



London Road Mews, Crawley

Design and Access Statement

by Gouldstone and Co. Architects
for Living Danish

December 2024

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0.0 Introduction :

The project is a fantastic opportunity to provide new housing in Crawley on partially unused garden land.

This Design and Access Statement outlines the proposal for 27 new homes. The scheme is designed around a new landscaped communal garden with the large majority of the homes having their own front doors leading from the central garden.

The scheme responds to the varying site conditions, respecting the existing listed building to the west of our site and stepping up in height towards the taller existing buildings to the north of our site.

The scheme is designed carefully to sit within the surrounding built environment, respecting the amenity of the existing dwellings and enhancing a currently poorly used and overgrown rear garden area. The scheme proposes a project with “gentle density” in keeping with the area but also maximising the potential delivery of new homes.

This Design and Access Statement forms part of the full planning application for the above site and has been prepared for Living Danish.

The proposal is outlined with detail provided on all aspects of the development. This DAS should be read in conjunction with our pre-application response document and the various other consultant reports and drawings.



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01. Send Road, 9 New Homes, Reading
 02. Bramley Road, LB Enfield, 8 New homes
 03. Lion Road, Enfield, 7 new homes

04. Lansdowne Lane, RB Greenwich, 6 Homes
 05. Fair oak Close, Croydon, 6 new homes
 06. Pampisford Road, Croydon, 8 new homes

0.1 Gouldstone and Co :

Gouldstone & Co was established in 2021 by David Gouldstone. We specialise in housing in urban locations. We maximise the potential of awkward, infill and backland sites throughout London and the south-east.

We are a design led practice and take a creative approach to the design of all projects. This enables us to see the potential in sites that other architects may overlook, making previously undevelopable parcels of land into successful housing projects. We will often take sites that have had previous refusals and achieve planning consent by looking at the site in a far more creative way.

Before establishing Gouldstone & Co David worked at Peter Barber Architects for 12 years where he was a Director.

Through the 12 years at Peter Barber Architects David developed a detailed understanding of the typical constraints and opportunities presented by working in tight urban brownfield sites and is able to input early in the design stage to minimise issues later on site. He has delivered projects with a range of construction methodologies and worked as part of large multi-disciplinary design teams.

Gouldstone & Co are currently working on a range of residential projects in London and the South-East. This includes around 250 new dwellings on a variety of sites ranging from a single new home to larger multi dwelling proposals.

1.0 Existing Site :



1.0 Existing Site :

The site is located on the eastern side of London Road, Crawley. The site is to the rear of the Grade II listed Firs Cottage, a 17th century timber framed house.

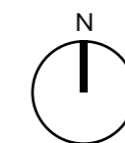
The site is around 2230m² in area. It measures around 40m in width and around 75m from the London Road frontage to the rear of the site.

London Road has a mixture of housing types. These range from earlier, smaller individual family homes to larger mid century flatted blocks.

The site is around a 19 minute walk from the centre of Crawley and the mainline station. London Road is well connected with a range of bus services running to various destinations.

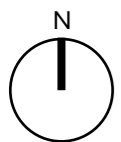
The site is divided from the listed building garden by a large bank of mature category B trees. The site is not in a Conservation Area.

The southern part of the site is currently occupied by a smaller house with a rear garden. This will be the location of any access into the site.



Site : location in wider local area with London Road running to the west of the site

1.0 Existing Site :



Site : location in local area with the listed buildings immediately to the west of our site

1.1 Existing Site :



Site : location in local area.

The areas to the various sides of the site vary in built form, age, massing and height. To the north of the site are a series of taller flatted blocks. To the east there are a series of 2.5 storey short terraces of houses.

1.1 Existing Site :

View of the site from the north east showing the taller flatted blocks to the north of our site that range between 3-5 storeys tall with tall curved roofs.

The eastern boundary of our site is formed by the rear garden fences of the more traditional 2.5 storey houses that run along Five Acres.



1.1 Existing Site :

View of the site from the north west showing the taller flatted blocks to the north of our site that range between 3-5 storeys tall with tall curved roofs. Along London Road there is a rough building line facing the street with the buildings ranging from 2 storey houses to much larger 3 storey flatted blocks.



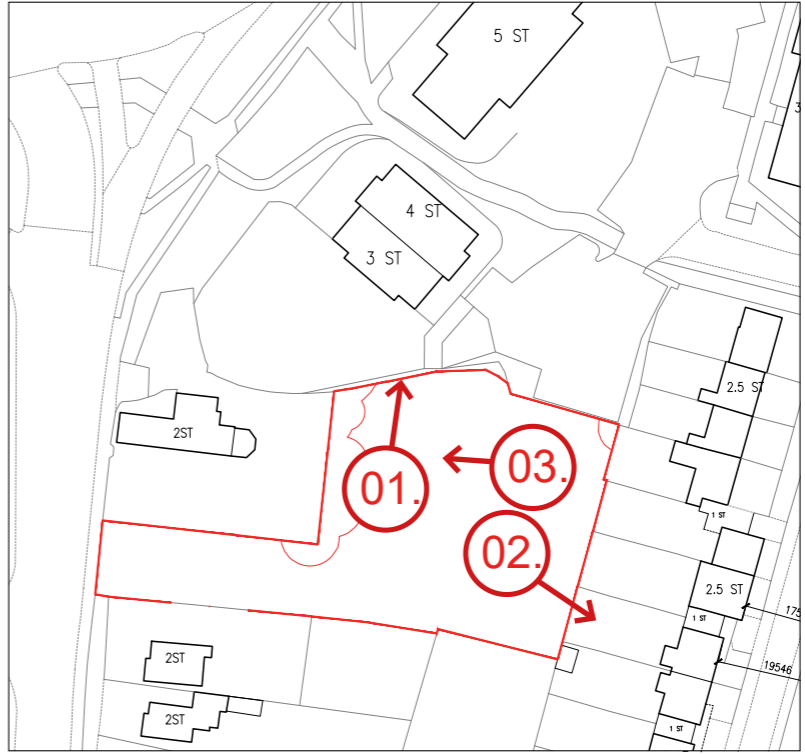


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1.2 Existing Site :



Views of the site showing the surrounding context of the 2.5 storey houses to the east and the taller 3-5 flatted blocks to the north.

Image 3, below, shows the tall line of existing trees that divide our site from the garden of the listed building.



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1.2 Existing Site :

Views of the site showing the surrounding context of the 2.5 storey houses to the east and the taller 3-5 flatted blocks to the north



1.3 Existing Site :

Fir Tree Cottage

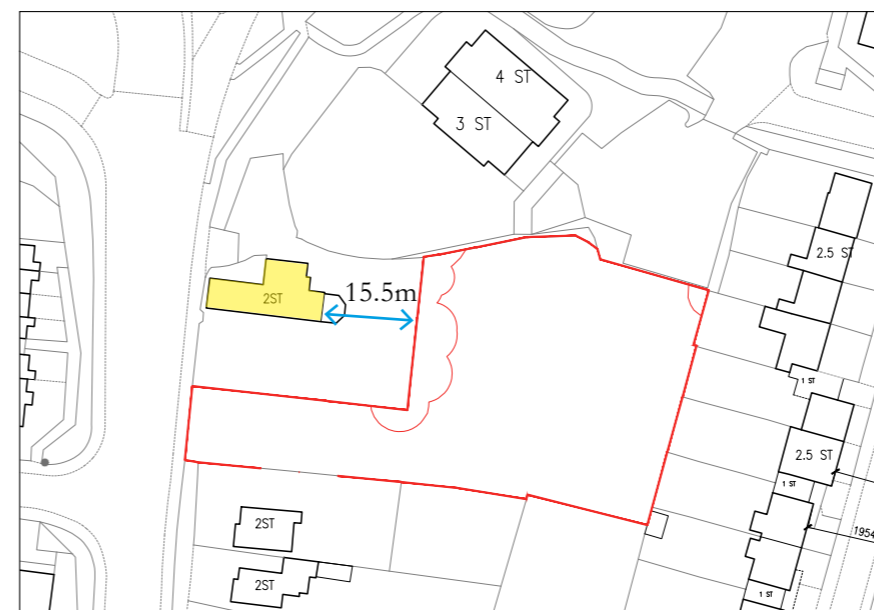
To the west of our site is the Grade II listed Fir Tree Cottage.

This house dates from the late 17th Century. The listing is given below.

“Probable late C17 timber framed house. Two storeys running east to west. Roof hipped at west end. West part tiled-the rest Welsh slates. Three brick chimneys. South front has ground floor refaced in stucco and first floor tile hung. The windows are wooden casements, some with modern leaded panes. The north front has the timber framing partly exposed on the eastern half. The western half is brick faced but painted in imitation of timber framing. The thinness of the structural timbers does not suggest a date earlier than circa 1700. It is shown as ‘Crawley Workhouse’ on the circa 1840 Tithe Map.”

The listed building sits around 15.5m away from the boundary of the site. This boundary is created by a line of mature trees.

Any scheme on our site will be designed to respect the existing listed building, the garden and also the line of mature trees.





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1.4 Existing Site :

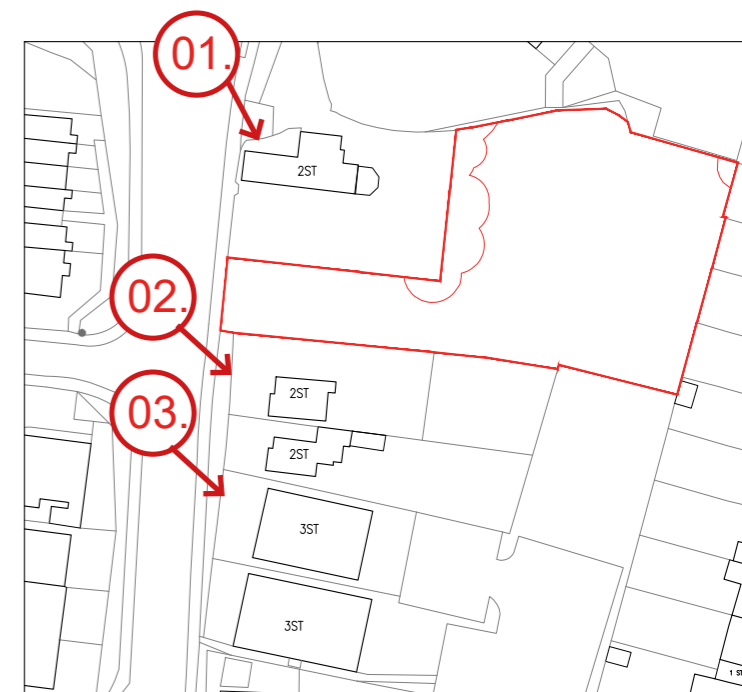
Streetscene

The listed building is relatively hidden from view when looking along London Road. The site is set down lower than the street level to the front. A consistent hedge line, fence and brick wall prevents most of the listed house being seen from the road.

Next to the listed house there are three smaller, early 20th century homes. Again these are set down slightly lower than the road with planting and hedges preventing these houses being seen from the road.

Further along the road there are two larger flatted blocks, These are three storeys with large pitched roof.

Overall along this section of London Road the streetscape is varied, although there is consistency in elements such as the building line along the street.





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1.5 Existing Site :

Context :

Opposite are the houses the run along London Road next to our site along with the later, larger flatted blocks.

These flatted blocks, assumed to be 1980s / 90s are much larger than the individual houses but try to reflect the type of development with pitched roofs and similar brickwork.

To the rear of the flatted blocks there are large hard landscaped parking areas.



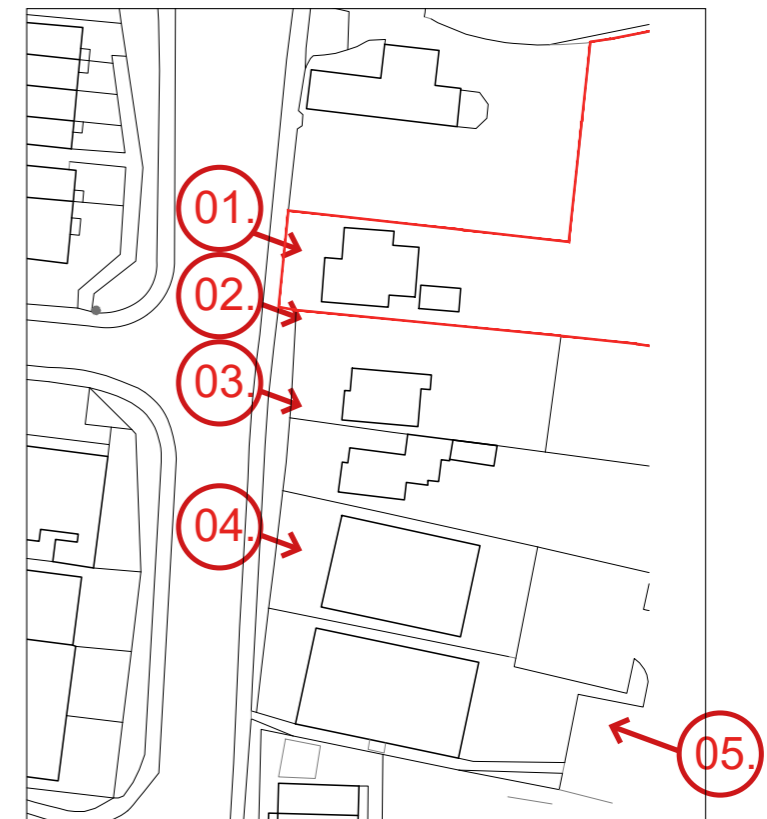
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1.5 Existing Site :

Context :

To the north of our site the context changes from a lower rise, street based context to include taller, flatted blocks. These range between 3 and 5 storeys tall.

The more traditional street based housing also is taller with larger flatted blocks at 3.5 storeys tall.

At ground floor level the taller towers sit in an area of parking, hard landscaping, tarmac with barriers and fences with small areas of grass and trees.



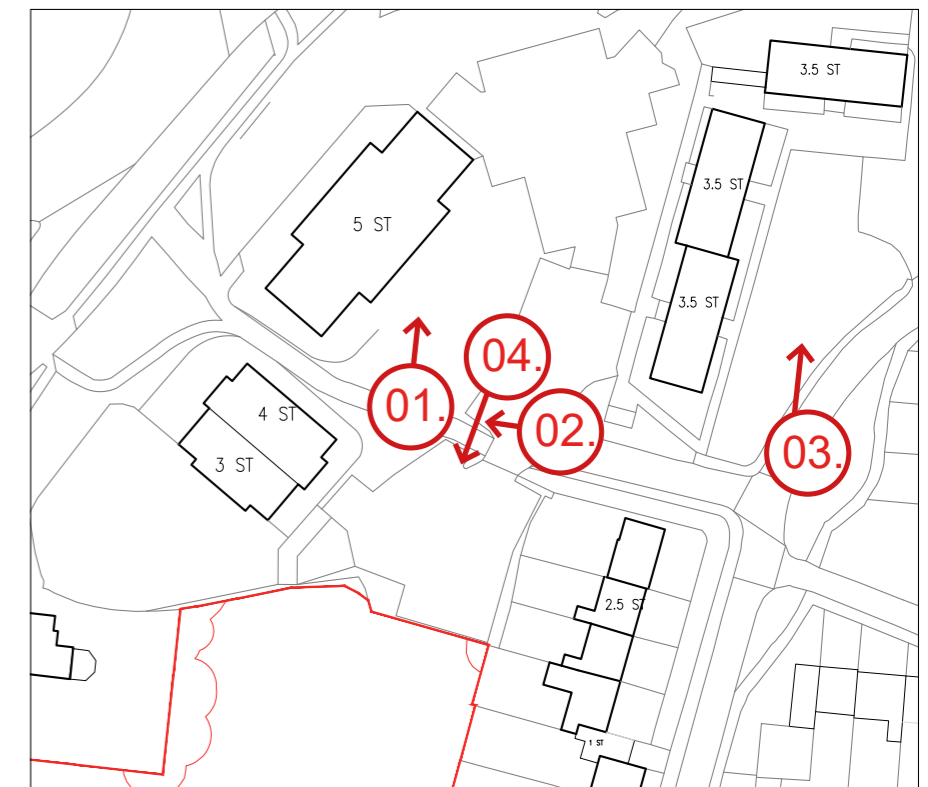
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1.5 Existing Site :

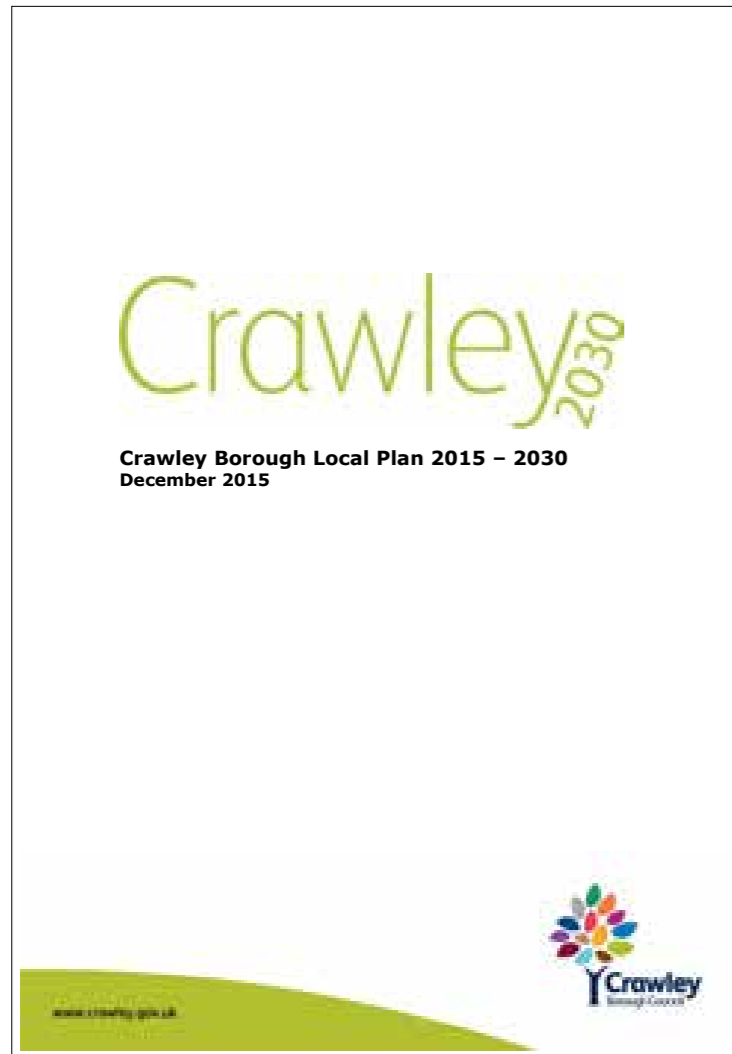
Context :

The wider context is typical of Crawley with a variety of 2-3 storey houses arranged along streets and accessed via front gardens. For the larger 3-4 flatted blocks the large parking areas to the rear dominate the areas



2.0 Policy Context :

2.0 Planning Policy Context : Local Plan 2015-30



There are various relevant planning policy documents that establish the parameters for our development. The Crawley Local Plan 2015-30 sets the larger scale considerations, particularly Chapter 4 on Character and Chapter 6 on Housing. Alongside the Local Plan there are also the Urban Design SPD documents and the newer Compact Residential Design Guide.

The Key elements of the Local Plan are outlined below.

Overall these policies seek to preserve and enhance the existing character of the areas with new developments that respect the existing qualities of the areas and the existing amenity of the surrounding homes.

The emphasis is on new development being “mainly residential, in keeping with the existing neighbourhood structure” and importantly that “higher density development may be compatible with the existing structure of the neighbourhood.”

The urban design policy seeks to create lower rise, street based neighbourhoods with active frontages and clearly defined routes and spaces with clear boundaries between public and private spaces.

Policy CH1: Neighbourhood Principle

The neighbourhood principle will be protected and enhanced by:

- a) maintaining the neighbourhood structure of the town with a clear pattern of land uses and arrangement of open spaces and landscape features.

Development within the neighbourhoods should mainly be residential, in keeping with the existing neighbourhood. Mixed use and higher density development may be compatible with the existing structure of the neighbourhood, particularly if it is situated in sustainable locations such as their neighbourhood centres.

Policy CH2: Principles of Good Urban Design

To assist in the creation, retention or enhancement of successful places in Crawley, development proposals will be required to:

- a) respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape character and protect and/or enhance heritage assets;
- b) create continuous frontages onto streets and spaces enclosed by development which clearly defines private and public areas;
- c) create public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe
- d) make places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport networks;
- e) provide recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around;

f) consider flexible development forms that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions; and

g) provide diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs. Applications must include information that demonstrates that these principles would be achieved, or not compromised, through the proposed development.

Policy CH3: Normal Requirements of All New Development

All proposals for development in Crawley will be required to:

a) Be based on a thorough understanding of the significance and distinctiveness of the site and its immediate and wider context and demonstrate how attractive or important features which make a positive contribution to the area would be integrated, protected and enhanced. These features include: views, landmarks, footpaths, rights of way, trees, green spaces, hedges, other historic landscape features or nature conservation assets, walls and buildings;

b) Be of high quality in terms of their urban, landscape and architectural design and relate sympathetically to their surroundings in terms of scale, density, height, massing, orientation, views, landscape, layout, details and materials.

c) Provide or retain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, including compliance with internal standards for new dwellings as set out in Policy CH5, and not cause unreasonable harm to the amenity of the surrounding area by way of overlooking, dominance or overshadowing, traffic generation and general activity, for example noise, smells and/or vibration;

d) Retain existing individual or groups of trees that contribute positively to the area and allow sufficient space for trees to reach maturity. Sufficient space should also be provided in private gardens that would not be overshadowed by tree canopies; and proposals should ensure that rooms within buildings would receive adequate daylight. Where a development is proposed or where trees would be lost to development, tree planting should accord with the standards set out in Policy CH6;

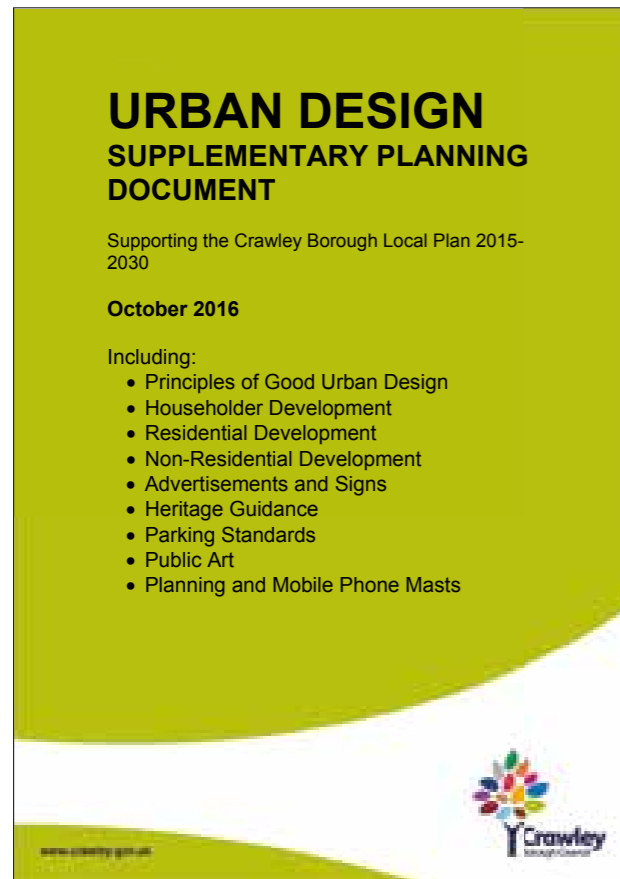
Policy CH5: Standards for All New Dwellings

Minimum space standards in line with National Space Standards.

Policy CH15: Listed Buildings and Structures

To recognise the value of Listed Buildings (including Listed Structures) within Crawley, the council will ensure that any proposed works to them are consistent with the character, appearance and heritage value of any statutory Listed Building/Structure, in line with national legislation, policy and guidance. Any changes must preserve or enhance the design and character of the Listed Building and have regard to its historic significance.

2.1 Planning Policy Context : Urban Design SPD



Crawley Borough Council also have the Urban Design SPD. This outlines all aspects of development including new residential development.

This document again reinforces the importance of new developments respecting the established character of the surrounding areas and how character assessments are a key part of any future application.

This document goes into more detail on the policy that can be used to assess future developments. Key elements such as the distancing between dwellings, heights, and amenity space standards are shown in more detail.

More detailed policies include the distances between new and existing dwellings at various heights. It states that there should be a distance of 21m between the rear of an existing house and the rear of a new dwelling when the new and existing dwellings are two storeys with pitched roofs.

When the new building is three storeys and a pitched roof the guidance is that the distance should be increased to 30m.

The SPD also highlights key local areas including the various Conservation Areas such as the Dyers Almshouses area. This development is typical of the much older Almshouses typology “The Dyers Almshouses are reminiscent of 19th Century workers’ villages. Set in a rectangular layout around a landscaped courtyard with integrated features such as walls and seating.”

This could be an excellent precedent for new low rise housing development centred around a landscaped courtyard.



Dyers Almshouses

Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document October 2016

Avoiding Overshadowing and Dominance

3.21 Rear extensions can create issues of overshadowing and overlooking with neighbouring properties.

Development Guidance:

3.22 Overshadowing or dominating neighbours’ houses and gardens can be avoided by keeping rear extensions relatively small as compared to the size of the main buildings and the gardens in which they stand.

3.23 Careful design will be necessary in order to ensure that neighbouring properties are not overlooked. What constitutes an acceptable size and design of extension depends on individual circumstances.

3.24 Maintaining an acceptable distance between the rear of dwellings can minimise the impact on the amenity of habitable dwellings located to the rear

Development Guidance:

3.25 One or two storey rear extensions will need to maintain a minimum distance of 21 metres between the rear windows of an opposing dwelling and the rear facing windows of the extension, in order to avoid any potential overlooking and privacy issues.

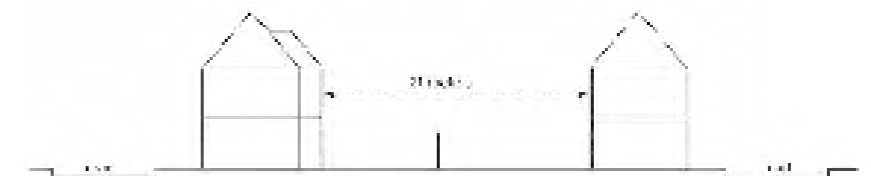


Figure 18: A minimum distance of 21 metres will need to be maintained between a rear extension of up to two storeys and the rear windows of an opposing dwelling. This will avoid potential privacy and overlooking issues.

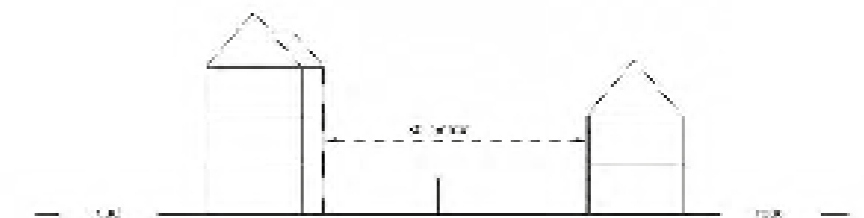
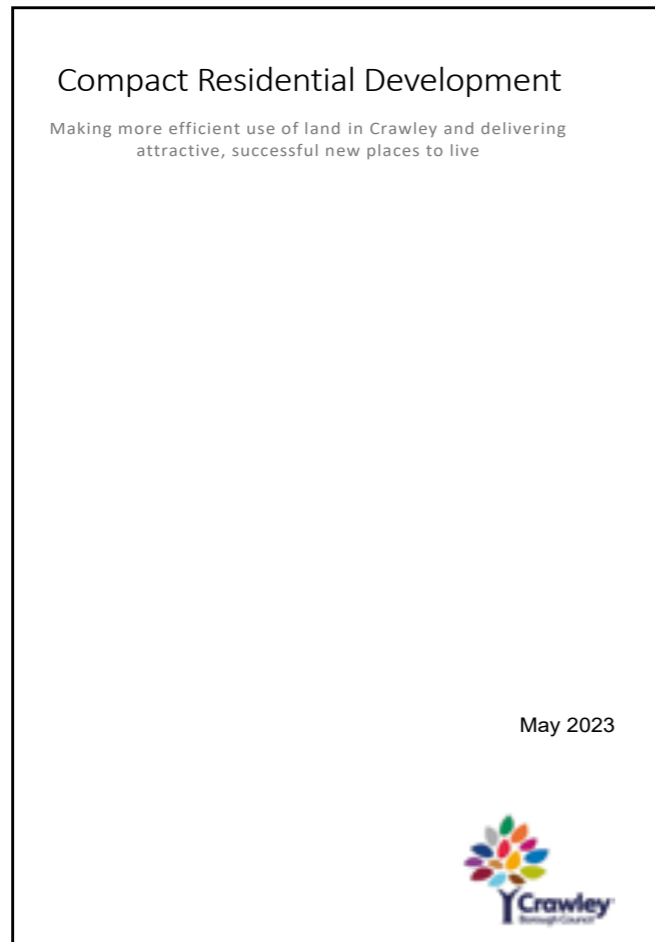


Figure 19: A minimum distance of 30 metres will need to be maintained between a rear extension of up to three or more storeys and the rear windows of an opposing dwelling. This will avoid potential privacy and overlooking issues.

2.2 Planning Policy Context : Compact Residential Development



In May 2023 Crawley Borough Council published their Compact Residential Development Guide.

This guide seeks to provide new housing within Crawley through the densification of existing neighbourhoods rather than through the construction of entirely new parts of town. The strategies outlined in this study are described as "gentle density".

Gentle density is described as a dense form of low rise housing with the focus on street based housing, communal landscaped spaces and buildings between 2-4 storeys.

The examples on the next pages are taken from this report that show their good examples of new developments that provide new homes through this gentle street based density.

This is also a reflect of recent National planning policy that seeks a lower rise form of development. Importantly this document also shows that through good design a lower rise housing development can both be more in keeping with the surrounding areas and also provide a large number of much needed new homes.

As a practice we specialise in just this form of new development. One that references and respects the existing area but also achieves higher density, lower rise housing in a street based form. The new homes are arranged as houses accessed from streets and not as towers with communal lobbies set within vague green areas.

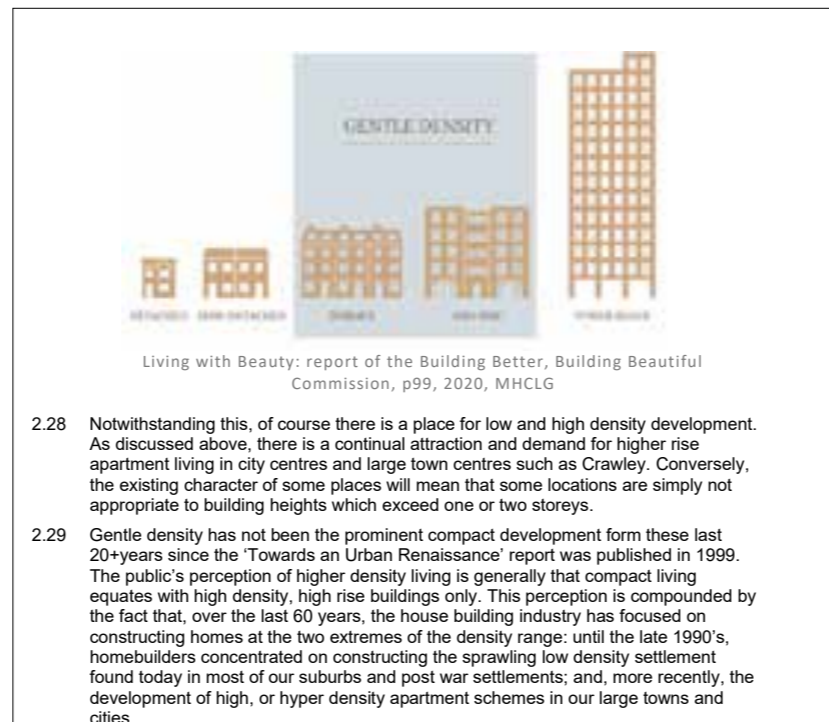
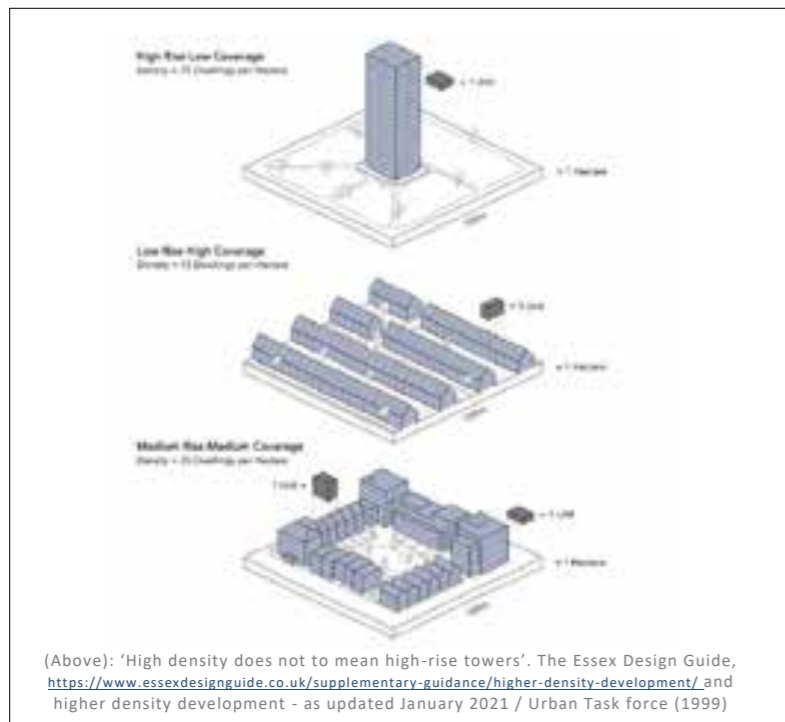
Therefore this is document is one of the most refreshing planning policy documents to read. We have only referred to small sections of it in this report but we could have referenced a considerable amount of the 129 pages.

"Intensification of existing land and compact urban form is not a choice. It is a requirement in national planning policy in order to meet development needs, to address the acknowledged Climate Emergency, and to reach best practice urban design standards."

"If carried out properly, it will improve the general quality of life for residents and result, in both new settlements and in existing places, in the transformation of some of our urban environments so that they both appear and function more like our much-loved traditional towns. Many of England's best urban areas are widely seen as attractive places in which to live yet have a compact form and relatively high density"

Compact Residential Development, p8, paragraph 1.2

2.2 Planning Policy Context : Compact Residential Development



Diagrams taken from the recent Compact Residential Development Guidance showing how the same density can be achieved through lower rise, street based housing as a single taller block

Examples of Moderate Density (Range: 60 to 90 dwellings per hectare)

Above: Commonwealth Drive, Crawley.

5.26 Unlike high-rise high-density schemes, the average building height shown in the images below is three storeys on average. The overall form of such places is comparable to historic towns such as Malmesbury, Wiltshire (see Chapter 1). Commonwealth Drive above is only a little denser than such places and as such the average height here is 3.5-4 storeys.

Moderate density illustrations taken from the Essex Design Guide (2018)

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Terraces at upper levels which allow for alternative, useable private outdoor space to be located for top level duplex dwellings.

Double storey of Private Car parking located under raised private garden decks.

Examples of good recent dense but low rise developments taken from the design guide. These show 2-4 storey housing developed around communal green spaces. The new homes have a "terraces at the upper levels which allow alternative, usable private outdoor space located for the top level of duplex dwellings."

Compact Residential Development

Making more efficient use of land in Crawley and delivering attractive, successful new places to live

May 2023

2.2 Planning Policy Context : Compact Residential Development

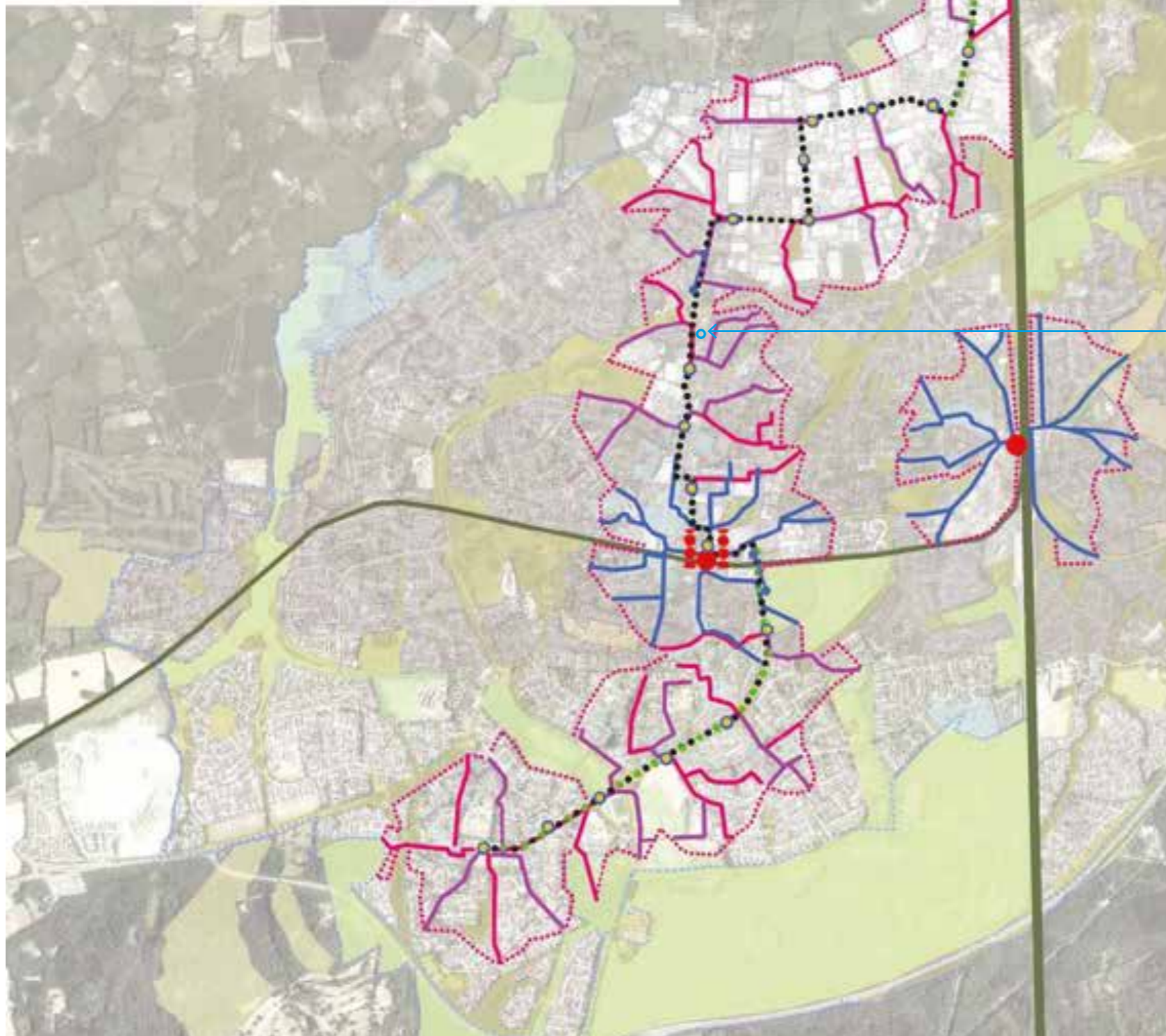
The Crawley Borough Compact Residential Development Guide outlines ways in which the potential density of new developments can be worked out.

The potential density of new developments is to be linked to the distance from the main transport routes around Crawley. These are shown on the diagram opposite.

Our site is located next to the fastway route 10 and within 150m of high frequency public transport links.

Please also see the Transport report from GTA for further information.

- Key:**
- [—] 800m /10 min. walk to Crawley or Three Bridges Train Stations.
 - [—] 640m /8 min. walk to existing segregated, high capacity, high frequency Fastway (Bus Rapid Transit) corridors.
 - [●] BRT stops. [—] dislocated BRT stop.
 - [—] Fastway route 10. [—] Fastway route 10 and 20.
 - [] Crawley Town Centre Multi Modal interchange.
 - [●] Three Bridges, Gatwick and Crawley train station.
 - [—] Brighton main line. [—] Arun valley line.
 - [●] Gatwick Airport coach station.



Site

High capacity, high frequency public transport. (Existing).

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