

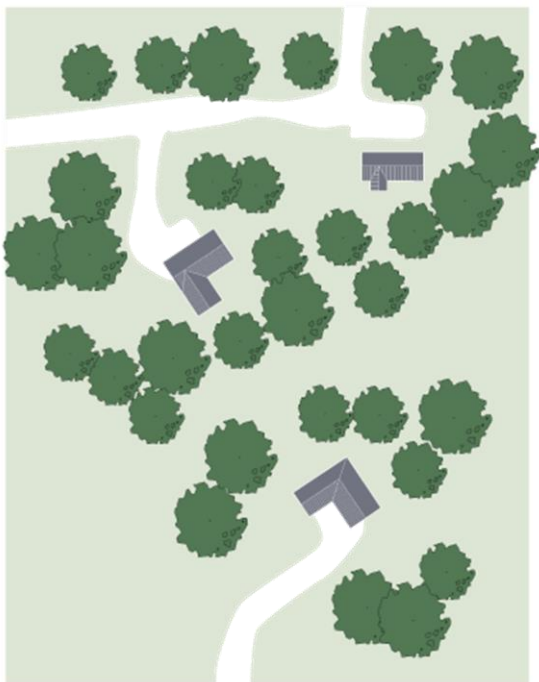
Rear Privacy

Residents have a higher expectation of privacy from the private or garden side of the dwelling. A low-density layout should be able to avoid any overlooking, but at normal urban densities (above 20 houses per hectare or eight per acre) some overlooking is inevitable.

Significant efforts should be made to avoid the overlooking of rear-facing living room windows. This may be achieved by:

- remoteness;
- design; or
- a combination of the two.

Privacy achieved through design is usually more effective.



Traditional arcadian privacy achieved by remoteness

Remoteness

Where habitable rooms are located at the rears of neighbouring properties and the rear facades face each other, a minimum spacing of 25m between the rears of the properties is required. An intervening fence or other visual barrier of above eye-level height (as viewed from the potential vantage point) should be incorporated to maintain an adequate level of privacy.

These requirements may differ between local planning authorities; applicants should consult their own local planning authority on this and other rear spacing requirements.

Where the rears of neighbouring properties face each other at an angle of more than 30°, the minimum spacing may be reduced to 15m from the nearest corner. These dimensions and limits should also be applied when considering future extensions with rear-facing windows. Again, applicants should always check with their local planning authority as to whether these dimensions will be acceptable.

Note: the above provisions also apply to the sides and flanks of houses containing habitable rooms with windows.

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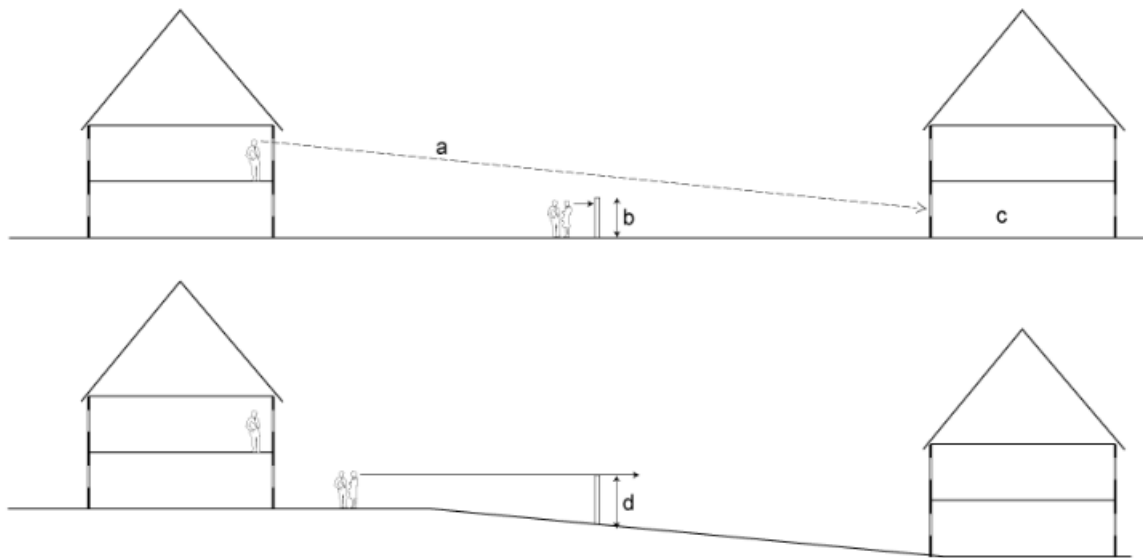
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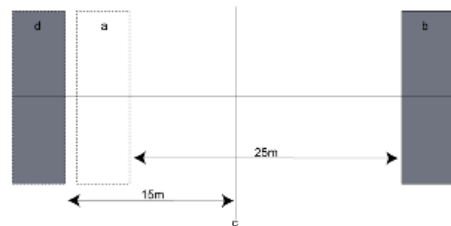
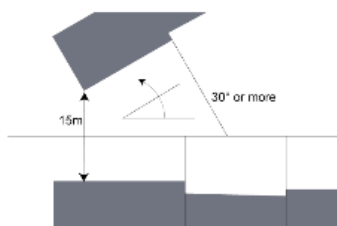
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a. Eye-to-eye distance b. Above eye-level screening c. Living rooms d. With slope, barrier has to be higher



Back of houses at more than 30 degrees to one another. Separation to be reduced to 15 metres from the nearest corner

a. New house b. Existing house c. Existing rear boundary d. New house to be set back at least 15m

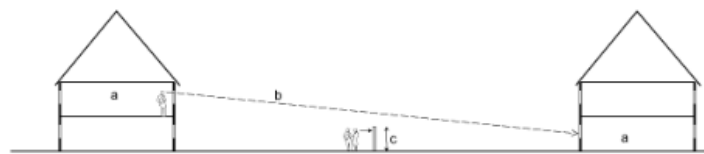
Where new development backs on to the rear of existing housing, existing residents are entitled to a greater degree of privacy to their rear garden boundary. Where the rear faces of the new houses are approximately parallel to those of the existing homes, the rear of the new

houses may not encroach any closer than 15m to an existing rear boundary – even though with a closer encroachment, 25m between the rears of the houses could still be achieved.

Where the rears of the new houses face those of the existing homes at an angle of more than 30°, this spacing may be decreased proportionately, down to a minimum of 1m from the boundary.

Where the rears of the new houses face those of the existing homes at an angle of 90° and where there are no windows in the flank end and where there are no problems related to overshadowing, the new houses may encroach up to 1m from the boundary. Please note, however, that some local planning authorities may require greater spacing.

Upper-storey flats can cause problems due to overlooking from living rooms. Any rear-facing upper-storey living room should therefore be no closer than 35m from the rear of any other dwelling. It should, however, be acknowledged that oblique views over side boundaries from upper-storey living rooms can also be a problem; this should be safeguarded against.



a. Living rooms b. Eye-to-eye distance 35m c. Above eye-level screening

Design

The rears of houses may be positioned more closely together than stipulated above if one or both of the houses concerned is designed so as not to overlook the other. This would require an intervening fence or other visual barrier set above eye-level between facing ground-floor windows. It would also prohibit rear-facing, upper-storey bedroom or living room windows.

There are several ways to achieve this:

- Upper-storey windows may face in other directions.
- Projecting rear wings may be used to block the view.
- Accommodation may be zoned internally so that only bathrooms and landings provided with above eye-level windows are rear-facing.

An above eye-level secondary window may also be used in a bedroom located on a privacy-sensitive elevation. In the case of an elevation with no windows, the house could be

positioned on the boundary provided it did not cause unacceptable overshadowing of a neighbouring house or garden.