

Local Distinctiveness Analysis

Features of rural buildings and the spaces around them

1.4

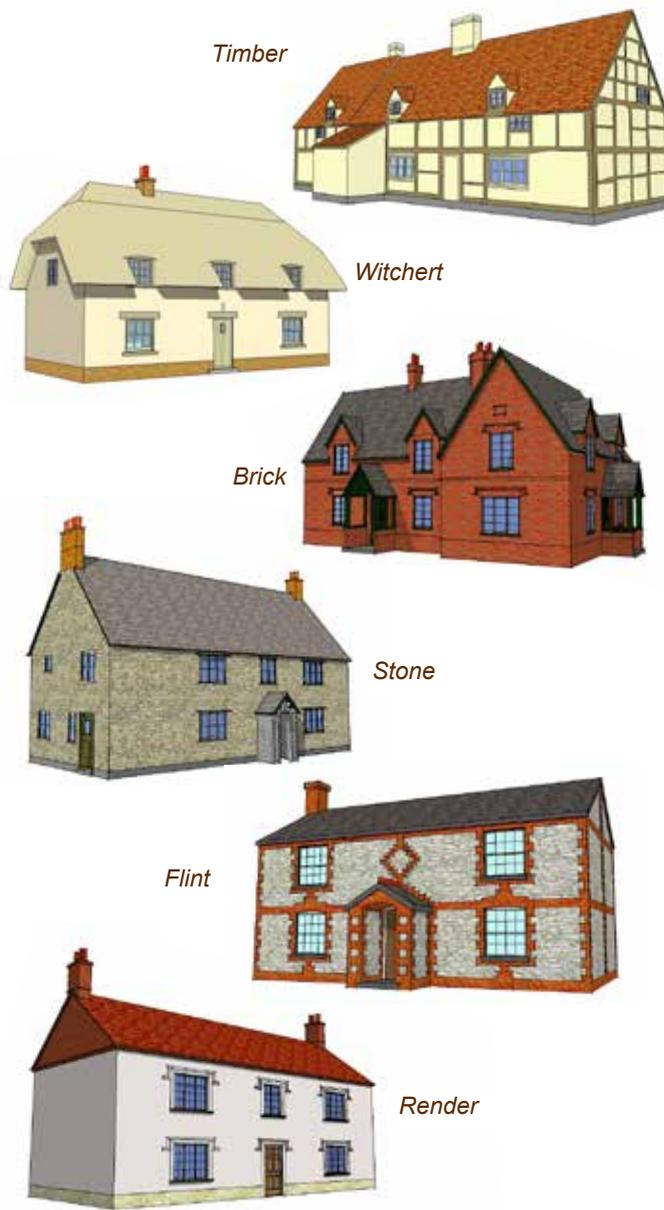
This leaflet supplements the preparation of Design and Access Statements and supports the Council's Design Guides.

Government Planning Policy Statements emphasise the need to maintain and reinforce local identity. In order to complement the character of villages through new development it is necessary to appreciate aspects of the architectural form and layout patterns that make them memorable.

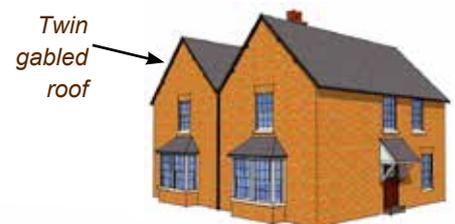
Development in the rural areas typically exhibits the following characteristics :-

1 Form

Earlier houses tend to have a simple linear shape. They often have full gables, relatively steep roof pitches over a limited span between front and back walls and chimneys which punctuate roof lines.



Even large traditional houses do not normally exceed 7 metre depths and these buildings are rarely over 8 metres to the ridge

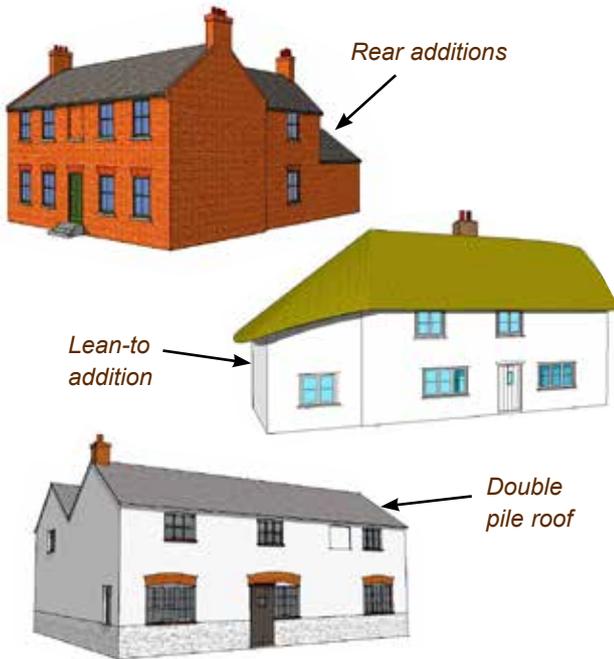


Despite variety of building materials there are common traits in terms of limited span depth and simplicity of form

Terraces are one of the few traditional housing types that can be deeper than they are wide, although as a group of houses they too have a linear shape

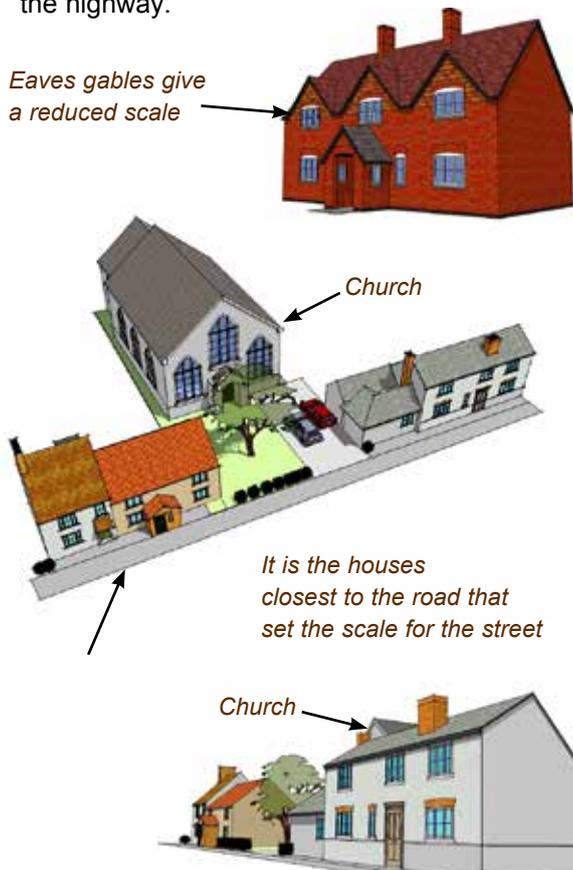
2 Size

Where greater depth was required it was achieved by a lesser wing set at right angles to the main house, by a lean-to arrangement or by a repeated structure that abutted the longer side of the first to form a double pile roof.



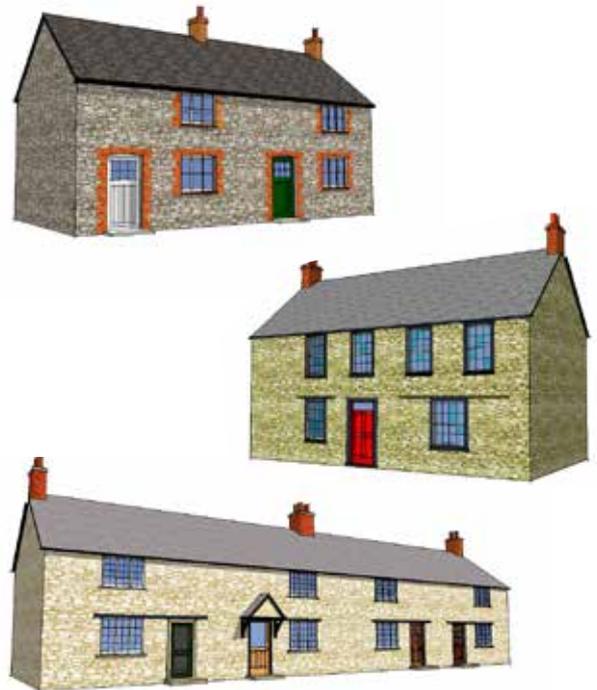
3 Scale

It is not so much ridge heights that determine domestic scale as eaves heights, limited span depths and the position of buildings relative to the highway.

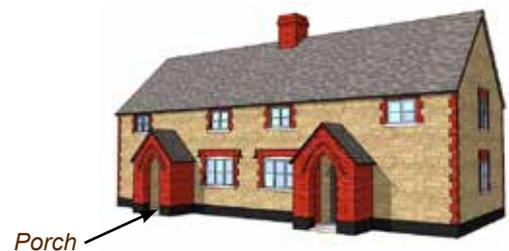


4 Composition

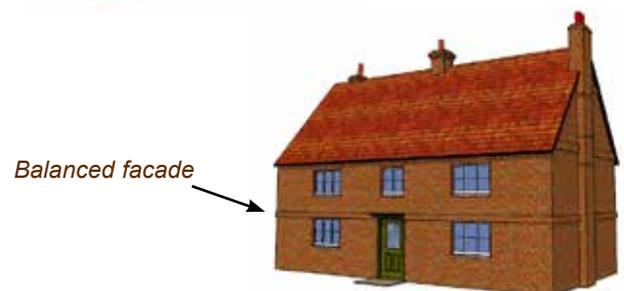
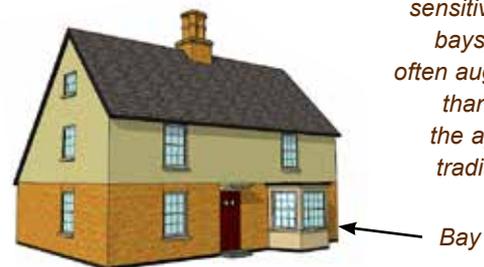
After the 18th century most houses have a degree of symmetry and entrance doorways were often a point of focus. Windows were usually placed one above the other and set away from corners.



Stone houses are characterised by a high mass of wall area relative to openings



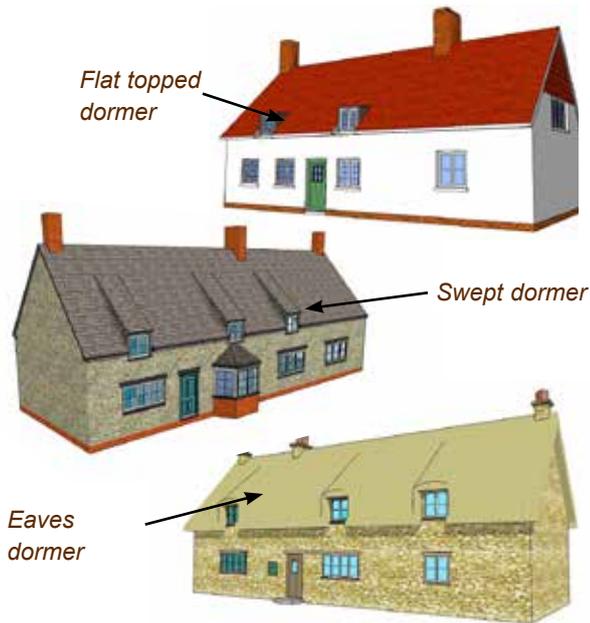
Originally flat fronted, sensitively designed bays and porches often augment, rather than detract from the appearance of traditional houses



On most older houses the front door is a focal point

5 Roofs

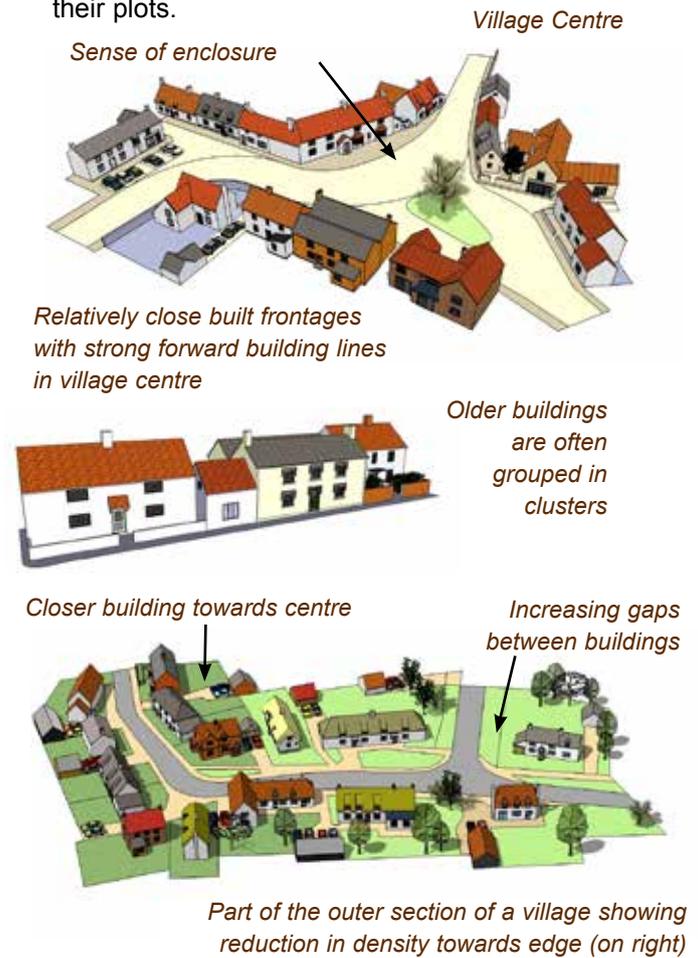
Ridge chimney stacks, uninterrupted eaves, open rafters and plain verges are common. Dormers are not generally prominent and tend to be set in the lower part of the roof slope.



Dormers are traditionally smaller than principal openings in the façade below

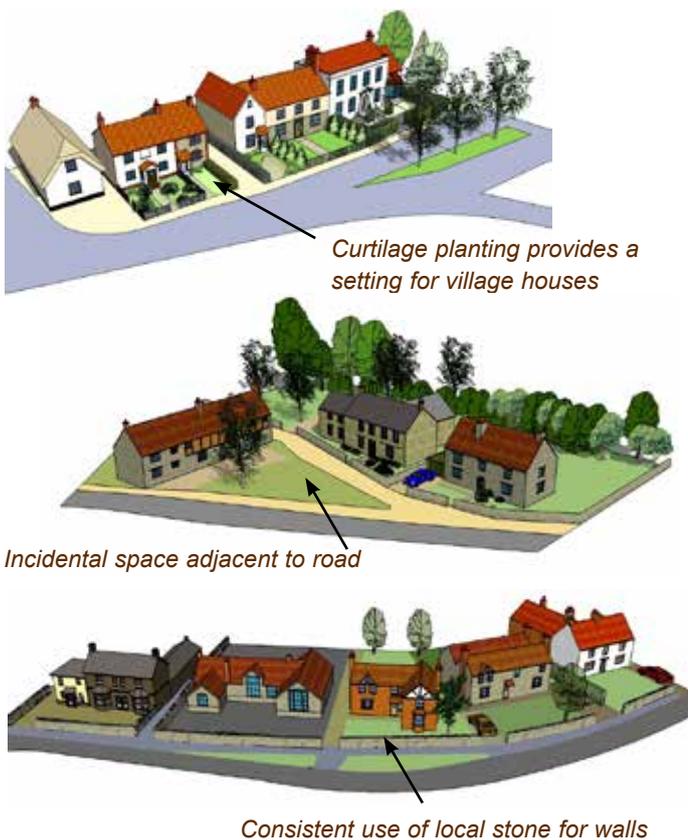
7 Density

In village centres, buildings tend to be close together and the pavements narrow. Towards the village edge, buildings tend to sit more centrally on their plots.



6 Setting

Enclosure without oppressiveness, streets often have variations in width and incidental verges, banks or greens and a leafy character. Walls, hedges, fences or railings provide a setting for buildings.



8 Parking

Access between buildings often reflects former agricultural or industrial uses that now provide off street car parking space.

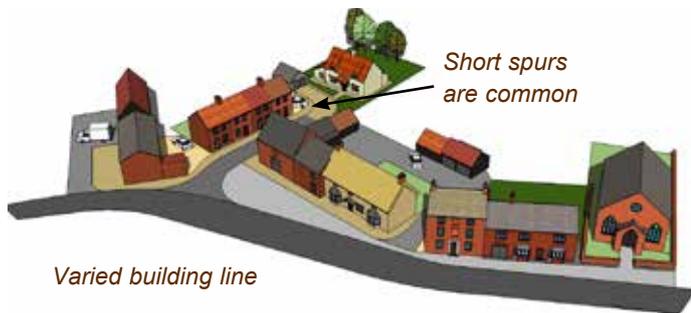


9 Informality

Most villages have developed organically over time. Buildings can be parallel, gable on to the road or at any point between to create enclosure and intimacy.



Houses contain space, with longer views avoiding any sense of claustrophobia



Short spurs are common

Varied building line

Patterns of development are unique to each village



Broader space

Trees soften central space

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10 Levels

In the past buildings often followed the lie of the land giving stepped rooflines and even individual buildings work with contours through intermediate floor levels.

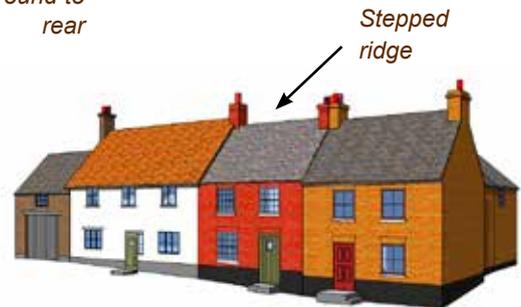
Split levels between front and rear



Falling ground to rear



Rising ground to rear



Stepped ridge

Slope parallel to ridge

The Council's 'Building Materials' design guide sets out local construction details and the 'New Houses in Towns and Villages' design guide indicates how the points in this leaflet might be applied.

For an audio or large print version of this leaflet, please phone 01296 585454

Planning
AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL
The Gateway Gatehouse Road Aylesbury Bucks HP19 8FF
Tel: 01296 585679 Text Relay: Prefix telephone number with 18001
email: devcon@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

