



Building on Tradition

A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside

April 2012



Department of the
Environment
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A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside

Supplementary Planning Guidance to PPS21
May 2012

Produced on behalf of the Department by SLR Consulting Ltd and Colin Buchanan and Partners Ltd in association with Mary Kerrigan Architects.

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Printed by GPS Colour Graphics



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Building on Tradition

This guide aims to raise awareness of the importance of looking after the Northern Ireland Countryside and how to achieve a higher quality of sustainable development that will provide a strong basis to protect and enhance our rural assets. This document will assist decision makers to develop a consistency of approach and understanding of the subject of sustainable rural development.

This document will be used as a development management tool and will be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and planning appeals for development proposals outside of settlement limits.

The photographs and images contained within this guide are for illustrative purposes only and the replication of which are not a guarantee of planning permission.



01 Introduction

- 1.1 Purpose of the Design Guide
- 1.2 How to Use This Guide
- 1.3 Approach

01 Introduction



1.1 The Purpose of the Design Guide

- 1.1.0 This guide has been prepared to assist all of those involved with sustainable development in the Northern Ireland countryside to understand the requirements of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21 'Sustainable Development in the Countryside' - as published in June 2010. It seeks to address current trends in relation to poor standards of design that if left unchanged will gradually erode what is valued and considered special about our environment.
- 1.1.1 It is written primarily for the use of those who are thinking of building in the countryside, to help them understand what the policy is aiming to achieve and how to put together well designed development projects that conform to a new set of planning requirements. It is also written to assist all of those who provide design, construction, maintenance and conservation services for new development projects featuring information and best practice advice on sustainable rural development.



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1.2 How to Use This Guide

1.2.0 PPS21 has a number of leading themes that transcend its entire set of policies. In order to understand and develop an insight into its policies and requirements the guide is structured according to theme, with clear cross references to individual policies as they arise. This guide tells you about

- **Our Place, what makes it special** – what gives our rural environment its unique character and how do we preserve this through new development?
- **Reuse - reusing vernacular and other buildings** – how can existing buildings be used to our best advantage?
- **Visually Integrated** – How we can integrate development with the landscape and other building groups?

- **Replacement** – How can you design top quality replacement houses?
- **New Build** – How should new buildings be designed to fit the landscape?
- **Building on Tradition** – how do you improve the environmental standards of development in order to minimise costs and impacts on the surrounding environment? This chapter also explains the information that will be required at each stage of the planning process, which will help you avoid any potential frustrations or delays.

1.2.1 Within each section the key principles of quality design and sustainable development are clearly explained along with points to consider when re using, extending, designing and siting buildings.

01 Introduction

1.3 The Approach

- 1.3.0 This document will guide you towards high quality sustainable building practices and architectural design in the countryside. Its primary aim is to support the essential needs of our vibrant rural communities, to conserve our rural landscape and natural resources, facilitate a sustainable rural economy and promote high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development in the countryside.
- 1.3.1 It takes into consideration emerging best practice in environmental design and highlights specific measures that can reduce the environmental impact of any proposed development. The approach is to help the reader understand what is special, unique and valuable about our countryside and its building traditions. It hopes to do this by promoting a fresh awareness of the challenges of sustainable development - the sensitivity of landscapes and seascapes, the nature of our settlement patterns, the opportunities presented by the re-use and conservation of our historic building stock, the deployment of new technologies to save on energy use and not least the need to simply stem the impact of ugly suburban development across our countryside.







02 **Our Place**

What Makes it Special

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Character Map
- 2.3 Landscape Character
- 2.4 Signature Characteristics of Our Region
- 2.5 Water Resources
- 2.6 Settlement Patterns
- 2.7 Farm Groupings
- 2.8 Traditional Siting Patterns
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02 Our Place

What makes it special

- 2.1.0 Our countryside in Northern Ireland is a quite spectacular resource. It is special for so very many reasons not least its natural beauty, vibrant rural community and enduring appeal as the key driver of our agriculture, tourism and leisure industries.
- 2.1.1 What makes it special is the uniqueness of its rural landscapes, the environmental quality of its rivers, lakes and coastline, the productive capacity of its fields and hillsides and the historic character of its buildings, villages and towns. All these attributes are products of natural and man made influences stretching back many centuries.
- 2.1.2 To understand what makes our countryside special, unique and different to anywhere else we need to know why the colour of stone is different in Fermanagh than it is in Antrim, the field systems of north Londonderry differ from Strangford and Down and the farm houses of Armagh can be subtly different to the farmhouses of Tyrone.
- 2.1.3 To better appreciate this diversity we must look at how our landscape has been shaped by geology, soils and water and understand how human settlement patterns have evolved from this.



2.2 Landscape Character Map (NIEA)



02 Our Place

2.3 Landscape Character

Geology and Soil

- 2.3.0 The variations in our rural environment have developed from its underlying geology and its erosion and weathering over long periods of time. The effects of the last ice age also helped with this, creating differences in topography and land use capability across Northern Ireland through the deposition of material including gravel, sand, or clay.
- 2.3.1 This process distinguished upland and lowland areas, the latter incorporating the majority of the productive soils. Glacial action generally accentuated these contrasts, stripping uplands and depositing soil-forming tills on lowlands, creating the differences in soil type and quality we have today. The physical attributes, as well as climate, drainage, historical and socio-economic factors, have had a marked influence on our cultural landscape, yielding a unique human response and creating distinct variations in our settlement pattern, farm type and size, building materials and dwelling form and size.

Character Areas

- 2.3.2 Our landscape has many variations in character and particular areas or landscape units, where a combination of physical characteristics produces visually unique areas.
- 2.3.3 The purpose of this section is to generate a greater understanding of the regional landscape context by describing elements within this





landscape. This understanding helps us appreciate what is special and most sensitive to change and facilitates the ultimate goal of good placemaking, which is about leaving a legacy of high quality places for future generations.

2.3.4 Our rural communities are in a unique position to enable this, through their intimate knowledge and understanding of the landscape that surrounds them. Applicants must draw on this knowledge and the guidance in this document to develop their understanding and in particular its relationship to the site and the design proposed. Detailed guidance on localised landscape character is also available from the Landscape Character Assessment Series. The quality of the Northern Irish landscape is also recognised through the designation of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) which are areas of landscape of distinctive character and special scenic value. These designations are designed to protect and enhance the qualities of each area. More information on AONBs in Northern Ireland is available from www.ni-environment.gov.uk/land-home/landscape_home/designated-areas-2/aonb.htm

2.3.5 It should be noted that this section describes the special features of our landscape in broad terms, taking into account existing information as highlighted above and allowing for complementary but more detailed policies and assessment to be considered during the making of development plans. A design concept statement (See Chapter 7) can detail these considerations and how they informed the design process of a particular proposal. This will ensure consistency with the policies in PPS21.

02 Our Place / Character Areas

The North-West

- 2.3.6 The North-West includes a large part of Counties Tyrone and Londonderry. It includes the Sperrin Mountains, which contain largely open uplands / moorlands and linear glens of Glenelly, Owenkillew, Ballinderry and Owenreagh Rivers. Glacial movements stripped the region of soil and as a result settlements are generally limited to the coasts and the upland areas around small lakes and bogs. Further south is a broad basin centred on the town of Omagh, which incorporates a lowland drumlin landscape with extensive patches of raised bog.
- 2.3.7 Of these features, drumlins provide a relatively enclosed landscape. Care should be taken in regard to the siting of new development and the retention and maintenance of existing field boundaries.

The Antrim Plateau

- 2.3.8 The Antrim Plateau is one of the highest upland areas in the region and is dissected into nine seaward facing glens. The Plateau is an extensive sheet of basalt which rises to over 360 metres above sea level. On the east, the Antrim Coast Road, is located on the slopes between the cliffs and the sea and on the western side, the Plateau gradually merges with the glacial plain of the River Bann.
- 2.3.9 Inland, agriculture takes place within the sheltered glens but on the upland areas the Plateau remains largely uninhabited. Areas sensitive to development include these glens as well as the lower lying areas around the plateau edges. Both features are subject to mid- to long-range views which create a high level of sensitivity to new development.

02 Our Place / Character Areas

The Mourne and South Armagh

- 2.3.10 The Mountains of Mourne and the 'Ring of Gullion' dominate the landscape to the south of the Lough Neagh Basin. The Mourne consist of a circle of twelve granite peaks which tower above the surrounding rocky foothills and drumlins. To the south east the steep slopes sweep down to the Irish Sea and the pointed summits of the south west are contrasted with the tranquil waters of Carlingford Lough.
- 2.3.11 To the South of the Mourne years of painstaking clearance of boulders by farmers has created a distinctive stone wall field landscape - known locally as the 'Kingdom of Mourne'.
- 2.3.12 The 'Ring of Gullion' consists of a volcanic complex of hills which has distinctive patterns of settlement which are more intricate than those in the surrounding areas. The foothills of these upland areas feature small farms and stone or whitewashed cottages on strong geometric field patterns. The landscapes to the outer fringes of the 'ring' are relatively remote and isolated.

Down

- 2.3.19 Down is usually associated with drumlins, egg shaped hills which are often subdivided by hedgerows into fields, small strands of woodland, patches of scrub and a single dwelling or barn creating an infinite variety of landscape patterns. Along the western shores of Strangford Lough the drumlins form a sheltered waterside landscape of oval islands and winding inlets.
- 2.3.20 The central core of Down is dominated by the rugged uplands of Slieve Croob which stand out from the marginal pastures and the mosaic of central moorland.
- 2.3.21 The eastern shores of Down are relatively smooth with mudflats expanding towards the head of the Lough and the estuary of the Comber River. To the south of Strangford Lough, the rugged, open landscape of the Lecale Hills extends from Downpatrick to Portaferry. A sequence of low, rocky headlands and rounded bays continue along the Ards peninsula. Each bay has its own small fishing village, with colourful buildings clustered around stone quays.

02 Our Place / Character Areas

Lough Neagh Basin

- 2.3.16 Lough Neagh resembles an inland sea. Parts of its low-lying margins are densely settled but there are also empty areas of marsh and woodland incorporating wet meadows, reed beds, and scrub, with pastures and settlements on higher ground.
- 2.3.17 The principal rivers flowing into and out of the Lough have created their own distinctive setting. The Upper Bann and the Blackwater flow into the southern part of the lough through a flat landscape of peatland, small pastures and scrub. Traditional cottages on drumlins and on the fringes of peatlands have been supplemented by more recent dwellings but the road pattern still reflects the ramparts and small looping roads giving access to the low-lying land.
- 2.3.18 Extensive drumlin lowlands are located to the west with the most distinctive located to the east of Brogher Mountain and the south of Dungannon. The farmland here has a diverse character with fields, hedgerows and small woodland laid out in a variety of patterns and farmsteads positioned in sheltered sites on drumlin slopes. In contrast the eastern shores have an open character and in places offer long views across a completely flat landscape.

Fermanagh

2.3.13 Fermanagh is noted for its lakeland landscape, enclosed by a horizon of hills, mountains and cliffs and at close quarters by drumlins, dense hedgerows, clumps of trees and woodlands. The River Erne flows through the centre of the area, linking Upper and Lower Lough Erne. Enniskillen is located at a key bridging point between the two loughs. Roads radiating out from here provide good links to the small dispersed rural settlements which are found throughout the district.

2.3.14 The western skyline is dominated by Belmore Mountain and the dramatic limestone escarpment at Knockmore . Also to the west are the densely forested Ballintempo uplands while the peat covered summit of Cuilcagh dominates the south west corner and a magnificent limestone escarpment extends from Marlbank and Hanging Rock to Greenan Rock. A limestone plateau carpeted in grassland is the setting for the Marble Arch Caves.

2.3.15 In the East the river valleys of the Finn/Lacky, Tempo, Ballinamallard and Glendurragh flow in broad east-west drumlin corridors. They are separated by prominent ridge lines; in the south by the Carnock and Coonen Hills and further north by the sandstone ridges of Brougher Mountain.

02 Our Place

2.5 Water Resources

2.5.0 Water availability and quality sustains biodiversity, the human population and important economic uses in your region. It is a basic requirement for life but a finite resource, accommodated in surface waterbodies including rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters in addition to groundwater. The importance of managing the water environment is recognised by the Water Framework Directive.

2.5.1 The Directive introduces the following River Basin Districts as the management units Northern Ireland:

- North Western River Basin District
- Neagh Bann River Basin District
- North Eastern River Basin District

2.5.2 River Basin Management Plans prepared for these areas will require new standards for development and new policies for development plans in rural and urban areas. Looking after the quality of the water resource is now a leading factor in the development of policy and regulation at national and European level. This will have a major impact on the future evolution of human settlement patterns in Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

2.5.3 Standards required by the Water Framework Directive will depend on the sensitivity of the receiving environment and whether the water is used for human consumption or whether it supports important sites for wildlife.



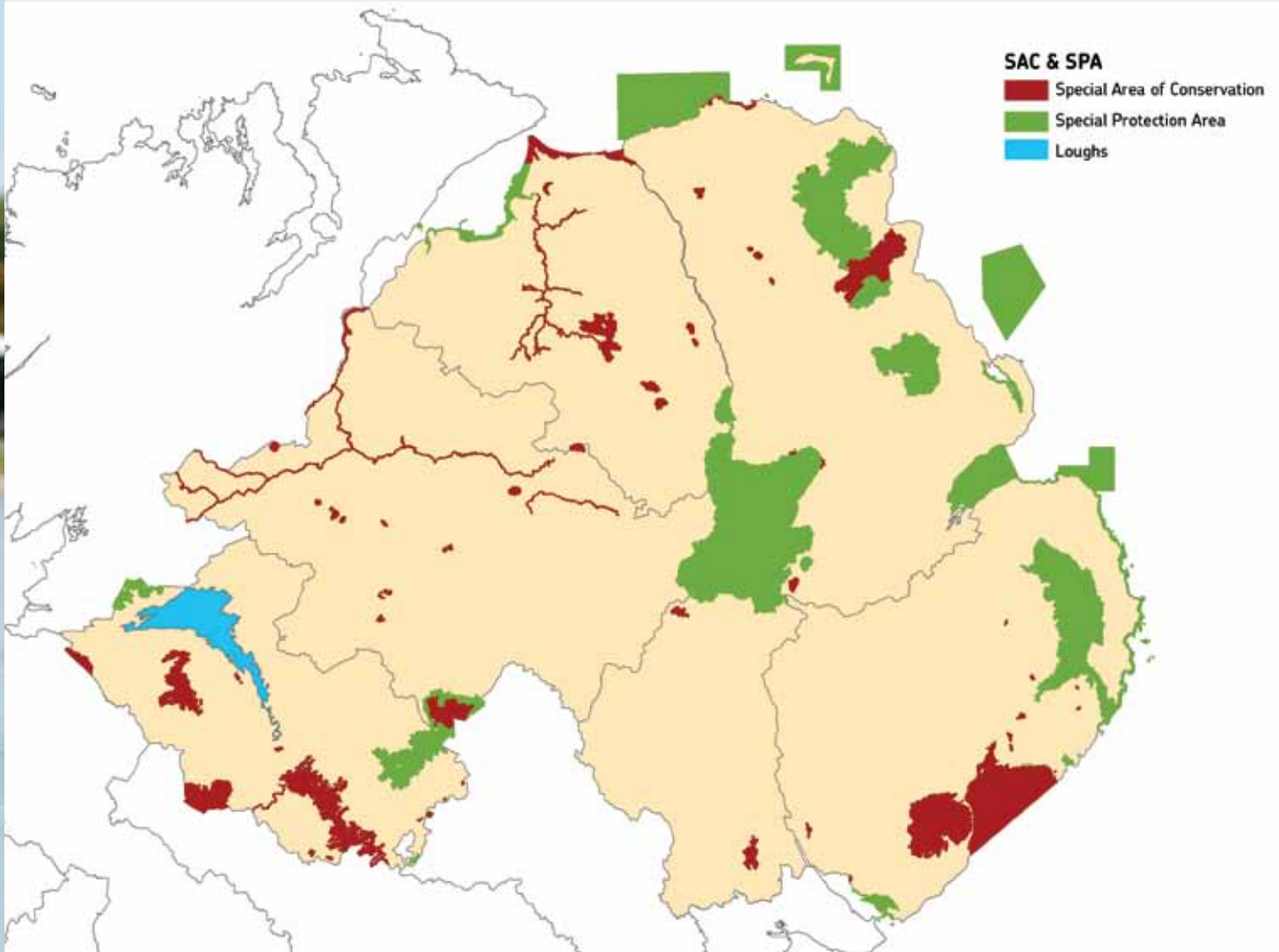


Figure 1.0

- 2.5.4 Water and ecological resources are largely interdependent and in order to maintain their quality it is important to acknowledge the lessons understood by previous generations and their legacy of good placemaking. Their actions demonstrate clearly the impact of today's choices on the quality of tomorrow's environment. Best practice sustainable design should minimise impacts with respect to those environmental issues.
- 2.5.5 As well as the emerging objectives for water quality for each of the River Basin Districts of Northern Ireland, internationally designated sites, shown in Figure 1.0, are protected under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- 2.5.6 Northern Ireland contains many biodiversity sites, ranging in importance from locally to internationally significant. This map shows the location of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs in green) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs in blue). SACs include internationally important habitats such as bogs, glens, estuaries and rivers and SPAs include sites such as loughs, bays and islands which are important for over-wintering birds. More information on the location of protected areas and why they are protected can be found at www.ni-environment.gov.uk/protected_areas_home.htm.

02 Our Place

2.6 Settlement Patterns

2.6.0 Prevailing character variations in Northern Ireland reflect historical differences in rural population density, farm size, settlement and field patterns. They are equally a response to socio-economic trends as well as environmental factors.

2.6.1 Our modern rural environment is a reflection of a number of distinct phases of development: from the plantations in the 16th and 17th centuries, to the emergence of the commercial estate system and linen industry in the 18th century and the modern agricultural and development patterns of the current day.

2.6.2 By helping to reorganise farming practices and increase productivity, the estate system left a legacy of improvements to our rural landscape, including the development of new villages for fairs and markets, house building, tree and hedgerow planting, and the making of enclosures. These elements can be seen all around us to this day.

2.6.3 Field enclosure had one of the most significant visual impacts on the rural landscape. This extended from the richer lowlands farming areas to the predominantly open-field areas to the north and west, creating two distinguishable field patterns: large regular enclosures in the lowlands and narrow ladder farms in the uplands areas. The character and composition of field boundaries also vary according to hedgerow type or boundary construction methods.



2.6.4 Significant investment in tree planting also took place, mainly within the large estates but also to a lesser extent on farms within hedgerows (as part of ditches created to enclose the land). In some cases, estates distributed plants among tenants and required planting as part of leasehold agreements.

2.6.5 The legacy of these measures gives the landscape the attractive parkland quality it maintains today. There is also increasing awareness of the ecological significance of natural field boundaries by virtue of their linear and continuous structure, a characteristic which is of major importance for wild fauna and flora.



02 Our Place / Settlement Patterns

Towns and Villages

- 2.6.6 PPS21 sets out planning policies for development in the countryside, controlling development of land lying outside the settlement limits as identified in development plans. Nonetheless, small towns and villages are a central component of the settlement structure and vital service centres for rural communities. Understanding their form, character and the relationship with the surrounding countryside provides a basis for considering new development adjacent to or near these settlements.
- 2.6.7 Estate led villages, developed mainly in the 17th and the early 18th Century, continue to provide excellent examples of good placemaking. Whilst less formally planned than the larger settlement types, conscious design, particularly in terms of the wide main street or market square is evident. Common features include the tree planted public space, square or diamond, the grouping and detailed design of the landmark buildings, and their location at a crossroads or marking the top of a hill.
- 2.6.8 This is particularly the case in County Armagh, where the village is frequently situated on hills or drumlins, as at Tynan, Killylea, and Richhill. By way of contrast, few of the villages of County Antrim area built on hills, but are usually located on level ground and are often in the form of one long street, as at Broughshane, where houses have been built on either side of the highway. Other settlements including Hillsborough, Banbridge and Newtownards were pre-existing developments remodelled as part of this phase of development.



Main Street, Moy

Figure 2.1: Hilltown, Co Down

How we understand the character of places...

2.6.9 Understanding the distinctive character of villages across the region provides the basis for adding to these communities in a meaningful way and enables new development to be designed sensitively. In addition to layout and form, these historic street plans give us important clues as to their specific design characteristics.

Building line

Public spaces

Entrance points

Scale

Plot size and width

Orientation to the road

Figure 2.2: Example of well defined estate town with market square at Moy Co. Tyrone**Fig 2.3:** Example of a linear village at Broughshane, Co. Antrim**Figure 2.4:** Hillsborough, a plantation town remodelled during the estate period

02 Our Place / Settlement Patterns

Mill Villages

- 2.6.10 The manufacture of linen has had considerable influence on our settlements and indeed the rural as well as urban structure of the region. The early spread of domestic weaving and later the more formalised linen industry facilitated smaller farm holdings and some exceptionally dense rural populations. This was particularly apparent in Co. Armagh, along the southern limit of linen country, where by the middle of the 19th Century, population densities had reached of 190 per square kilometre, amongst the heaviest concentrations of rural population anywhere in Europe.
- 2.6.11 The heart of linen country extended between Dungannon, Lisburn, and Armagh, with peripheral influence developing later throughout areas of Antrim, Armagh, Down, Londonderry and Tyrone. Until the factory system was introduced in the 19th century, towns were small and operatives were dispersed throughout rural areas
- 2.6.12 The transition of the industry to factory production led to the development of mill villages like Bessbrook, Sion Mills, Darkley, Milford, Gilford, Drumaness, Ligoniel, Whitehouse, Mossley, and Donaghcloney which were at the forefront of the model village movement. Industry strengthened the urban structure in parts of Antrim, Down and Armagh, but only lightly affected other areas such as the Glens of Antrim, south Down, Lecale, Ards, South Londonderry and Fermanagh which remained largely committed to agricultural production.

Sion Mills - Note the planned layout and variety of dwellings and how they relate to nearby community buildings and amenity/open space. The village is architecturally distinctive, with a number of high quality mill and community buildings.





Sion Mills, County Tyrone

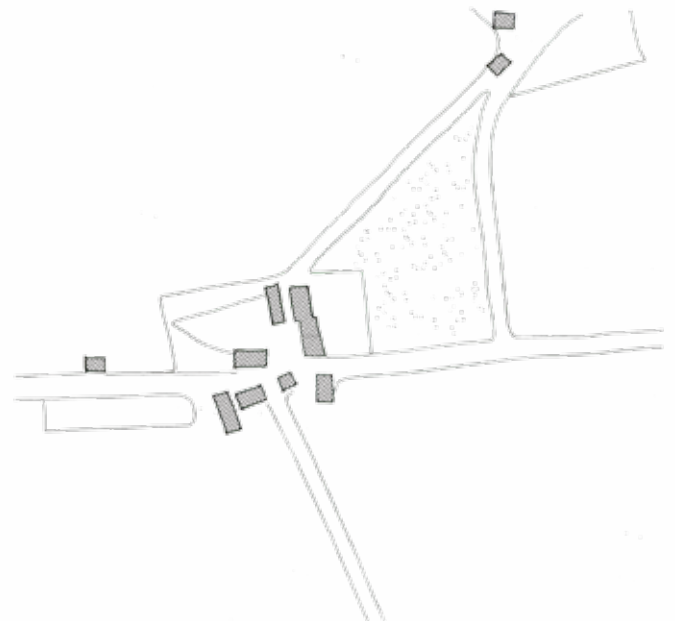
02 Our Place / Settlement Patterns

2.7 Farm Groupings

- 2.7.0 In addition to villages and towns, evidence of less formalised settlement patterns are spread across our countryside. These patterns including farm type and size are reflective of different agricultural activities as well as the influence of the linen industry which supported the development of small holdings.
- 2.7.1 The form of the farmstead is dictated by the scale and the type of farming practiced, local climate and topography, as well as building materials available locally. The most common form in the last century reflected improvements in farming with buildings serving different functions becoming more segregated and arranged around a farmyard. Farmyard types are described below.

Extended and Parallel Farmyards

Farmyards or singular narrow plan farm dwellings initially extended at the gable end of the structure and then with additional units to form parallel, scattered or courtyard farmyards. Parallel farms sometimes cross the public road and where they are disconnected, a loose form of courtyard is created.



Scattered Farmyards

Mainly found in mountainous districts, where ground is uneven



Courtyard Farmyards

Have several variations and can also be enclosed on three or four sides



Small Holdings and Roadside Farmyards

With farm dwellings and buildings either fronting or with the gable end to the road.



02 Our Place



Kearney, Portaferry

Clachan Settlements

2.7.2 Rather than conventional villages with clear service functions, Clachans were nucleated groups of farmhouses with landholdings organised communally. This settlement type was characteristic of marginal farming land in western, coastal and mountainous areas of our region, with concentrations in northern areas of the Bann and Foyle valleys and in coastal areas in counties Londonderry, Antrim and Down - especially in the Lecale and Ards areas. Those in coastal areas, close to sources of fertilizer such as seaweed, were usually larger in size and the tight packing of houses and their common orientation also helped to minimize storm damage.



Typical examples of clachan layouts



2.7.3 These settlements often related to extended family networks and were arranged in accordance with the rundale system, which was a form of joint co-operative or common occupancy or tenancy of land allowing equal access to land for cultivation and land for grazing. After the famine, many of the informal clachan networks were dispersed and replaced with ladder farms.



Dispersed Rural Communities

- 2.7.4 Policy CTY 2, PPS21 recognises the rural regeneration needs of some communities, by providing a policy context for the development of a small cluster or clachan style development. These areas will be identified as part of the Development Plan process which will be accompanied by the preparation of locally specific policies.
- 2.7.5 These areas are likely to have unique defining characteristics such as a combination of significant uplands and /or marginal farming areas in addition to weak linkages to urban areas.
- 2.7.6 They will have a locally significant number of dwellings that have been established over time which traditionally may have been associated with smaller farmholdings and settlement patterns derived from clachan development or ladder farm patterns. Our objective in these areas is to support the traditional focal point of the community.

02 Our Place

2.8 Traditional Siting Patterns

2.8.0 Until the present century, rural buildings in Ireland were regionally varied, traditional and adapted to the local environment and economy. The term vernacular architecture is applied to building design that was not formalised but its form, plan and method of construction expresses local and regional traditions. Vernacular dwellings can largely be identified by:

- a simplicity of form, built without formal plans or drawings
- the linear plan, usually single room deep between the front and the rear walls

- linear extension or extensions with an extra storey
- Hearth and chimneys expressed along the ridge lines
- Walls of mass load bearing materials
- The use of local materials
- The location of openings (including doors and windows) predominantly on front and back long walls
- The siting either fronting or gable end to the road.



Typical Glebe house and farmyard



Typical single farmhouse grouping



Typical farmhouse straddling the road



Typical rural terrace at junction

- 2.8.1 There are two main traditional house types; direct entry houses most common in the uplands to the north and north-west and lobby – entrance houses in the lowlands predominantly to the south. Whilst the design of component elements such as doors, windows, stairs, and hearths evolved, these dwelling types remained constant.
- 2.8.2 Both these forms are found in basic, single roomed houses. When these dwellings were extended, the most common approach was to add another room at the gable or to incorporate a section that was previously used for agricultural use as with byre-dwellings, which combined quarters for people and cattle. Sometimes a storey was added over one or more bays. Through the provision of additional space, it is possible to see how related forms were generated.
- 2.8.3 Formal architecture can be distinguished from vernacular structures through the design process. For formal architecture this usually involved a greater degree of resources and the work of a professional designer or architect. Examples of formal architecture include estate and glebe houses, however in reality there are a range dwelling types illustrating a blend of both vernacular and formal influences.
- 2.8.4 An example of this is the replacement of older vernacular houses with modern two-storey dwellings by more prosperous farmers in the nineteenth century which drew inspiration from the formal end of housing design. They accommodated features which were indicative of formal architectural design including symmetrical facades, deep plan layout and a central hallway and staircase.
- 2.8.5 The following pages illustrate typical built form and materials (both traditional and contemporary), the use of which should reflect and / or compliment its context.



02 Our Place

2.9 Form - Main Traditional Typologies





02 Our Place

Form - Contemporary re-interpretation of traditional forms



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02 Our Place

2.10 Materials - Traditional

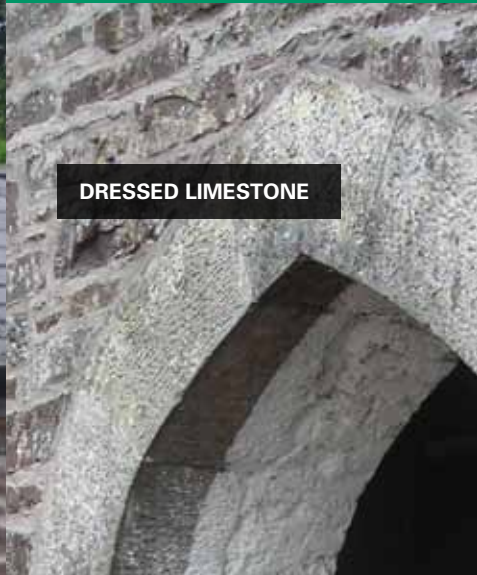


COURSED RANDOM RUBBLE



BANGOR BLUE NATURAL SLATE

CAST IRON, PAINTED



DRESSED LIMESTONE



SHUTTERED CONCRETE



GALVANISED CORRUGATED IRON



PEBBLE DASH RENDER ON EARTH MASONRY



LIMEWASH ON RUBBLE STONE

WROUGHT IRON



PAINTED TIMBER



ROUGH CAST RENDER

Materials - Contemporary



PAINTED RENDER AND TIMBER



ZINC SHEETING

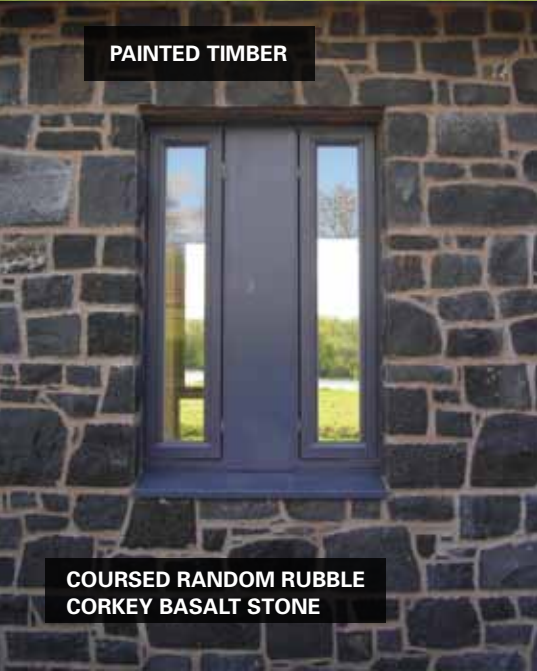
RANDOM RUBBLE SCHIST

FAIR FACED CONCRETE



ZINC SHEETING

UNTREATED CEDARWOOD



PAINTED TIMBER

COURSED RANDOM RUBBLE
CORKEY BASALT STONE



UNTREATED TIMBER



LOCAL RUBBLE SANDSTONE



COPPER SHEETING AND GUTTERING

UNPAINTED ROUGH
CAST RENDER



LEAD

UNPAINTED IROKO

POLYESTER POWDER
COATED STEEL



GALVANISED PROFILED STEEL



03 Re-Use and Conversion

- 3.1 Sustainability and the Historic Environment
- 3.2 Preserve, Maintain and Enhance
- 3.3 Locally Important Buildings
- 3.4 Advantages of Re-Use
- 3.5 Conservation Principles
- 3.6 Sympathetic Conversion
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03 Re-Use and Conversion

3.1 Sustainability and the Historic Environment

- 3.1.0 Times change and buildings need to find new uses. PPS21 places a significant emphasis on the role that our historic building stock can play in meeting the needs of the community and also in achieving sustainable development. Older buildings are not only part of our heritage, but considerable energy is also embodied in the building material used in their construction. The energy requirement for their reuse and refurbishment is considerably less than that for replacement. So the sustainability principle of reduce, reuse, recycle applies to our building stock just as much as it does to every other aspect of resource consumption.
- 3.1.1 Throughout Northern Ireland, there is considerable potential to convert and reuse former schools, churches, mills, and farm buildings bringing new life to many beautiful and outstanding historic buildings that presently lie empty. This is a key aspect of the sustainability strategy for the countryside - nurturing our built heritage, bringing empty and redundant buildings into use and conserving the best of our traditional buildings. Policy CTY 4 - The Conversion and Reuse of Existing Buildings sets out the criteria for the assessment of these applications.
- 3.1.2 A good starting point for those interested in rescuing or refurbishing historic buildings is the Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland Register (BHARNI). This is available at www.uahs.org.uk.

3.2 Preserve, Maintain and Enhance

- 3.2.0 The preservation and enhancement of the historic environment is about understanding original aspects of the building and materials used. This is an area where specialist knowledge is important and you may need to enlist the services of a qualified conservation or restoration professional to help you develop your ideas. Particularly in relation to listed buildings but also in relation to the wider historic environment, prior to any planning or design work, research should be completed to understand the history of a building and to identify the characteristics of the original fabric and whether these are capable of adaptation.
- 3.2.1 In design terms, the sympathetic conversion of a suitable building for a variety of alternative uses is considered acceptable where
- reuse or conversion would maintain or enhance the form, character or architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and
 - new extensions are sympathetic to the scale, massing and architectural style and finishes of the existing building.
- 3.2.2 For buildings listed as having special architectural or historic interest, applications will also be assessed against the policy provisions of PPS6.





Two very distinctive landmark buildings in Gleneely, County Londonderry

3.3 Locally Important Buildings

- 3.3.0 Policy CTY 3 has a clear emphasis in retaining the best of our local buildings therefore there will be circumstances where the Department will require existing dwellings to be retained and sensitively incorporated into new development proposals.
- 3.3.1 The essential characteristics of vernacular buildings (relating to simplicity of form, proportion, solid and simple construction) are set out in Chapter 2 and Annex 2 to the PPS. Rural vernacular or traditional architecture is defined as the construction of small plain buildings in the countryside (particularly before 1925) where the dominant influence in siting, materials, form and design is the local 'folk tradition'. Such vernacular buildings will have been typical, i.e., of a common type in any given locality and will lack the individualistic and 'educated' design features that characterised international fashions in formal architecture during the same period.



03 Re-Use

- 3.3.2 The retention and sympathetic refurbishment of non listed vernacular structures is encouraged, particularly where they make an important contribution to the heritage, appearance or character of the locality.

Aspects of the setting of these buildings, including hedgerows, trees, boundary walls and existing access arrangements are also integral to the contribution these buildings make to the character and appearance of local landscapes. Preserving and maintaining the physical setting of such sites is therefore an important design consideration. There are many good examples which demonstrate how to keep and integrate these building into exciting and innovative new projects....

3.4 Advantages of Re-Use

Reusing existing buildings, particularly where these are of local historic importance is consistent with Policy CTY 3–Replacement Dwellings and central to CTY 4–Reuse and Conversion, but there are other benefits that extend far beyond the confines of the site:

- **Minimizing resource use and construction waste through the re use of existing materials.**
- **Minimizing visual impact – vernacular buildings ‘fit’ the landscape and are discreet in terms of scale, form and colour.**
- **Promoting adaptability – sustainability is about being able to adapt to the environment.**
- **Maintaining locally significant buildings as record of the past.**
- **Supporting traditional building and conservation skills.**



03 Re-Use

3.5 Conservation Principles

3.5.0 Policy CTY 3 and CTY 4 encourages the sympathetic conversion, with adaptation if necessary, of suitable buildings where this would secure upkeep and retention. Specifically for listed buildings but also favourable and where deemed appropriate for vernacular structures, this process will involve conservation and managing change so that their character and special interest is maintained. Applicants should have regard to the following principles of conservation:

1. **Minimum intervention:** based on respect for the existing fabric
2. **Maximum retention of fabric:** the least possible loss of the original fabric
3. **Reversibility:** avoid using process or materials whose future removal would damage the original historic fabric
4. **Legibility:** replacements or new additions should be distinguishable from the original





03 Re-Use

3.6 Sympathetic Conversion

- 3.6.0 Sympathetic conversion of a structure requires an understanding of the present condition, including the exterior as well as setting of structure which contributes to overall special interest or character of the site. This understanding will inform future proposals, allowing designs to maintain and enhance form, character, architectural features, and setting of the existing building.

The Right Skills

- 3.6.1 Building conservation requires specialist skills, involving knowledge and experience of historic buildings. For listed buildings and where special features have been identified as part of vernacular structures, applicants are encouraged to seek expert advice to inform proposals. In some cases their input may extend beyond the preparation of designs and the planning application process to the supervision of work being undertaken. The use of experienced and skilled workers ensures that works are competently and correctly completed. More information on the availability of professional conservation skills in your area can be obtained from the Royal Society of Ulster Architects or the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society's Traditional Skills Directory (see www.rsua.org.uk).

Principles of Repair

- 3.6.2 The purpose of repair is to work beyond the scope of regular maintenance to remedy defects, decay or damage and return the building to good order without major alteration or restoration. The successful repair depends on the extent to which the original design and materials are understood and appropriate research will be an important part of this process. The aim is to allow the retention of as much of the original as possible and repair of like with like.



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3.7 Change

- 3.7.0 Maintaining and enhancing building form, character and architectural features is a central concern of Policy CTY 4. The policy requires a design approach that respects and reinforces the signature characteristics and architectural traditions of the area.
- 3.7.1 This is achieved through restoration and repair of the existing structure and through the blending in of new buildings or extensions. Rather than proposals for new additions that copy the existing historic architectural style, any new element should blend with the existing structures and landscape setting by having regard to the following qualities:

- **Context, including landscape setting**
- **Appropriate siting**
- **Appropriate height and massing**
- **Compatible scale**
- **Good proportion overall and also in its elements and details**
- **Choice of materials and colours should complement the surrounding context**

- 3.7.2 The extension should be designed to become an integral part of the property both functionally and visually, well proportioned and in balance with the shape of the existing property. The height, width and general size of an extension should be integrated so as not to dominate the character of the existing structure.

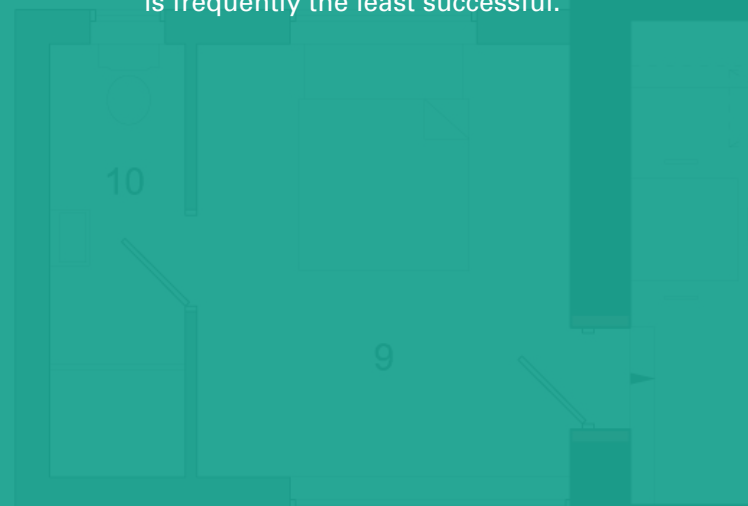
03 Re-Use



3.7.3 Extensions to existing vernacular structures tend to be most successful when they are high quality, and reflect the architectural expression of their own time. Variations in the contemporary design approach include;

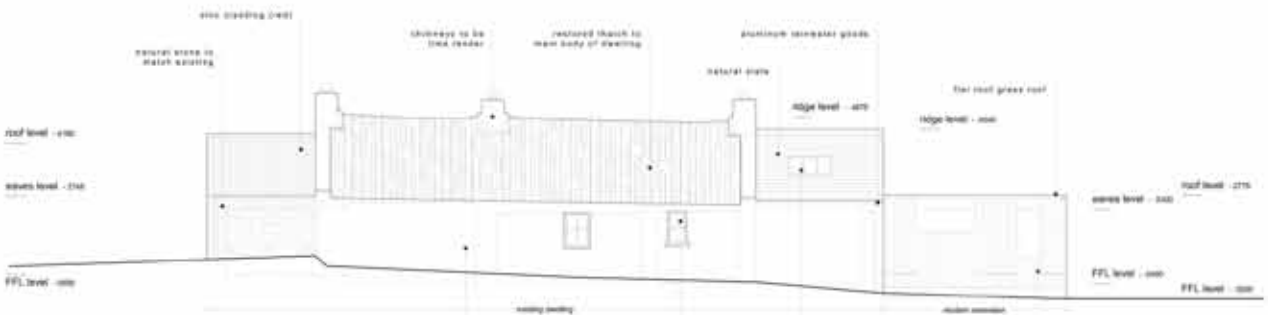
- **Innovative contemporary approach;** which can involve new shapes and materials
- **Traditional contemporary approach;** drawing on traditional shapes, massing, materials and / or siting to influence the design solution. The contemporary expression may come in the shape, proportion and composition of windows and doors or other elements.

'Reproduction' or 'pastiche' reproduces the architectural styles, language, proportion and detailing of the past – usually from the 18th and 19th centuries. This approach can lack authenticity and is frequently the least successful.





front elevation (southern)



front elevation (northern)



external finishes:
existing

roof:	natural slates / zinc (painted red) / thatch
chimney:	lime render
walls:	lime render / natural stone
windows:	hardwood timber - painted (sliding sash windows)
doors:	hardwood timber panelled - painted finish
rainwater goods:	aluminium

extension

roof:	grass roof
walls:	hardwood timber - painted
windows:	hardwood timber - painted



side elevation (western)



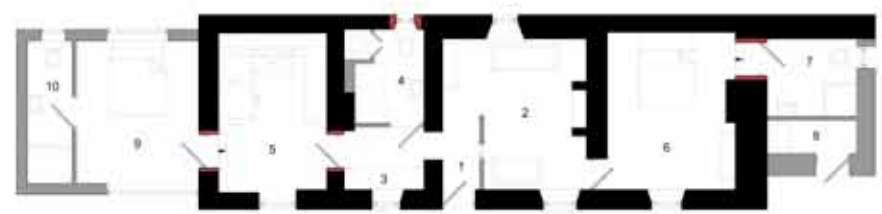
section a - a



side elevation (eastern)

section 4 - b

- 1 entrance
- 2 living
- 3 reading area
- 4 wc
- 5 kitchen / dining
- 6 bedroom 1
- 7 ensuite
- 8 utility / boiler
- 9 bedroom 2
- 10 ensuite



floor plan

03 Re Use

3.7.5 Accommodating modern living space requirements and meeting sustainable design standards are the critical design challenges for traditional buildings. 'Traditional Buildings in Ireland – Home Owners Handbook' sets out a number of practical issues for consideration at the outset of the design process;

1. **Reach an understanding as to what is significant about your house** – use this significance as a fundamental basis for any decisions about alterations or extensions.

2. **Understand how the house, or a similar house, has already evolved with the changing needs of past generations.** Traditional houses were extended either along their length, or upwards, but rarely in width.

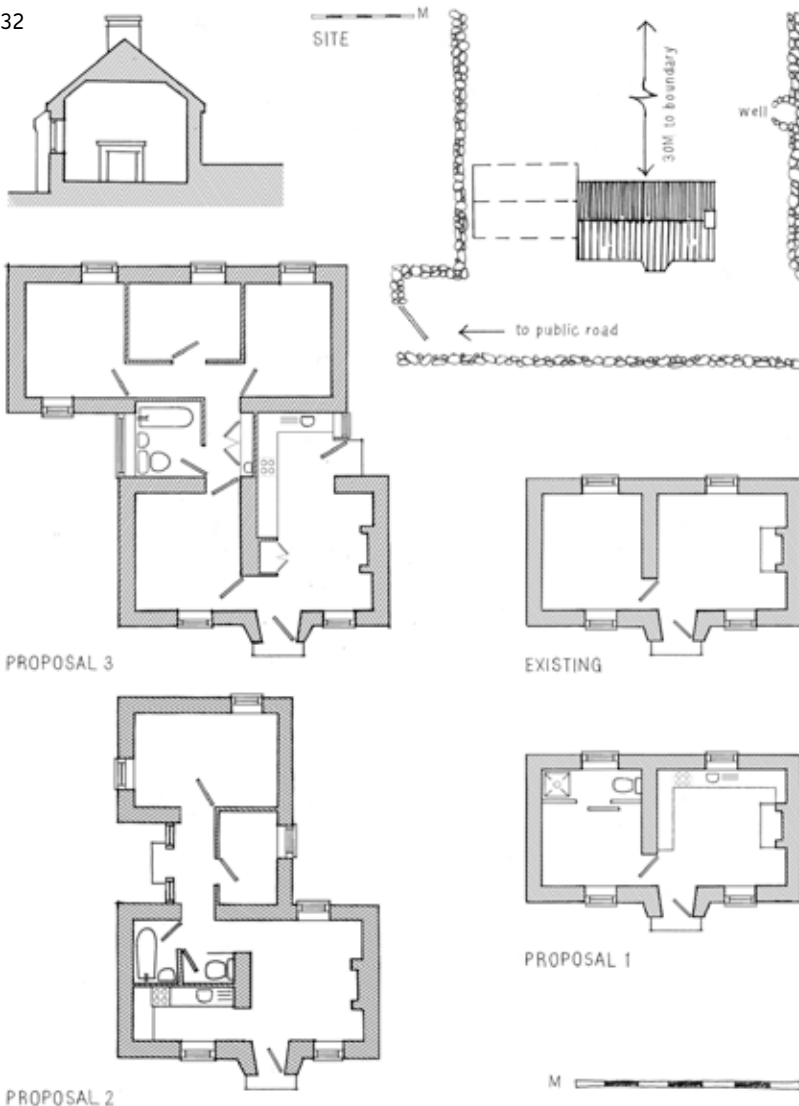
3. **The proportion of the plan form** is crucial to traditional character

4. **Accommodation needs** Modern living makes demands on traditional buildings that can only be met by alteration and adaptation. In general, amendments to the internal layout in response to the demand for services, additional and separated room space may have significant effects on the integrity of a vernacular structure or the quality of the internal spaces themselves considering the traditional narrow plan characteristics. Where possible, changes to structure and layout should be minimised and improvements in amenity accommodated within the new build elements of the project





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The example on the left of Rock Cottage, Castlewellan, Co. Down is taken from *Traditional Buildings in Ireland – Home Owners Handbook*. It was originally a two room property with a form characteristic of the Mournes. Initial proposals to extend upwards and then in length was considered and rejected in favour of a rear extension. The preliminary proposals for extending the cottage to the rear are shown here. This final design (proposal 3) proved successful in allowing the original dwelling to remain the dominant feature of the site.

03 Re Use

3.8 Retrofitting Vernacular Buildings

- 3.8.0 Retrofitting vernacular buildings to high standards of energy efficiency and sustainable design requires the applicant to deal sensitively with an existing structure. Notwithstanding this requirement, greater energy efficiency gains can come from the refurbishment of an existing building compared to its demolition and replacement.
- 3.8.1 Not all measures to improve energy efficiency are consistent with preserving and enhancing the character of historic buildings and a balanced approach to accommodating these arrangements is needed. The starting point should be the question of character; what is authentic, unique and significant about the building?
- 3.8.2 Upgrading thermal efficiency should also focus on areas where heat loss is most pronounced such as roofs, walls, floor, doors and windows. To achieve this, an important distinction between traditional and modern construction should be made- some modern materials are impermeable and can result in trapped moisture and condensation within the building.
- 3.8.3 Although more flexibility will apply to retrofitting vernacular buildings as compared to the listed structures, specialist advice should be sought when retrofitting historic buildings generally. The broad principle of minimal intervention and preserving and enhancing the character of a building should still apply. Appropriate retrofitting measures can include;

Windows -

Improvements to thermal performance whilst retaining and repairing existing windows; Reducing draughts through single glazed sliding sash windows without loss of original character by installing proprietary brush seals and draught stripping. Secondary glazing offers scope for further improvement.

Walls - Solid masonry walls - either brick or stone – are generally built without damp proof courses. These walls absorb moisture from the ground and also

laterally from inside and out. They need to breathe to allow this moisture to evaporate out again.

Avoid removal of original plasters especially if this is simply to reveal rubble stone beneath. This dilutes character and removes the first line of defence against ingress of moisture from driving rain.

If external or internal plasters are in need of renewal, repairs should be carried out on a like for like basis, adhering to the original mix of materials

Roofs - Proposals to improve the thermal performance of the roof space have to be considered in relation to the use and performance of the rest of the building and the need to maintain ventilation levels and avoid moisture problems.

Floors - Generally when original solid floors remain such as stone flags on earth these are best retained. Replacement of these with concrete floors, damp proof membranes and insulation can exacerbate rising damp in solid masonry walls.

Services and Renewable Energy - The insulation of heating and hot water pipes, the use of low energy lighting and high energy efficiency appliances can reduce overall energy demand. The use of low and zero carbon emission energy sources is also attractive in relation to retrofitting historic structures. An example is provided by solar hot water and photovoltaic (PV) installations which are less visually intrusive when sited on the ground or located to the rear of the building.

- 3.8.4 'Historic Buildings & Energy Efficiency' published by the NIEA provides valuable additional guidance on how to comply with Part F of the Northern Ireland Building Regulations in regard to historic buildings.

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h western elevation
n A



h eastern elevation
n B

north e
levation C



ridge - 8250

04 Visually Integrated

external finishes

chimney	natural stonework finished with smooth plaster
roof	flat black grey water
brick walls	natural stonework finished with smooth plaster
windows	blackwood timber painted
doors	blackwood or visually similar
rainwater goods	black aluminium

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Integrating with the Landscape
- 4.3 Integrating with Existing Clusters
- 4.4 Infilling Gaps and Frontage Development
- 4.5 What's not a Gap Site
- 4.6 Linking to Focal Points Within Dispersed Rural Communities

04 Visually Integrated

- 4.1.0 A core requirement of much of the development covered by PPS21 is that it is integrated within (and in particular instances 'Visually Linked' to) the countryside and/or other established buildings. This approach marks a step change in the design and siting assessment of all new proposals and places the issue of visual impact and landscape integration as a key policy consideration, spanning these types of development categories. Hence the policies are structured to direct development to locate within existing small communities, at the edge of small settlements, within existing built clusters, adjacent to established farm groups or if a case can be made to depart from these, to fully integrate with the surrounding landscape.
- 4.1.1 The rationale within PPS21 for this approach is very straightforward. It's about directing development to achieve the focused regeneration of existing rural communities and their services, to achieve the more sustainable use and adaptation of the existing building stock and settlement pattern and to better manage the impact of isolated development on our rural landscapes. Essentially this is about stewardship of the countryside and making sure that what makes it special today will continue to make it special for many years to come.
- 4.1.2 In chapter 2 of the guide we looked at the things that make the northern Irish countryside special and unique. In this section of the guidance we will look at how to reinforce these attributes by guiding development on how to achieve strong visual integration with the landscape, rural building groups and farms and small settlements and dispersed rural communities.





04 Visually Integrated

4.2 Integrating with the landscape

4.2.0 The diversity of the landscapes of Northern Ireland will present very different challenges to achieving good visual integration. The small scale drumlin landscapes of Strangford, Down and Armagh for example, present a very different challenge to the large open landscapes of north Antrim the Bann Valley and parts of Fermanagh. Detailed guidance on localised landscape character is available in the NI Landscape Character Assessment Series held by NIEA.

4.2.1 Work with the landscape avoiding prominent and elevated locations and retaining as many hedgerows, trees and stone walls as you can. Take time to assess the context of your location looking carefully at how the current settlement pattern has evolved. Look at the rise and fall of the land around the site and how this will impact on views into and out of the site. Are there features that you can take advantage of such as a dip in the land or a woodland backdrop that can help integrate the development and avoid the need for expensive excavation to create an artificial platform. Look in particular for locations that have two or preferably three boundaries already in place. This will make the task of blending in with the landscape much easier as they will help achieve enclosure and should typically deliver the shelter and privacy that you require.

- Work with the contours (not against them)
- Look for sheltered locations beside woodland
- Make use of natural hollows (avoiding frost pockets)
- Avoid full frontal locations at prominent roadsides
- Avoid exposed locations where bad weather can damage buildings
- Avoid north facing sloping sites (difficult to achieve good passive solar gains)
- Look for sites with at least two boundaries in situ and preferably three
- Look for sites that face south (easy to achieve good passive solar gains).






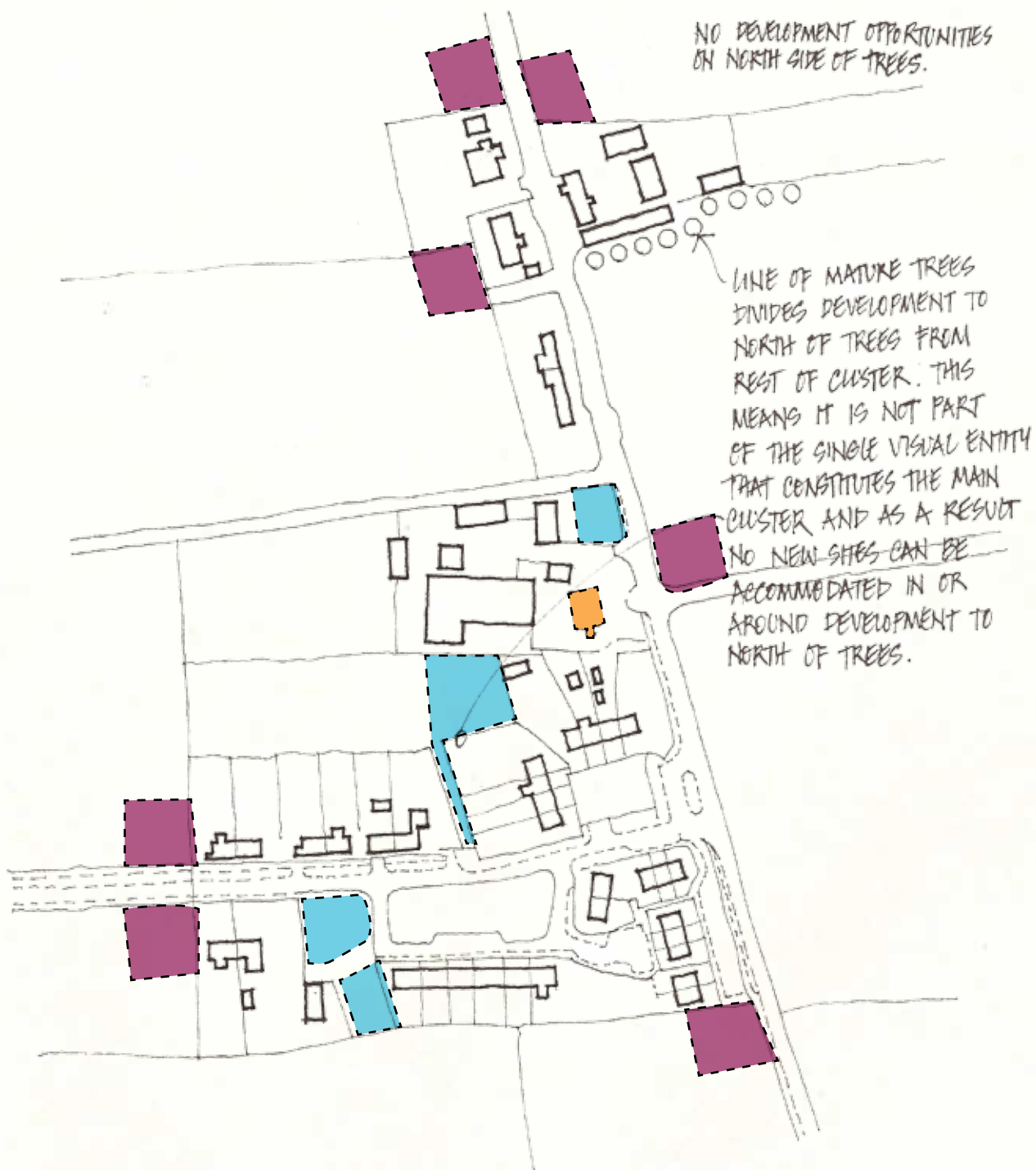


Integrating with existing clusters

- 4.3.0 Policy CTY 2a New Dwellings in Existing Clusters, defines what constitutes a cluster and sets down very clear guidance on how new developments can integrate with these. The key requirement is that the site selected has a suitable degree of enclosure and is bounded on two sides with other development in the cluster. The sketches below illustrate this siting principle applied to a range of small groups.

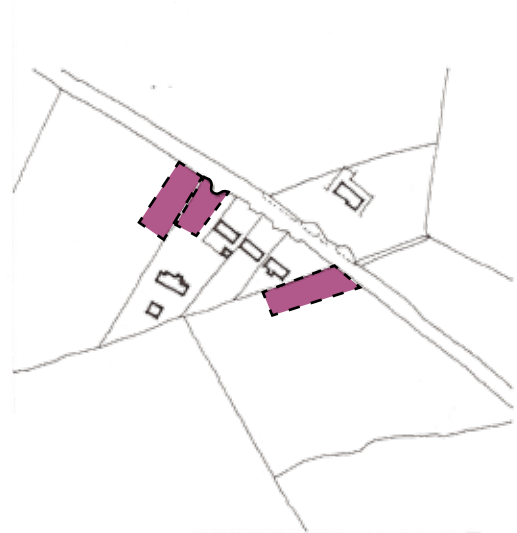


-  Social / Community Facility
-  Proposed site not likely to comply with CTY 2a
-  Proposed site likely to comply with CTY 2a



Infilling Gaps and Frontage Development

- 4.4.0 Introducing a new building to an existing cluster (CTY 2a) or ribbon (CTY 8) will require care in terms of how well it fits in with its neighbouring buildings in terms of scale, form, proportions and overall character.
- 4.4.1 CTY 8 Ribbon Development sets out the circumstances under which a small gap site can, in certain circumstances, be developed to accommodate a maximum of two houses (or an appropriate economic development project), within an otherwise substantial and continuous built up frontage. Where such opportunities arise, the policy requires the applicant to demonstrate that the gap site can be developed to integrate the new building(s) within the local context.



Typical 3 house ribbon



Quality infill at existing ribbon



- Proposed site not likely to comply with CTY 2a
- Proposed site likely to comply with CTY 2a

- It is not acceptable to extend the extremities of a ribbon by creating new sites at each end.
- Where a gap frontage is longer than the average ribbon plot width the gap may be unsuitable for infill.
- When a gap is more than twice the length of the average plot width in the adjoining ribbon it is often unsuitable for infill with two new plots
- Sometimes ribbon development does not have a consistent building set back. Where this occurs the creation of a new site in the front garden of an existing property is not acceptable under CTY 8 if this extends the extremities of the ribbon.
- A gap site can be infilled with one or two houses if the average frontage of the new plot equates to the average plot width in the existing ribbon.



Complex linear ribbon



Some gaps are not suitable for infilling if they frame a view or provide an important visual break in development



 Proposed site not likely to comply with CTY 2a

What's not a gap site

- 4.5.0 There will also be some circumstances where it may not be considered appropriate under the policy to fill these gap sites as they are judged to offer an important visual break in the developed appearance of the local area.
- 4.5.1 As a general rule of thumb, gap sites within a continuous built up frontage exceeding the local average plot width may be considered to constitute an important visual break. Sites may also be considered to constitute an important visual break depending on local circumstances. For example, if the gap frames a viewpoint or provides an important setting for the amenity and character of the established dwellings.



 **Wooded Area**

Woodland forms visual break in short ribbon

Another type of visual break can be an existing stand of mature trees occurring between properties that appear to be ribbon development on plan. The trees contribute positively to the rural character in this area and are an important visual break in the development. There is no scope for infill in such a ribbon.



Gap site and infill principles

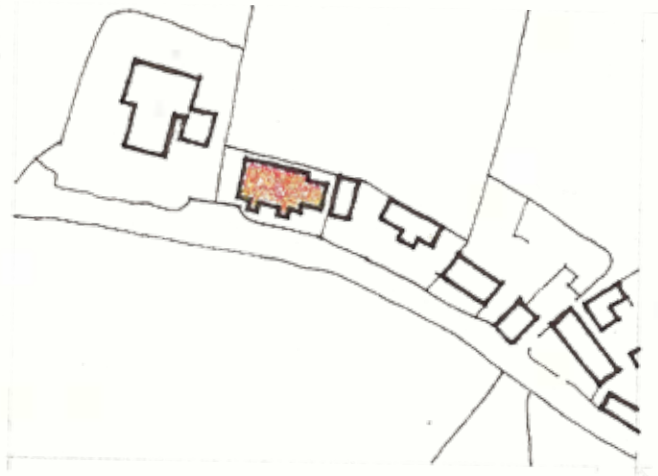
Follow the established grain of the neighbouring buildings.

Allow for clear definition of front and back, public and private sides to the plot which will help address overlooking issues.

Design in scale and form with surrounding buildings.

Retain existing boundaries where possible and construct new boundaries using native hedgerows and natural stone walls to assist integration and local biodiversity

Use a palette of materials that reflects the local area.

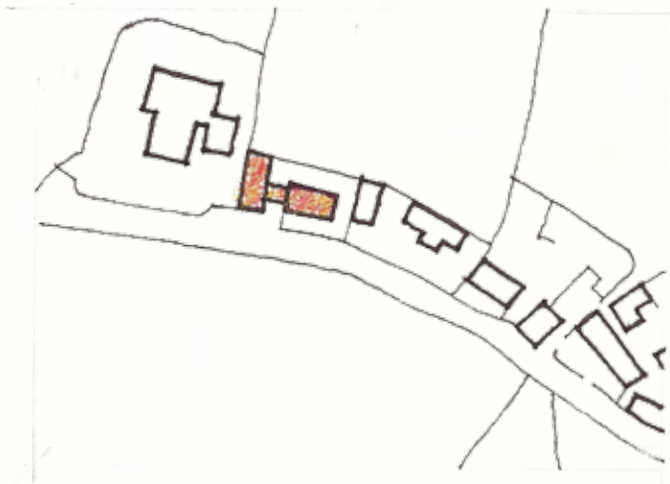


PLAN OF EXCESSIVELY LARGE FOOTPRINT OF ONE HOUSE INFILL

- Height and footprint of house are excessive for the size of the site
- The overall scale of the house fails to respect the existing houses in the ribbon and relates very poorly to them as a result
- The architectural expression in the proposed house is overly elaborate and fussy.



POORLY SCALED ONE HOUSE INFILL TO RIBBON. THIS HOUSE FAILS TO RESPECT THE HEIGHT, SCALE, MASSING + FORM OF ITS NEIGHBOURS.



PLAN OF WELL SCALED + SITED ONE HOUSE INFILL

The house has been sited to respect traditional siting patterns in this locality:

- Block positioned with one gable end facing the main road and is linked to a narrow linear block facing the road
- Parking and access are restricted to the public road side of the property and south facing garden space is kept private and free of car circulation
- Alignment of narrow linear buildings and simple double pitched roofs repairs and consolidates distinctiveness in local identity.

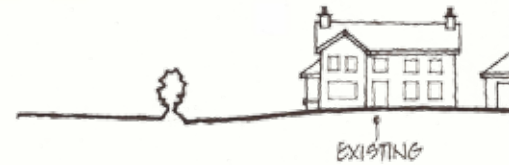


WELL SITED AND SCALED
ONE HOUSE INFILL
SINGLE STOREY LINEAR
DOUBLE PITCHED FORMS
PLACED AT RIGHT ANGLES TO
AND PARALLEL TO ROAD
REFLECT + REINSTATE TRADITIONAL
SITING PATTERNS LOCALLY

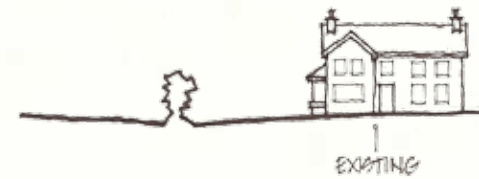
Gap site and infill principles



PLAN SHOWING EXCESSIVELY LARGE FOOTPRINTS OF POORLY SCALED + SITED 2 HOUSE INFILL

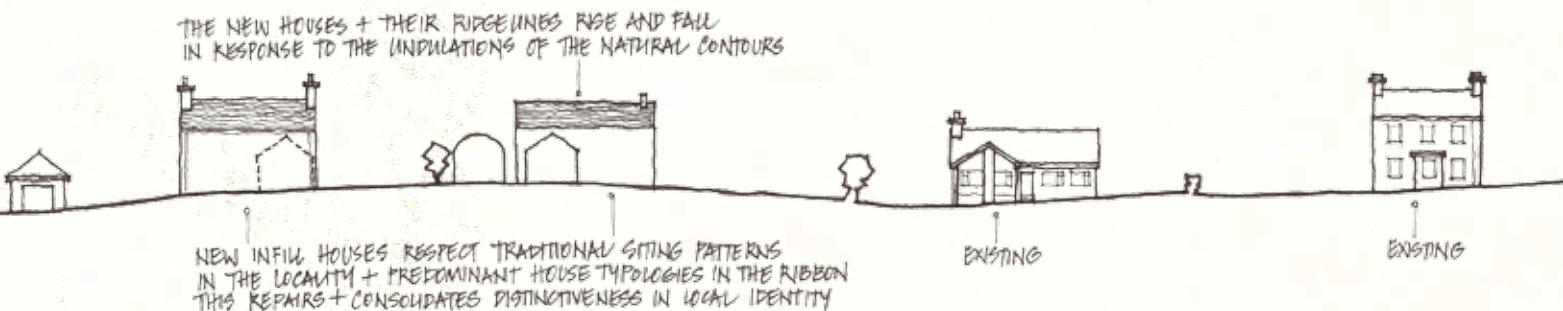
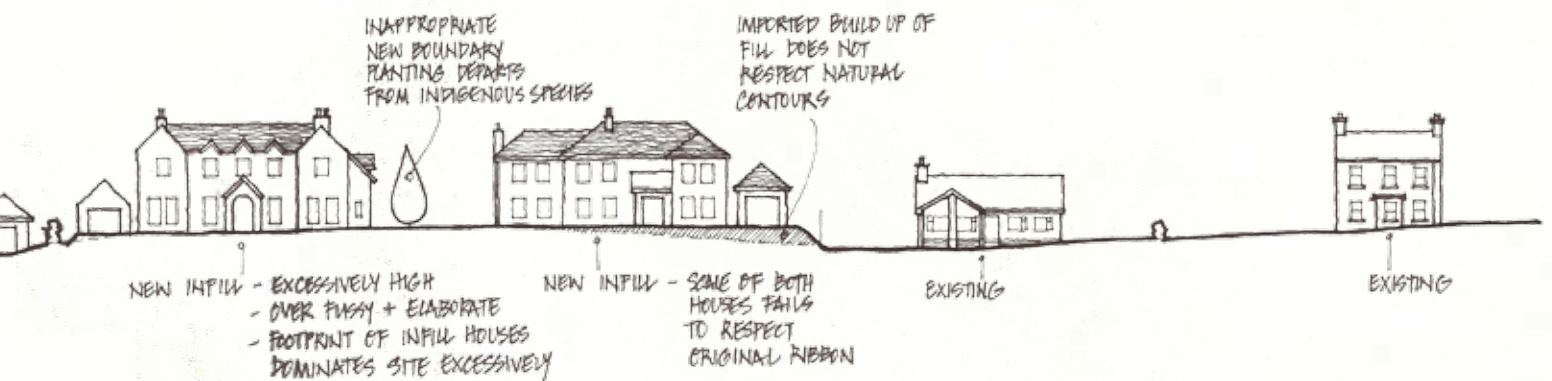


PLAN SHOWING WELL SITED AND SCALED 2 HOUSE INFILL. NOTE HOW THESE REFLECT TRADITIONAL SITING PATTERNS



Example of poorly scaled two house infill (Elevation)

- Height and footprint of house are excessive for the size of the site
- The overall scale of the houses fail to respect the existing houses in the ribbon and relates very poorly to them as a result
- The architectural expression in the proposed new houses is overly elaborate and fussy
- Fill has been introduced to the site to form large flat platforms for the new houses - this does not respect the natural contours and makes it even harder for these houses to integrate into the existing ribbon.



Example of well sited and scaled two house infill (Elevation)

- These houses respect traditional siting patterns in this locality and the predominant house typologies in the ribbon
- There is a strong pattern of simple two storey houses with double pitched roofs fronting the road. Single storey linear buildings with double pitched or barrel vaulted roofs are positioned at right angles to the main house - either to front or rear
- Parking and access are restricted to the north or east side of the house and south facing garden space is kept private and free of car circulation
- Houses (and their ridge lines) rise and fall in response to the undulations of the natural contours
- This approach repairs and consolidates distinctiveness in local identity.

Linking to focal points within Dispersed Rural Communities



A Church may provide a typical focal point.

- 4.6.0 Policy CTY 2 – Development in Dispersed Rural Communities provides for the development of small clusters or clachan style developments of up to 6 houses at an identified focal point within areas designated as ‘Dispersed Rural Communities’ in development plans. The objective here is to ‘build upon and consolidate’ identified focal points in order to encourage local regeneration.
- 4.6.1 Assuming issues of servicing the site can be addressed (utilities, road access and sewage disposal), the key design issues will be scale, visual impact and visual integration with the existing settlement pattern.
- 4.6.2 Chapter one of this guide examines some of the inherent characteristics of rural building groups that are commonly found in Northern Ireland. There are clues here in how to look at layout, integration and disposition of buildings to each other in terms of scale and orientation.

The ground illustration opposite shows a typical Dispersed Rural Community settlement pattern. Buildings highlighted in orange signify social/community facilities and are a significant ingredient in identified focal points.

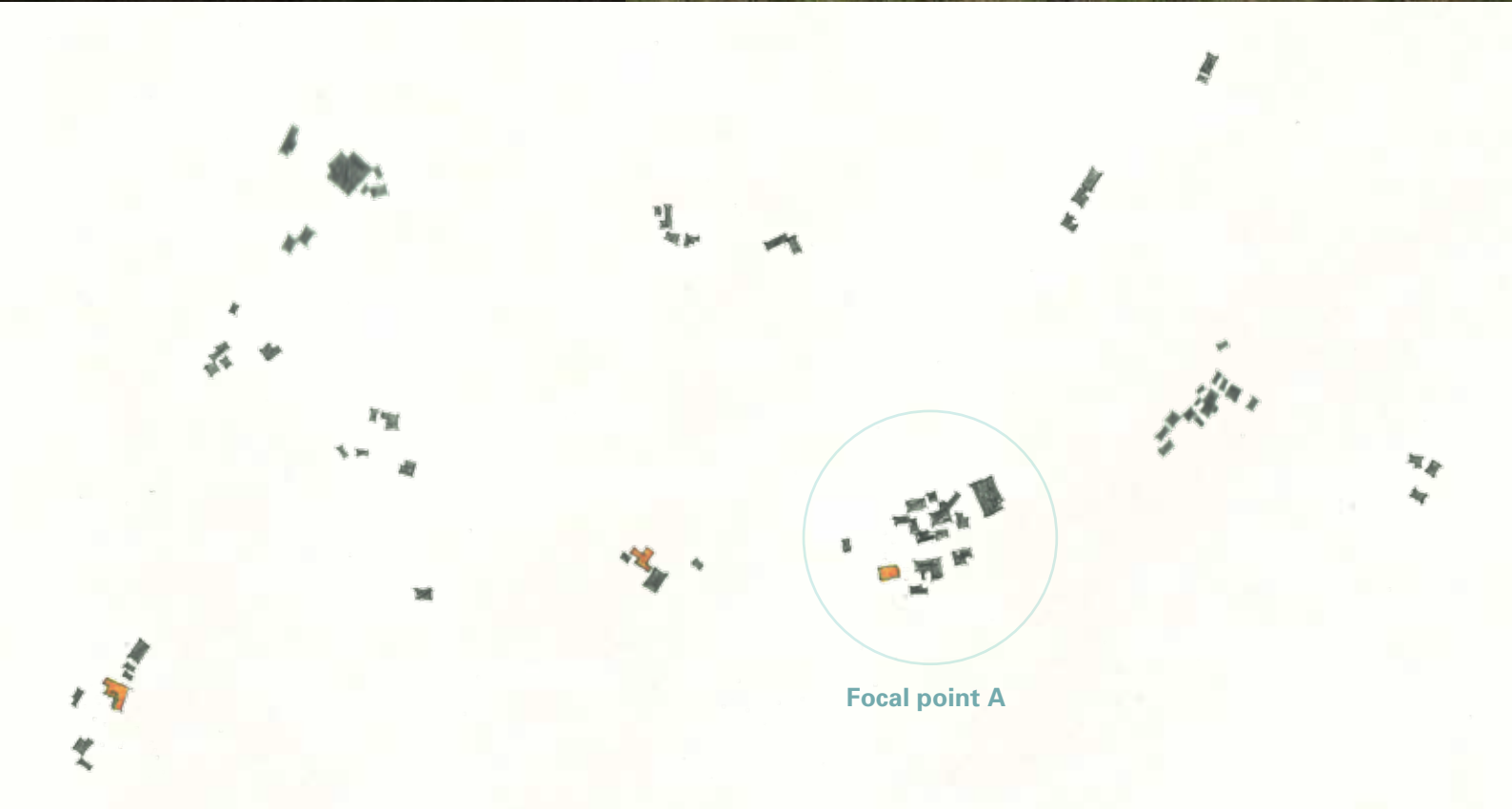
When seeking to site a new cluster or ‘clachan’ type development of 1-6 houses at an identified focal point applicants and agents should appraise the capacity of a given focal point for absorbing additional development of this size.

If an existing focal point is already at capacity and/or of significant visual size within the DRC (see focal point A) it may be preferable to site the new houses at another identified focal point that is smaller or better integrated into the wider landscape visually.

Aim to maintain the overall character of the settlement pattern - these vary from Dispersed Rural Cluster to Dispersed Rural Cluster



Coranny Dispersed Rural Community, Fermanagh.



Linking to focal points within Dispersed Rural Communities

4.6.3 The policy refers specifically to clachan style developments and great care is needed to interpret these northern Irish settlement forms. Traditional clachans have an intimacy and scale that is not easy to replicate with contemporary homes. Typically the buildings were small, the spaces between were small and all was held together by a network of stone walls and enclosures which welded the group together. Modern homes because they tend to be big and wide gabled and have cars and garages to accommodate can present a fairly formidable design challenge in terms of achieving the intimacy and design quality of the traditional clachan. This is a skilful task that demands a skilled hand.

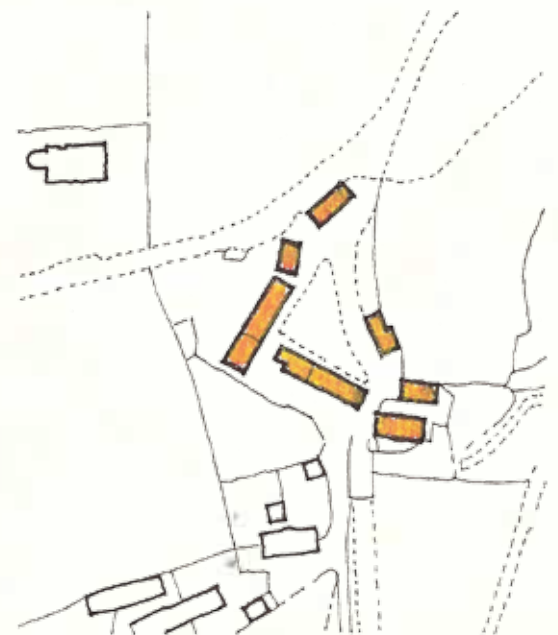
4.6.4 "Clachans...Such was the apparently random nature of their layout that in the words of one 19th century writer, they appeared to have fallen 'in a shower from the sky'"

UAHS Modern Ulster Architecture.



Typical linear Clachan

Clachan at Hanna's Close



Contemporary Clachan forms



37



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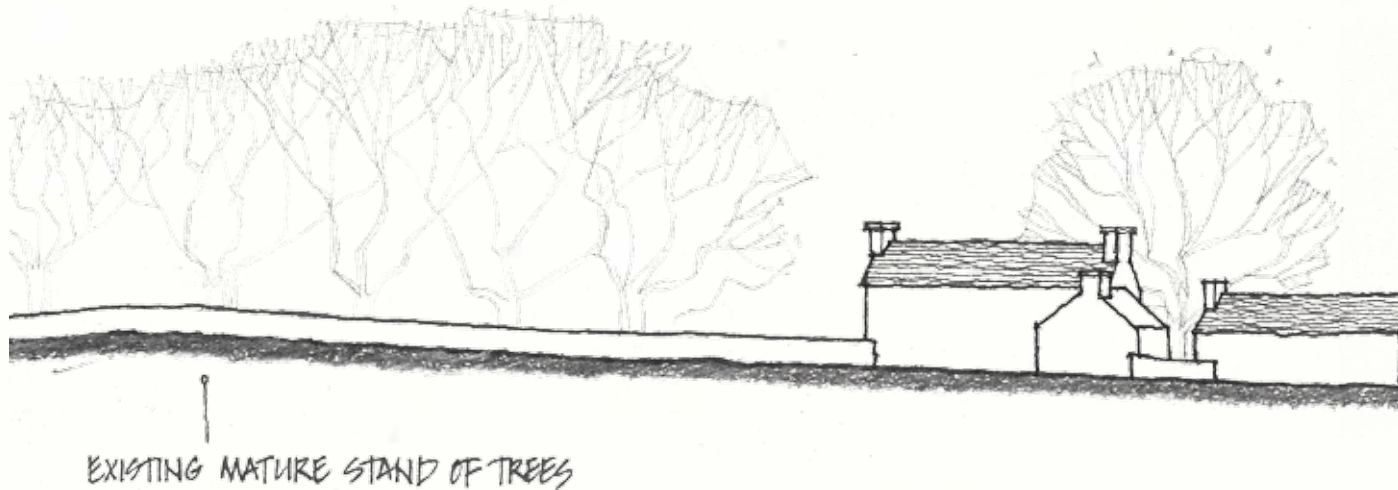
Typical characteristics of clachans

- They generally have an adhoc plan layout - this may be linear or more obviously grouped around a central space
- External spaces around the houses that form a clachan are often shared and communal
- Though they may differ in their details the houses and outbuildings in clachans have an overall unity when viewed from afar
- The buildings have a small scale and integrate well into the landscape.

4.6.5 Two good examples of where this form has been successfully achieved can be found near Magherafelt and just outside Donaghadee. The small cluster of four houses in Magherafelt is both contemporary in style yet firmly rooted in this indigenous rural building tradition.

4.6.6 The convergence of the housing units, their outhouses and pitched slated roofs and the network of white rendered walls and private intimate garden spaces clearly belong to this historic Ulster settlement tradition. A similar trace is clearly evident in the small contemporary group at Donaghadee which uses innovative shared spaces and landscaping to unite the group and link to the existing buildings.

Linking to focal points within Dispersed Rural Communities



When siting a cluster of 5-6 houses at an identified focal point aim to:

- Respect the existing character and setting of the existing grouping
- Site the new houses so that they are secondary and subservient to other significant or visible elements of the focal point grouping
- Use existing rural lanes as the access route serving all the houses
- Avoid placing new houses in excessively prominent positions relative to existing significant architectural form.

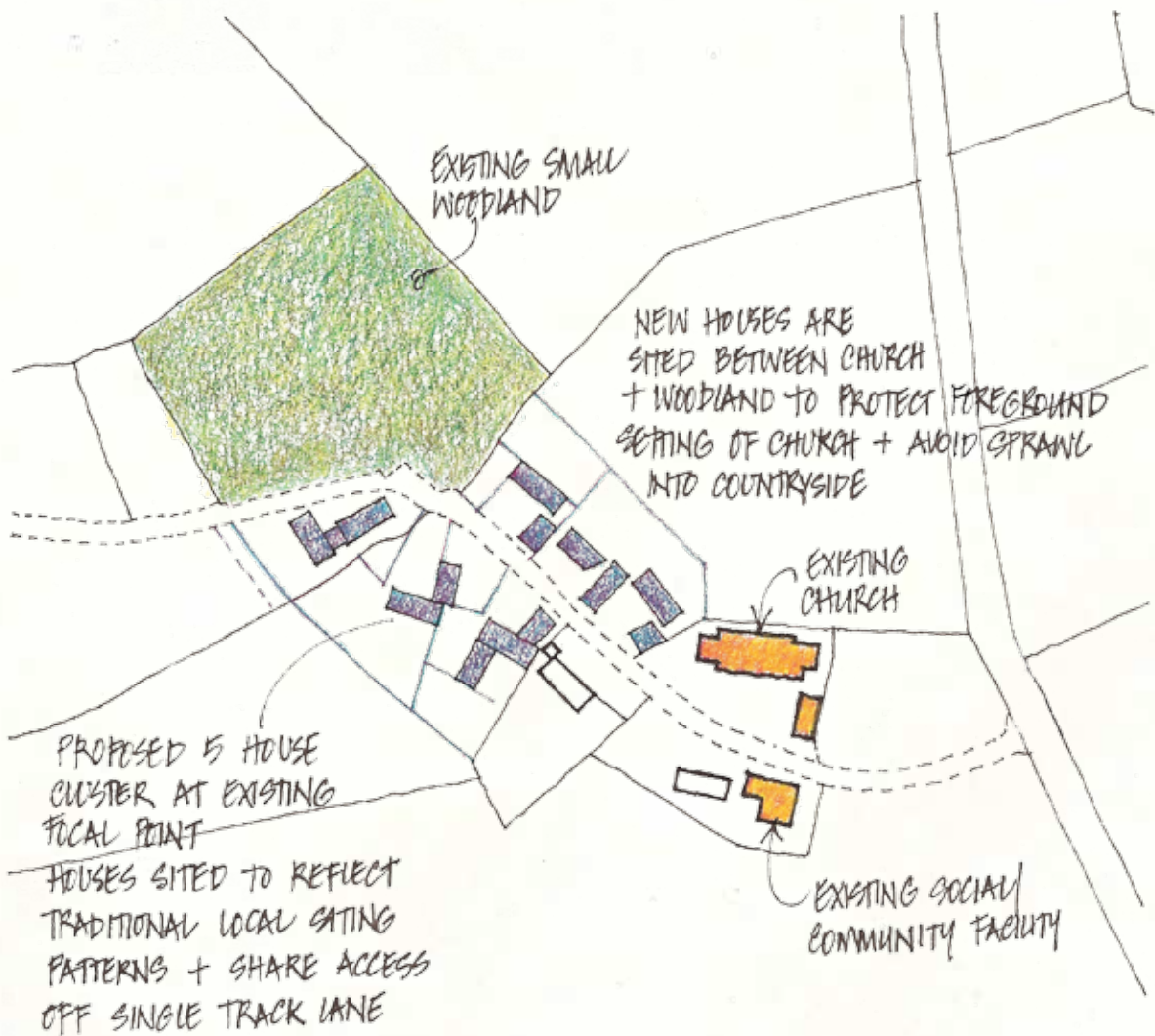
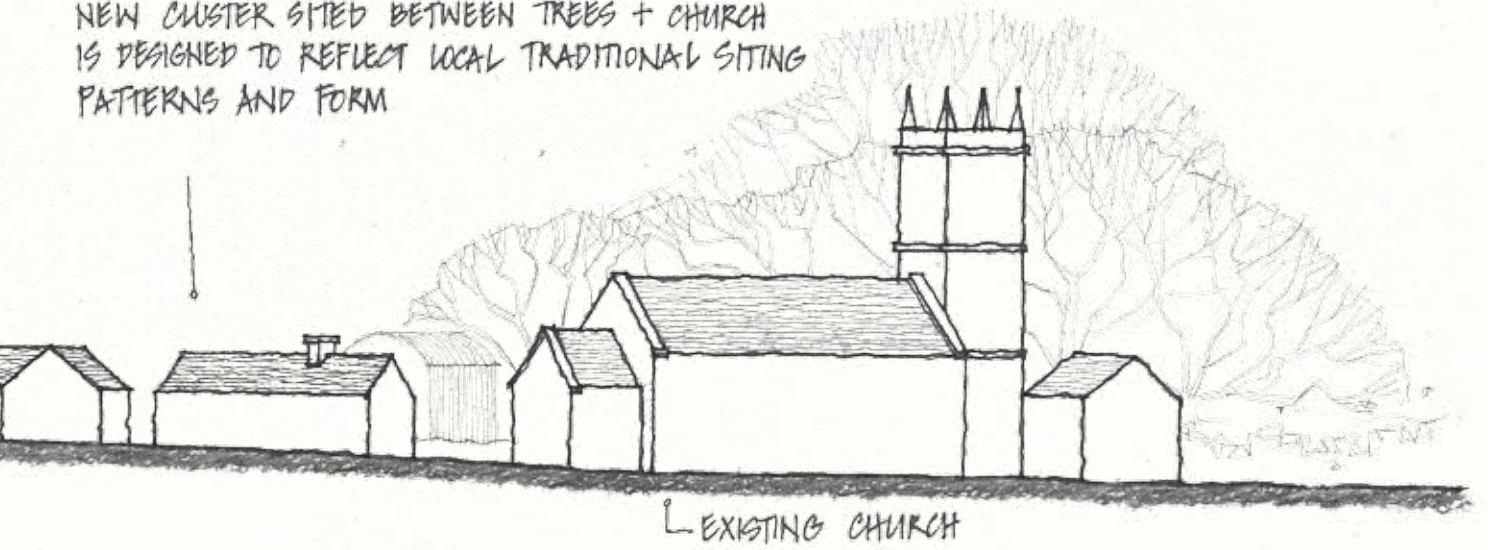
In this example the new houses have been deliberately sited between the Church and pub, and the forest so that they combine to form one visual entity in the landscape.

This protects that foreground setting of the original grouping when viewed from the main road.

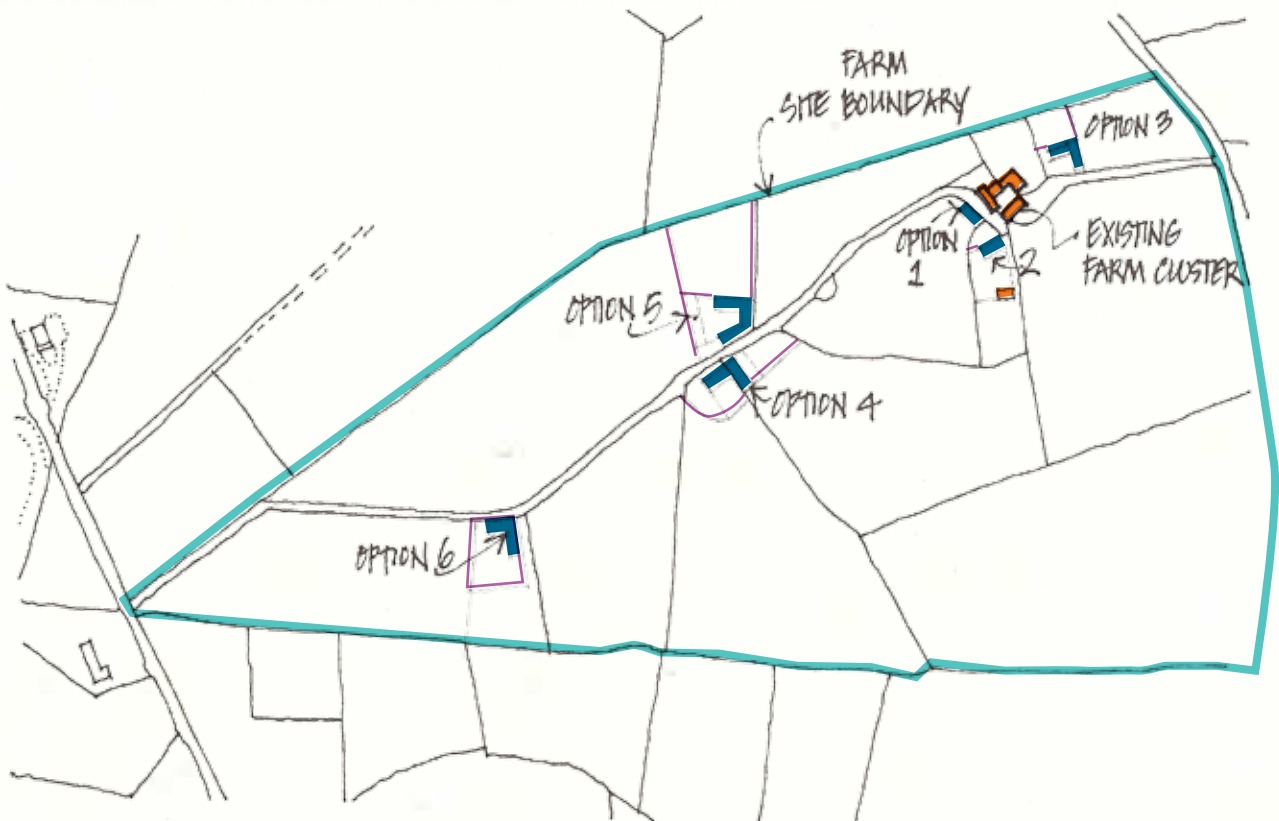
An existing single track rural lane serves the new and existing buildings. This also sets the new houses back from the main road and reduces their visual impact.

The locally distinctive traditional siting patterns have been reflected and reinterpreted in the layout of new houses - this repairs and consolidates local identity.

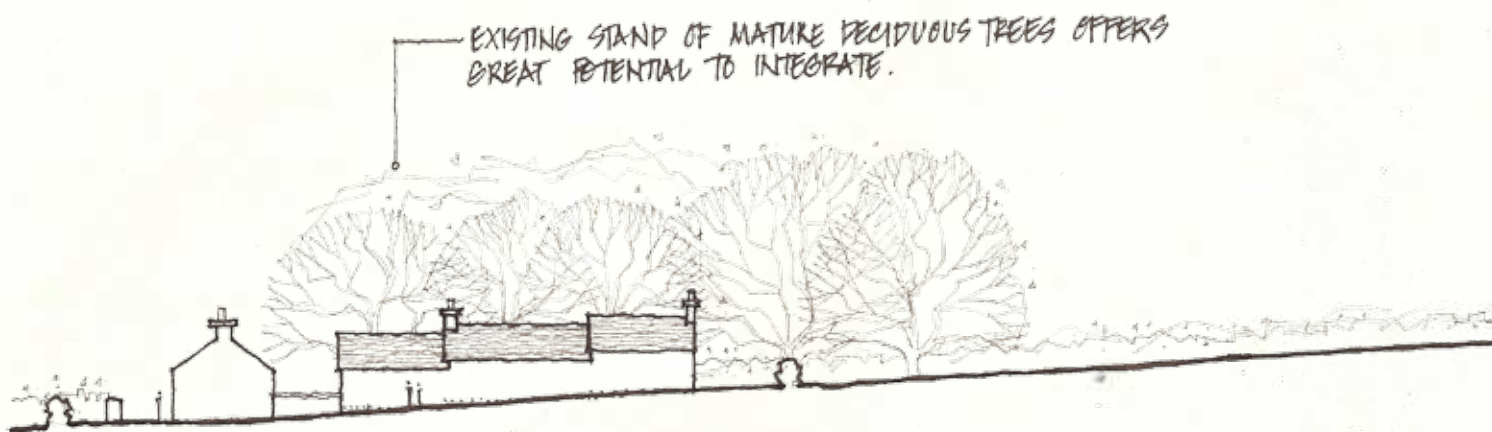
NEW CLUSTER SITED BETWEEN TREES + CHURCH
IS DESIGNED TO REFLECT LOCAL TRADITIONAL SITING
PATTERNS AND FORM



Dwellings on Farms



- Farm Boundary
- Visually linked field boundaries at new house options
- Options for visually linked siting off spine
- Original Farmhouse buildings



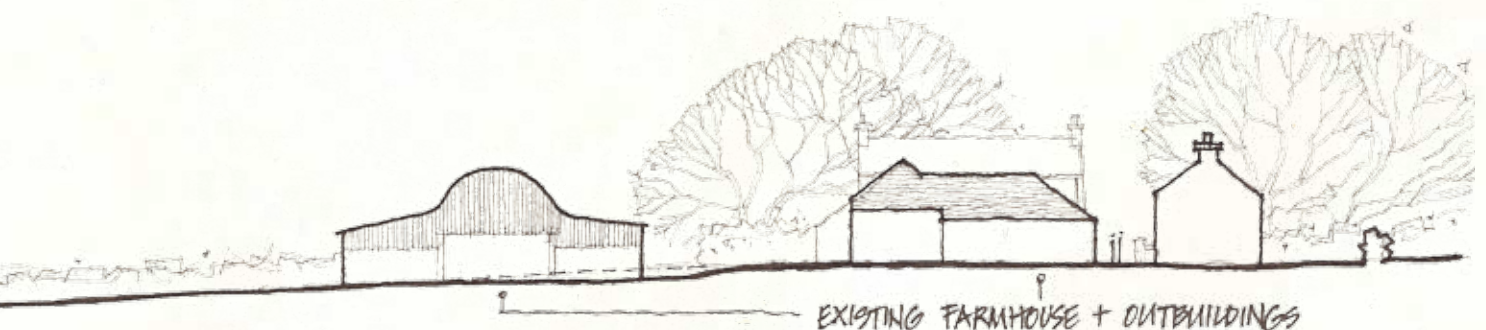
To reduce the impact of a new building in the countryside, new buildings are required to be “visually linked”, or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on a farm.

These should be positioned sensitively so as form an integral part of that building group, or when viewed from surrounding vantage points, the new building reads as being visually interlinked with those buildings.

The map opposite shows a number of options that may be acceptable in any given example. Options 1, 2, and 3 in most instances would be the preferred location for any new residential development. Options 4 and 5 may however be acceptable where they are located to be linked to the original farm cluster from critical view points.

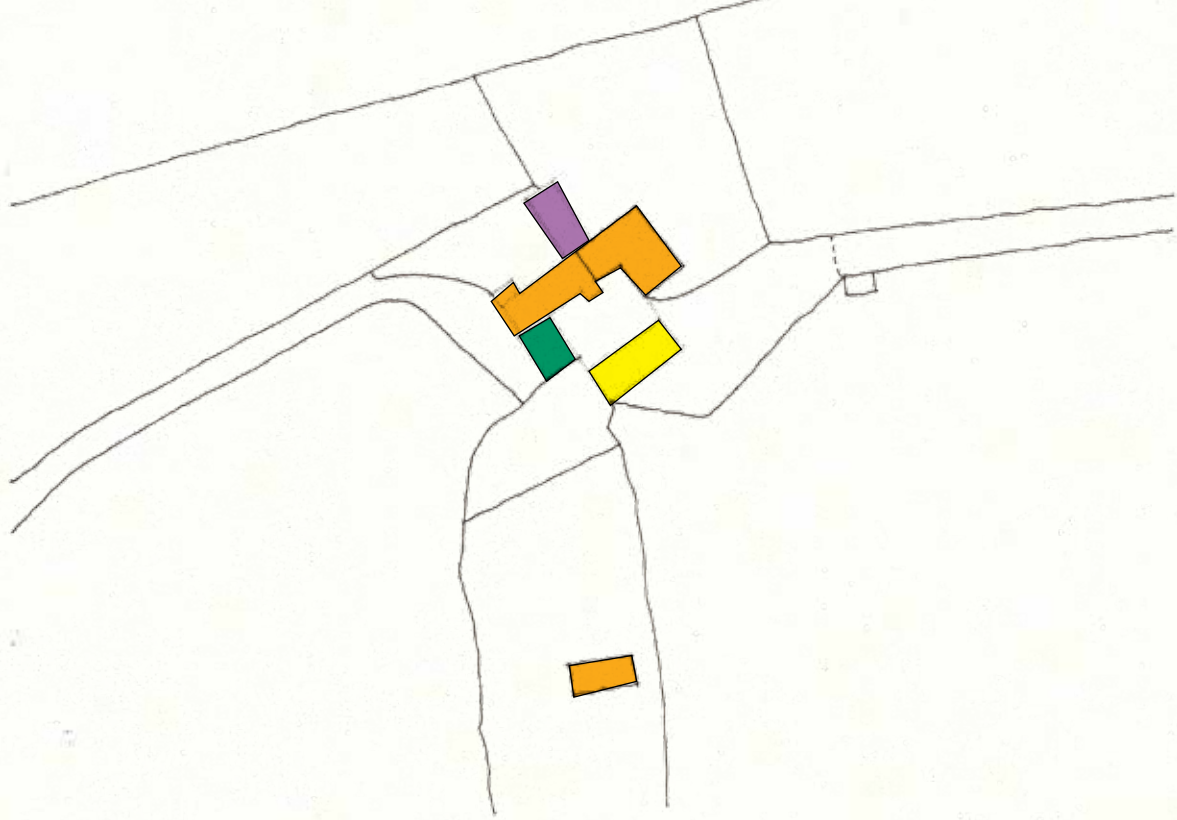
In certain circumstances, for example option 6, it may be appropriate to locate the new building at another location within the farm holding. Where this is the case, aim to:

- Site the house as close as possible to the existing cluster
- Locate the house so that it relates to existing established field boundaries
- Respect and reinterpret traditional patterns of siting, scale, massing and form
- Link where possible to existing mature hedges and/or stands of mature trees.



Dwellings on Farms



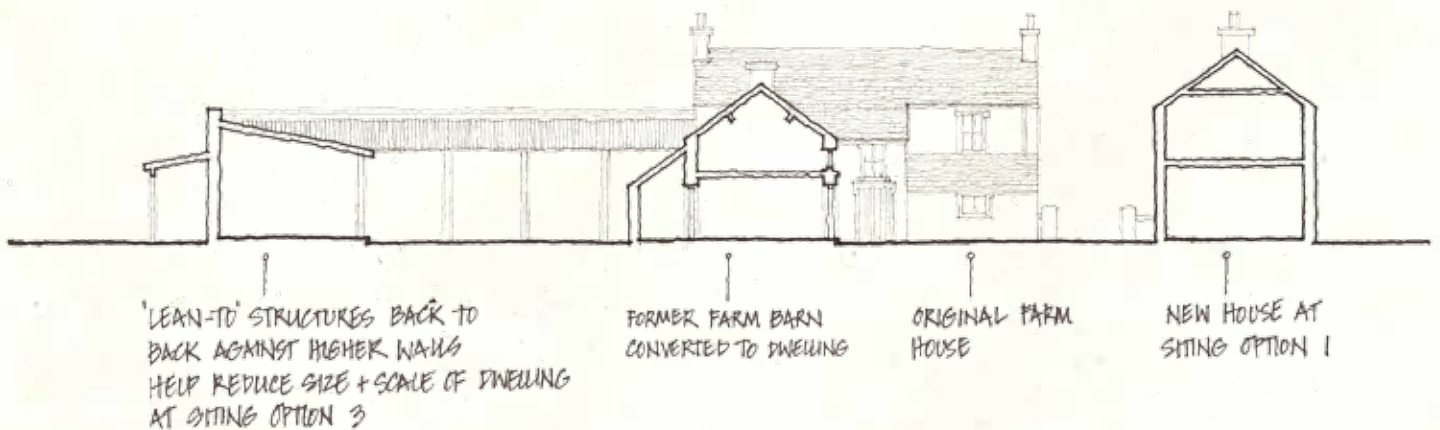


- Existing farmhouse and buildings
- Siting Option 1
- Siting Option 2
- Siting Option 3

It is often possible to form or consolidate a traditional farm courtyard by locating a new house adjacent to or even adjoining an existing farmhouse and outbuildings

Traditional building forms can be used singly or in combination within an overall farm grouping.

The scale of a larger house can be reduced by breaking it down into several smaller blocks. Lean-to structures back to back against higher walls are a useful device to reduce the apparent size and scale of a building



04 Visually Integrated / Common Elements



- 4.6.7 Other building forms appropriate for adding to existing focal points may work well in certain circumstances. Rural terraces can tend to be a feature of landscapes where landed estates have had a strong influence and the semi-detached form is common throughout the landscape as a form of workers cottage and early social housing. Rural terraces and semi detached units tend to differ from their urban counterparts by virtue of their position set back from the road and the size.

4.6.8 A common set of design principles will apply to projects that will link to an existing group, be it a farm group, small rural cluster, gap site within a ribbon or to a focal point within a dispersed rural community. Projects will tend to succeed if they address the following:

————— Get the size and scale right relative to what is existing.

————— Understand and reflect the character and layout of the group in terms of the relationship between buildings and landscape.

————— Avoid the use of typical suburban features such as dormer and bay windows, porticos and pediments on the building and concrete kerbs, tarmac, blockwork walls, pre-cast concrete fencing and ornate gates and lampposts around the site.

————— Retain existing hedgerows, boundaries and mature vegetation.

————— Acknowledge building lines and informal set backs.

————— Maximise rural landscape treatments such as gravelled lanes and driveways, grass verges and local native species for new planting.



05 Replacement

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Basic Rules for Replacement
- 5.3 Replacement: Scale and Size
- 5.4 Replacement: Form

05 Replacement



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5.1.0 As part of the general approach to sustainability running through PPS 21 the policy places a strong emphasis on the opportunities to re-use and develop the existing rural settlement pattern through a sensitive policy for replacement dwellings. Policy CTY3 sets out the criteria against which proposals will be assessed and it contains specific safeguards for the integration and retention of non listed vernacular buildings that are considered to be important to retain because of the contribution they make to the character and appearance of our local rural landscapes.

5.1.1 Their importance in terms of the overall character of the area, means that replacement will only be considered where it is clear that the building is not capable of being made structurally sound. Evidence to support any proposal in this regard will need to be substantiated through the provision of a structural engineering assessment, which will be subject to consideration and approval by qualified engineers retained by the planning authority or Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Applications for the replacement of

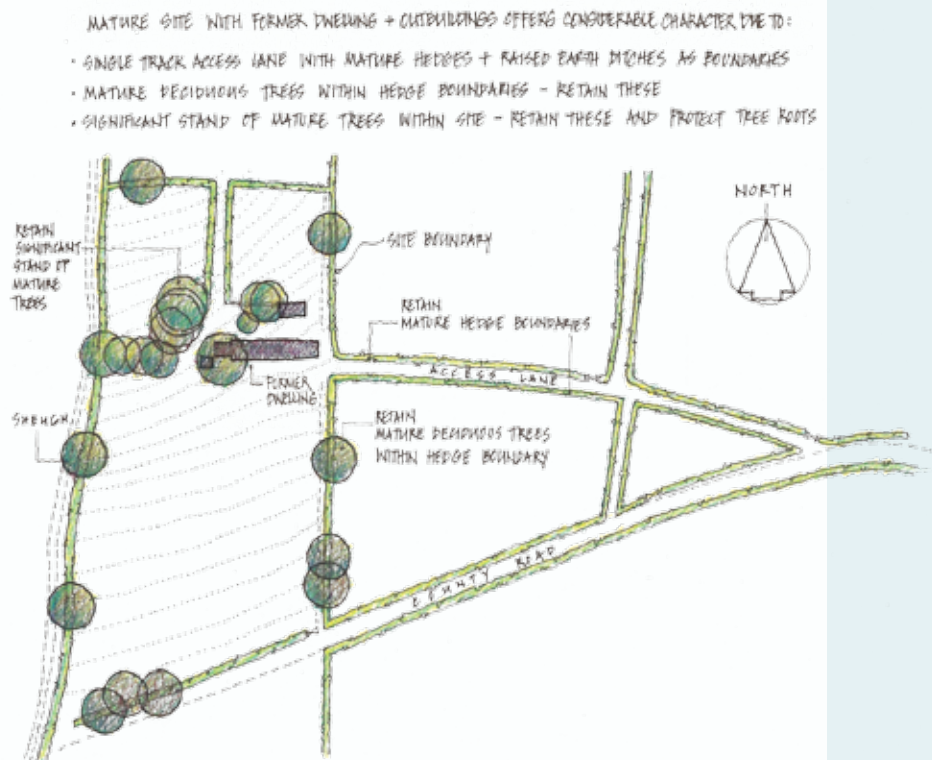
recently destroyed dwellings will also need to submit evidence about the status and previous condition of the building.

5.1.2 The guidance offered in this section presumes that the proposal qualifies as a replacement under the terms set out in PPS21. That is:

- It exhibits the essential characteristics of a dwelling
- All external walls are substantially intact
- If a non residential building, it will bring significant environmental benefits
- Is not listed or otherwise judged to make an important contribution to the heritage, appearance or character of the locality.



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5.1.3 Replacement projects can help to reinvigorate our rural landscape through the sensitive redevelopment of the historic footprints of long established buildings. Sites for replacement projects can prove an attractive option for building in the countryside as they will generally have key services in place in terms of access, water and power etc but will also have well established mature boundaries that will already have achieved a strong visual linkage with the landscape. Renewing development on these sites reinforces the historic rural settlement pattern.

5.1.4 Working within such sites the design priorities will be to:

1. Establish the right scale of the replacement building and make sure it fits comfortably on the original site and integrates well with retained outbuildings and well established mature landscape features.
2. Retain key established site character features particularly at access points, lanes and driveways.
3. Retain all mature trees, hedgerows, walls and boundaries where possible.
4. Make best use of architectural salvage and derelict building materials such as natural stone for incorporation in the new building or ancillary buildings and for the reinstatement of boundary walls. Repair and reuse traditional iron gates and reuse what ironmongery can be salvaged from the original building where possible (letter boxes, door knockers, etc).

05 Replacement

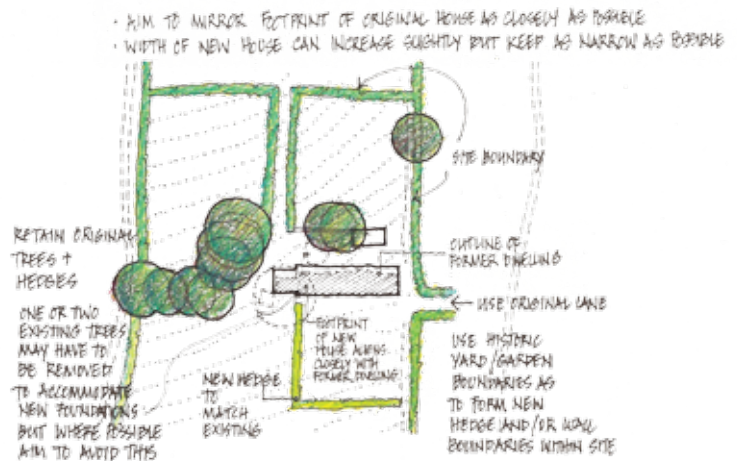
5.2 Basic Rules for Replacement Projects

- 5.2.0 The replacement dwelling should generally be placed as close as possible to the footprint of the original house, unless significant benefits are apparent in terms of visual and functional integration.
- 5.2.1 The replacement dwelling should be of a form and scale that integrates well with the characteristics of the site. Replacement dwellings should not be of an excessive size in comparison to the original building or be located a significant distance away from the original footprint unless there are clear and evident benefits.
- 5.2.2 The proposal takes full advantage of the retention of established and mature landscape and boundary features and retains the discreet character of existing access points.
- 5.2.3 Use is made of recycled building materials in the new proposal.

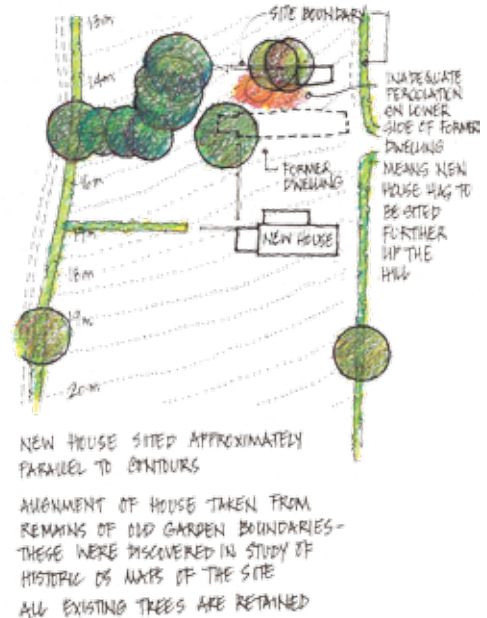
Off site replacement

- 5.2.4 Circumstances may arise where there are good planning reasons for a replacement dwelling to depart from the site of the original dwelling. For this to meet the terms of policy CTY3 there must be a clear demonstration of betterment in terms of landscape and visual integration, the safeguarding of a built or natural heritage asset or other exceptional access or amenity benefits that offer clear planning merit.
- 5.2.5 It is important that applicants prepare and present the rationale in support of an offsite replacement proposal and clearly articulate the planning benefits of adopting this approach. Where appropriate, applicants should present sufficient detailed information in the form of supporting drawings, sketches, reports or photomontages to enable the case officer to properly assess the merits of this design approach.

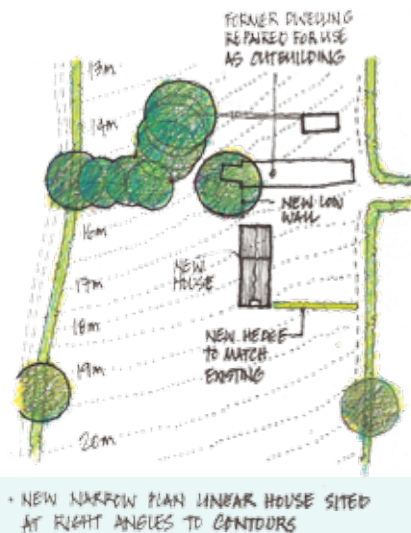
Replacement Scenario 1 - curtilage of replacement dwelling opportunity too small to accommodate modern house



Replacement Scenario 2 - example of betterment



Replacement Scenario 3 - alternative betterment siting option





Replacement: Scale and Size



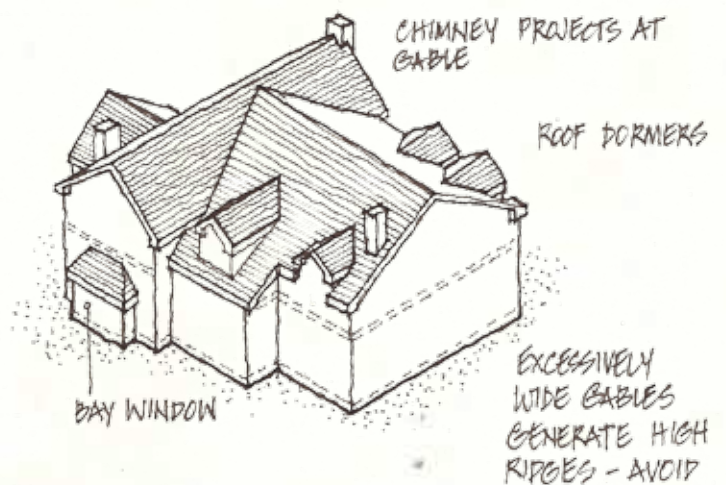
43

5.3 Replacement: Scale and Size

5.3.0 A frequent mistake with replacement projects often rests with a poor understanding or appreciation of scale and size. A typical group of local rural buildings will comprise a house, store, various outbuildings and perhaps a barn or lean-to shelter. There will be an evident relationship within this collection of buildings that will reflect a common sense of scale and proportion relative to the size of the site and the physical characteristics of its setting. To successfully introduce a new contemporary house to this group will require a skilled understanding of this relationship.

5.3.1 The most common offence is to introduce a new house that is simply too big for the site and bears no relationship to the scale of the traditional buildings that are retained. Skilled designers are trained in the assessment of scale in the design process. The key message is that a buildings size must be relative to its surroundings.

- AVOID INAPPROPRIATE BIG BULK HOUSES
MAKE SURE YOUR DESIGN AVOIDS:
- OVERLY COMPLEX ROOF SHAPES
 - DORMER WINDOWS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THESE ARE VERY LARGE OR HALFWAY UP THE ROOF SLOPE
 - EXCESSIVELY FUSSY APPENDAGES TO EXTERNAL WALLS SUCH AS:
BAY WINDOWS, PORCHES + CHIMNEY BREASTS PROJECTING FROM GABLE WALLS



As a general rule keep forms as simple as possible. Dormer windows were not a feature of traditional Northern Irish farmhouses - avoid them (especially on large houses).

Two storey houses without dormers achieve a much simpler form than storey and a half houses with dormers and integrate better into the countryside.

The simplicity of form and grouping found in traditional Glebe and linear farmhouses offers considerable scope for breaking down the scale and complex, bulky massing of many poorly designed modern houses. These sketches show various combinations and permutations for this.

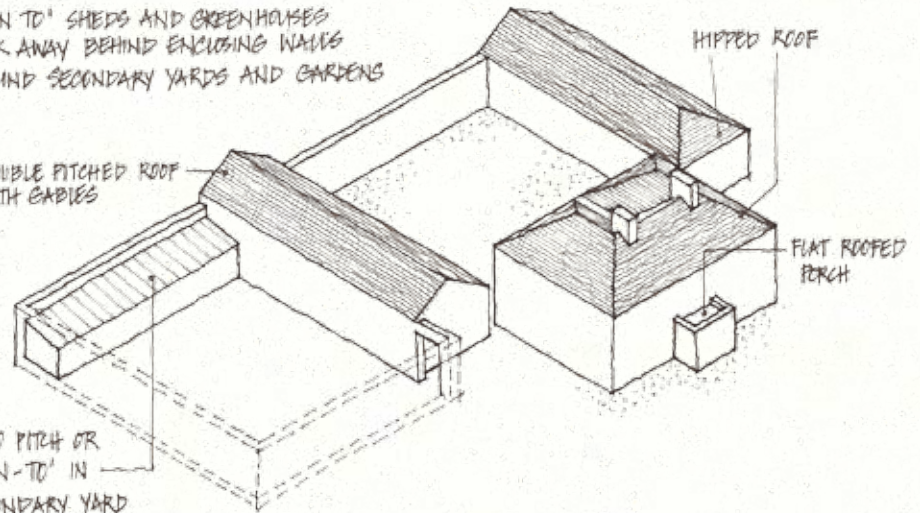
Traditional arrangement of Glebe house and farmbarns

HIPPED ROOF ON 'GLEBE' HOUSE COMBINES WELL WITH DOUBLE PITCHED ROOFED OUTBUILDINGS

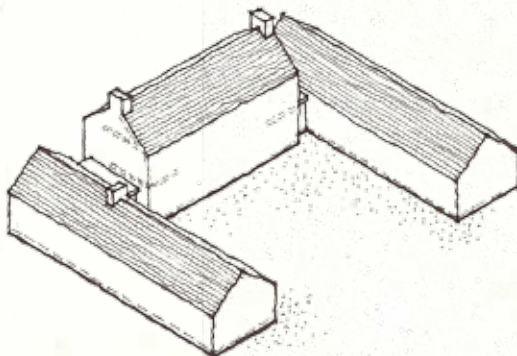
'LEAN TO' SHEDS AND GREENHOUSES TUCK AWAY BEHIND ENCLOSING WALLS AROUND SECONDARY YARDS AND GARDENS

DOUBLE PITCHED ROOF WITH GABLES

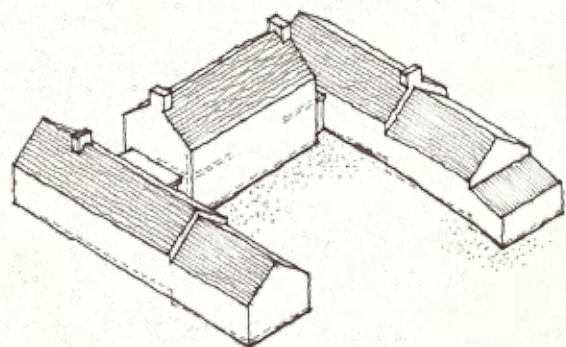
MONO PITCH OR 'LEAN-TO' IN SECONDARY YARD OR WALLED GARDEN



4,000 SQ. FOOT HOUSE

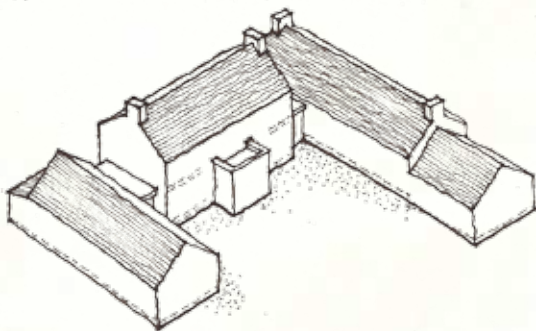


4,000 SQ. FOOT HOUSE

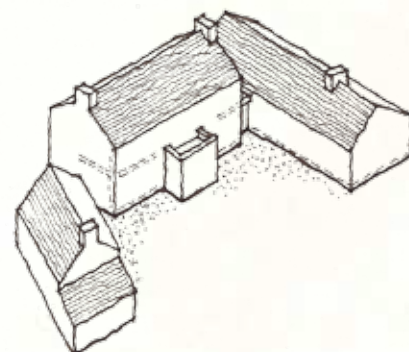


LARGE FLOOR AREAS ACCOMMODATED UNDER ONE ROOF RESULT IN HOUSES WHOSE SCALE IS EXCESSIVE. A GOOD WAY AROUND THIS IS BY BREAKING THE FLOOR AREA INTO SMALLER 'BITE SIZED' BUILDINGS WHOSE SIZE, SHAPE AND SCALE REFLECTS TRADITIONAL HOUSES.

3,000 SQ. FOOT HOUSE



2,700 SQ. FOOT HOUSE

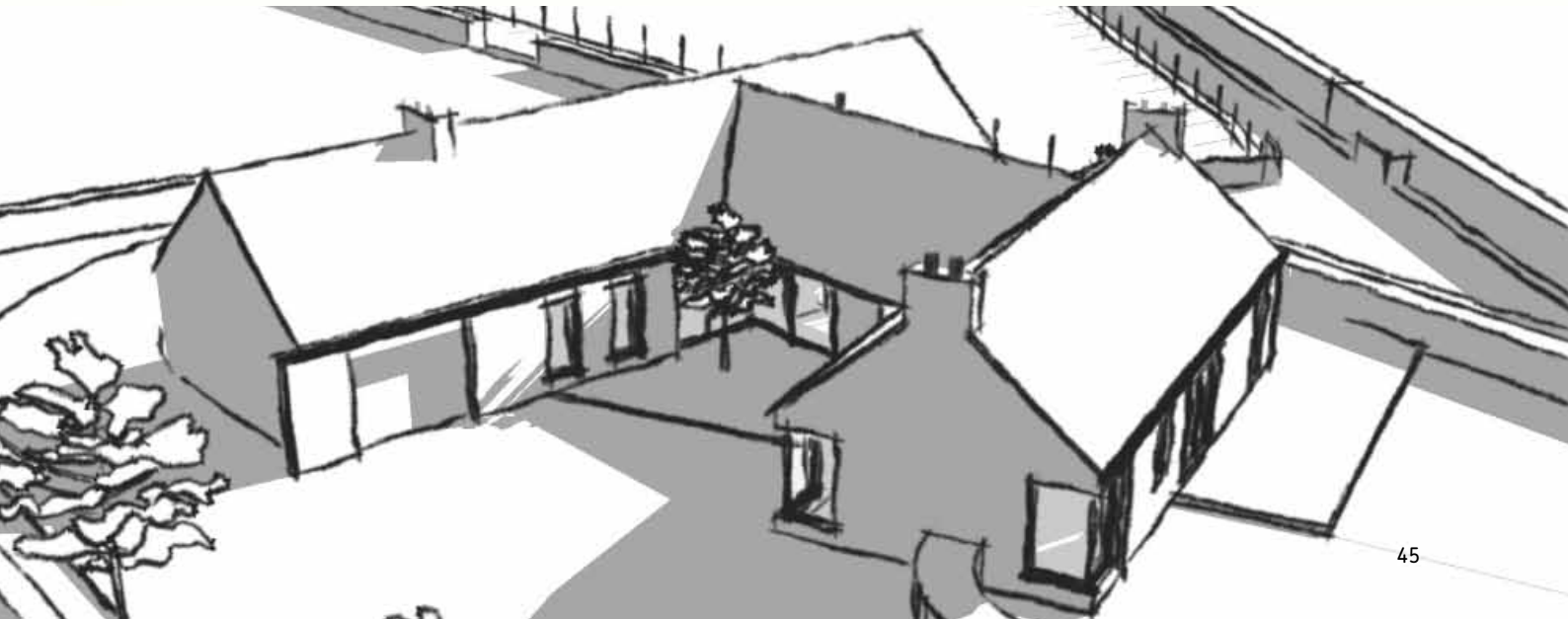


SMALLER NARROW GABLED, LINEAR BUILDINGS (ONE + TWO STOREY) CAN BE LINKED BY FLAT ROOFS TO CONNECT DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE HOUSE. FLAT ROOFS ARE MOST SUCCESSFUL AESTHETICALLY WHEN THEY ARE FINISHED IN HIGH QUALITY, DURABLE MATERIALS SUCH AS LEAD.

Replacement: Form



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5.4 Replacement: Form

5.4.0 Our countryside contains a wide variety of building shapes and forms which generally tend to be fairly simple. Replacement projects will tend to be most successful where they defer to the form and shape of the building they are replacing. In most cases this means they will need to interpret the long, low form of the narrow gabled Ulster farm house. This form dominates but we also have the two storey house, one and a half storey cottage, and the cuboid glebe house. Add to this the tin and slate roof lean-to, the curved tin hay sheds and the sturdy and solid thatched houses of which we have very few left and we have the collective palette of rural building forms that give our landscape its unique identity.

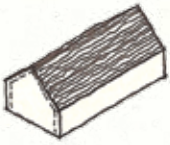
5.4.1 From this typology of rural buildings we can identify aspects of our regional architectural signature:

- **Long and low buildings**
- **Few add-ons such as dormers, bay windows or rooflights**
- **Vertical emphasis to gables**
- **Narrow plan**
- **35-55 degree roof pitch**

Traditional rural building shapes

Farm Houses and farm outbuildings

Long double pitched building with narrow gable ends



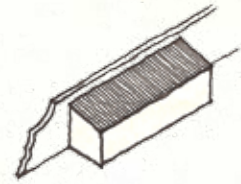
Single Storey

Small Country Houses

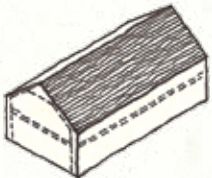


Single Storey / Storey and a half / Two Storey
Outbuildings associated with the "cube" house often have hipped roofs

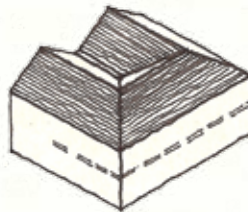
Agricultural Outbuildings



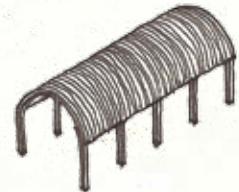
Lean-to shed or glasshouse (against wall or gable end)



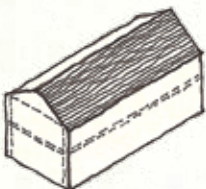
Storey and a half



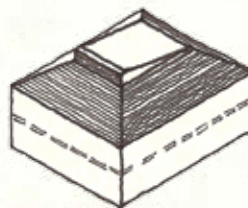
Storey and a half / Two Storey
Traditionally these houses were a combination of two double pitched roofs



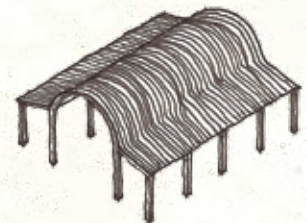
Linear steel framed shed with curved barrel vaulted roof.



Two Storey



Storey and a half / Two Storey
More often the two double pitched roofs had hips at the rear.



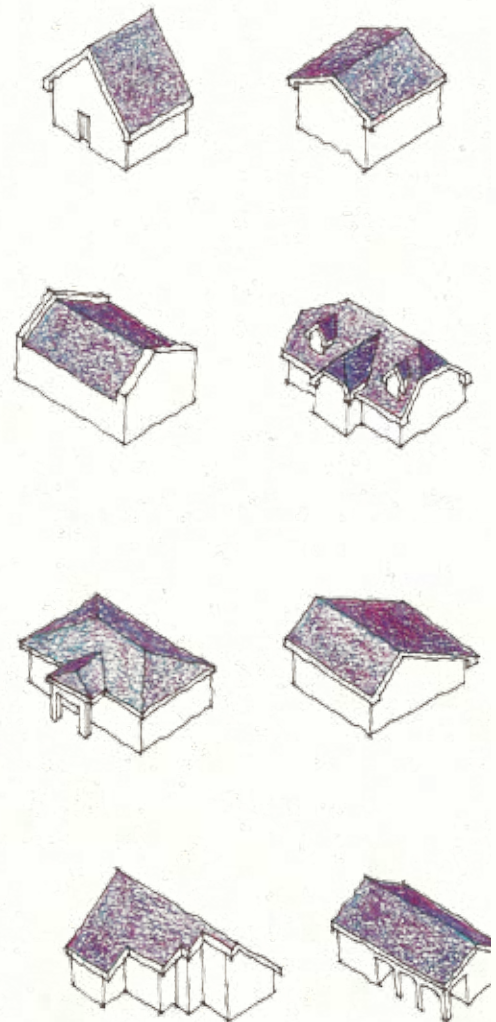
Linear steel framed shed with curved barrel vaulted roof and often with one or two lean-tos added

Replacement: Form

Examples on these pages illustrate a number of commonly occurring elements that can result in poor or unacceptable design. This list is not exhaustive, but serves to highlight the common pitfalls which should be avoided.

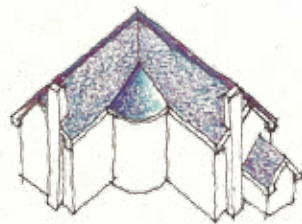
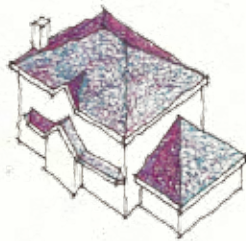
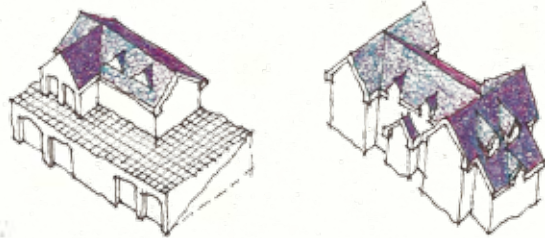
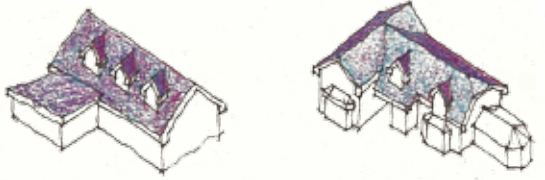
AVOID THE FOLLOWING

- Dominant roofs
- Complex roof shapes
- Complex house shapes
- Large scale
- Awkward form
- Excessively small scale outshots/ extensions relative to the main house form
- Varying lengths of roof planes
- Ridge lines that are excessively high relative to the eaves
- Excessively high eaves lines
- Raised verges – these do not integrate well viewed from afar
- Wide gables – these result in poor proportions
- Mix of gable widths
- Mix of roof pitches
- Half hipped gables.



5.4.3 We frequently make mistakes when we try to apply the deep plan house form to replacement sites. The wide gabled fat bungalow or big two storey trophy house typical of the 90's and early 2000's, rarely works in these situations because they have difficulty relating to the scale of the site and the form of the retained rural buildings.

They also of course have few of the attributes we can recognise as belonging to the palette of northern Irish rural architecture. Houses that have wide gables, high eaves, synthetic finishes, decorative frontages with a low roof pitch tend not to work well.



AVOID THE FOLLOWING

- Two storey projecting bay windows, porches and apses
- Dormers within the roof - these do not integrate well viewed from afar
- Too many dormers - these make a house look overly fussy
- Mixture of dormer types within a roof
- Overhanging fascias and soffits on verges and eaves
- Decorative barge boards and fascias
- Extending main roof plane over bay windows
- Extending bay window roofs beyond plan line of bay
- Excessive mixture of bay windows and roof dormers
- Hipped roofed outshots rising from half hexagonal plan
- More than one or two rooflights
- Storey and a half house on a habitable semi-basement plinth
- Chimney breasts that project from gables
- Excessive number of different materials
- Synthetic materials (such as concrete, imitation clay brick or stone and PVCu).



06 **New Build**

- 6.1 Defining the Site
- 6.2 Design to Respect the Landscape
- 6.3 Wrap Yourself in Nature

06 New Build



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6.1.0 Where a project qualifies under the policy for the development of a new single dwelling, that is one not related to the edge of an existing small settlement, existing cluster or existing farm group, then a subtly different set of assessments are needed to guide the selection of a good location and design response that meets the terms of policies contained in PPS 21. These policies of course apply to all forms of development but in this section of the guidance we concentrate on the generic principles of good siting and location for projects that will be proposing a new build solution on a new site.

6.1.1 There has been a tendency in recent years to build big in the countryside even though average household size across rural Northern Ireland is falling. Big houses need big sites and come with big gardens and big maintenance which doesn't always fit with the concept of a home for life or with the wider sustainability agenda. Think carefully about how you would frame a brief for your architect or designer and whether your project is residential or commercial, set out the key things you need - and things you don't...



06 New Build

6.1.2 **The things you may need:**

Maximise solar gain

Eco friendly, natural materials, cheap to heat

Modern but distinctively northern Irish

Low key sitting comfortably in the landscape

Rooms where the light streams in throughout the day

A garden that is easy to manage and natural

Sheltered from the weather

Minimise areas of hard standing

A spacious open plan kitchen/living area

A place where you can grow old and manage

6.1.3 **And some things you probably don't:**

Poorly integrated buildings

Too big, full of empty bedrooms and bathrooms you don't need and will rarely use

Proliferation of white plastic (doors, windows, eaves and downpipes)

Costs a fortune to heat and is solely reliant on an oil based heating system

A massive suburban lawn that you can't manage when you get older

An outdoor space that has no privacy or shelter

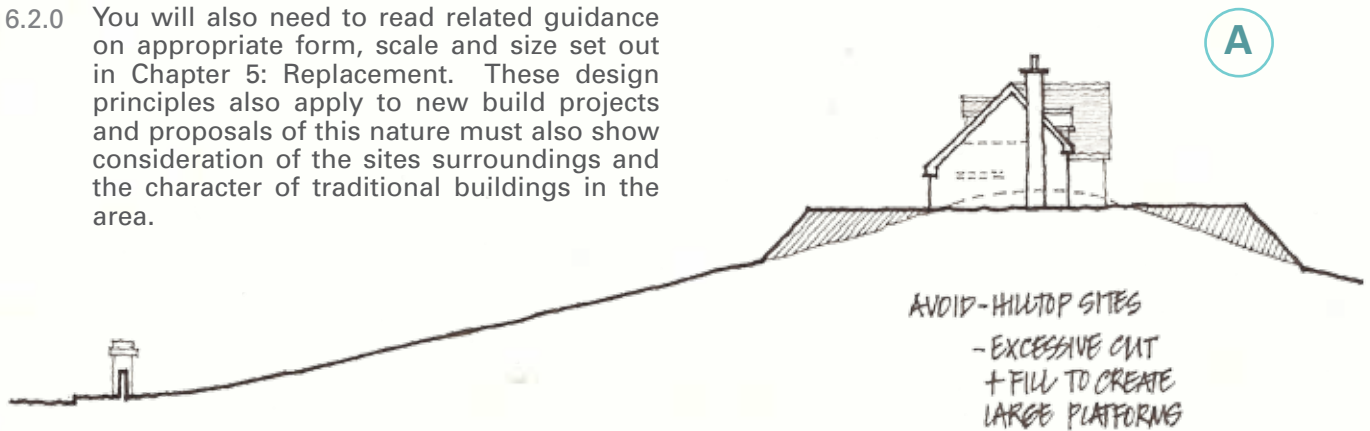
A big tarmac platform up front

Prominent siting of bins, oil tanks and other services

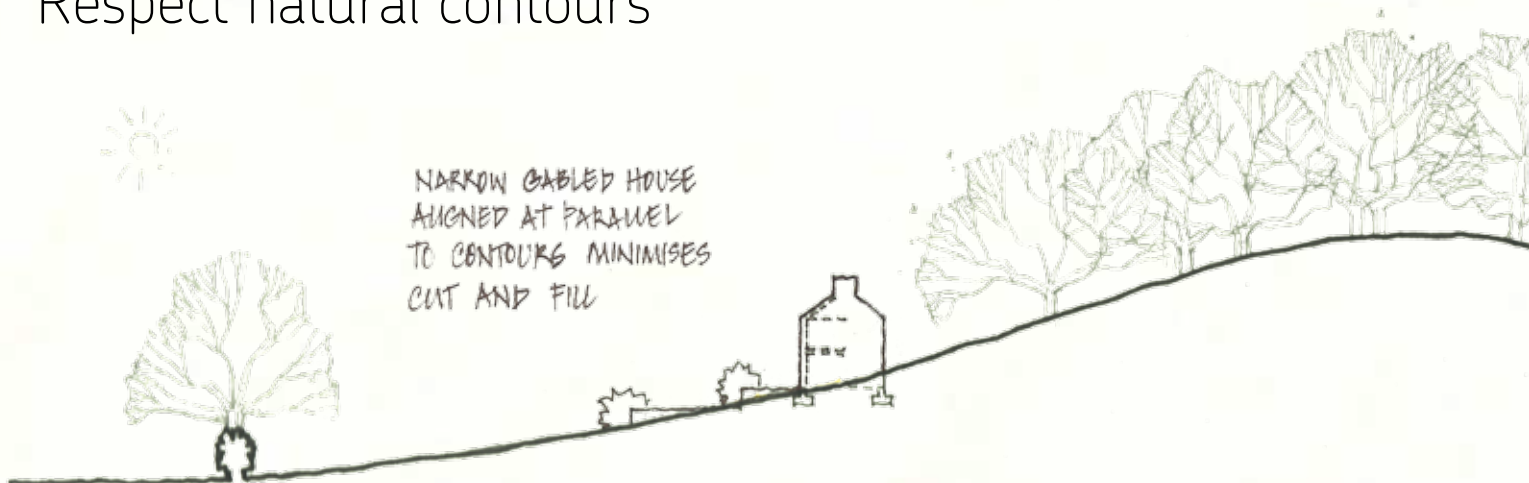


Design to respect the landscape

6.2.0 You will also need to read related guidance on appropriate form, scale and size set out in Chapter 5: Replacement. These design principles also apply to new build projects and proposals of this nature must also show consideration of the sites surroundings and the character of traditional buildings in the area.



Respect natural contours



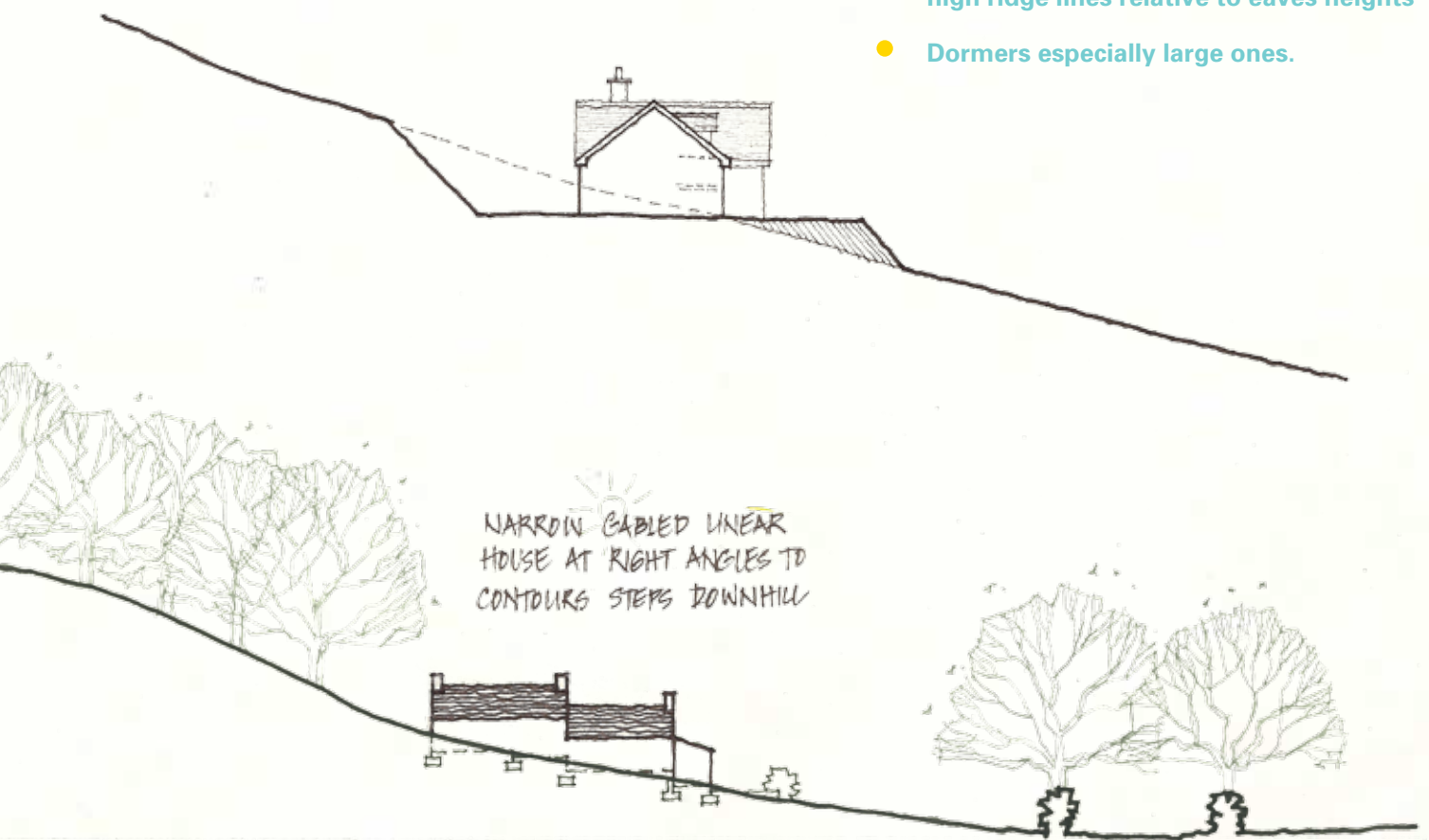
- Sites on the lower slopes of hills are preferable. They offer greatest potential for integrating buildings into the landscape well
- Sites on the lee of the hill (away from the direction of the prevailing winds) have the added advantage of being more sheltered
- Sites that have existing stands of mature native broadleaf trees will be more sheltered
- Mature trees help new buildings to blend in
- Avoid sites that are overshadowed most of the day by mature trees - this will reduce the potential for passive solar gain
- New buildings positioned close to mature trees can damage tree roots and cause their premature death - take care to keep buildings and construction traffic away from the roots.

B

Sketches A and B illustrate a number of commonly occurring siting decisions that result in buildings being poorly integrated into the rural landscape. The examples shown are not definitive but highlight familiar pitfalls.

AVOID

- Excessively wide gables that result in high ridge lines relative to eaves heights
- Dormers especially large ones.



- When siting on hilly sites cut and fill can be minimised by siting narrow linear buildings parallel to the contours

OR

- by positioning narrow linear buildings at right angles to the contours. In this case floor levels and ridge lines should step down the hillside - this avoids excessively high walls and ridgelines.

06 New Build

6.3

Wrap Yourself in Nature

6.3.0 One of the strongest character features of our countryside is how the landscape wraps itself around its buildings and man-made features. This is about landscape up close, providing shelter, privacy and screening, and bringing nature to your doorstep. This relationship helps buildings settle comfortably into their position and blend seamlessly with their surroundings.

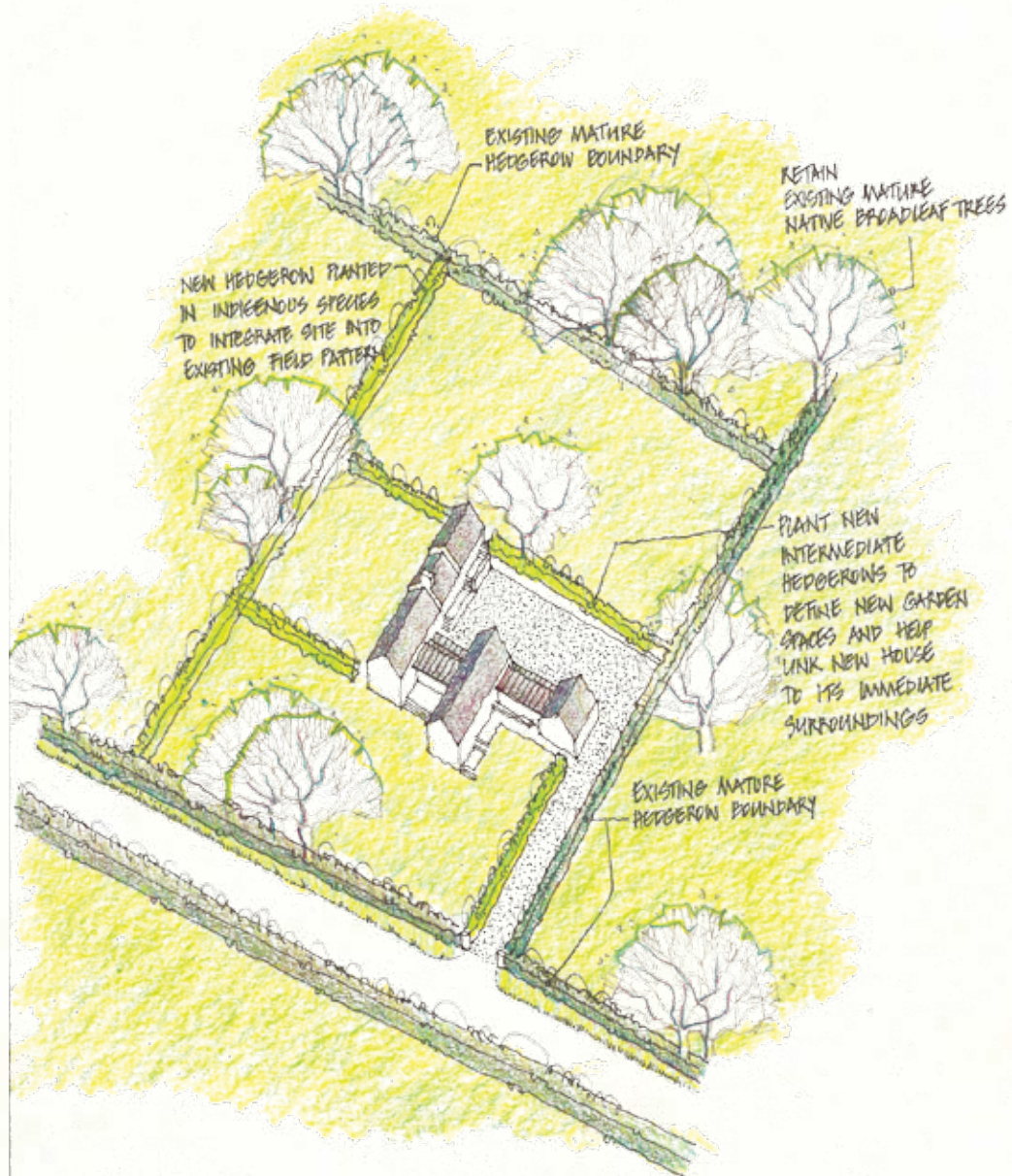
6.3.1 Work with the landscape, keeping as many hedgerows, walls and trees as you can. Avoid large areas of mown lawn and plant the garden up close to the building. Keep the driveway in gravel and place it to the side or rear.

- Retain as many hedges and trees as possible
- Keep paths a couple of feet from the building to allow planting to contact the building
- Contour the site where necessary to provide shelter and enclosure.
- Minimise the need for hardstanding by appropriately locating parking requirements.
- Minimise application of suburban landscape features – the tarmac drive, the sea of mown lawns, the decorative garden centre brick features and the decorative lamps and floodlights.



Site Boundaries

Choose sites that have well established natural hedge boundaries. It is a great advantage if these are also inter-planted with native deciduous trees. Existing natural boundaries should also be sufficiently dense to provide reasonable enclosure to a new building. This will help the new building to blend into the countryside.



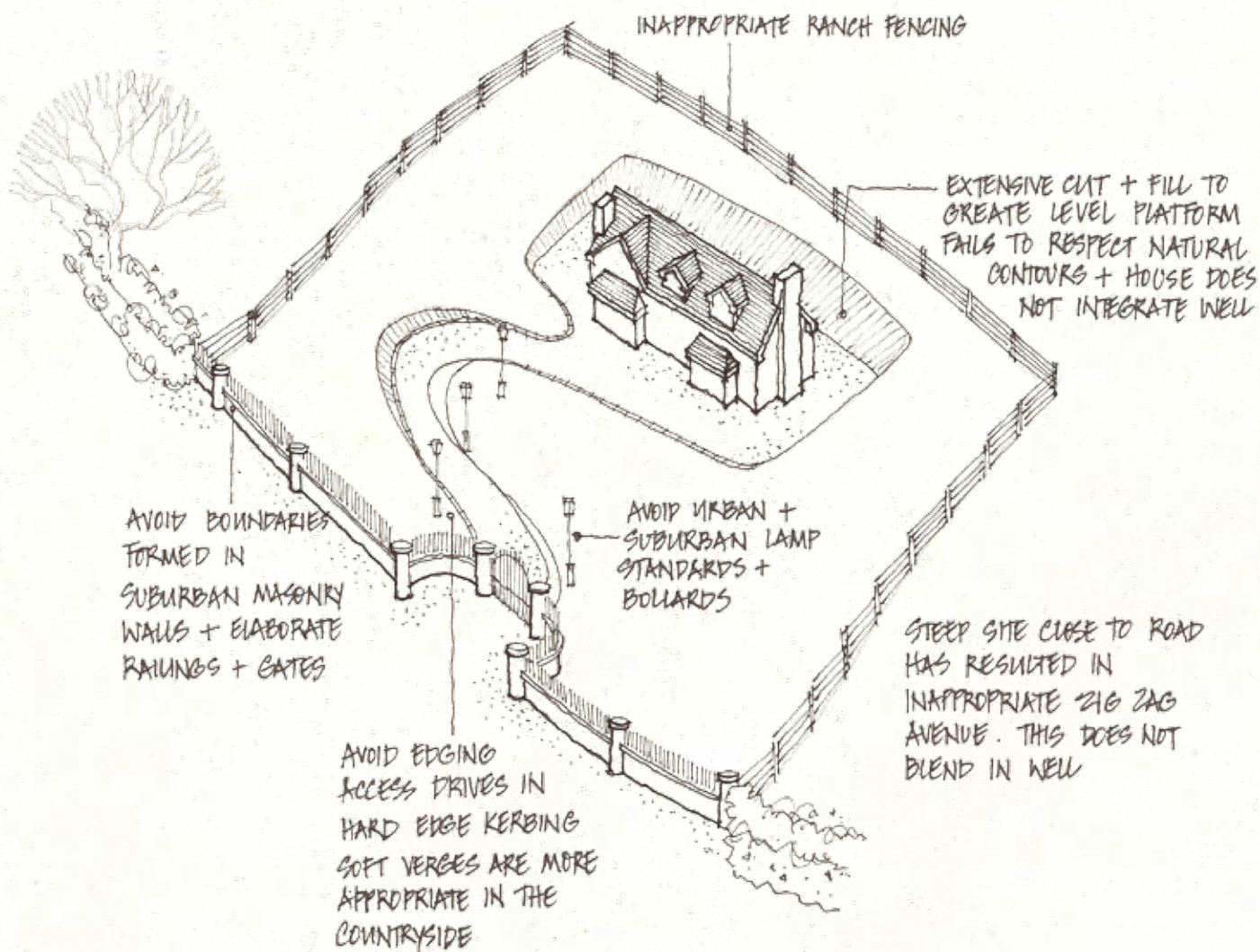
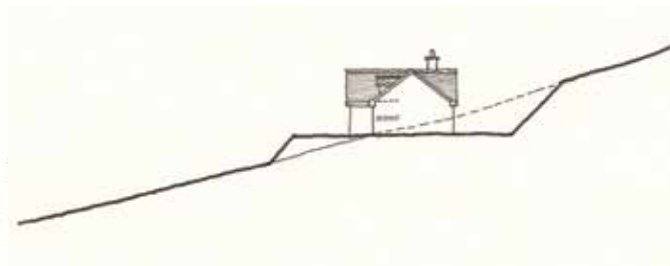
Ideally new sites should have three existing established natural boundaries.

Form new boundaries with indigenous hedging appropriate to local soil types and established local planting patterns such as Hawthorn inter-planted with Blackthorn, Elder, Guelder Rose and Honeysuckle; or in upland areas Gorse and heather. If raised stone or earth ditches are a distinctive element in your locality then these could be incorporated with hedging.

New hedges will integrate better into the wider landscape character if they are also inter-planted with native deciduous trees appropriate to the soil type, exposure and local planting patterns such as Ash, Hawthorn, Beech, Sycamore or Chestnut or in poorly drained areas Willow, Alder, and Birch.

AVOID

- Sites that require more than one new boundary
- Timber ranch fencing
- Excessively high or overly elaborate boundaries in imitation stone and/or brick
- Overly elaborate railings and gates
- Excessively steep sites that necessitate a central zig zag avenue to reach the front door
- Urban street lamps along access drives
- Edging driveways with kerb stones.





07 Building on Tradition

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 The Design Process
- 7.3 Sustainable Environment Checklist
- 7.4 Supporting Information
- 7.5 Design Concept Statements
- 7.6 Bringing it All Together

07 Building on Tradition

- 7.1.0 The concept of sustainable rural development has at its heart a sense of participation in terms of our role in rural community life, society and local economic activity as well as a sense of care in terms of our wider environmental footprint. PPS21 with its emphasis on reuse, replacement and building within existing groups and clusters is clearly aiming to draw maximum benefit from renewal and regeneration through the strong integration of new development with the existing settlement patterns.
- 7.1.1 Some key themes in terms of how we approach new development underpin this approach. There is an expectation of a light touch in terms of environmental impact, a presumption that we will return to a better appreciation and understanding of character and landscape and fashion our very own movement promoting a confident contemporary northern Irish rural architecture, and an expectation that we will be greener and more self sufficient in how we power and heat our future rural homes and buildings.
- 7.1.2 This chapter looks at how to plan and design the good projects that will create tomorrow's architectural heritage. It provides advice on how to set about the design process, how to integrate and make use of sustainable technologies for managing energy and water resources and how to supply key supporting information for your application.





07 Building on Tradition

7.2 The Design Process

7.2.0 A design should consider every aspect of a new or existing building, its site and setting in order to achieve a successful outcome that considers the wellbeing of the natural environment and responds to the needs of the client. Achieving quality outcomes is as much about the design process as the quality of the site and resources available. The following stages are not necessarily sequential as you need to think of landscape, building, layout and detailed design in a parallel process. That said there is a logic to following a number of key stages.



1

Stage one: Define your brief

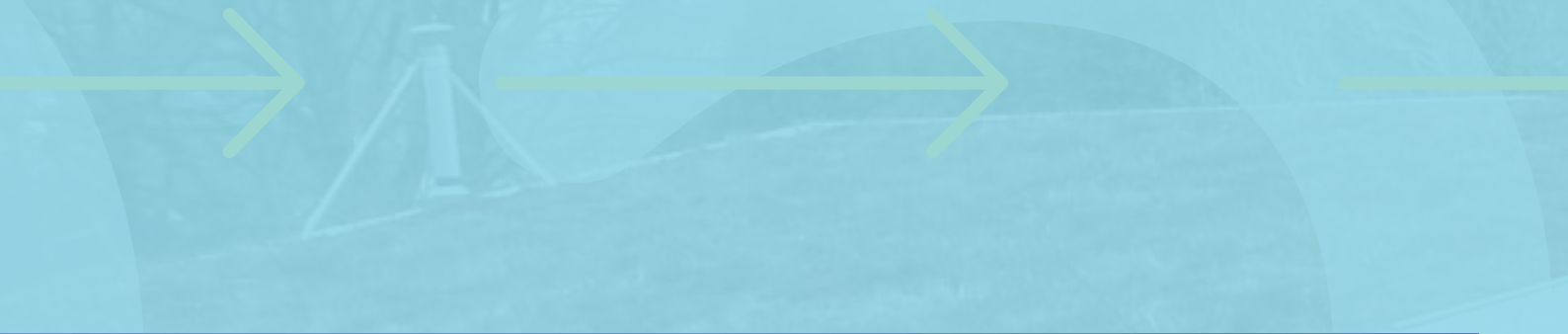
- 7.2.1 Start off by deciding what it is that you need and what it is that you don't need (See page 106) and write this down. As the client, it is your role to define your requirements and set out a brief that will tell your architect / designer what is required. A good brief will not only help you choose the right designer and skills, if not already done so, it can also help you choose the right site and ultimately ensure that your requirements are met to the highest possible standard. A brief takes time to agree and is an iterative process, initiated by the client and developed with the guidance and expertise of your architect.
- 7.2.2 The architect's job is to turn your instructions into drawings for consideration by the Department and you should instruct your designer to present your scheme in accordance with PPS 21 and the guidance given in this document. It is important to choose your designer wisely. An architect who is a member of a recognised professional association will work to a Code of Professional Conduct and will produce a professional standard of work.

2

Stage two: Appraise your setting

- 7.2.3 Take time to look around and understand the setting and location of the site and the dynamics of the landscape character and settlement pattern. (Refer to the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000).
- What are the characteristics of the surrounding landscape and the site?
 - Are there natural features within the site that should be incorporated or retained?
 - Is there a particularly good view? How can the building and the rooms within it be orientated to take advantage of this, and still sit well in the landscape without losing the benefits of passive solar gain?
 - Are there external viewpoints, including critical views along stretches of the public road network, shared private laneways serving existing or approved dwellings, public rights of way and other areas of general public access?
 - Are there any potential negative impacts on neighbours; particularly where there is potential for adverse affects on combined views from individual private laneways, located in close proximity to each other?
 - Assess whether a new building on this site will pose problems of prominence or would result in skyline development?

07 Building on Tradition / The Design Process



3

Stage three: Appraise the detailed qualities of the site by checking:

Boundaries

Access levels / Access
point's

Exposure / shelter /
prevailing winds

Orientation issues
(map the sunpath)

Drainage / sewage
disposal

Constraints (e.g. legal,
boundary issues wayleaves
etc.);

Relationship to adjacent
buildings within or beyond
the site; and

Opportunities to build in
nature, biodiversity and
wildlife habitats

4

Stage four: Develop a concept

7.2.4 A design concept will bring together the various site and setting appraisals undertaken and will help you and the architect to arrange buildings and spaces on the site. This stage may also require you to revisit some assumptions about how the site layout is arranged. When developing the concept you will discover how well things will work out practically on the ground.

7.2.5 Influences will include:

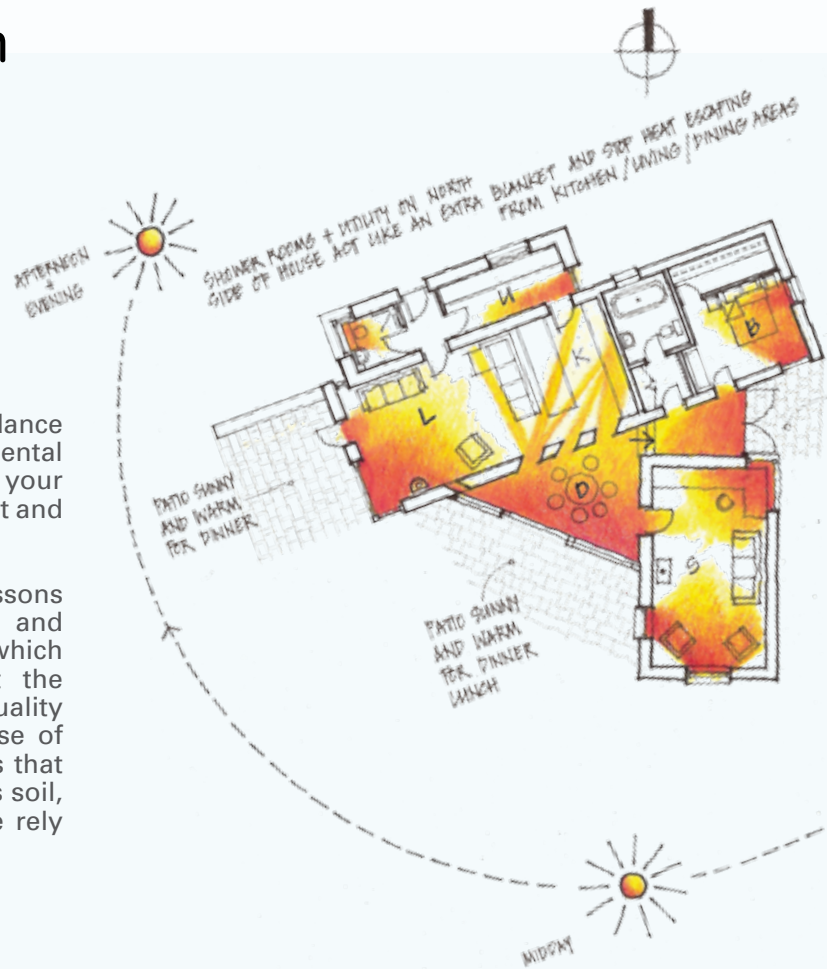
- **Is the site a focal point for views?**
- **Is it at a gateway or edge of a cluster location or does it fill a gap in the road frontage?**
- **Is skyline/roofline important?**
- **Are there features to be kept – walls, buildings, trees etc?**
- **Does a slope exert a strong influence on layout and orientation?**
- **What will be the character of the main frontage relative to what is existing in terms of openness or compactness, scale and materials?**
- **How do you respond to neighbouring gardens, buildings and set backs?**

7.2.6 The working up of the concept will provide the basis for the preparation of detailed drawings. It will also provide the material you may need for a design concept statement (See Section 7.4).

07 Building on Tradition

7.3 Sustainable Environment Checklist

- 7.3.0 Designing schemes that are in accordance with the highest standards of environmental design and energy efficiency will reduce your costs over the lifetime of the development and result in healthier environments.
- 7.3.1 It is important to acknowledge the lessons understood by previous generations and their legacy of good placemaking which demonstrates clearly the impact that the choices we make today have on the quality of tomorrow's environment. The purpose of this section is to detail design measures that seek to conserve finite resources such as soil, water, air, fuel, and biodiversity that we rely on for our overall health and wellbeing.



Orientation

- Buildings should be sited in a sheltered area to take advantage of the potential for energy conservation and renewable energy generation within residential development. The orientation should incorporate the most frequently used rooms e.g. kitchen/living/dining and family rooms to the south side of the house
- Reduce the house to the minimum size required to meet day to day needs
- Make the shape of the house as compact as possible; the greater the volume of the building the more surface area it has to lose or gain, heat from
- Smaller windows should be used in north facing elevations. On the south elevation, larger windows will increase solar gain, but this has to be weighed against heat losses in the winter and a risk of overheating in the summer
- In order to reduce heat losses, unheated spaces such as conservatories, green houses and garages which are attached to the outside of heated rooms can act as thermal buffers, the temperature of the unheated space being warmer than that outside.

ROOMS AND OUTSIDE SPACES THAT FACE NORTH NEVER GET THE SUN. THEY ARE SHADED AND GET NO HEAT FROM THE SUN

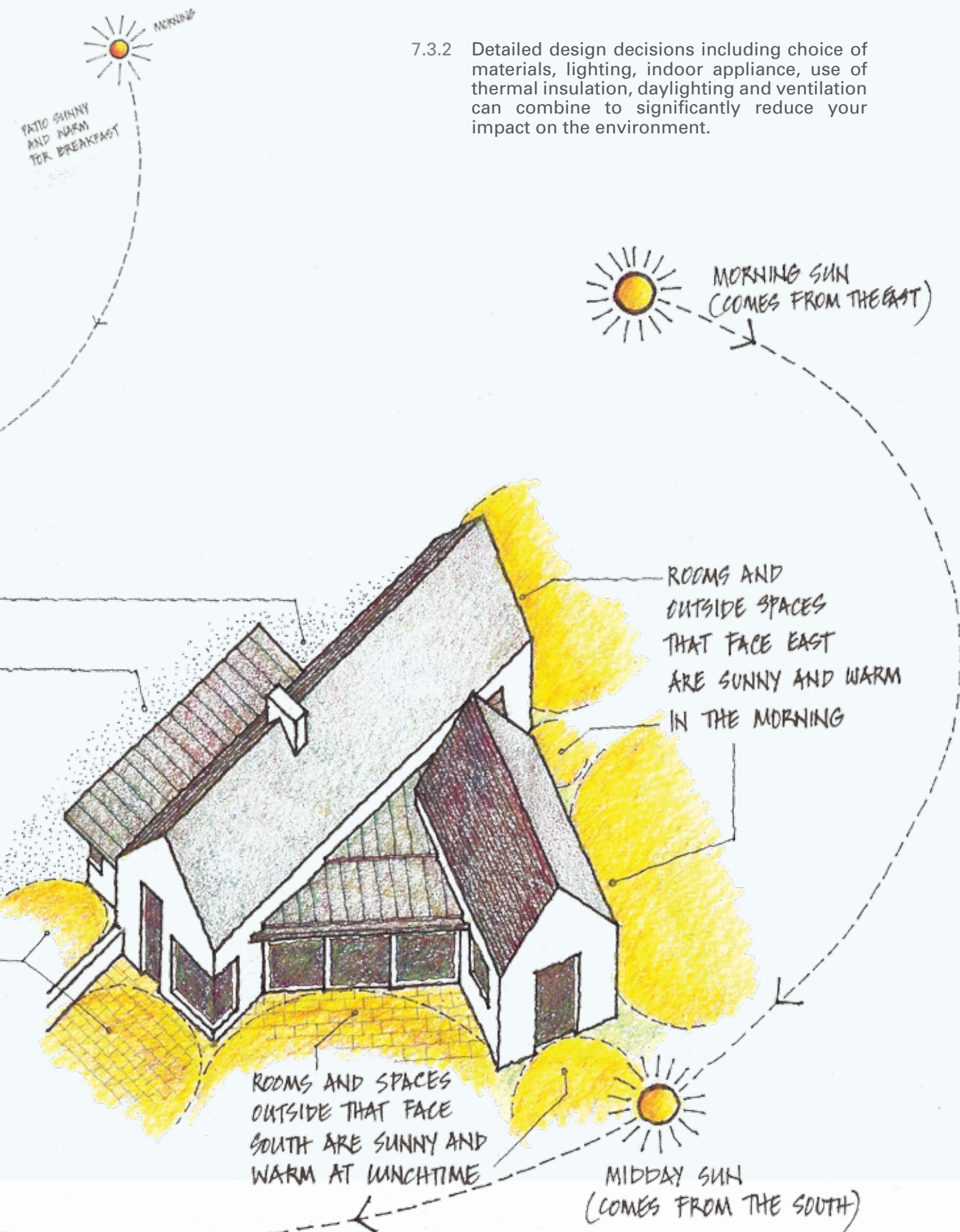
ROOMS AND OUTSIDE SPACES THAT FACE WEST ARE SUNNY AND WARM IN THE AFTERNOON

EVENING SUN (COMES FROM THE WEST)

Resource efficiency

Make best use of the sun - it's free!

- 7.3.2 Detailed design decisions including choice of materials, lighting, indoor appliance, use of thermal insulation, daylighting and ventilation can combine to significantly reduce your impact on the environment.



07 Building on Tradition

Resource efficiency
Making best use of new
technology



Insulation

- Use appropriate materials to enable the building to absorb heat during the day and release it slowly at night.
- Control air leakage and air movement
- Insulate the enclosing envelope (walls, roof, floor and windows) to a high degree. As passive solar buildings can be vulnerable to overheating in summer, ensure good window design, appropriate shading, natural cooling devices and sensible control systems which will be needed to maintain a comfortable balance
- Natural ventilation – atria and internal ventilation stacks projecting above the roof level can be used to vent air as the building warms during the day. This approach obviates the need for air conditioning and makes for a more healthy and pleasant building environment.



Renewable energy

- Avoid deep-plan internal layouts and use roof lights and light reflecting surfaces to help reduce the need for artificial lighting
- Maximise opportunities for capturing and providing energy. The introduction of renewable energy in the form of active solar technology is encouraged. Active solar technology can be divided into: Photovoltaic (PV) and Solar Water Heating (SWH). Both technologies use roof mounted equipment to collect radiation from the sun. PV is converted into electricity whereas SWH is converted into hot water. PV can also be used as a building material. It can be integrated into the roof or facade through the use of solar shingles, glass laminators or most appropriate for the islands - solar slates. SWH panels are mounted on the roof. For best performance they need to be mounted at an angle of 20-40 degrees, depending on latitude and oriented due south
- Ground source heat pumps (GSHP), air and water pumps and micro combined heat and power (CHP) systems are alternatives to conventional boilers. Horizontal GSHP require up to 100m² to accommodate all the necessary pipe work whilst vertical GSHP are more suitable for small sites as the pipes are placed in boreholes to a depth of at least 15 metres. Extreme care needs to be taken with ground source systems and specialist expertise is needed to inform how and when it is appropriate to deploy these systems
- Small scale wind turbines and hydrogen fuel cells could become cost effective and sustainable means of supplying the energy requirements for individual buildings
- Biomass heating systems in the form of a room heating stove or boiler system also provide a sustainable source of heating and hot water although consideration needs to be given to the availability of fuels and their storage. All externally visible forms of micro renewable energy operation will need to be sensitively sited.



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Resource efficiency



Waste and Materials

- Reuse and recycle existing materials on site
- Reduce food waste by composting
- Seek to repair, rather than replace
- Minimise the use of non-renewable and hazardous/polluting substances
- Reduce surface water runoff using SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) such as a reed bed system and including permeable paving where appropriate
- Incorporate water saving devices throughout the home for toilets, showers and kitchen including spray-head taps and a low flow shower head
- Collect rainwater for washing cars, garden watering and toilet flushing. The next likely step is to collect rainwater and store it in a basement or underground storage tank that filters it to be used for WC flushing or the garden. The reuse of greywater in this way requires pre-treatment and its use for irrigation in rural areas is not promoted.

Adaptability to peoples needs

- Is the dwelling adaptable?
- It is designed to promote inclusivity - can people easily use and access the development?
- Does the dwelling cater for the changing needs of people over their lifetime?
- Are homes energy-efficient and equipped for challenges anticipated from a changing climate?
- Can a replacement or new build home be extended without affecting the character of the dwelling or its setting?
- Does the design / layout allow for adaptation and subdivision, such as the creation of an annex or small office or the provision of a ground floor bedroom?



Biodiversity

A number of specific measures can be used to prevent loss and damage to biodiversity levels. Whilst the appropriateness of these measures will depend on the characteristics of the site location, they may include:

- Conserving biodiversity and wildlife corridors through retention of existing trees, hedgerows and traditional field boundaries
- Using low level and low intensity outdoor lighting such as high pressure sodium “flat glass” lantern technology
- Using native species as part of new landscaping.

In the case where important bird or bat species may be present the appropriate surveys should be carried out.

As well as careful attention to the way in which a buildings removal may take place, the design of the restored or replacement dwelling can also incorporate features to provide a continued habitat for these species e.g. the provision of suitable bat and or bird boxes.



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7.4 Supporting Information

- 7.4.0 There are a number of policies within PPS21, which require the applicant to submit detailed information or evidence demonstrating that the application is policy compliant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to meet these requirements and to submit this information as part of a planning application. This is especially important for applicants seeking permission under exceptional circumstances.



Supporting Information Checklist

POLICY

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

CTY 1

Acceptable drainage arrangement– See CTY 16

Access and road safety – applicants must submit information to demonstrate that access arrangements are in accordance with the Department’s published guidance.

CTY 3

In cases where a dwelling has recently been destroyed, evidence, normally in the form of an engineers report or a report from a qualified conservation professional about the status and previous condition of the building and the cause and extent of the damage must be provided.

Proposals involving the replacement of a dwelling that makes an important contribution to the heritage, appearance or character of the locality, will only be granted where it is demonstrated that it is not reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved.

CTY 5

A local housing needs assessment undertaken by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, where need has not been foreseen and provided for through the development plan process.

Information demonstrating that the potential to locate the necessary housing within settlement limits has been explored and that no suitable sites are available.

CTY 6

Applicants will be expected to provide sufficient information to allow a proper assessment of each specific case. Such information should include:

- A statement detailing the special personal or domestic circumstances supported if appropriate by medical evidence from a medical or health professional
- Details of the level of care required in relation to any medical condition again supported by the appropriate health professional, the identity of the main carer, their current address and occupation.

07 Building on Tradition

Supporting Information Checklist

POLICY

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

CTY 6 (contd)

- An explanation of why care can only be provided at the specific location and how genuine hardship would be caused if planning permission were refused
- Details of what alternatives to a new dwelling have been considered e.g. extension / annex to an existing dwelling and why such alternatives are not considered practical to meet the site specific need
- Any other information considered relevant to the particular case.

CTY 7

Sufficient information to show that there is a site specific need which makes it essential for one of the firm's employees to live at the site of their work, as against a general desire for a dwelling in association with the business. The onus is on the applicant to provide a convincing statement of need together with supporting testimonies where appropriate.

CTY 10

The provision of the farm's DARD business ID number along with other evidence to prove active farming over the required period.

Where an alternative site is proposed under criteria (c) which is removed from existing buildings on the farm, the applicant will be required to submit appropriate and demonstrable evidence from a competent and independent authority such as the Health and Safety Executive or Environmental Health Department of the local Council to justify the siting. Evidence relating to the future expansion of the farm business may include valid planning permissions, building control approvals or contractual obligations to supply farm produce.

For horse breeding and training and the operating of livery yards, trekking centres and riding schools, applicants will have to provide sufficient information to demonstrate a level of involvement commensurate with commercial activity over the requisite period of 6 years. Such information should include:

- A statement of commercial rateable history for the business
- Copies of appropriate Insurances
- Copies of 'Horse Passports' (if applicable) and
- Any other information considered relevant to the particular case.

POLICY

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

CTY 11

Where a new building is proposed, the applicant will be required to provide sufficient information to satisfactorily demonstrate why existing buildings cannot be used.

CTY 12

A proposal located away from existing agricultural or forestry buildings will only be acceptable where it is shown to be essential for the efficient functioning of the holding or enterprise. In such cases the applicant will be required to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that this is the case.

CTY 14

Where appropriate, applications for buildings in the countryside should include details of proposals for site works, retention or reinstatement of boundaries, hedges and walls and details of new landscaping.

Applicants are encouraged to submit a design concept statement setting out the processes involved in site selection and analysis, building design, and should consider the use of renewable energy and drainage technologies as part of their planning application.

CTY 16

If Consent for Discharge has been granted under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 for the proposed development site, a copy of this should be submitted to accompany the planning application. This is required to discharge any trade or sewage effluent or any other potentially polluting matter from commercial, industrial or domestic premises to waterways or underground strata.

In other cases, applications involving the use of non-mains sewerage, including outline applications, will be required to provide sufficient information about how it is intended to treat effluent from the development so that this matter can be properly assessed. This will normally include information about ground conditions, including the soil and groundwater characteristics, together with details of adjoining developments existing or approved.

Where the proposal involves an on-site sewage treatment plant, such as a septic tank or a package treatment plant, the application will also need to be accompanied by drawings that accurately show the proposed location of the installation and soakaway, and of drainage ditches and watercourses in the immediate vicinity. The site for the proposed apparatus should be located on land within the application site or otherwise within the applicant's control and therefore subject to any planning conditions relating to the development of the site.

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7.5 Design Concept Statements

- 7.5.0 Applicants are encouraged to submit a design concept statement setting out the processes involved in site selection and analysis and building design as part of their planning application.
- 7.5.1 Design Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind a proposal. They are submitted with a planning application and show how the applicant has thought about the design and how it responds to the attributes of the site and its landscape surroundings.
- 7.5.2 Statements should include a written description and justification of the planning application and, if appropriate, photos, maps and drawings which may be needed to further illustrate the points made.
- 7.5.3 Design statements can help make your case for the development; the amount of detail should reflect the complexity of the application. The best examples of these are written specifically for the application in question.
- Start when you start the scheme
 - Help influence the design
 - Include an explanation of how the design has come about and what you are trying to achieve
 - Use accurate and informative illustrations.





7.5.4 Design concerns that can be addressed as part of a statement include

- Site selection and analysis
- Alternative design options considered and rejected
- The attributes of the site and its landscape surroundings and whether this provides sufficient enclosure
- Reason for building design as proposed; its integration with the landscape and relationship with the surrounding buildings
- The environmental attributes of the site and the surrounding area including features such as rivers, trees, hedgerows and protected species or sites and measures taken to protect these areas
- The impact on critical and combined views
- Local distinctiveness and regard for the rural setting and character
- The provision of necessary services without impacts on the environment or character of the local authority
- The use of renewable energy and drainage technologies.

07 Building on Tradition

Design Concept Statement - Template

- 7.5.5 The level of detail required by a Design Concept Statement should relate to the size and scale of the development and whether any complex issues relating to the site or the proposal need to be addressed. Although applications assessed against the policies set out in PPS 21 are likely to be small in scale, they may need to address more complex issues relating to visual impact, landscape character or conservation of the built heritage.
- 7.5.6 A design concept statement should reflect the depth of these issues which emerge as the site character, context and relevant planning policies are explored and understood more clearly. Broadly speaking, a design concept statement will be set out in two parts. Part 1 will describe and evaluate this contextual information. Part 2 should then show how the design solution addresses these contextual findings.
- 7.5.7 A Design Concept Statement may, in particular, be required where innovative building types are proposed, to aid a full understanding and appreciation of the design development thinking.

SECTION 1 – DESCRIBE THE SITE

Describe the site character and context

- Site Location
- Site Size, Shape and Orientation
- Existing Buildings and Structures
- Existing Boundary Treatment; walls and hedges
- General History
- Planning History
- Access and parking
- Natural features, including trees and hedgerows, designated areas and evidence of the presence of protected species
- Topography and landscape character (please refer the NI Landscape Character Assessment Series)
- Land Use and Development Form (roofscape, height, building lines and set backs, building widths, architectural style and details).

Policy Background

- Planning Policy Statements
- Development Plan - The relevant development plan will contain a number of policies which are relevant to the site, the surrounding area and the actual design of your proposals? If so, what are they?
- Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Development Objectives

- What are the development objectives i.e. accommodation requirements / minimum floorspace / number of units?

SECTION 2 – DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Design Solutions

This section should explain the preferred design solution and how it responds to the characteristics and context identified in the preceding Section. Combining the contextual findings in Section 1 with the design principles identified in Section 2 should enable the completion of one or more 3-dimensional design concepts or options (If more than one option has been drawn up, you may wish to discuss these with the planning authority).

The explanation of the detailed design solution should use a combination of text and images and should include some or all of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Layout (i.e. context, orientation, connections, car parking)
- Built form (i.e. scale, massing)
- Details and materials (i.e. façade treatment, roofscape, materials, colours)
- Landscape (i.e. open space, planting, boundary treatment)
- Sustainability and development practicalities (i.e. drainage, energy efficiency, resource conservation, wildlife and protected species, trees and conservation, flexibility/adaptability)
- Impact (i.e. on neighbours, travel patterns, historic features, character or regeneration of area)
- Accessibility & Parking (i.e. access arrangements and parking).



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7.6 Bringing it all together Making a Planning Application

7.6.0 Once your design has been finalised you must complete a planning application form and submit it together with the required documentation and appropriate fee. The following should be considered when making a planning application-

- Planning application forms come with explanatory notes. You should read these carefully before completing the form. The planning authority can give you advice, or you could appoint an agent (e.g. planning consultant/engineer/architect) to make the application on your behalf. Either the applicant or the agent may sign the application form
- A fee is payable with the planning application. Details of fees can be obtained from the Department of the Environments website at http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/fees_forms.htm

7.5.1 It is very important that you check to ensure that all of the requirements listed have been satisfied before submitting your application. Please note that failure to comply will result in your submission being returned immediately.

Planning Application Checklist

Forms

- Have all forms been completed fully, with the correct number of copies all duly signed and dated?
- Have you completed the certificate of ownership section with the appropriate parts deleted? (Only one section A, B, C or D should be fully completed. If required, please refer to page 3 of "Explanatory Notes on Applying for Planning Permission, Approval of Reserved Matters and other Planning Consents")
- Have you listed all of the neighbours who should be notified?

Plans/Drawings

- Have you included Ordnance Survey based site location plans to scale, clearly showing the site outlined in red, ensuring that lands required for access to the public road and for the septic tank are included within the red line?
- Have you submitted the required number and type of fully annotated detailed drawings to an appropriate scale?
- Site Location Plan (x 7 copies) Elevations (x 7 copies)
- Site layout/Block Plan (x 7 copies) Cross Sections (x 7 copies)
- Floor Plans (x 7 copies) Existing and Proposed Levels (x 7 copies).

Fee

- Have you enclosed the correct fee?

Supporting Information

- Depending on policy requirements, have you submitted the relevant supporting information with respect to your application (Please refer to PPS21 and Supporting Information Checklist in Chapter 7 of this guide).

Reserved Matters

- If you are applying for Reserved Matters approval following the grant of Outline permission, are all the conditions of the Outline approval met? (If not, the Reserved Matters approval cannot be sought and Full permission should be sought instead).

Appendices

Appendix 1 Related Information Sources

Planning Policy Statements www.planningni.gov.uk

- **PPS 1:** General Principles
- **PPS 2:** Planning and Nature Conservation
- **PPS 3:** Access, Movement and Parking
- **PPS 3 (Clarification):** Access, Movement and Parking
- **PPS 6:** Planning, Archaeology and The Built Heritage
- **PPS 7:** Quality Residential Environments
- **PPS 7 (Addendum):** Residential Extensions and Alterations
- **PPS 7 (Addendum {Draft}):** Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas
- **PPS 15:** Planning and Flood Risk
- **PPS 18:** Renewable Energy
- **PPS 21:** Sustainable Development in the Countryside

Northern Ireland Environment Agency Publications www.ni-environment.gov.uk

- NI Landscape Character Assessment Series www.ni-environment.gov.uk/landscape/country_landscape.htm
- NIEA Historic Buildings & Energy Efficiency A Guide to Part F of the Northern Ireland Building Regulations (2006)

Ulster Architectural Heritage Society www.uahs.org.uk

- Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland Register (BHARNI)
- UAHS Modern Ulster Architecture.

Other References

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- Gailey, Alan. (1984) Rural houses of the north of Ireland. Edinburgh, Donald.
- Mitchell, G. Frank. (1998) Reading the Irish landscape / Frank Mitchell & Michael Ryan. Dublin, Town House.
- Camblin, Gilbert. (1951) The town in Ulster : an account of the origin and building of the towns of the Province and the development of their rural setting / by Gilbert Camblin. Belfast, Wm. Mullan & Son Publishers, Ltd.
- Oram, Richard and Stelfox, Dawson. (2004) 'Traditional Buildings in Ireland – Home Owners Handbook', Featuring the Mourne Homestead Experience Mourne Heritage Trust

Appendix 2

Acknowledgements; Accreditations; and Photo and Image Credits

This publication was devised on behalf on of the Department by SLR Consulting Ltd and Colin Buchanan & Partners Ltd (Authors).

The following organisations inputted as members of the project steering group:

- **Department of the Environment**
- **Ulster Architectural Society**
- **PLACE**
- **Rural Development Council**
- **Royal Society of Ulster Architects**
- **Ulster Farmers Union**
- **Women's Institute**
- **Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG)**

The project team would like to give special acknowledgement and thanks to staff at the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, for access to and permission to use images from the NITB photographic library.

Finally, the authors would also like to express their gratitude to all those who kindly submitted photographic and sketch material for inclusion in the document (listed with the photographic and design credits).

- **BGA Architects,**
- **Bradley McClure Architects Ltd,**
- **Consarc Design Group Ltd,**
- **Des Ewing Chartered Architects,**
- **Hackett Hall McKnight Architects,**
- **Hall, Black, Douglas Ltd,**
- **Hamilton Architects,
Keys and Monaghan Architects Ltd,**
- **McGarry-Moon Architects Ltd,**
- **Studiorogers Ltd,**
- **Twenty Two Over Seven,**
- **Urban Innovations,**
- **David Wilson Chartered Architect,**
- **Ard Ciaran Mackel Architects,**
- **Bell Architects,**
- **Rachel Bevan Architects,**
- **White ink Architects**

Appendices

Photo and image Credits

- 1 (Internal title page) Cunningham Bell artists studio near Portrush by Bell Architects, Ballymoney.
- 2 Contents Page, Conversion of an old school house Boho, Co County Fermanagh, CB
- 3 (Foreword) Mourne Uplands , NITB

Chapter 1: Introduction

- 4 (Intro) Replacement house by Niall Mclaughlin Architects
- 5 (Page 10) Replacement house by Niall Mclaughlin Architects
- 6 (Page 12/13) Glens of Antrim NITB

Chapter 2: Our Place

- 7 (Page 15) Contents Page NITB
- 8 (Page 17) Timber-frame dwelling in the Mourne Mountains by Rachel Bevan Architects
- 9 (Page 18) Arable Landscape NITB
- 10 (Page 19) Mourne Landscape NITB
- 11 (Page 20) North West Landscape NITB
- 12 (Page 21) The Antrim Plateau NITB
- 13 (Page 22) The Mournes and South Armagh NITB
- 14 (Page 23) Fermanagh NITB

- 15 (Page 24) Lough Neagh NITB
- 16 (Page 25) Down NITB
- 17 (Page 27) Water Resources NITB Form / Contemporary Reinterpretation of traditional forms
- 18 (Page 42) Barrel House at Boho, Fermanagh by Martin Connelly Design
- 19 (Page 42) Near Kilrae, McGarry Moon Architects,
- 20 (Page 43) Mary Kerrigan Frank Harkin Architects
- 21 (Page 43) Aughey O'Flaherty Architects
- 22 (Page 43) Black Hall Douglas Architects
- 23 (Page 43) Studiorogers Architects

Chapter 3: Re – Use and Conversion

- 24 (Page 50) Hanna's Close, restoration by Consarc Design
- 25 (Page 51) House Mills at Aghadowey by Studiorogers
- 26 (Page 51) Leap Mill, Restoration and newbuild near Beragh, Co. Tyrone by Keys Monaghan Architects
- 27 (Page 52 / 53) "Home", Frank Harkin
- 28 (Page 54) Hanna's Close, restoration by Consarc Design

- 29 (Page 55) House Extension by Des Ewing Architect
- 30 (Page 56) Restoration and newbuild near Portrush, using the courtyard form CB
- 31 (Page 57) Cottage restoration extension by Patrick Bradley Architects
- 32 (Page 59) graphic from Oram, Richard and Stelfox, Dawson. (2004) 'Traditional Buildings in Ireland – Home Owners Handbook', Featuring the Mourne Homestead Experience Mourne Heritage Trust.
- 33 (Page 61) Converted water-mill with sympathetic extensions and solar panels by Rachel Bevan architects.
- 34 (Page 61) Restored Farmhouse, Kearney, National Trust

Chapter 4: Visually Integrated

- 35 Contents Page, New House by Patrick Bradley
- 36 (Page 80) Hanna's Close, restoration by Consarc Design.
- 37 (Page 81) Magherafelt, Co. Londonderry, Twenty Two over Seven Architects.
- 38 (Page 81) Donaghadee, Co. Down, Twenty Two over Seven Architects.
- 39 (Page 86) New House, Michael Kelly Architects

Chapter 5: Replacement

- 40 (Page 92) 'Ruin' Frank Harkin
- 41 (Page 93) 'Lane' Frank Harkin
- 42 (Page 95) Kilclowney, Near Newtownbutlear, McGarry Moon Architects.
- 43 (Page 96) Roslea, Co. Fermanagh, Aughey O'Flaherty Architects.
- 44 (Page 98) Kilrea, Co. Londonderry, McGarry Moon Architects.
- 45 (Page 98) Martinstown, near Ballymena, Urban Innovation.

Chapter 6: New Build

- 46 (Page 104) Belraugh Road, Coleraine, Studiorogers.
- 47 (Page 105) Ard, Ciaran Mackel Architects.
- 48 (Page 107) Boveedy house, McGarry Moon Architects, CB
- 49 (Page 107) Des Ewing Architects
- 50 (Page 107) Lisnasallagh House, BGA Architects
- 51 (Page 107) Finvoy, co. Antrim, Mary Kerrigan Frank Harkin
- 52 (Page 107) Ahogill, co. Antrim, Alan Jones
- 53 (Page 110) Kilrea, Co. Londonderry, McGarry Moon.
- 54 (Page 111) Coleraine, Studiorogers

Appendices

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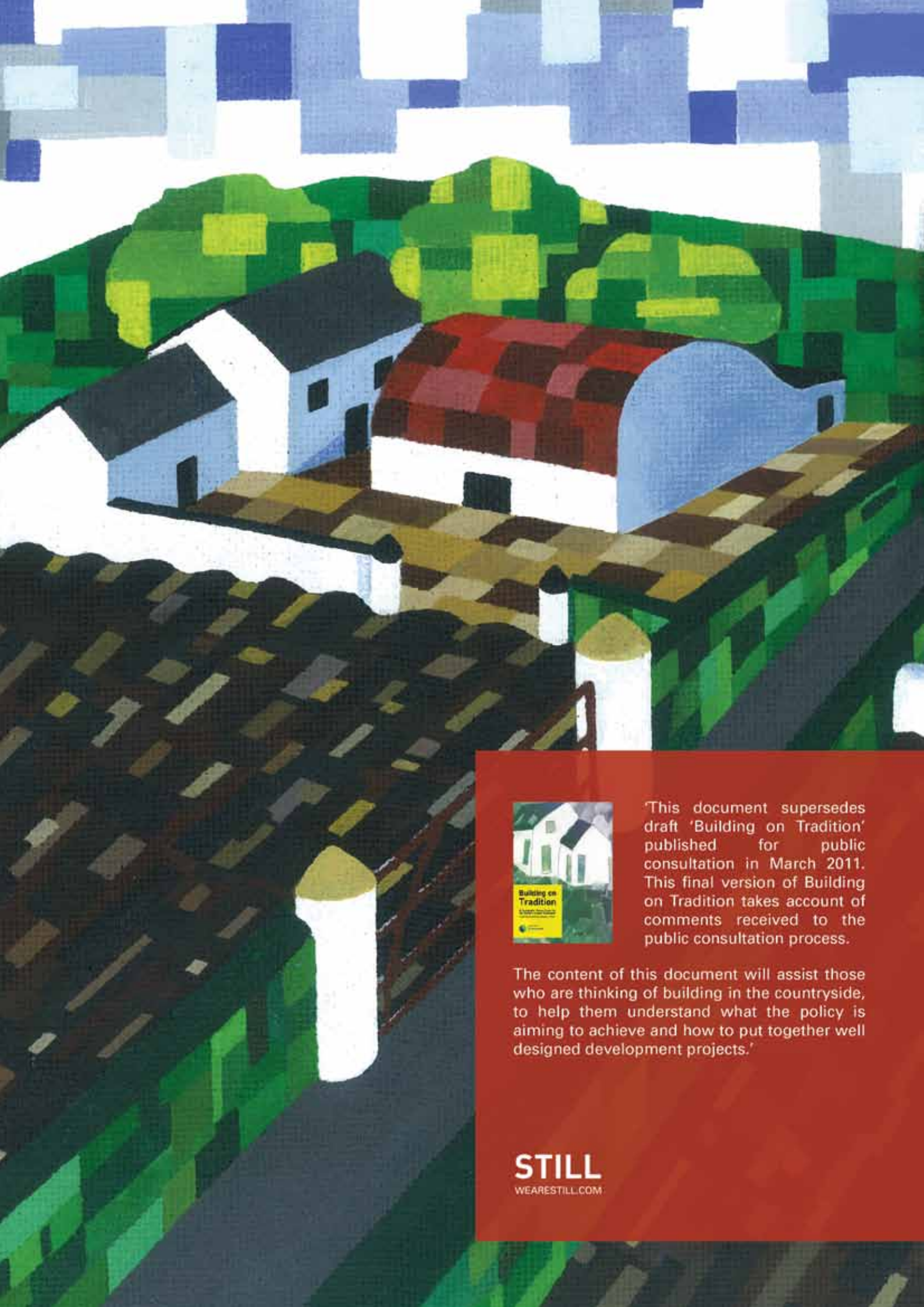
- 55 (Page 111) Mary Kerrigan Frank Harkin Architects
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- 59 Contents Page Niall McLaughlin Architects
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- 62 (Page 127) Rachel Bevan Architects
- 63 (Page 128/129) Carlingford, NITB
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- 65 (Page 135) Leap Mill, Restoration and newbuild near Beragh, Co. Tyrone by Keys Monaghan Architects
- 66 (Page 136) Royal County Down Golf Club, NITB
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'This document supersedes draft 'Building on Tradition' published for public consultation in March 2011. This final version of Building on Tradition takes account of comments received to the public consultation process.'

The content of this document will assist those who are thinking of building in the countryside, to help them understand what the policy is aiming to achieve and how to put together well designed development projects.'

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