area within the Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out a series of design guidelines and codes mostly related to the residential development.

The document initially provides context to the design guidelines and codes including strategic issues identified during the consultation carried out by the Brettenham Neighbourhood Group. The aspirations of the communities involved, although not strictly design issues, need to be considered in the context of any design proposal.

1.2 Process

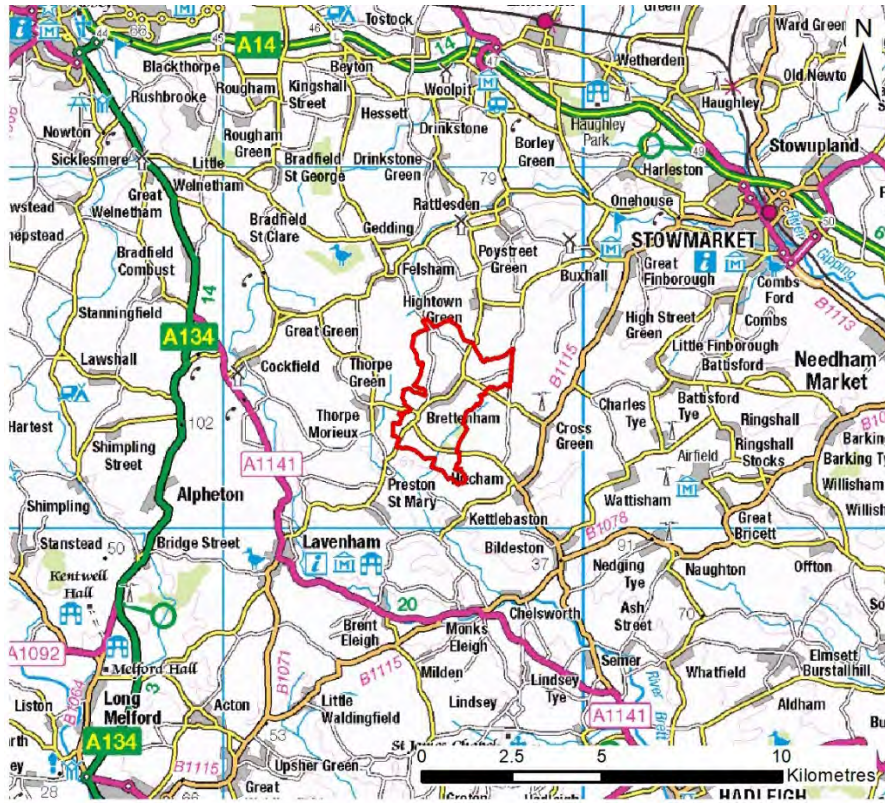The following steps were undertaken to produce this document:

- Virtual site visit with members of the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area Group on 19th April and site visit on 26th May;

- Character assessment and urban design analysis;

- Preparation of design principles and guidelines to be used to assess future developments;

- Draft report with design guidelines and codes; and

- Final report.

2. Context

2.1 Location and area of study

Brettenham is a small village located in west-central Suffolk, within the district of Babergh. The village is located approx. 8 km north-east of Lavenham and approx.12 km south-west of Stowmarket, as shown on Figure 1. The Neighbourhood Area is approximately 735 hectares (ha) and, according to the most recent census in 2011, the population was 353.

A network of local roads links Brettenham with the surrounding towns, villages and hamlets. The B1115 links with Stowmarket to the north-east and Sudbury to the south-west. The A1141 runs from Hadleigh to Bradfield Combust. The A1141 joins the A134 and links the village with Bury St. Edmunds to the north-west. The nearby A14 provides long distance links to Cambridge and the Midlands to the west and Ipswich and Felixstowe to the east of Brettenham.

The nearest railway station is in Stowmarket, which provides services to London, Norwich, Ipswich, Cambridge and Peterborough.

The well-developed network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW), predominantly footpaths, provides connections between the village and the surrounding countryside.

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Figure 1 Location

2.2   Landscape designations

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Figure 2 Landscape and Heritage Designations

Statutory and non-statutory designations have been made in the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area. There are no landscape designations, although there are heritage and ecological designations which contribute to the localised landscape value.

The Brettenham Conservation Area was designated in 1973 to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of the area. Overall, the conservation area covers approx. 150ha; a fifth of the overall Neighbourhood Area. This includes Old Buckenham Hall School grounds, also designated as a listed building, which have strong parkland landscape character. In addition, over 20 buildings in the village have been listed by Historic England. The Church of St. Mary the Virgin is the only Grade I listed building.

Rams Wood, Little Hastings Wood, Dove Farm Wood and Oak Grove are designated as Ancient Woodlands. Therefore, they are considered to be an irreplaceable habitat, important for wildlife, soils, recreational, cultural, historical and landscape value. Other Ancient Woodlands which are adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area are a present feature in the views, such as Thorpe Wood, Felsham Wood, Pie Hatch Wood or Boxhall Grove.

Map legend:
- Brettenham Neighbourhood Area
- Ancient Woodland
- Woodland
- Listed Buildings Grade
  - I
  - II
  - II*

1 Tudor Lodge
2 Walnut Tree Cottage
3 Ryece Hall
4 Francis House
5 The Poplars
6 Crownings
7 Church Farmhouse
8 Barn to the North of Charlie's Cottage
9 Charlies Cottage
10 Church of St Mary the Virgin
11 Cock Farmhouse
12 Sparrows Pond
13 8 And 9, The Street
14 Thatched House
15 23 And 24, The Street
16 Rose Farmhouse
17 Brewers Cottage
18 Pound Farmhouse
19 Chapel Hill
20 West Lodges and Gates to Brettenham Park
21 Old Buckenham Hall School
22 Dove Farmhouse
23 Poplars Farmhouse
24 Hitcham Lodge

3. Landscape character assessment

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the broad physical, historical and perceptual characteristics of the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area. Character assessment is used to describe and articulate what is special and distinctive about a place. It is used to identify recognisable patterns of elements or characteristics that make one place different from another. This report is focussed on the character of the village and its rural landscape context. The features introduced in this section are later used to inform the design guidelines and codes.

3.2 Existing landscape character assessment and design guidance

This report is also informed by a number of other studies relevant to the local area, as follows:

- *Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance, August 2015.* This assessment provides a background to the character assessment of the rural areas around Bentley.

- *Suffolk Design Guide for Residential Areas, revised in 2000* https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/suffolk-design-guide-for-residential-areas/

Existing character assessments have been reviewed to provide some context to this more detailed assessment. The study area falls within National Character Area (NCA) 86: South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands, as defined by Natural England (Natural England, 2014). This NCA is broad but provides some context to the character of the study area. The key characteristics of this area which are of particular relevance to this assessment are:

- An undulating chalky boulder clay plateau is dissected by numerous river valleys, giving a topography of gentle slopes in the lower, wider valleys and steeper slopes in the narrower upper parts;

- Fragments of chalk give many of the soils a calcareous character, which also influences the character of the semi-natural vegetation cover;

- South-east-flowing streams and rivers drain the clay plateau. Watercourses wind slowly across flood plains, supporting wet, fen-type habitats; grazing marsh; and blocks of cricket-bat willows, poplars and old willow pollards. Navigation locks are present on some rivers;

- Lowland wood pasture and ancient woodlands support dormouse habitats and a rich diversity of flowering plants on the clay plateau. Large, often ancient hedgerows link woods and copses, forming wooded skylines;

- The agricultural landscape is predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. There is some pasture on the valley floors. Field patterns are irregular despite rationalisation, with much ancient countryside surviving. Field margins support corn bunting, cornflower and brown hare;

- There is a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, parishes and small settlements around 'tyes' (commons) or strip greens and isolated hamlets. The NCA features a concentration of isolated moated farmsteads and numerous well-preserved medieval towns and large villages;

- Traditional timber-frame, often elaborate buildings with exposed timbers, colour-washed render, pargeting and steeply pitched roofs with pegtiles or long straw thatch. Sometimes they have been refronted with Georgian red brick or Victorian cream-coloured bricks ('Suffolk whites'). Clay lump is often used in cottages and farm buildings.

At a local level, the study area falls mostly within the 04 Ancient Rolling Farmland landscape character area (LCA), as defined within Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance, August 2015.

04 Ancient Rolling Farmland

- The rolling clayland landscape is dissected by river valleys including The Brett and Box.

- Ancient and species-rich hedgerows (mainly oak, ash and field maple, with suckering elm) and associated ditches have a strong visual impact as they are frequently high and wide.

- Ancient woodland is scattered throughout in blocks consisting largely of oak, lime, cherry, hazel, hornbeam, ash, holly and elm. The woodlands provide strong visual features within the landscape.

- Although there are some extensive field amalgamations resulting in a much more open landscape, overall the landscape is largely intact, and accessible through a dense network of winding roads and wide verges.

- Wide panoramic views are offered in all directions from this landscape character.

4. Design guidelines

4.1 Introduction

This section is divided into two parts. The first is a set of key elements to consider when assessing a design proposal. These are presented as general questions which should be addressed by developers and their design teams who should provide clarification and explanation as necessary. The second part is a series of design codes or guidance setting out the expectations of the Brettenham Neighbourhood Group.

It is important that full account is taken of the local context and that the new development responds to and enhances "sense of place" and meets the aspirations of people living in that area. The aim of this section is to produce design guidelines and codes that help to assess design quality and appropriateness in residential development proposals. Images have been used to reflect good examples of local architecture.

The guidelines and codes developed in this document focus on residential development, considering the character of the immediate neighbouring buildings and the landscape of the surrounding area. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of new development whilst recognising that new building technologies can deliver acceptable built forms and may sometimes be more relevant.

4.2 General design considerations

This section sets out a series of general design principles followed by questions against which the development proposals should be evaluated.

As an initial appraisal, there should be evidence that development proposals have considered and applied the following general design principles:

- Harmonise with and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, movement pattern and land use;

- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent long-distance views;

- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets and other spaces;

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

- Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

- Retain and incorporate important existing landscape and built form features into the development;

- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; to provide a safe, attractive and cohesive environment;

- Make enough provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours; and

- Sensitively integrate energy efficient technologies within the scheme at the start of the design process.

4.2.1 Key points to consider when assessing planning applications

The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment overview as to whether the design proposal has considered the context and provided an adequate design proposal. Following these fundamental principles, there are number of questions related to the design guidelines and codes which should be used to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of development proposals.

Landscape structure or settlement pattern

- What are the essential characteristics of the existing settlement and street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?

- Does the proposal respect local landscape features including topography and hydrology?

- What are the important landscape or historic features within and surrounding the site? Have these features, including existing trees, been considered in the proposal?

- How does the proposal relate to its setting? Are there any important links both physical and visual that currently exist on and adjacent to the site?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?

- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?

- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

- Do the new points of access and street layout take regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?

- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Green spaces, public realm and street scape

- Does the new proposal respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features including trees on or adjacent to the site?

- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural or edge of settlement location?

- In rural and edge of settlement locations does the development impact the tranquillity of the area and has this been fully considered?

- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been considered?

- Does the proposal positively contribute to the quality of the public realm and streetscape?

- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?

- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

- Have all aspects of security been fully considered and integrated into the design of the buildings and open spaces?

Pattern and layout of buildings

- What is the pattern and layout of existing buildings and have these been respected in the proposal?

- Does the proposal maintain the character of existing building layouts and their relationship with the main roads through the settlement?

- If the design is within or adjacent to a heritage asset, have the elements which contribute to their significance been considered in the proposal? (Heritage assets include listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, registered landscapes and registered battlefields.)

- Does the proposal affect or change the setting and significance of a heritage asset?

Views and landmarks

- What are the existing key views and visual landmarks in the area and have these been retained and enhanced in the proposal?

- Where long distance views exist, how are these respected in the design?

- Are new views and visual connections with the existing settlement and surrounding area incorporated into the proposal?

- Are new landmarks to be formed within the proposals?

Building line and boundary treatment

- Does the proposal respect the existing building line and harmonise with the adjacent properties?

- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline

- Does the proposed development compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens?

- Has careful attention been paid to height, form, massing and scale of new buildings? Is it appropriate to reflect the adjacent scale or could a taller development be considered?

- If a proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing property so it does not compromise its character?

Architectural details and materials

- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

- What are the distinctive materials in the area, if any? Do the proposed materials harmonise with the local vernacular?

- Does the proposal use high quality materials?

- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

Parking and utilities

- Has adequate provision been made for car and cycle parking both private and public?

- Do the proposed private car and cycle parking locations complement the existing provision or introduce new approaches? If new, do these new approaches change the character of the street?

- Has adequate provision been made for bin storage including facilities for waste separation and recycling?

- Is the location of the bin storage facilities appropriate in relation to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?

- Has the impact of the design of bin storage facilities been considered, including quality of materials and location on the whole development? Could additional measures be incorporated to help integrate facilities into the development?

- Has the location of utilities including appropriate maintenance access been integrated into the proposal?

- Is the use of energy saving/efficient technologies encouraged and maximised? Are these technologies integrated into the proposal and not 'bolt on'?

- Has the lighting scheme been designed to avoid light pollution?

4.3   Design guidelines and codes

The guidelines and codes in this section should be applied as a starting point to all new development, regardless of where it is in the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area. These guidelines and codes advocate character-led design which responds to and enhances the existing village townscape. Reference to context does not mean to copy or use pastiche solutions. It means responding to what is around as inspiration and influence and it could be a contemporary solution that is in harmony with the surroundings.

The design guidelines and codes focus on the unique characteristics of the neighbourhood area which are to be considered in any future development. They are to be applied in combination with the general questions in section 4.2 above.

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Figure 3 Street Pattern

The neighbourhood area is dominated by arable farmland. Medium to large fields with hedgerows, occasional copses and Ancient Woodlands create a simple landscape pattern. Brettenham has retained its historic linear development pattern, focused along The Street and Church Road. Primarily buildings are located to the east of The Street with the western boundary remaining as arable farmland. There is a concentration of buildings to the northern end around the St Mary the Virgin Church. Sparse linear development continues north-east along Old School Road. The historic character of the village is emphasised by the traditional Suffolk materials including rendered timber frames, Suffolk brick, both red and white and thatched cottages.

Old Buckenham Hall is located south-east of the main settlement. It is a large 16th century brick mansion altered in the 19th century. The complex of buildings, now used as a school, is set within 150 acres of parkland and it is approached from Bury Road by an avenue of oak trees.

Farmsteads are scattered across the neighbourhood area away from the main settlement emphasising the historic farmland character of the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area.

The network of Public Rights of Way enables easy access to the countryside and provides pedestrian access to the grounds of Old Buckenham Hall and River Brett which forms part of the western boundary of the neighbourhood area. There are no designated cycle routes located within the neighbourhood area.

Linear development along The Street

The well-developed network of Public Rights of Way enables easy access to the countryside

Eastern part of Old Buckenham Hall School

Design guidance:

- New development should conform with the historic linear settlement pattern and scattered farmsteads.

- The existing network of Public Rights of Way should be retained as part of new development proposals.

Green space at the junction of The Street, Buxhall Road and Church Road.

Playground next to the Village Hall

Public green spaces within Brettenham Neighbourhood Area include an open space at the junction of The Street, Buxhall Road and Church Road, the playground next to the Village Hall, and St. Mary's the Virgin Church cemetery. These are small green spaces including benches and signs. Larger and higher quality green spaces belong to the Old Buckenham Hall School and Centre Academy East Anglia which are excluded from the public access. There are PRoW linking the Village Hall and Bury Road which follows along the eastern edge of the Old Buckenham Hall parkland.

Mature hedgerows, individual trees and woodlands, some of which are designated as Ancient Woodlands, are common across the neighbourhood area. This vegetation forms a simple landscape pattern and important wildlife corridors. Low hedgerows separate front gardens from the pavement. Front gardens contribute to the streetscape where hedgerows up to 1.2m height or wooden fences separate the building from the street.

Design Guidance:

- New development should provide sufficient green space appropriate to the location and size of the dwelling, including front and rear gardens and grass verges. Typically, no more than 50% of a dwelling's plot should be built on, a 'plot ratio' that reflects development patterns in the village and conforms with the National Model Design Code guidance for suburban and village locations (paragraph 52).

- Existing green spaces should be retained and enhanced.

- Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained in new development proposals to help reinforce the existing pattern of vegetation.

- Materials used in the public realm should be of high quality and respond to, and enhance, the rural character of the settlements.

Topic 3: Pattern and layout of buildings

There are three distinctive development types within the neighbourhood area.

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The first development type comprises up to two storey houses set within a medium to small size plot. These are detached and semi-detached with a few examples of terraced buildings. Houses are primarily set behind a small front garden, separated from the road by a low hedge or a wooden fence allowing for views of the buildings from the street. These houses contribute to the historic character of the village due to traditional form and building materials. This type of development is usually concentrated along the main street and therefore reflects the linear settlement pattern of Brettenham.

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The second development type comprises farmsteads. These are large houses up to two and a half storeys in height. They originate from farms or manor houses and therefore contribute to the historic character of the neighbourhood area reflecting the agricultural traditions of the region. Ryce Hall Farm is an example of this development type. It comprises a complex of buildings set back in large plots separated by hedgerows, typically allowing views of the buildings from the road.

Thatched cottage along The Street - example of first development type

Ryce Hall Farm - example of second development type

Recent development along The Street - example of third development type (first group)

Recent development on Bury Road- example of third development type (second group)

The third development type comprises a mix of more recent buildings. Within this type there are two distinctive groups, which differ in scale, form and materials.

The first group comprises smaller houses, such as those along The Street, set on smaller plots closer to neighbouring houses and these increase the density and enhance the sense of linear settlement pattern. These houses are up to two storeys, positioned in a small plot allowing for a small front and back garden. Commonly used brick and render reflect traditional materials.

The second group comprises recent development modelled on historic farmhouses, barns and stables. An example of this is a complex of large-scale residential buildings set on a generous plot north of the junction of Bury Road and Chapel Hill. These developments are usually located away from the centre of the village. Building materials, although not being an exact replica of historic materials, remain suitable and contribute to the sense of place of a rural village. The setting of such buildings play a key role in blending new development with the surrounding landscape and maintaining the rural character of the area.

Design Guidance:

- New development proposals should respond to development types reflecting local and regional characteristics, including scale and form.

- New development should be responsive to the plot widths, proportions, building lines and positions within the plots of existing development.

- Buildings should not front directly onto streets but should be set back from the street behind a front garden.

- New development proposals should be situated in a way to complement the layout of the street or blend with the surrounding landscape.

Short distance view of St. Mary's the Virgin Church from Buxhall Road.

There are no designated views within the neighbourhood area. There are, however, short distance views of St. Mary's the Virgin Church from Church Road, The Street and Buxhall Road. Vegetation close to the church and along local field boundaries prevents long distance views of the church tower. There are also short distance views of Old Buckenham Hall from the surrounding parkland. Within the grounds of Old Buckenham Hall there is a distinctive view along the avenue of Oak trees from North Lodge to South Lodge. Open views of gently sloping fields can be experienced intermittently throughout the neighbourhood area creating a strong visual connection to the rural setting of the village.

The avenue of Oak trees at Old Buckenham Hall park looking east.

Design Guidance:

- New development should not disrupt the visual setting of local landmarks including St. Mary's the Virgin Church, Old Buckenham Hall and surrounding parkland.

- Proposals for new development should demonstrate consideration of visual connections with characteristic landmarks.

- New development proposals should not be visually intrusive. This should be achieved through appropriate scale and design, including screening where appropriate.

Hedges are common boundary features which allow for views of the buildings

Simple low wooden fence enhances rural character of the area

The majority of the houses are set behind low hedges which allows for views of the front gardens and buildings beyond them. Gaps in the hedges provide access to the properties and driveways, some with wooden gates and others with open space. The hedges are typically well-maintained at an approximate height of between 1-1.2 m along The Street. There are some sections where the height of the boundary hedgerow is uniform, typically to the boundary of large gardens and along the central part of The Street. In other areas hedge heights are less uniform, for example, further north along Church Road.

Other boundary features include low wooden fences typically with wooden gates in the centre defining the property entrance. Some wooden fences are standalone, and others are coupled with a hedge. These boundary features contribute to the rural character of the neighbourhood area.

There are also examples of low brick walls marking property boundaries, such as St. Mary's the Virgin Church. Brick is one of the most characteristic Suffolk materials, although it enhances local vernacular, there are not many low brick walls across the neighbourhood area.

Within the neighbourhood area, there is a mixture of setback distances between the property and road. The majority of houses have a small front garden and are setback by approx. 3-4m.
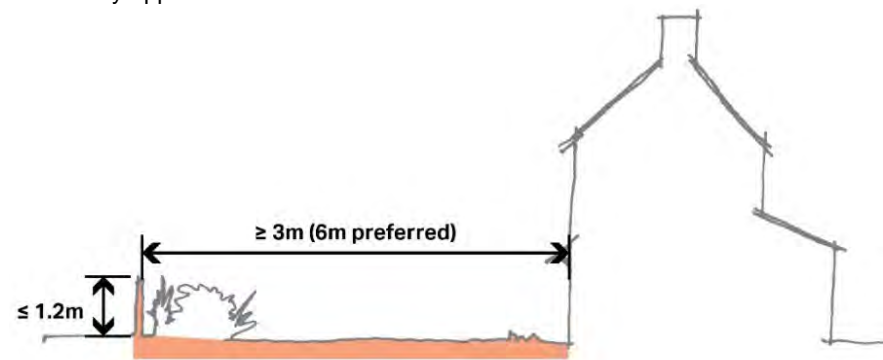
Hedges are a recommended boundary feature. Height should be up to 1.2m and garden lengths: 3m minimum, 6m preferred.

Lack of hedge or fence marking the property boundary is uncommon and contributes to an urban character rather than rural character.

There are examples of recent development along The Street without a hedge or fence marking the boundary. These characteristics contribute to an urban rather than a rural landscape character and therefore should be avoided.

Design Guidance:

- New development should use boundary features which allow for visual connections with the streets, are complementary to the streetscape and enhance the rural character of the village. The use of panel fencing in publicly visible boundaries should be avoided.

- The materials proposed for new boundary fences and walls should be of high quality, responding to the village character and have strong attention to architectural detailing.

- The maximum height of a hedge, wall or other boundary features should not generally exceed 1.2m.

- New development should follow a boundary line consistent with existing development.

Topic 6: Building heights and roofline

Consistent height of the roofline along The Street

Dormer windows decorating roofline along The Street

The roofline along The Street is generally a consistent height. The majority of properties are either one and a half or two storeys. Some two storey properties have a one and a half storey garage, outbuilding or extension attached which creates minor variation. Buildings rarely exceed two storeys, with some exceptions such as the three-storey Brewers Cottage. However, due to the spaces between the individual houses and mature vegetation the perceived difference in height is not noticeable. The tallest building in the neighbourhood area, apart from St Mary's the Virgin Church, is Old Buckenham Hall which is four storeys. It is set away from the road and sheltered by trees and therefore not visible from the central part of the village.

Dormer windows, gables with bargeboards and decorative ridge features on thatched roofs are characteristic roof features within the neighbourhood area. These contribute to the historic character of the village. Brick chimney stacks and octagonal shape chimney shafts are prominent throughout the neighbourhood area.

Octagonal chimney shafts and gables with bargeboards contribute to character.

Brewers Cottage, an example of a steep pitched thatched roof with a central ridge and square chimney stack.

Steep pitched roofs and hipped roofs are prevalent in the neighbourhood area and contribute to the historic character of the area.

Pound Farmhouse, example of a hipped tiled roof with north and south ends with gables and a ridge chimney stack.

Design Guidance:

- Height of new development should respond to adjacent buildings and generally should be no higher than two storeys.

- New development should consider pitched and hipped roofs to correspond with the historic character of the area.

- Typical roof features such as dormer windows, gables with bargeboards, decorative ridge features on thatched roofs, chimney stacks should be considered in new development proposals to reflect and enhance the historic character of the area.

Modern extension of the Francis House, Old School Road.

Modern extension of The Gardens on Bury Road.

Extensions to dwellings can have an impact on the character and appearance of the building but also alter the appearance of the streetscape. A well-designed extension can improve the appearance of the street, whereas an unsympathetic extension can have a harmful impact, create problems for neighbouring residents and affect the overall character of the area.

Some of the larger plots within Brettenham Neighbourhood Area give an opportunity for new development within the plot. There are examples of extensions and infill development in the area which fits well within the rural context. These usually comprise of materials representative of the local vernacular such as red brick, render, pantiles and timber cladding which enhances the rural character of the neighbourhood area.

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Positive use of locally characteristic building materials at October House, The Street.

Design Guides:

- Extensions should be appropriate to the scale, massing and design of the original building and complement the streetscape.

- Alterations and extensions of historic buildings should respect the original building. Replacement of historic and traditional features, such as timber windows and doors with uPVC and other non-traditional materials should be avoided.

- Extensions are more likely to be successful if they do not exceed the height of the original or adjacent buildings. Two storey extensions should be constructed with the same angle of pitch as the existing roof.

- The design, materials and architectural detailing of extensions and infill development should be high quality and respond to the host building and local character.

- The impact of infill development on the neighbouring properties should considered.

- Infill development should correspond with the character of the existing building on the plot, both in terms of the pattern of development and design of the house. Issues of sufficient space, local vernacular, privacy, loss of trees needs to be considered.

The *Permitted Development Rights for Householders* (MHCLG, 2019) contains more detailed information on building modifications and extensions, setting out what is usually permitted without planning permission. This is summarised in Appendix B.

Topic 8: Locally characteristic architectural details

8A - Architectural Detail: Doors

Timber door with simple doorcase

Timber door

Split timber doors with timber and brick porch

Timber doors with timber frame and birck porch

8B - Architectural Detail: Windows

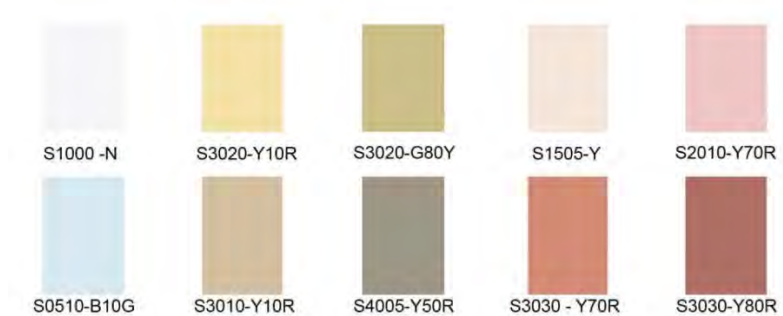Sash windows with glazing bars

Dormer window

Sash window with glazing bars

Casement window with glazing bars

8C – Colour Palette

A rich palette of colours present on buildings façades emphasises the quality of the place and builds upon diverse character. Warm tones of orange and brown relate to the building materials such as brick and tile. Other colours such as various tones of green, blue and brown related to the range of colours present in the surrounding landscape. This range of colours is appropriate for Brettenham and appears in other towns and villages across Suffolk.

S1000 -N   S3020-Y10R   S3020-G80Y   S1505-Y   S2010-Y70R

S0510-B10G   S3010-Y10R   S4005-Y50R   S3030 - Y70R   S3030-Y80R

Design Guidance:

- Architectural detailing in development proposals should enhance the rural character and contribute to the sense of place.

- Future development should consider casement and sash windows with glazing bars to reflect the historic character of existing buildings.

- Future development should consider emphasising doorways by simple porches or doorcases.

- The choice of exterior colour should help integrate new building into its context.

Topic 9: Vehicle Parking

On-plot parking is common across Brettenham. There is a limited provision of on-street car parking, associated with the Church of St. Mary the Virgin and the Village Hall.

Car parking in future development should follow design rules outlined below.

- When needed, residential car parking can be on-plot side, front, garage, or courtyard parking.

- For family homes, cars should be placed at the side (preferably) or front of the property. For small developments, a rear court is acceptable.

- Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the visual impact of parked vehicles.

- Parking areas and driveways should be designed with permeable paving.

- When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim should be to keep a sense of enclosure and to avoid continuous areas of car parking in front of dwellings. This can be achieved by means of walls, hedging, planting, and the use of quality paving materials.

- Parking bays and spaces should be designed for easy access by wheelchairs, loading carts, and buggies.

- The following pages outline the residential car parking solutions that can be employed in Brettenham.

- Provision of electric vehicle charging points should be considered.

On-Plot Side or Front Parking

- On-plot parking can be acceptable when it is combined with high quality and well-designed soft landscaping. Front garden depth from pavement back should be sufficient for a car.

- Boundary treatment is the key element to help avoid a car-dominated character. This can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high-quality paving materials between the private and public space.

- Hard standing and driveways should be constructed from permeable materials to minimise surface water run-off.


Indicative layouts of on-plot front (left) and side (right) parking.

1. Front parking with part of the surface reserved for soft landscaping. Permeable pavement to be used whenever possible.
2. Side parking set back from the main building line. Permeable pavement to be used whenever possible.
3. Boundary hedges to screen vehicles and parking spaces.

On-Plot Garages

- Where provided, garages must be designed either as free-standing structures or as an extension to the main building. In both situations, it must complement and harmonise the architectural style of the main building.

- Often, garages can be used as a design element to create a link between buildings, ensuring continuity of the building line. However, garages should not be prominent elements.

- It should be noted that many garages are not used for storing vehicles, and so may not be the best use of space.

- Considerations must be given to the integration of bicycle parking and/or waste storage into garages.
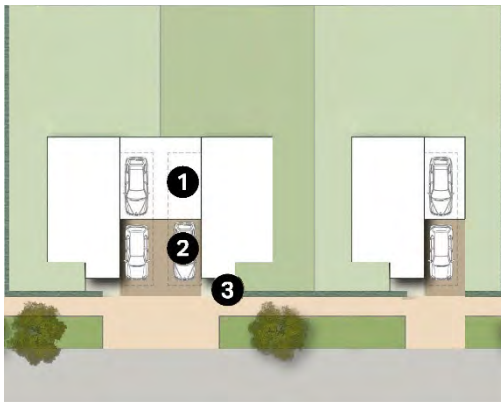
Indicative codes/layout of on-plot parking with garages

1. Garage structure set back from main building line. Height to be no higher than the main roofline.
2. Side parking set back from the main building line. Permeable pavement to be used whenever possible.
3. Boundary hedges to screen vehicles and parking spaces.

Topic 10: Materials

Brettenham comprises examples of traditional Suffolk building materials such as rendered timber frames, local soft Suffolk red brick or the harder Suffolk white brick which demonstrate the historic character of the village. Weatherboarding is often used on barns, outbuildings and extensions enhancing the rural character of the place. Typical roof materials comprise plaintiles, clay pantiles and thatch with the addition of slate in places.

A limited palette of materials has been used in the public realm and is largely restricted to asphalt roads and pavements. This provides an opportunity for the creation of a new higher quality palette of materials inspired by local examples.

Palette of Materials - Roof

Thatch

Slate

Plaintiles

Pantiles

Palette of Materials - Walls

Flint

Rendered timber frame

White brick

Red brick with white brick corner detailing

Black weatherboarding

Black timber frame

Design Guidance:

- Materials used in new developments should demonstrate an understanding of local and regional character and build upon the sense of place.

- High quality roof materials consistent with the rural character of the village should be used in new development. Concrete tiles should be avoided.

- New development proposals are likely to be more successful if they comprise high quality, traditional materials such as red and white brick, flint, render and black weatherboarding.

- Materials for alterations and extensions should be high-quality and retain or, if possible, enhance the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Topic 11: Sustainability

Potash Farm, Old School Road with solar panels.

Energy efficient technologies and strategies help reduce overall energy use and manage the cost more effectively. Eco design principles do not prescribe a particular architectural style and can be adapted to fit a wide variety of built characters. Energy efficient appliances become more popular and a few examples of solar panels, which are visually sympathetic to the character, are present in Brettenham Neighbourhood Area. Implementing Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable surfaces, bioretention systems, and harvesting rainwater results in better management of rainwater, hence leading to a reduction of flood risk and improvements of water quality.

Although the above technologies and strategies do not constitute a policy requirement, new development would be highly encouraged to embed these guidelines into their proposals.

Design Guidelines:

- Energy efficient technologies and strategies, including passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient landscaping which are determined by local climate and site conditions, should be considered and incorporated in new and existing buildings.

- Renewable sources of energy such as solar panels should be implemented to new development proposals where appropriate.

- New development proposals should consider Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water in a sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality.

- New development proposals should consider use of permeable surfaces including unbound gravel, clay pavers, or stone setts to increase capacity of the ground to absorb the runoff water and reduce risk of surface water flooding.

- New development proposals should consider bioretention systems including soak away and rain gardens along verges and in semi-natural green spaces to enable the water to infiltrate the ground and reduce runoff of water into the sewer system. Vegetation should be selected to sit cohesively within the surrounding landscape and reflect the character of the parish.

- New development proposals should consider rainwater harvesting options to capture and store rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse of on-site grey water.

5. Deliverability

5.1 Delivery agents

The design guidelines will be a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high quality development in the Brettenham Neighbourhood Area. They will be used in different ways by different parties in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table below:

Actor	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers and landowners	As a guide to the community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought. Where planning applications require a Design and Access Statement, the Statement should explain how the Design Guidelines have been followed.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Brettenham Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are followed.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

5.2 Deliverability

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 35) emphasises that a proportionate evidence base should inform plans. Based on a '*positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings*' (see paragraph 15). Policies should be '*underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals*' (paragraph 31). Crucially planning policies '*should not undermine the deliverability of the plan'* (paragraph 34).

Neighbourhood Plans need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the corresponding Local Plan. Where new policy requirements are introduced (that carry costs to development) over and above Local Plan and national standards it is necessary to assess whether development will remain deliverable. The principles and guidance set out in this document and within the Neighbourhood Plan's policies are aligned with national policy and non-statutory best practice on design.

The values and costs of construction between new developments and within new developments will vary based on location, situation, product type, design (architecture, placemaking etc.) and finish; and the state of the market at the point of marketing the properties. The guidelines herein constitute place making principles and guidance to help interpret and apply the statutory policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. Good design is not an additional cost to development and good placemaking can result in uplifts in value.

Appendix A References

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Appendix B Permitted Development

Refer to _Permitted Development Rights for Householders_ (MHCLG, 2019) for information on what building modifications and extensions are is usually permitted without planning permission. Some elements, accurate as of November 2019, are highlighted here.

Household extensions

An extension or addition to a house is considered to be permitted development, not requiring an application for planning permission, subject to limits and conditions including:

- No more than half the area of land around the "original house" (as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948) is covered by additions or other buildings

- No extension forward of the principal elevation or side elevation fronting a highway

- No extension to be higher than the highest part of the roof

- Single-storey rear extensions must not extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by more than eight metres if a detached house; or more than six metres for any other house

- Maximum height of a single-storey rear extension of four metres

- Extensions of more than one storey must not extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by more than three metres

- Maximum eaves height of an extension within two metres of the boundary of three metres

- Maximum eaves and ridge height of extension no higher than existing house

- Side extensions to be single storey with maximum height of four metres and width no more than half that of the original house

- Two-storey extensions no closer than seven metres to rear boundary

- Roof pitch of extensions higher than one storey to match existing house

- Materials to be similar in appearance to the existing house

- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms

*MAXIMUM EAVES HEIGHT

1. No higher than existing house
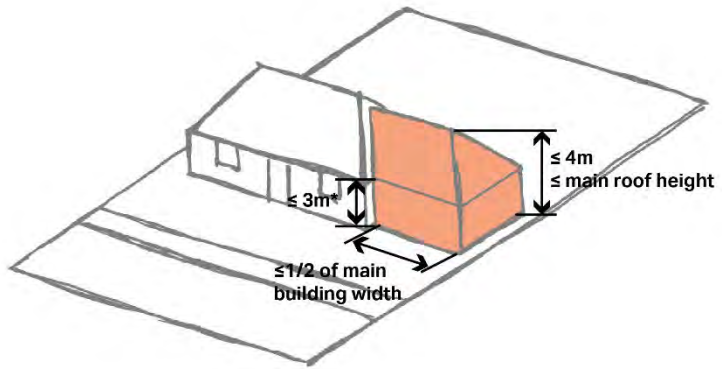2. No higher than 3m for extensions within 2m of boundary
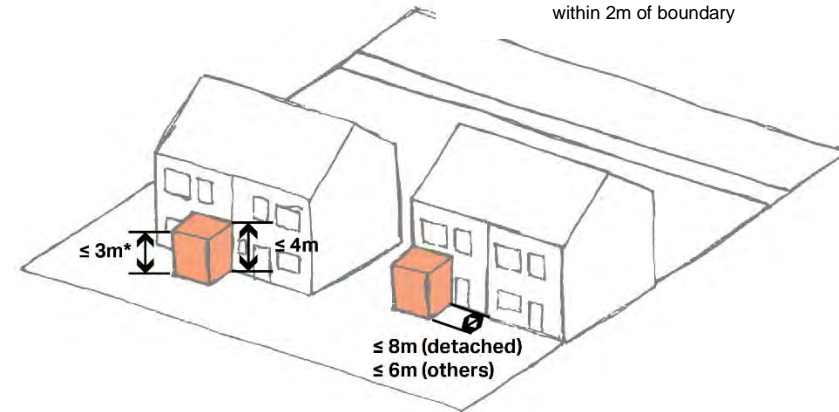
Single-storey rear extension.
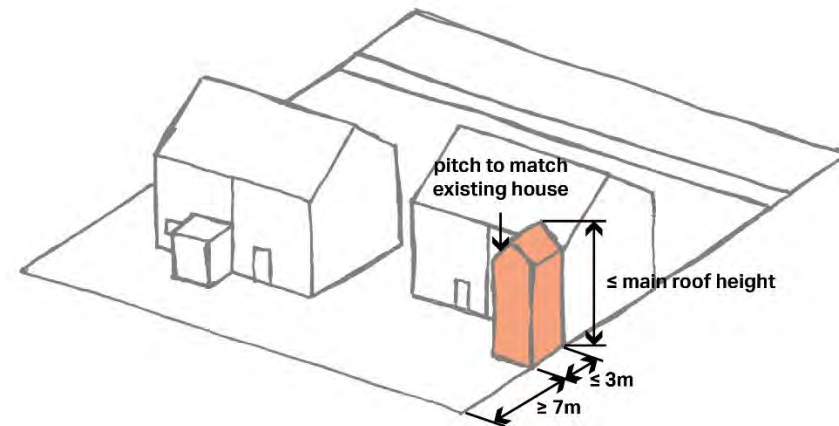
Two-storey rear extension.
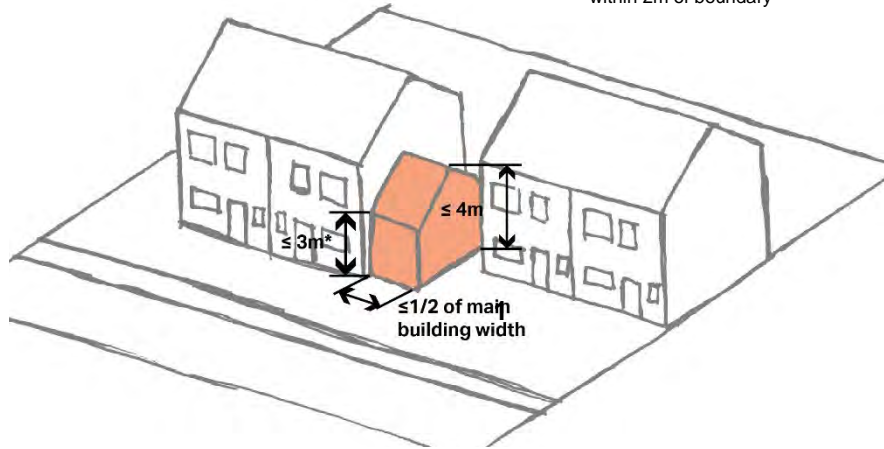
*MAXIMUM EAVES HEIGHT

1. No higher than existing house
2. No higher than 3m for extensions within 2m of boundary

≤ 4m
≤ main roof height

≤ 3m*

≤1/2 of main building width

Side extension to a single-storey building.

*MAXIMUM EAVES HEIGHT

1. No higher than existing house
2. No higher than 3m for extensions within 2m of boundary

≤ 4m

≤ 3m*

≤1/2 of main building width

Side extension to a two-storey building.

Roof extensions

A loft conversion is considered to be permitted development, subject to the following limits and conditions:

- A volume allowance of 40 cubic metres additional roof space for terraced houses

- A volume allowance of 50 cubic metres additional roof space for detached and semi-detached houses

- No extension beyond the plane of the existing roof slope of the principal elevation that fronts the highway

- No extension to be higher than the highest part of the roof

- Materials to be similar in appearance to the existing house

- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms

- Side-facing windows to be obscure-glazed; any opening to be 1.7m above the floor

- Roof extensions not to be permitted development in designated areas**

- Roof extensions, apart from hip to gable ones, to be set back, as far as practicable, at least 20cm from the original eaves

- The roof enlargement cannot overhang the outer face of the wall of the original house.

The fitting of skylights is considered to be permitted development, subject to the following conditions;

- Any alteration to project no more than 150 millimetres from the existing roof plane.

- No alteration to be higher than the highest part of the roof.

- Side facing windows to be obscure-glazed; any opening to be 1.7m above the floor.
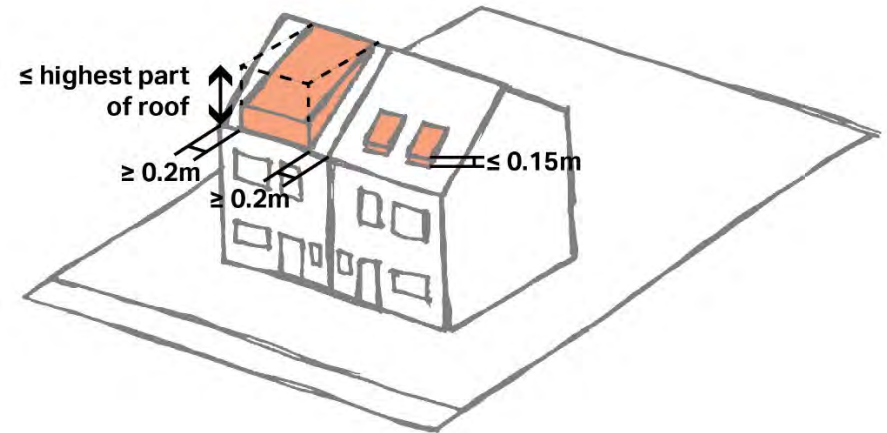
Porches

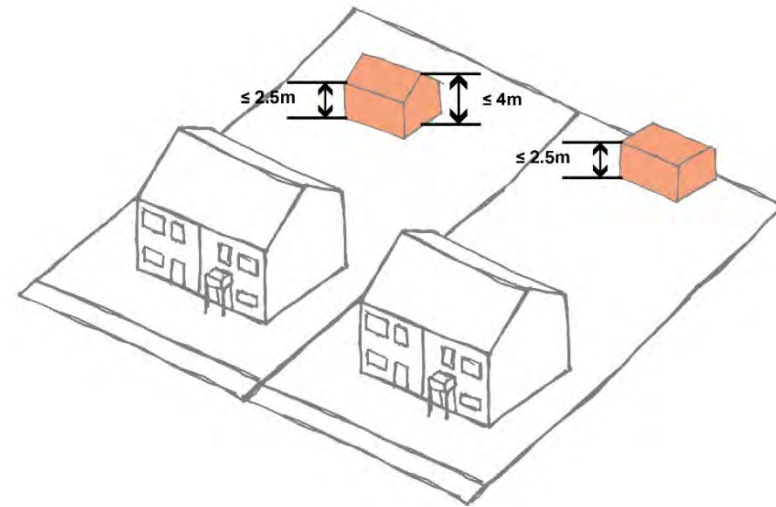Porches are considered permitted development, provided:

- the ground floor area (measured externally) would not exceed three square metres.

- no part would be more than three metres above ground level (height needs to be measured in the same way as for a house extension).

- no part of the porch would be within two metres of any boundary of the dwelling house and the highway.
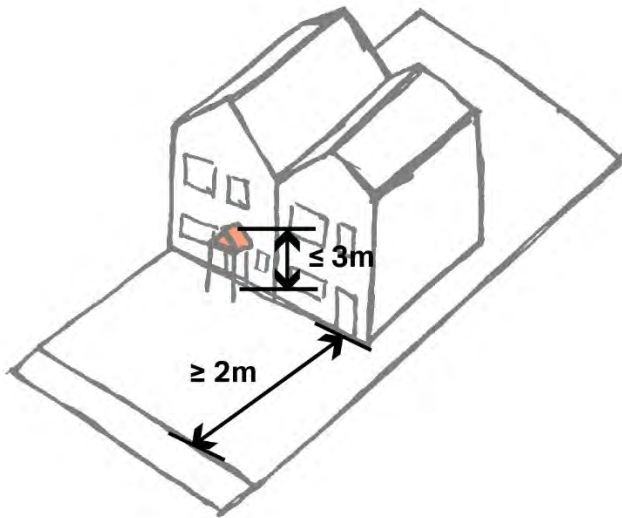
Outbuildings

Outbuildings are considered to be permitted development, subject to the following conditions;

- No outbuilding on land forward of a wall forming the principal elevation.

- Outbuildings and garages to be single storey with maximum eaves height of 2.5 metres and maximum overall height of 4 metres with a dual pitched roof or three metres for any other roof.

- Maximum height of 2.5 metres in the case of a building, enclosure or container within two metres of a boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.

- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms (a platform must not exceed 0.3 metres in height)

- No more than half the area of land around the "original house" would be covered by additions or other buildings.

- Within the curtilage of listed buildings any outbuilding will require planning permission.