



Crudwell Parish

Design Guide 2018



A guide to new development within the Parish of Crudwell.



Introduction

If an observer was asked to describe Crudwell, they would probably suggest the parish was characterised by traditional Cotswold stone 18th and 19th century housing. Yet on closer examination it is clear that the dominant housing stock is post 19th century dwellings built of concrete blocks and man made roofing products. Whilst many of the historic structures were originally built to serve commercial, agricultural, educational and religious purposes.

The population increases of the 19th and 20th century has resulted in the settlement profile outlined above, and is typical of many settlements across the UK, large numbers of new dwellings being built around historic centres, with

commerce moving out to dedicated business parks, and the historic commercial/agricultural buildings converted to further support the demand for housing.



The question then should be - why would one consider Crudwell to be a settlement of historic traditional housing, when that is clearly not the case?



Firstly most of the 20th century housing has been carefully implemented, such there is little sense of it, or its scale as you pass through the community, relatively modest estates of typically fewer than 20 houses have been designed with modest frontages to the principle routes through Crudwell. This is very important.

Secondly the historic buildings that have been converted to domestic use, are generally of a scale that is in keeping with the residential dwellings, therefore the conversion of these buildings to residential use results in housing that sits comfortably within its setting.



The design, layout and materials used in the 20th century housing in Crudwell, is generally unfortunate. The demand for housing in this period triggered the growth of house building corporations, building uniform house types across the nation, with scant regard to the local vernacular, our communities 20th century housing reflects this period.

The pressure on housing in the 21st century, is predicted to be as significant, or more so than that experienced in the 20th century, therefore we have to work harder and smarter, if we are to preserve the character of this historic settlement. This design guide has been designed to assist in that endeavour.



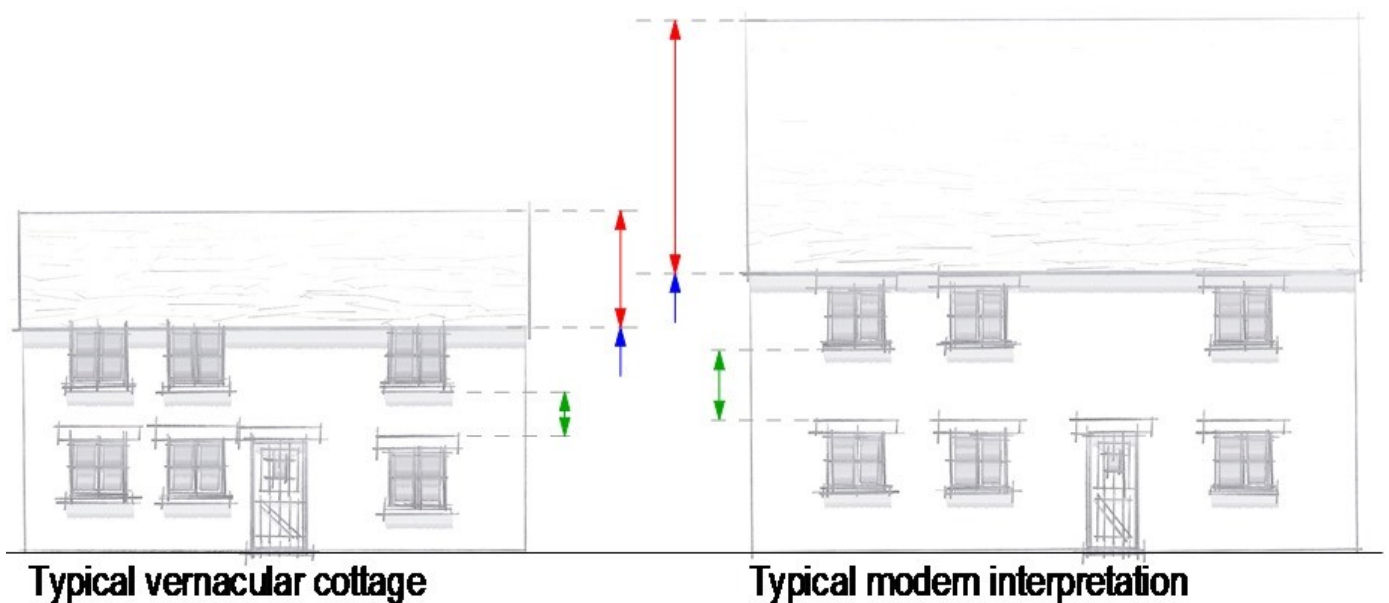
What is the local Vernacular?

Massing

Due to the constraints forced upon pre 20th century house builders, buildings of this period typically had room sizes of little more than 10ft x 10ft (3m x 3m), cottages were typically formed with two rooms on the ground floor and two on the first (the classic two up two down), with walls of ave. 500mm thick it produced a plan depth of 4m. With ceiling heights of around 2m, the eave height would have been no more than 4m.

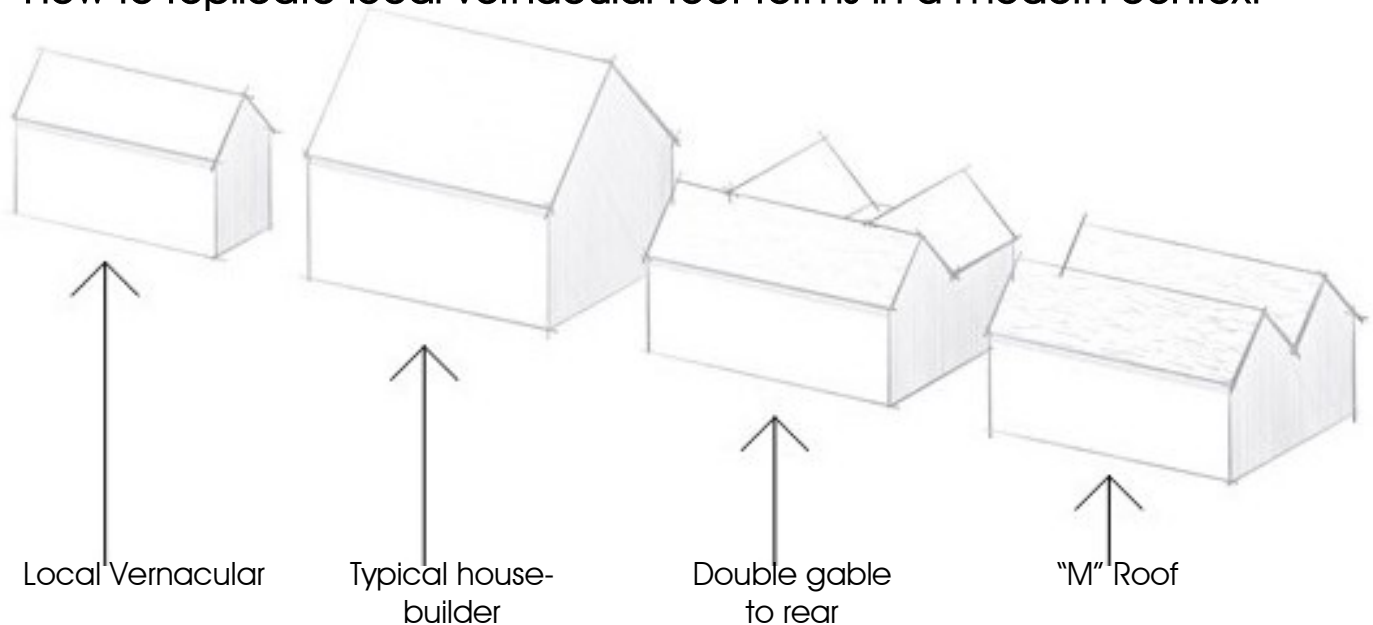
Local roof pitches, dictated by the minimum effective pitch of stone states, ranged from 42.5 degrees to 52.5 degrees, so a plan depth of 4m, roof pitch of 45 degrees produces a building that has an eave of 4m and a ridge height of 6m. This 2/3 to 1/3 ratio is critical in recreating the Cotswold vernacular.

Modern houses enjoy much larger rooms, forcing a much greater plan depth, typically 6 to 8 metres. Therefore roof slopes are up to 4m high, eaves heights have also crept up, typically now 5m. This results in overbearing roof slopes.



With a bit of thought, and careful design, the larger plan depths of modern dwellings can be accommodated, without impacting on the wall to roof massing, by using multi roof surfaces such as an "M" roof, or rear gables.

How to replicate local vernacular roof forms in a modern context



Because, on average, people are taller than they were ceiling heights have grown and as stated above this results in a raised eave height, it also affects the massing of the external walls, the ratio of glazed area against solid wall is reduced, with windows spaced too far apart, and uncomfortably large areas of walling.

To balance these issues, one has to accept compromises (as we do if we live in historic buildings), first floor rooms may be partially in the roof space, with windows set very low in the rooms, remember this may only apply to elevations that face the public spaces.



Materials



Vernacular buildings are, by definition, made of locally sourced materials. In the case of the Crudwell this is principally stone and timber. Stone would have been quarried from very close to the site, where it would have been weathered before tooling it ready for use. The local limestone was also used to produce lime for render and limewash.

We are fortunate that many quarries now exist providing stone of varying qualities to the area. Note that machine split Cotswold stone was never a feature of the Cotswold vernacular, we advise looking further than the cheapest quarries. Stone walls should always be laid and pointed in lime mortar and never cement mortar, cement mortar will cause a breakdown of the stone from frost damage.

Render, particularly rough cast, is a feature of the region and is an acceptable material in modest quantities (rear walls for example). Likewise timber cladding, ideally oak, untreated and allowed to go silver grey naturally.

Our traditional stone slates are staggeringly expensive, and again the modern methods of quarrying produces a less than authentic product. Good quality imitation stone slates, are a good alternative and considered acceptable to the community.



Fenestration

It is often said that the windows are the eyes of a building (does that make the door its nose?), they are without doubt one of the most important features of a building, and regrettably one that is so often gotten wrong.

Traditional windows were of simple design and construction, often made on site with a make shift joinery facility. Modern windows are far more sophisticated, offering a higher performance through multiple rebates, draught proofing, multi sheet glazing, and highly machined elements such as integral cills.

Traditional windows were by comparison leaky, both in terms of air and water. To help reduce their exposure to the elements they were typically set back into the wall by about 4" (100mm).



Modern windows, because of their integral cills are typically set 1 ½" (40mm) from the face of the wall.

Traditional windows with their simple single rebate design have a flush front surface, with the opening casements sitting on the same plane as the outer frame. Modern windows with their multiple rebates often have casements that sit proud of the frame..

Traditional windows had a casement fixed in every frame opening, as this made glazing easier, this results in perfectly balanced elevations, whereas modern windows have no casements where the glass is fixed, resulting in unbalanced elevations.



ing the second world war.

Traditional style windows are readily available, but designed with modern rebating and seals along with double or triple glazing, they just take effort to find (they don't come knocking on your door) good painted hardwood windows of this style will last 4 or 5 times longer than plastic windows, cost little or no more and will enhance the value and appearance of the property.



The difference between modern windows and traditional windows is like night and day. One well known commentator is quoted as saying that the plastic window industry has done more damage to Britain's housing stock, than the Luftwaffe did during the second world war.



Roofs

You may be noticing now that the Cotswold vernacular is about simplicity, and this is never more true than with roofs. Modern houses have fascia boards, soffits, and often barge boards.

These are generally alien to our local style – a simple clean eave



overhang of about 100mm, with the stonework coming up to meet the underside of the tiles, and the same on the verge, this time a 50mm overhang and the tile ends pointed with lime mortar (no undercloak). Just keep it simple.

Traditional roof face connections would have involved “swept”

valleys and leaded or stone tiled hips. These are both incredibly expensive options. Use a tightly cut valley, with a gap of no more than 20mm between tiles. Use square ridge and hip tiles.



Placement

Pre 20th century homes were generally built by employers for staff, so they were rarely extravagant, but were functional. To maximise the land usage the cottages were normally set to the front of the site, with reasonably long rear gardens to enable residents to grow or breed their own food. The result of this was cottages that were normally built on the side of the highway, invariably linked or terraced and with long gardens.

The 20th century trend towards greater privacy, and the need to consider traffic noise, has resulted in houses that are generally set centrally on their plot, ideally detached. This results in a very different street scene to the traditional.

To minimise the impact that new housing has on the historic character of Crudwell, new developments should be discrete, with either no or minimal visibility from the principle routes and walkways through the village. The Ridgeway, off Tuners Lane is an excellent example of a recent development that has minimal visual impact on the character of the settlement, yet enjoys a central location.



New Build

In building new homes for the 21st Century, it is important to understand the local vernacular in understanding the key characteristics, it is possible to design modern buildings that reflect and respect the historic buildings in Crudwell. This will always be preferable to building a poor copy. As stated previously, housing development in the 20th

century was characterised by large regional or national companies building uniform housing across the country, to designs and site layouts that maximised returns for the contractor. This is all fully understandable. The experience of the



Crudwell residence is that less harm is done to the community, if the scale of each development is restricted in size, we have several developments of around 10 houses, such scale, for any single development, is generally considered appropriate.



Finally

The local community welcomes new development and we would like to see this vibrant community continue to develop in a manner that preserves, reflects and where possible enhances the historic character of our built environment, we request all developers work with us to ensure we can all be proud of our contributions to this community.





