

New Forest District Local Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance

Residential Design Guide for Rural Areas of the New Forest District



contents

	Preface	1
1	Foreword: New Forest Residential Design Guide for Rural Areas - its purpose	2
2	Introduction: The character of the New Forest District rural areas and pressures upon them	3
3	Objectives, Policies and Government Guidance	6
4	General Principles	8
	a Local context: Understanding and respecting settlements	8
	b Individual, new and replacement dwellings	9
	c Developments involving more than one dwelling	14
	d Extensions: Minimising their impact	16
	e Conversions: Subtle change where policy allows	18
5	Directory	20
	General examples	20
	Building elements	21
	Elevational formats	22
	Materials	23
	Local landscape character	28
	Traditional landscape settings	30
	Tree, landscape, highway and lighting issues	31
	Boundary definition and detailing	32
6	Further advice and contacts	34

preface

1. This document provides Supplementary Planning Guidance on the subject of the design of residential developments (new/replacement dwellings, extensions to dwellings and residential conversions) in the New Forest Heritage Area, including the defined New Forest villages, and in the countryside outside the New Forest Heritage Area. It amplifies the policies of the New Forest District Local Plan, which has been prepared by the New Forest District Council to guide development in the District. These policies are listed in Section 3 of this Guidance.
2. This guidance was issued in draft for public consultation in July 1999. Amendments were made in the light of consultation responses, and the final version as amended was formally approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the New Forest District Local Plan by the Planning and Transportation Committee on 29 September 1999.
3. Thinking on the issues raised in this document continues to evolve. In order to share best practice and benefit from the experience of other practitioners, we would welcome further comments. Please write to:

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1 foreword:

New Forest Residential Design Guide for Rural Areas - its purpose

1.1 The purpose of this guidance is to assist those considering new residential development in the rural areas of New Forest District. It will also assist the development control process, and be one of the means to assess the appropriateness of planning applications in conjunction with the policies of the New Forest District Local Plan and other relevant guidance and legislation.

1.2 The guidance complements any village design statements (the undertaking of which is supported by the District Council and which may also be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance) and/or conservation area appraisals that are undertaken for rural settlements in the District.

1.3 The guidance is also intended to draw attention to the overall character of the New Forest and the countryside outside it, and to show ways in which the scale, appearance, detail and landscape character can be reflected and respected in new development.

1.4 This document specifically relates to new residential development in rural areas. Information on design criteria for other rural development is covered by Farm Buildings: A Design Guide for Hampshire, published by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Chief Planning Officers Group.

New Forest District ▼

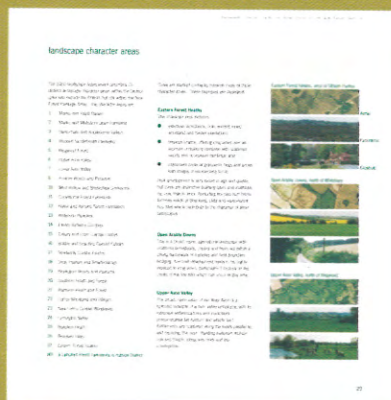


Format of the Guide

Individual topic format e.g. ▼



Each sheet has key information and adjacent examples: ▼



The boxed areas refer to Policies in Section 3 but also provide important policy summaries ▲

2 introduction:

the character of the New Forest District rural areas and pressures upon them

- 2.1 There will always be pressure on the New Forest - it is a rural area close to the conurbations of Bournemouth and Southampton and the City of Salisbury. There is easy access from London. 18 million people are within 1½ hours drive of the District. The 145 square miles of landscape and rural development are constantly under pressure for change. The character of the New Forest is very vulnerable.

Background

- 2.2 The New Forest was established some 900 years ago. The most fertile lands were first to attract investment and communities. Small-holdings evolved in locations linked strongly to areas of grazing. Some major land owning Estates were established.

Character

- 2.3 Traditional buildings and fine landscape combine to give the District its particular character. There are 36 conservation areas and 1796 listed buildings. Many buildings are of modest origin and use local materials. Grander Estates often exhibited broader national design trends as fashion influenced the wealthier and more travelled landowners.

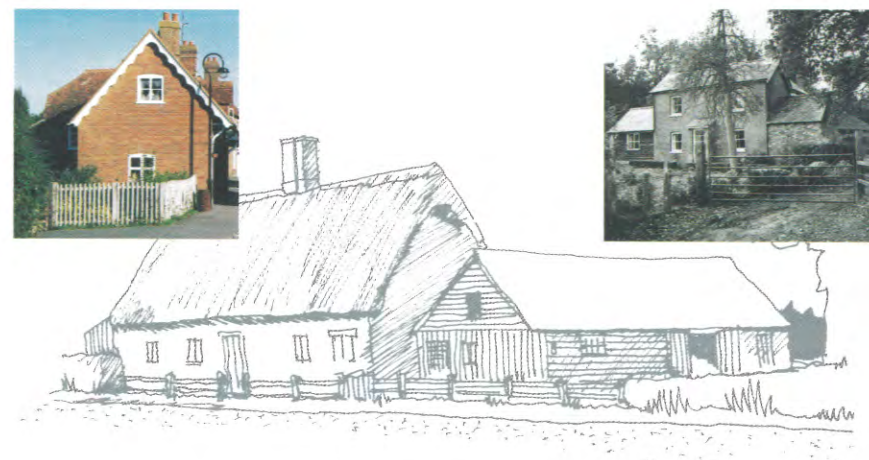
The New Forest in relation to London and coastal settlements ▼



Illustration by local artist Heywood Sumner, from A Guide to the New Forest 1925 edition ▼



A rich built heritage - distinctive buildings and materials contribute to the local character ▼



2.4 The landscape of the New Forest District is very diverse. Twenty-six distinct landscape character areas have been identified and mapped. Because of its outstanding national importance for the quality of its landscape, the New Forest Heritage Area has National Park status for planning purposes. Consideration is being given to designating the New Forest as a full National Park.

See Section 3 and Directory for details of policies and landscape types respectively

2.5 Building materials often evolved from the local landscape characteristics - such as brick from the local clay seams with timber cladding and thatch historically generated from elm forest and locally available straw. In the Western Downslands, stone, flint, cob and thatch reflect the chalky/quarried landscape.

2.6 The landscape has also influenced the pattern of development - for example, buildings following the stream at Rockbourne, while at Fritham, smallholdings are scattered over undulating hedged countryside. Landscapes vary from the large open field pattern of the coastal areas, to those more intimate landholdings and building clusters in the inner areas of the Forest.

2.7 Some local building styles have historically been influenced by local material production. At Beaulieu, brick and tile production was established. Buff brick and warmly toned tile hanging are part of the Beaulieu scene.

Two of the landscape character areas - Martin and Whitsbury Open Farmland in the Western Downslands ▼



Avon Valley ▼



Local materials of the Western Downslands ▼



Brick and tile at Beaulieu ▼



- 2.8 Across the Forest, traditional buildings are often grouped close to the road; in the case of smallholdings, to maximise the area of adjacent land for rural husbandry.



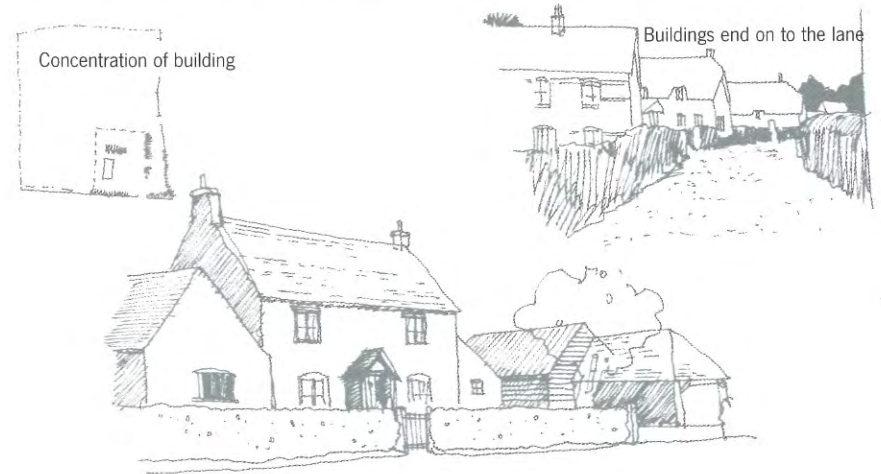
See Directory for details.

The Problems

- 2.9 The appeal of the New Forest has brought with it national influences which have usually diminished local character. Suburban influences have been particularly harmful. Even old, fairly modest cottages in large plots have been vulnerable to acquisition, redevelopment or gentrification. Infill and ribbon development along country lanes have harmed the more rural appearance of the locality.

- 2.10 The Planning Authority will continuously exercise controls to curb unsympathetic change and loss of character - not just to the built environment, but also the landscape setting; e.g. the scale of approaches, the local rural boundary treatment and established tree cover.

Forest smallholdings and dwellings reflect a more intimate agricultural scene ▼



Infilling has produced some more suburban forms of development ▼



Small forest cottages in large plots are particularly vulnerable to redevelopment ▼



The impact of change over 60 years has been very harmful in some instances. Small lanes, cottages and robust hedgerows have been lost to highway improvements and more modern development; for example: ▼



3 local plan and government guidance

New Forest District Local Plan

One of the three principal aims of the New Forest District Local Plan is “Protecting and improving the environment” (Aim 3). The objectives of the Local Plan that follow from this, and that are relevant to the design of residential development in rural areas, are as follows:

Objective 2 Coast

To maintain and improve the environmental quality and character of the District’s coast, recognising the need to undertake coast protection and flood defence works.

Objective 4 Countryside

To protect the character and appearance of the countryside for its own sake.

Objective 5 Landscape

To achieve and maintain a high quality landscape in rural and urban areas; and to protect and maintain trees and woodland of high amenity and landscape value.

Objective 9 Environmental Design

To encourage the highest possible standards of design in new development and in environmental improvements; and to provide attractive, stimulating and safe places in which to live, work and play.

These objectives are interpreted in a variety of Local Plan policies to control development and the form it takes.

Policies

Section C1 Design, Layout and Landscape

- DW-E1 Scale, appearance, materials, form, siting and layout
- DW-E2 Lighting/electricity etc
- DW-E3 Energy conservation
- DW-E5 Requirement for landscape schemes
- DW-E6 Content of landscape schemes
- DW-E7 Provision of private open space with residential development
- DW-E8 Areas of special character
- DW-E9 Protection of landscape features
- DW-E10 Historic street and footpath patterns
- DW-E11 Crime Prevention - community safety
- DW-E12 Access for disabled people

Section C2 History and Archaeology

- DW-E14 to DW-E18 Policies controlling development in and near listed buildings
- DW-E19 to DW-E20 Policies controlling development in Conservation Areas
- DW-E25 Protection of historic landscape.

Section C3 Special Rural Designations

- DW-E30 High standard of design in AONB’s (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

Section C13 The Coast

Policy DW-C1 Coastal development

Section D3 Housing in the New Forest

NF-H1 New residential development in the New Forest

NF-H2 New housing within the defined New Forest villages

NF-H3 Extensions to dwellings in the New Forest

NF-H4 Replacement dwellings in the New Forest

NF-H8 Affordable Housing for local needs in the New Forest

Section D12 Re-use of buildings in the New Forest

Policy NF-RB1 Re-use of buildings in the New Forest

Section E2 Housing in the countryside outside the New Forest

CO-H1 New residential development in the countryside

CO-H2 Extensions to dwellings in the countryside outside the New Forest

CO-H3 Replacement of dwellings in the countryside outside the New Forest

CO-H7 Affordable housing for local needs in the countryside outside the New Forest

Section E-10 Re-use of buildings in the countryside outside the New Forest

Policy CO-RB1 re-use of buildings in the countryside outside the New Forest

Government Guidance

The policies of the New Forest District Local Plan are generally in accordance with Government guidance on design issues relating to rural development.

This is set out in the following Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) issued by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR):

PPG1, General Policy and Principles, paragraphs 13-20, 28 and 32, and Annex A

PPG2, Green Belt, paragraph 3.15

PPG7, The Countryside, Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development, paragraphs 2.3, 2.8, 2.11, 2.15, 4.4 and 4.8

PPG15, Planning and the Historic Environment, paragraphs 2.14, 2.16, 2.17, 3.12 - 3.15 and 4.19

Other relevant Government publications include "Design and the Planning System: a Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance Note 1" (1999).

4 general principles

4A local context - understanding and respecting settlements

The guidance provides general criteria on the qualities that should be respected in new development. Where applicable, local village appraisals should be carried out.

Checklist:

- maintain the traditional 'grain' of layout, plot format and building to plot ratio;
- safeguard important views both into and out of settlements;
- maintain the character and scale of building and the rural character of approaches;
- retain important and landmark buildings and landscape features;
- reflect the local vernacular styles, massing and detail; reflect local tree and landscape characteristics;
- promote the retention of uses or consider new uses which complement the locality and which reflect the aims of local guidance;
- avoid the use of urban, suburban or otherwise inappropriate features which are harmful to the area, eg. prominent double garages and weak boundary treatments.

Hedgerows lost to suburban walls and fences



Picking up on local style and particular characteristics: -

An example - Exbury

Simple cottages and terraces along hedged lanes



Victorian buildings of modest scale



School and lodge buildings give a flavour of local style



Buff brick and formal elevations; a structured approach



Buildings and rear outbuildings have a particular pattern

4B individual, new and replacement dwellings

New dwellings should respect the local traditional building style and employ materials and detailing which reinforce the local character (see also Directory). Care is needed to retain and reinforce rural boundaries and minimise new openings within them.

Replacement dwellings should normally be positioned close to the original location unless there are sound environmental reasons for considering an alternative position on the site.

How good development can be achieved:

- it should be subtly integrated with the best elements of surrounding development and native landscape characteristics;
- the site layout should retain valued site features. Permitted Development Rights may be removed where there could be a future threat to existing trees and landscape;
- the scale, depth, roofline and plan format should be sympathetic to the locality;
- the character should respect the local vernacular (the traditional styles of buildings);
- a carefully chosen combination of matching materials - to merge into the local scene;
- in the case of replacement dwellings, if the scale and character of the existing building plays a special part in the appearance of the locality (or contributes some unique or historic characteristics) these should be reflected in proposals for any replacement.

Policies for new and replacement dwellings are listed in Section 3 of this document.

Policies NF-H1 and CO-H1 of the New Forest District Local Plan control new residential development in the New Forest Heritage Area and the countryside outside the New Forest Heritage Area.

Policy NF-H2 requires new residential development in the defined New Forest villages to protect or enhance the existing character of the village, and not adversely affect its setting in the New Forest landscape.

Policies NF-H4 and CO-H3 impose limits on the size of replacement dwellings in the New Forest Heritage Area and the countryside respectively. Please refer to the policies in the Local Plan itself for details of how they are applied, but in summary, in respect of size limitations:

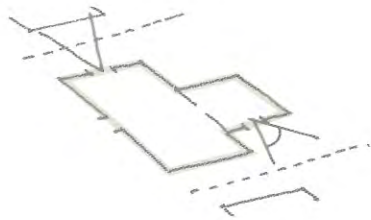
- the policies apply to the replacement of all "small" dwellings throughout the New Forest Heritage Area (including the defined New Forest villages) and the countryside; they also apply to all other dwellings outside the defined New Forest villages and in the countryside;
- "small" dwellings are defined as dwellings with a floorspace of 80 square metres or less on 1st July 1982. The maximum permissible size for re-built small dwelling is normally 100 square metres;
- the floorspace of a replacement dwelling other than a small dwelling is not usually permitted to exceed by 30% the floorspace of the building as it existed on 1st July 1982 or as it was built after this date;
- floorspace is measured as the total internal floorspace including all attached buildings irrespective of whether their current use is as habitable floorspace.

Some residential design and curtilage issues

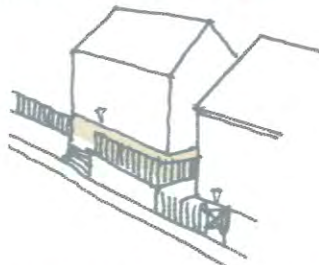
- 1 Relate the scale and direction of rooflines to adjacent buildings ▼



- 2 Avoid new windows that look over adjacent properties and gardens ▼



- 3 Avoid awkward changes in levels ▼



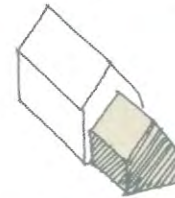
- 4 Provide traditional enclosure with car parking and garaging to the side ▼



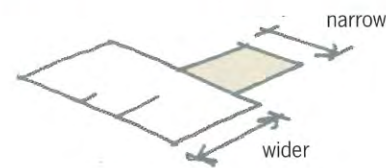
- 5 Allocate some rooms to the rear in a lower building ▼



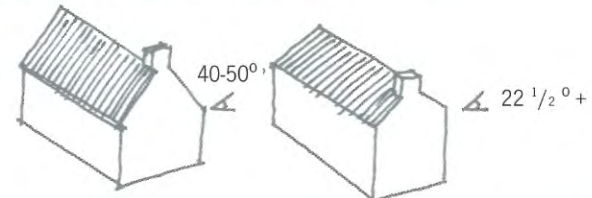
- 6 Or place an ancillary building to the side ▼



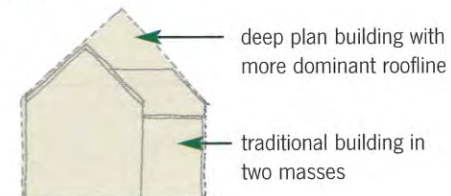
- 7 Rear extensions of building should be narrower than the main part ▼



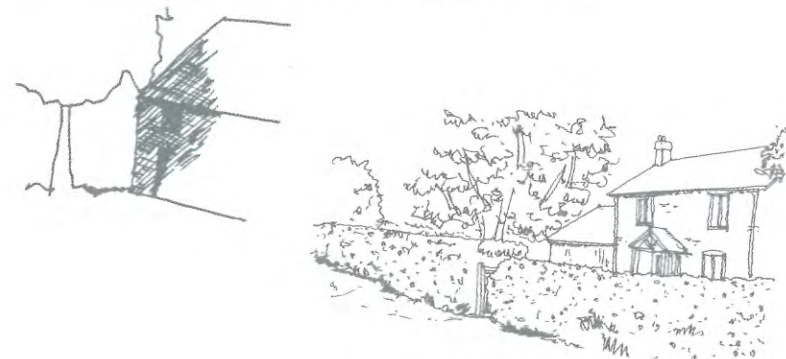
- 8 Pitches of roofs should vary with the locality ▼



- 9 Deep plans result in a poorly proportioned building and dominant roof with high ridge line ▼

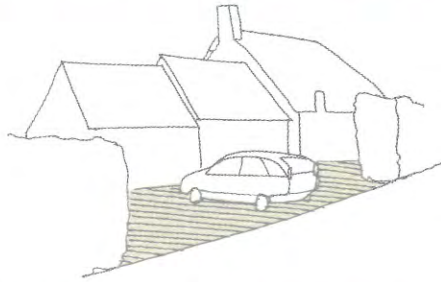


- 10 Poor relationship of building to tree should be avoided ▼



New dwelling set back behind rural hedgerow, Copythorne

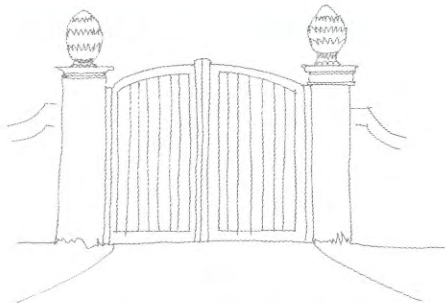
- 11 Avoid prominent hard-standings and weak open boundaries ▼



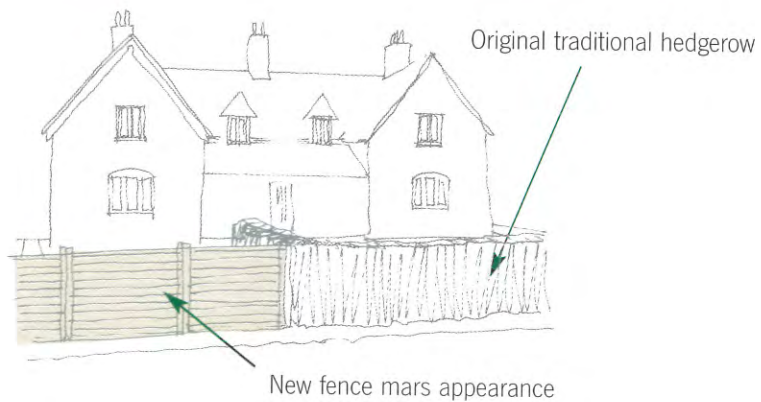
- 12 Building and service yard may be set within a soft green enclosure ▼



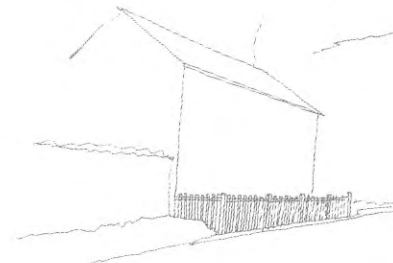
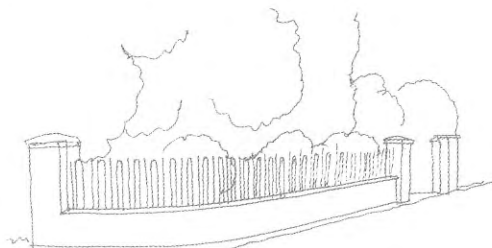
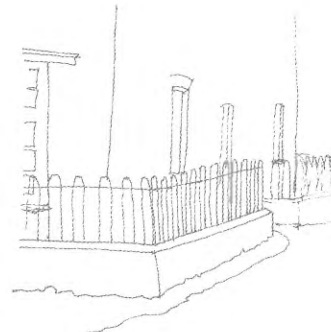
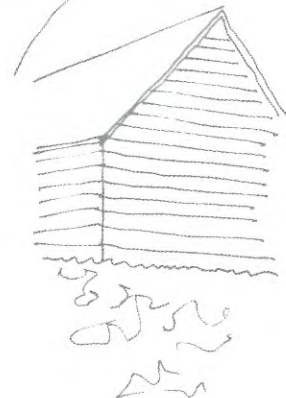
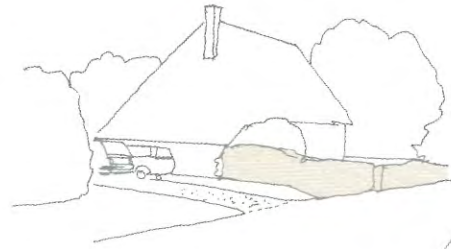
- 13 Avoid oversized and fussy entrances ▼



- 14 and boundaries that weaken the strength and appearance of natural enclosure ▼



- 15 Provide simple traditional robust enclosures, not just to the frontage, but extending to the return, and utilise the local tree and hedgerow characteristics ▼



(Refer to the Directory for details of materials and general species)

examples new dwellings

Cottage ancillary to Smithy, Sopley

- Traditional location, close to road;
- carefully 'linked' to Smithy;
- modest depth of plan, simple slate roof;
- small scale fenestration;
- repeats the Flemish bond of the earlier building.



Pair of 1½ storey cottages, Bramshaw

- Located at the top of a large grassed space;
- modest depth, low eaves to minimise impact on site;
- strong traditional chimneyed roofline and modest sized dormers;
- mellowed orange/plum brick;
- traditional picket fence with hedge to rear;
- building and car parking distanced from trees.



Detached cottage at Hightown, Ringwood

- Consisting of two masses, one brick, the other brick and timber;
- imparts a rustic character and avoids the appearance of a suburban bungalow;
- new outbuildings relate to adjacent farm buildings;
- the curtilage is kept simple, with important trees retained.



House at Newbridge, Cadnam

- In the location of a former group of buildings;
- an innovative approach to the design of a new rural dwelling;
- reflects in part an earlier barn;
- uses traditional materials and robust detailing.



examples replacement dwellings

House at Breamore (former property burned down)

- Rebuilt to reflect important characteristics of previous building;
- new accommodation is within the 30% guideline;
- the house is integrated with established landscape features and has a good relationship to existing trees;
- it is built close to the original location;
- employs robust brickwork and modest sized openings - painted windows and dormers reflect the local style;
- has mellow dappled brickwork and reclaimed tiles which give the house an 'established' look.



Carefully integrated with existing landscape features



Reflects the local vernacular



Country House at Bramshaw (replacement for large turn of century decayed residence and agricultural outbuildings)

- It replaces a 'landmark' house in a similar location;
- the contrasting stature of main house and the lower, more modest outbuildings is retained;
- mellow bricks and tiles on the main house complement the existing front boundary wall;
- the character of outbuildings (residential use) retain a robust agricultural appearance;
- buildings have an appropriate relationship to trees; rear (residential) subdivision of the grounds has a rural character.

New house behind historic wall and carriage gate



Maintains the contrasting scale



Robust outbuildings and an orchard setting.

4C developments involving more than one dwelling

The New Forest District Local Plan only allows for larger residential schemes (beyond extensions and single dwellings) in particular areas and situations.

The Local Planning Authority will resist development where the proposed scale and impact will compromise the character and visual amenity of a location or the approaches to it.

How appropriate development can be achieved:

- safeguard important views both into and out of the settlement;
- retain important and landmark buildings;
- maintain the character and scale of building and the rural character of approaches;
- respect the local vernacular style, massing, materials and detailing;
- avoid the use of urban, suburban or otherwise inappropriate features which are harmful to the area;
- provision should be made for the long term management of surrounding landscape;
- removal of unsightly structures.

Policies in relation to larger developments are set out in Section 3

Please refer to the policies in the Local Plan itself for details of how they are applied, but in summary policies allow for:

- acceptable schemes within the defined New Forest Villages of Ashurst, Bransgore, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway (NFDLP Policy NF-H2). [Note: defined New Forest villages are those where the local plan defines a village boundary - see NFDLP Policy NF-E2];
- affordable housing schemes (NFDLP Policies NF-H8 and CO-H7); and
- conversions to residential use of buildings in certain limited circumstances (NFDLP Policies NF-RB1 and CO-RB1).

examples new developments

Narrow lanes, no footways. The rural appearance may be threatened by new development. ▼



New development focuses views toward the established upper meadows. ▼



An old coach house and established road becomes the focus of a new housing scheme. ▼



The character of a former building is reflected in new development. ▼



The impact of new development is reduced by an introverted layout and landscape scheme ▼



4D extensions: minimising their impact

The cumulative effect of change through enlargement of the local housing stock will have a major impact on the District unless sensitively controlled.

The Local Planning Authority will resist changes which compromise the character, scale and variety of its housing stock through inappropriate expansion and gentrification.

It may not be possible or permissible to extend some buildings. Others may be improved by a carefully designed addition which removes awkward or unsightly elements of building, materials or fenestration.

Extensions need to be:

- subtle, borrowing characteristics which reflect the main building without dominating it;
- appropriate in scale and levels to adjacent established building;
- positioned to ensure that the light and aspect of adjacent property is not compromised;
- complementary to adjacent development;
- appropriate in the choice of materials and details;
- positioned to avoid pressure on adjacent trees, established boundaries and other areas of significant vegetation.

The more recent trend for extension of traditional buildings in the form of conservatories in non-traditional materials can appear incongruous and should be avoided.

Policies for extensions to dwellings are listed in Section 3 of this document.

Policies NF-H1 and CO-H1 of the New Forest District Local Plan control new residential development in the New Forest Heritage Area and the countryside outside the New Forest Heritage Area.

Policies NF-H3 and CO-H2 of the New Forest District Local Plan impose size limits on extensions to dwellings. Please refer to the policies of the Local Plan itself for details of how they are applied, but in summary:

- the policies apply to the extension of all "small" dwellings throughout the New Forest Heritage Area (including the defined New Forest villages) and the countryside; they also apply to all other dwellings outside the defined New Forest villages and in the countryside;
- small dwellings are defined as dwellings with a floorspace of 80 square metres or less on 1st July 1982. The maximum permissible size for an extended small dwelling is normally 100 square metres;
- the floorspace of an extended dwelling other than a small dwelling is not usually permitted to exceed by 30% the floorspace of the building as it existed on 1st July 1982 or as it was built after this date;
- floorspace is measured as the total internal floorspace including all attached buildings irrespective of whether their current use is as habitable floorspace.

examples minimising impact

A cottage's appearance is improved by a new extension ▼



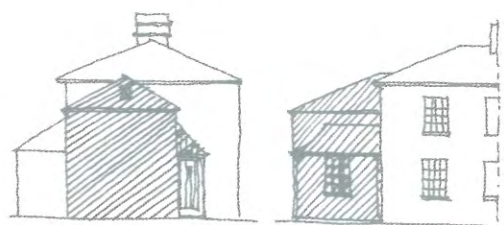
Additions to a semi-detached house are tucked away, out of sight ▼



The extension to this listed building minimises the effect on the original structure and has its own staircase ▼



A pair of new, modest 'formal' semi-detached cottages receive modest "set back" additions ▼



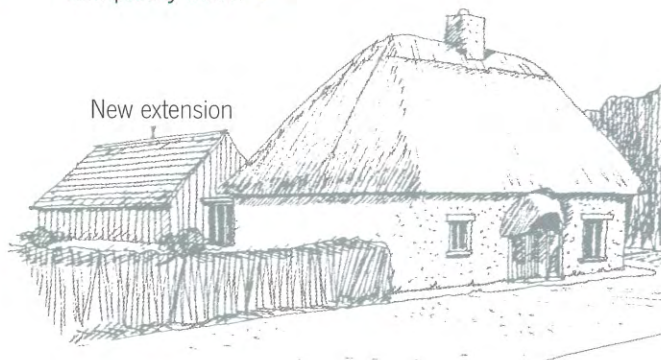
A large former country house receives new accommodation in a complementary stable block style ▼



A contrasting timbered addition maintains the definition of the original brick building ▼



An extension that leaves an original "hovel" completely intact ▼



Garages and covered car parking facilities have a traditional rustic character ▼



The style of the conservatory reflects the shape of the roof on the building to which it is attached ▼



Window styles are replicated in the new extension ▼



4E conversions: subtle change where policy allows

Rural buildings and groups of buildings play a major part in the character of, or approaches to, Forest settlements.

These buildings are often strong local features, and while not necessarily attractive, play an important part in the local scene.

Subject to Policy constraints, conversion may be possible.

- Conversions should demonstrate minimal and subtle change through imaginative design;
- should maintain simple enclosures and external definition;
- car parking and residential external sub-division should be kept low key;
- encroachment into surrounding agricultural land to expand domestic curtilage or established boundaries is not permitted;
- rooflines should be kept simple, avoiding chimneys on agricultural buildings;
- sturdy materials and details should be used, avoiding ornament or pretension, using matching materials;
- conspicuous external elevations should not be affected by major change.

Policies for conversion of buildings to dwellings are listed in Section 3 of this document.

Policies for the re-use of buildings in the New Forest Heritage Area and the countryside outside the New Forest Heritage Area are set out in policies NF-RB1 and CO-RB1 of the New Forest District Local Plan respectively. For full details please read the policies in the local plan, but in summary:

- these policies permit existing buildings which are capable of conversion without major reconstruction, and that are of appropriate scale and character to their location, to be re-used for certain purposes;
- residential re-use is only likely to be given favourable consideration in certain narrowly defined cases;
- within the New Forest Heritage Area, the re-use of agricultural or forestry buildings will only be considered if the building is genuinely redundant for agricultural or forestry purposes;
- in all cases a planning application will be assessed against other environmental criteria including the impact on amenities, traffic generation and noise;
- Listed buildings, particularly barns and farm buildings need to be handled very sympathetically. Proposals should be superimposed on accurate plan and survey drawings to show how changes can occur with minimum effect on the existing structure and fabric.

Conspicuous elevations mainly unaltered ▼



Robust joinery ▼

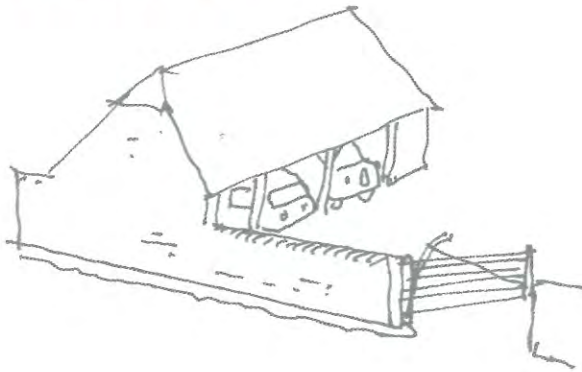


Simple enclosure and external definition ▼

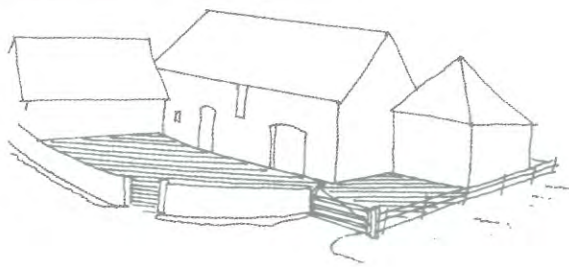


examples: conversions

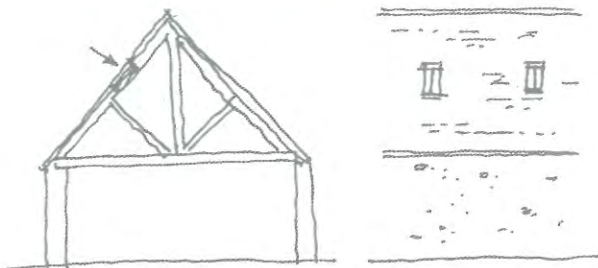
Low key car parking ▼



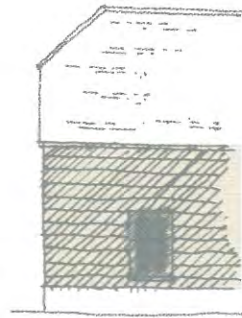
Uncluttered external spaces ▼



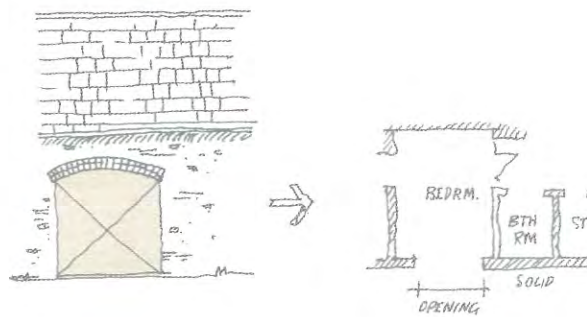
Minimal effect on rooflines ▼



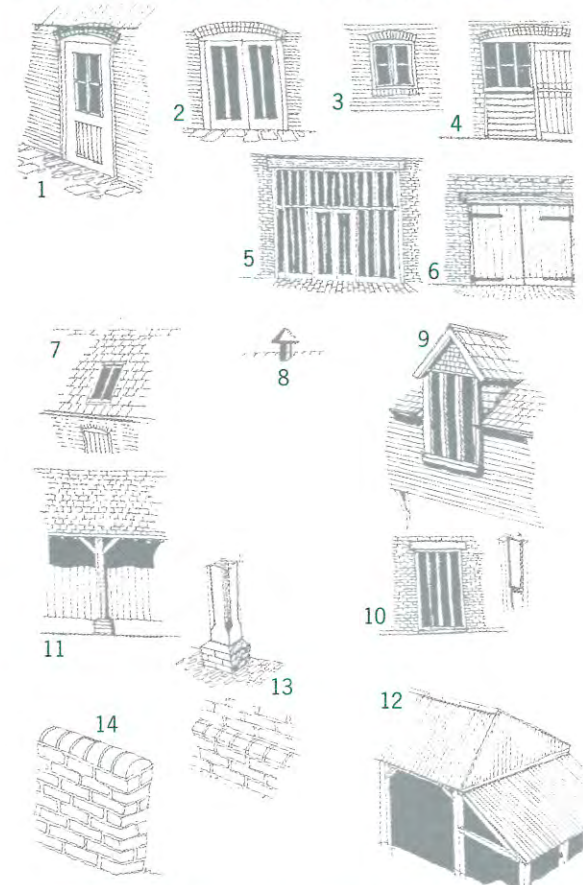
New window frames merge with cladding decoration ▼



Use made of existing openings rather than forming new ones ▼



Some individual elements used in conversion ▼



- 1 Strong door sections and lower panelling
- 2 Glazed areas reduced by introduction of mullions
- 3 Load bearing head detail, strong cill
- 4 Former large openings may be subdivided by a traditional combination infill
- 5 Large shed and barn openings can be subdivided by glazing mullions and transoms - set under a load bearing lintol
- 6 Garage doors reflect traditional side hung units with broad cladding and side hinges
- 7 A modest rooflight can avoid another opening in an external wall
- 8 Agricultural buildings usually have flues - not chimneys of domestic appearance
- 9 Upper loft doors may be glazed if glazing is set back within chunky frame and cill detail
- 10 A simple floor to ceiling glazed screen will often look better than a window opening
- 11 Stalls with traditional support and open underside can accommodate cars
- 12 Lean-to roofs can reduce bulk to give modest additional accommodation
- 13,14 Brick plinths and arched copings give traditional strength and character

5 directory

Many different building types contribute to the character of the New Forest Heritage Area and the surrounding countryside. The Directory gives general examples and also common elements of building and associated details. The Directory then covers the main materials in use and which reflect the Forest vernacular - the traditional local building style.

Finally, the Directory covers local landscape and tree issues.

general examples

A range of traditional local building styles



A simple brick house with a clay tiled roof



One and a half storey cottage with rendered finish and thatched roof



Modest Victorian cottage with symmetrical elevations



Estate cottages utilising a range of materials - patterned brick, tile hanging, clay tiled roof and cast iron windows



Lodge style house with attractive roof lines and detailing



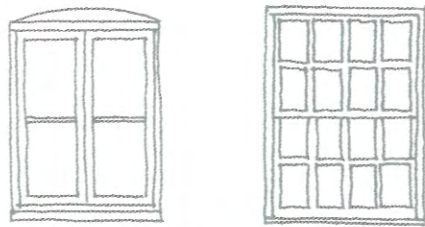
Single storey cob cottage of long narrow proportions behind a picket fence

building elements

Windows



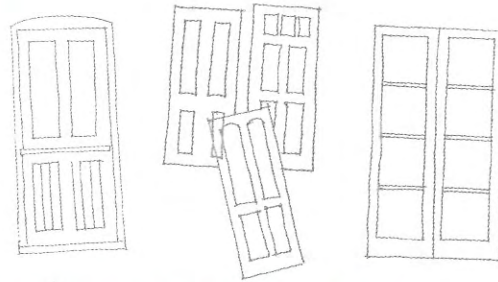
Casement (left) and Sash (right) windows ▲



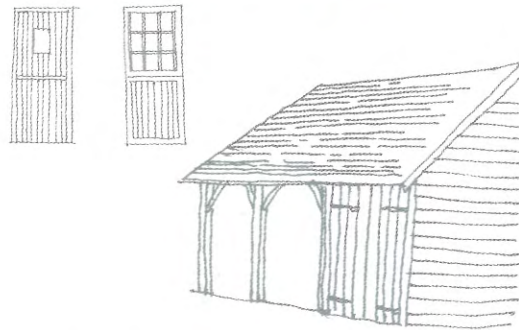
Balanced, flush framed casements with centre bar (left) and '8 over 8' sash (right) windows ▲



Doors



Main doors and double door (right) ▲



'Stable' doors (secondary) and side hung, ledged and braced garage doors ▲

Eaves, verges and bargeboards ▼



Non-traditional windows weaken the appearance of a building and can look conspicuously out of place. Inappropriately sized sections, poor subdivision of glazing (such as the use of fan lights or single panes of glass), awkward looking operation, and modern UPVC/aluminium replacements should all be avoided. Non-traditional doors can have a similar effect ▼



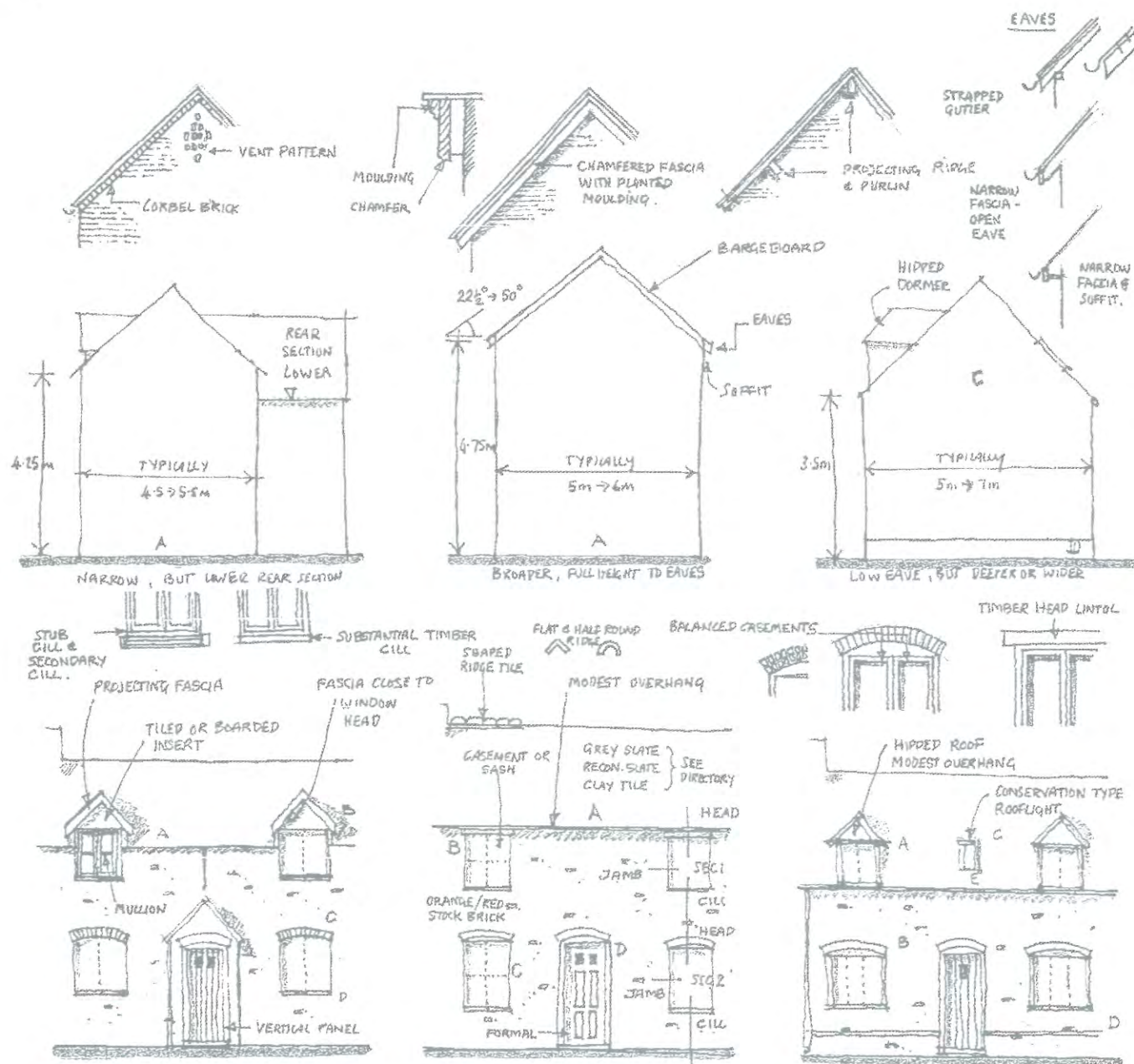
Non-traditional materials, weak sections and cumbersome fanlights ▲



The effect of missing glazing bars (left) and awkward looking tilting windows (right) ▲

elevational formats

Here are some of the more typical formats seen in the District; from simple symmetrical elevations to those with a more intricate appearance. The scale and proportion of openings are important.



- A Traditional open or narrow eaves
- B Gable roof close to window head
- C Rough arch to lower windows
- D Robust timber or stone cill

- A Narrow fascia and soffit
- B Lintol or arched heads
- C Sash or casement windows
- D Can have formal or rustic front door

- A Smaller upper windows
- B Broader lower windows
- C Deeper roof span
- D Plinth

Good elevational design can easily be marred by ancillary equipment such as burglar alarms, meter boxes, satellite dishes and associated ducting, conduit and wiring. These items should be handled in a discreet manner.

materials

Certain materials complement the New Forest more than others. The use of appropriate tile, slate, thatch, corrugated iron, brick, timber cladding, paint and stain in the right combination can reflect local characteristics. The reuse of existing traditional materials is encouraged.

tiles

Traditionally handmade clay peg tiles of a warm orange and terracotta tone were used. Today there is an extensive range of handmade and machine made tiles, which have to be selected carefully to attain the right effect.

- Tiles can be used to maintain traditional pitches (often 40 - 55°) although 37½° is a minimum in general building.
- Reclaimed peg tiles can give a traditional effect.
- Stronger toned orange tiles can contrast with darker roof tiles and give a traditional effect to tile hanging.
- Patterned and shaped tiles are available.
- Appropriate new clay tiles do exist, ranging from handmade plain and antique (mottled) tiles to those with a darker weathered patina.
- It is often difficult to attain rooflines with a mellow appearance using a non traditional material such as concrete.
- 'Half round' hip tiles can give a more traditional appearance than bonnet hip tiles.
- Manufacturers 'utility' tiles or 'seconds' can give an irregular rustic effect (subject to satisfactory performance checks).
- Ridges and verges can be pointed up in natural toned mortar.
- Ridge, tile and eaves vents can be selected to minimise their impact.



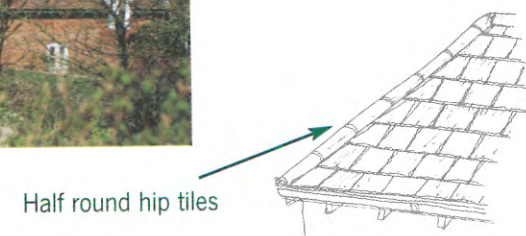
Historic peg tiles, Beaulieu



"Keymer" hand made tiles at Beaulieu Abbey



New "Ashurst" tiles



Half round hip tiles

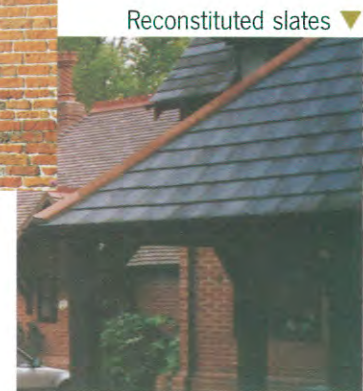
slate

Welsh slate is common in the New Forest. Today, similar slates in size and tone are available. The use of imported (European) slates can prove difficult where size and matching are concerned. Slates can be used on relatively low pitches, combined with matching or contrasting accessories, depending on the character of the locality.

- The use of Welsh slate can give a mellow appearance.
- Reconstituted slates can be appropriate, depending on the area in which they are being used.
- A wide range of interlocking artificial slates are available but have limitations on complicated roofs where cutting of interlocking slates can prove unsightly.
- In particular cases, green and other toned slates are available to match with existing.



Welsh slate ▲



Reconstituted slates ▼

thatch

Traditionally used up to the mid 19th Century, it has sometimes been replaced by slate, tile or corrugated iron; depending on the pitch of the roof and the robustness of the structure.

- There are three common types: long straw, combed wheat straw and water reed. Straw was traditionally the material available in the New Forest, with localised areas of water reed.
- Best effect can be made by using the thatch type most appropriate to its locality.
- Traditional details, e.g. flush, simple ridge and roof profile should be used.

New thatch is discouraged near or under trees, as aphid drip causes discoloration.



Longstraw thatch at Breamore - note the simple ridge ▲

corrugation

A very traditional low cost material common to rural outbuildings. Often covering modest and lightweight structures, it gives a very rustic effect.

- It can be used on very shallow roofs - gutters and downpipes are often absent.
- It can be painted black, grey or supplied in granular finishes. The latter can effectively weather to muted tones.
- Simple rounded profiles should be used, avoiding the regular and stylised profiles of some present day industrial claddings.

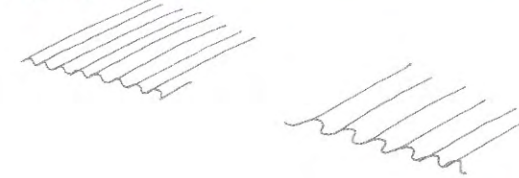
Small holding - corrugation ▼



Modest sheds and outbuildings ▼



Typical profiles ▼



bricks

Bricks came into the District in the late 17th Century. They can be seen in the form of buff bricks of Beaulieu, the soft red bricks of Lymington and overburnt headers that adorn the facades of buildings across the New Forest.

Strong orange/plum tone stock bricks are the most common. The combination of these two tones can produce a dappled appearance. There are local variations in brick tones - stronger plum tones in Lymington, more orange tones in Ringwood.

- Traditional appearance can be obtained by using tight flush joints and lime mortar.
- Generally, washed gritty sand can give the mortar a more appropriate tone.

Wire cut bricks and those with applied finishes can appear very harsh and are generally inappropriate.

An important early brick building (c1700) ▼



timber cladding

Used on 'outshuts' to dwellings and on barns and other outbuildings, this material is readily available through the Forest's saw mills.

- Elm is traditional, but now generally unavailable due to the ravages of Dutch Elm disease.
- Alternatives such as Larch, Oak and Douglas Fir can be obtained.
- Sawn, feather edged and waney edged timbers can give very different effects, and need to relate to the locality.
- A robust appearance can be obtained by using broad boarding. Many buildings have vertical boarding with cover strips.
- Although many new agricultural timber buildings can be left to weather naturally, others can look very raw for a long period of time without some form of timber stain.
- Traditional stain, such as ebony and creosote are available. Redwood stains and stylised colours should be avoided.



Use of both horizontal and vertical cladding ▲

finishes and decorations

Buildings rely heavily on appropriate decorations to make them look satisfactory in their locality; from the tones and finishes used on render to the combinations of finish used on joinery features.

- Paints:- Gloss and semi-gloss finishes are commonly used on joinery, though 'solid' stains are also available and can have a similar effect.
- The use of traditional pigmented limewash may be appropriate for the elevations of some buildings.
- Window frames can be decorated to give very different character of proportion and appearance
- The selection of traditional gloss and masonry paints to provide an appropriate effect can be assisted by using specialist colour cards provided by manufacturers.

- Door openings can appear more robust when both door and frame are in the same tone
- Gutter lines can appear less conspicuous when painted or toned to match the fascia
- Meter boxes and other ancillary equipment should be placed out of sight, and can be made less conspicuous through decorations which match with adjacent surfaces.



A traditional decorative effect on old and new joinery - the window frame contrasts with the tone of the opening casement.▲



Painted brick



Pigmented lime



Pigmented lime



Masonry paint on render



local landscape character

The qualities of the landscape and local variations are an essential part of the overall character of the area.

New development should seek to strengthen and enrich these characteristics, ensuring that change does not diminish the rural qualities.

Finding the right concept for the setting of buildings is critical to the success of a scheme. Appropriate landscape design will facilitate the harmonious integration of buildings into the local environment. Awareness of context is essential: proposals must be related to adjoining uses and respect the wider landscape.

A comprehensive assessment of the character of the landscape of the District and the Heritage Area was produced in 2000, which examines in detail the relationship between landscape character, ecology, history, archaeology and settlement patterns. There is a considerable diversity of landscape character both within the New Forest Heritage Area and outside it, and historically this has significantly influenced the form of buildings and settlements. The assessment identifies the key characteristics of each character area and sets out the principles for built form and appropriate landscape management. Essential points to bear in mind are:

- Each settlement or locality will have its own particular landscape characteristics and features, which will provide a basis for design approach and selection of species
- Local community appraisals (e.g. Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals) may have identified specific qualities or features
- The retention of existing natural features on site, including trees and hedgerows, is usually desirable and will often be a planning requirement
- Landscape schemes will often be required as part of a planning application.

The Local Authority will resist schemes which are out of context with established local landscape characteristics.

Landscape check list:

- see landscape policies (Ref. Section 3 of this document);
- observe constraints and obligations, such as planning conditions
- Section 106 (legal agreements)
- measures regarding trees, protection and Tree Preservation Orders
- tree and landscape maintenance
- providing full site survey and levels information as the basis for new schemes;
- be aware of the range and requirements of local landscape flora and fauna;
- attain an appropriate landscape concept through an initial local assessment;
- resolve the technical and aesthetic aspects of highway design both on and off site;
- consider community safety, lighting and signing.

landscape character areas

The 2000 landscape assessment describes 26 distinct landscape character areas within the District (plus one outside the District but still within the New Forest Heritage Area). The character areas are:

- 1 Martin and Tidpit Downs
 - 2 Martin and Whitsbury Open Farmland
 - 3 Damerham and Rockbourne Valleys
 - 4 Wooded Sandleheath Farmland
 - 5 Ringwood Forest
 - 6 Upper Avon Valley
 - 7 Lower Avon Valley
 - 8 Poulner Woods and Pastures
 - 10 West Wellow and Bramshaw Commons
 - 11 Copythorne Forest Farmlands
 - 12 Hythe and Ashurst Forest Farmlands
 - 13 Waterside Parishes
 - 14 Fawley Refinery Complex
 - 15 Exbury and Lepe Coastal Estates
 - 16 Boldre and Beaulieu Coastal Estates
 - 17 Newlands Coastal Estates
 - 18 Sway Pasture and Smallholdings
 - 19 Bransgore Woods and Pastures
 - 20 Southern Heath and Forest
 - 21 Northern Heath and Forest
 - 22 Furzey Woodland and Villages
 - 23 New Forest Central Woodlands
 - 24 Lymington Valley
 - 25 Beaulieu Heath
 - 26 Beaulieu Valley
 - 27 Eastern Forest Heaths
- NB 9 Landford Forest Farmlands is outside District

There are marked contrasts between many of these character areas. Three examples are illustrated.

Eastern Forest Heaths

This character area includes:

- extensive woodlands; both ancient mixed woodland and timber plantations;
- treeless heaths; offering long views over an exposed undulating landform with scattered woods and occasional dwellings; and
- intermixed areas of grassland, bogs and ponds with fringes of encroaching scrub.

Built development is very mixed in age and quality, but there are distinctive building types and materials, eg. cob, thatch, brick, (including the pale buff bricks formerly made at Beaulieu), slate and warm-toned clay tiles which contribute to the character of these landscapes.

Open Arable Downs

This is a broad, open, agricultural landscape with scattered farmsteads, copses and trees set within a strong framework of roadside and field boundary hedging. Any built development tends to be highly exposed to long views, particularly if located on the crests of the low hills which can occur in this area.

Upper Avon Valley

The broad, open valley of the River Avon is a splendid example of a river valley landscape, with its extensive watermeadows and associated predominantly flat pasture and arable land. Settlements are scattered along the roads parallel to, and crossing, the river. Building materials include cob and thatch, along with brick and tile construction.

Eastern Forest Heaths, west of Dibden Purlieu



Aerial



Panoramic



Close-up

Open Arable Downs, north of Whitsbury

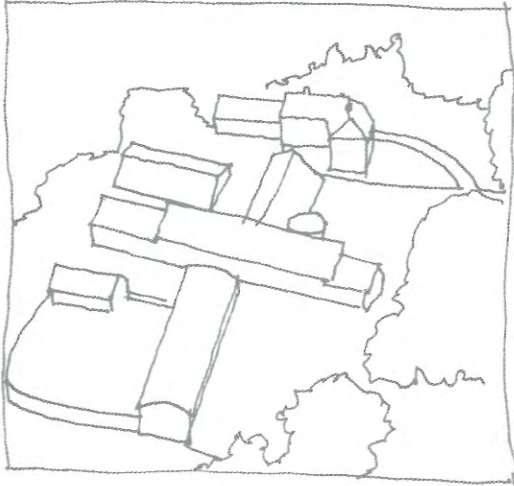


Upper Avon Valley, north of Ringwood



examples traditional landscape settings

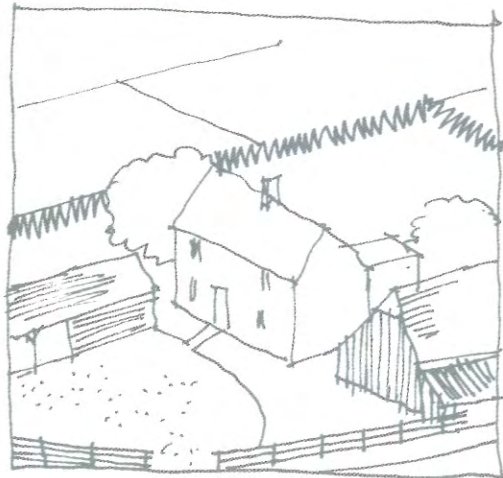
Farmhouse and adjacent enclosures ▼



- Simple robust gated approach/threshold.
- Gravel path cuts through lawned frontage.
- Rural tree/hedge planting defines spaces.
- Walls link buildings to provide enclosure.



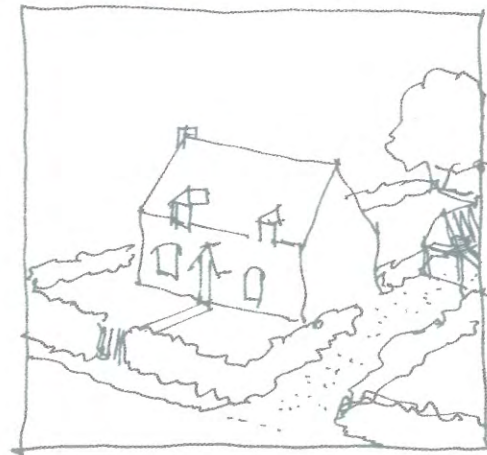
A smallholding ▼



- Buildings in contrasting materials enclose main yard.
- Simple edging to grassed areas.
- Plain front garden, hedged rear enclosure.
- Robust estate fencing or rustic alternative.



A rural dwelling ▼



- Brick or hedged boundary encloses frontage.
- Car parking is separated from frontage.
- Simple textured surfacing gives rural quality.
- Garaging should not look suburban.



tree, landscape, highway and lighting issues

The format of new roads and paths should be compatible with the scale and character of the adjacent rural scene.

Assessment of pedestrian routes from proposed development to adjacent centres needs early consideration.

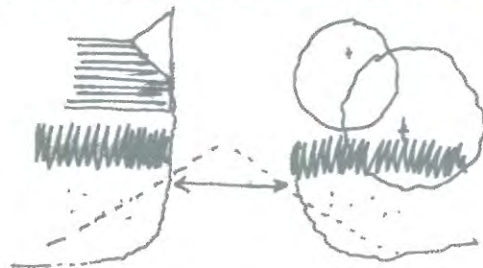
'Suburbanisation' of rural roads must be avoided; care needs to be taken, for example, to integrate vehicular lay-bys and turning heads into overall design. ▼



Minimise the extent and spread of hard surfacing in locations where landscape is predominantly soft. ▼

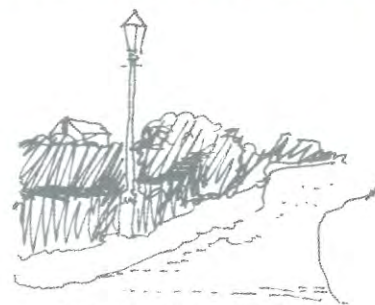


Arrange buildings and sight-lines so that existing trees and hedgerows are not compromised. ▼



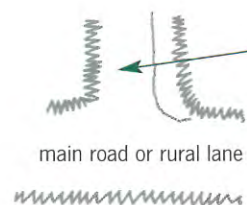
Established grass margins allows modest opening to remain and sight-lines to be accommodated

Provide lighting levels compatible with the locality. Avoid extensive lighting, restricting artificial light to critical positions and avoiding light spillage through the use of downlighting. Within developments, residents should be encouraged to be sensitive in the type and extent of lighting they require. ▼

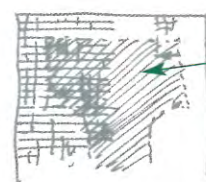


Isolated junction - a modest amount of light in a rural area generally unlit

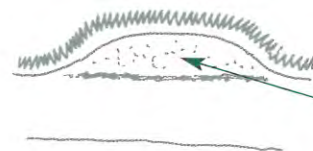
Integrating Highways... Minimising impact (subject to Highway Authority Assessment)



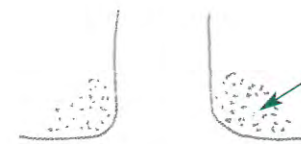
new road should not be as wide as the main road or lane it connects with



turning heads can be integrated into more rural or courtyard spaces - avoiding harsh highway definition



laybys can be informal, with subtle kerbing (subject to satisfactory drainage)



over-run to tight radius bends can sometimes be attained by using compressed hoggin with grass seeding



sight-lines can often be improved by re-aligning the hedgerow



camber



textured surface

traditional 'arched' cambers and low-key edge restraint can give a road a rural appeal. Roads should not be 'dead straight'.

Protecting Trees



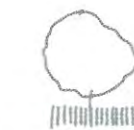
minimum distance from canopy to building



trees can be destabilised through excavation



traffic can damage roots



trees need protecting during building works



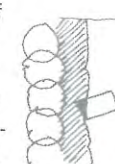
a build up of spoil can harm a tree



trees that appear to be a threat are vulnerable to requests for removal - avoid close proximity, overshadowing and areas where roots might damage foundations



the nuisance of tree sap and falling cones can threaten a trees existence - parking needs to be distanced



exclusion zone

very dominant trees may lead to an exclusion zone for building to allow satisfactory light to building and safeguard trees

boundary definition and detailing - examples of traditional forms

railings

Employing simple worked shapes, e.g. bow-hoop tops or arrow-head finials. Set either as continuous runs with reinforcing brackets to rear, or as shorter panels with either metal posts or brick piers between. Over the last century generally painted black. Brick plinth and stone coping can serve to unite the detailing of the boundary with the materials of the dwelling. Entrance points secured with gates to match.



fencing

Timber fencing may be semi-open, e.g. sawn palisades or cleft rails, or of solid form e.g. close-boards. It can also be formed of wattle (woven hazel or willow stems) either as preformed panels or of the same materials woven on site into continuous fencing with the potential to follow undulating contours. Metal estate fencing may also be appropriate. With all fencing the proportion of the components and the gaps between palings, rails, etc. is crucial to a successful detail, as is the manner of finishing the material. Non-durable timbers should all be pressure treated with appropriate preservatives prior to erecting. Ornamental finishes must also be carefully chosen to achieve a traditional effect, avoiding for instance the combination of opaque, 'Red Cedar' stain onto the lightweight or 'budget' suburban style waney edge panels.



hedging

Hedging varies from the close-trimmed, fine leaved types, e.g. Yew, through to more expansive, looser screens of mixed native species requiring greater depth of space. Clipping may attain either a tight geometric profile or a looser, almost billowing, yet still tidy shape. Hedging may consist of robust and continuous runs creating a secure side or rear boundary, or exist as shorter broken sections of more ornamental species or trimmed forms along the property frontage. Hedging is often combined with other forms of boundary definition, e.g. dwarf walls, railings or fencing wherein the built element achieves an instant definition whilst the planting behind gradually increases the bulk. Hedge planting may require protection from animal grazing or other damage whilst establishing by fencing along one or both sides. Traditional species include Holly, Hawthorn, Yew, Beech and Chinese Honeysuckle. Leyland Cypress (a vigorous and often visually prominent introduced hybrid species) is considered inappropriate in the countryside.



6 further advice and contacts

The Countryside Agency,

Dacre House,
19 Dacre Street,
London,
SW1H 0DH

Tel. 020 7340 2900

English Heritage,

South East Region,
4th Floor,
Berkeley House,
London Square,
Cross Lanes,
Guildford,
GU1 1YA

Tel. 01483 304869

Royal Institute of British Architects,

66 Portland Place,
London,
W1N 4AD

Tel. 020 7580 5533

Landscape Institute,

6/8 Barnard Mews,
London,
SW11 1QU

Tel. 020 7350 5200




New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL