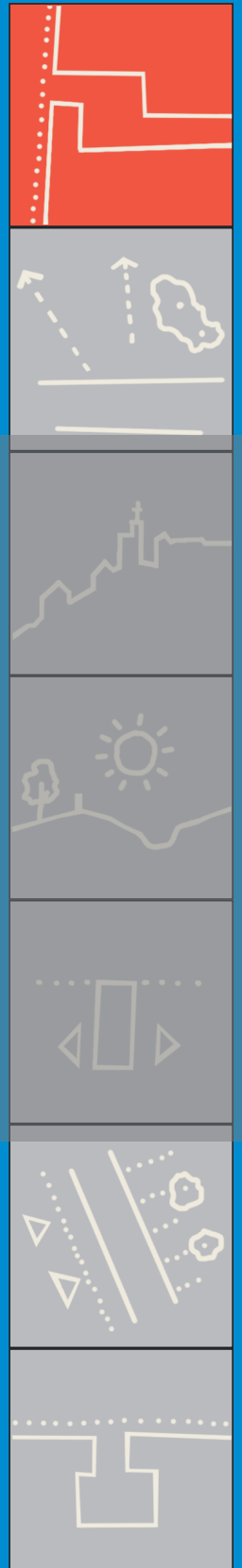


# Housing Typology (3 of 7): **Closes, Wynds and Mews**



## Introduction



^ Circus Lane, Edinburgh  
(image: cyocum, [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#))

This piece looks at the role of contemporary closes, wynds and mews, re-interpretations of Scottish urban forms. Our aim is to show the linkage between design of the house and the place of which it forms a part.

In urban Scotland, closes and wynds emerged behind the market street as the narrow routes between plots of land. These slender routes, with their closely-bound adjoining buildings and boundary walls, form a distinctive Scottish typology. In later Georgian streets mews had a similar function of providing the infrastructure to Georgian townhouses, with mews now re-appropriated for compact urban living. Such ancillary streets and lanes are often the interstices between busy streets and blocks of terraced townhouses. Surviving examples have proved adaptable and conducive to a mix of uses.

However we identify here two distinct new models emerging in the search for sustainable forms of development and placemaking:

- as infill within and between historic urban blocks in cities
- as a tier in the street hierarchy of new housing

Here we illustrate built examples where architects and urban designers have sought to reconcile contemporary living with the wider roles and functions of the individual house that are integral to placemaking.

## Roles of closes, wynds and mews

The success of this form can be attributed to some of the useful roles it plays:

### 1. Economic Value

- associated with efficient, compact, high density forms
- adaptable and accessible for a mix of uses

### 2. Townscape Value

- providing for distinct secondary routes and linkages
- giving more space for walking routes, cycle routes and car parking
- compatible with indigenous architecture and townscape models

### 3. Cultural Value

- helps create more attractive/vibrant neighbourhoods
- convenience of proximity to bigger streets and urban facilities
- bringing tenure diversity through small scale residential infill

### 4. Environmental Value

- an efficient land use
- maximizing use of brownfield land

## Viewing this data

Drawing and mapping were prepared by Architecture and Design Scotland in 2013, based on material supplied by the architects involved.



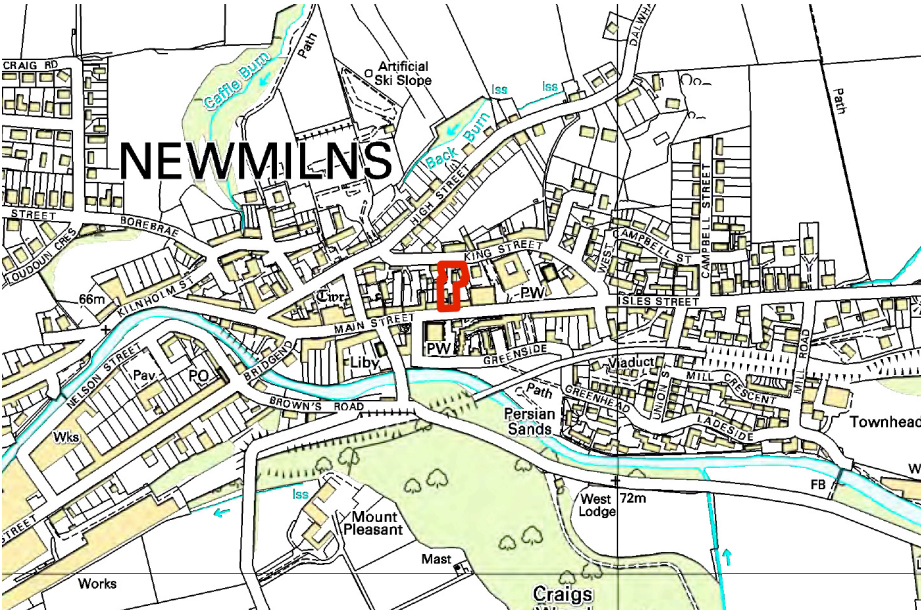
^ Housing reinforcing a walking route

# Closes and Wynds

## Murdoch Nesbitt Court, Newmilns

This new housing demonstrates that narrow courts and closes can be achieved in the context of current planning legislation for frontage standards, parking and roads standards.

Credits  
Design: Page\Park Architects  
Images: Page\Park Architects

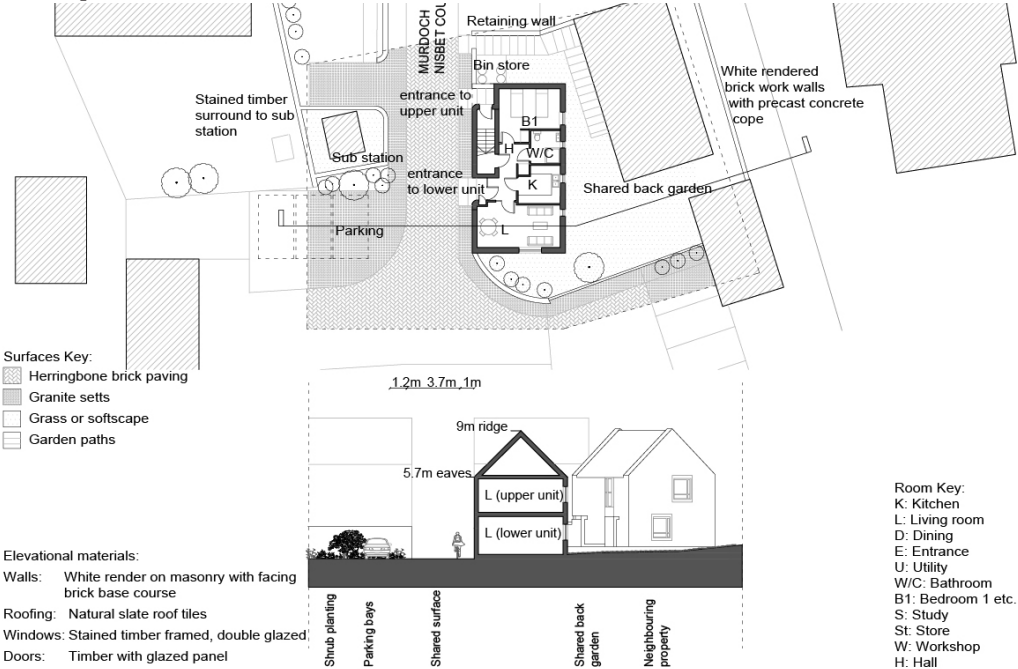


^ Location plan



^ Site plan

### Detail plan and section





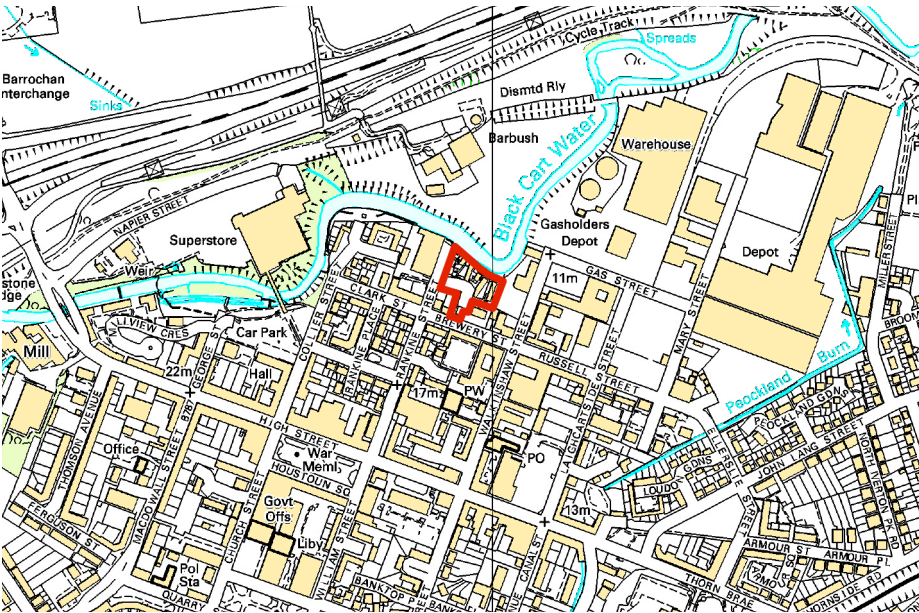
^ View from street to landscape

# Lilybank Wynd, Johnstone

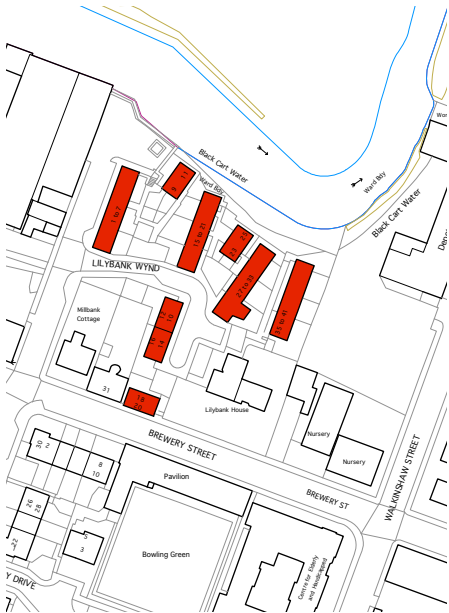
This new housing is another example of narrow courts and closes achieved in the context of current planning legislation and roads standards.

The linear form of the housing highlights routes and paths between buildings, a distinctive response to topography and views over the Black Cart Water into the countryside.

Credits  
Design: Page\Park Architects  
Image: Page\Park Architects

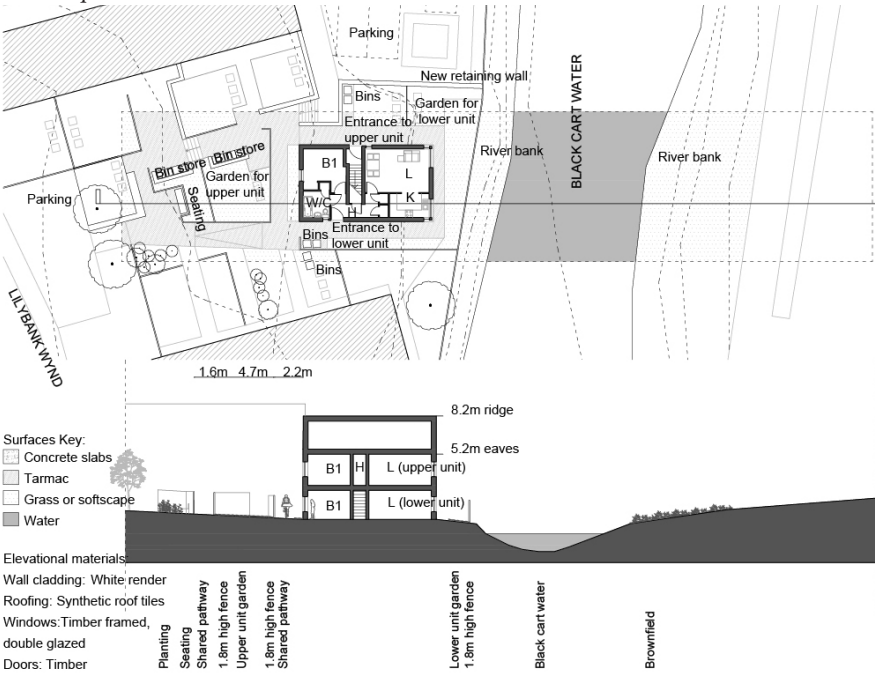


^ Location plan



^ Site plan

∨ Detail plan and section





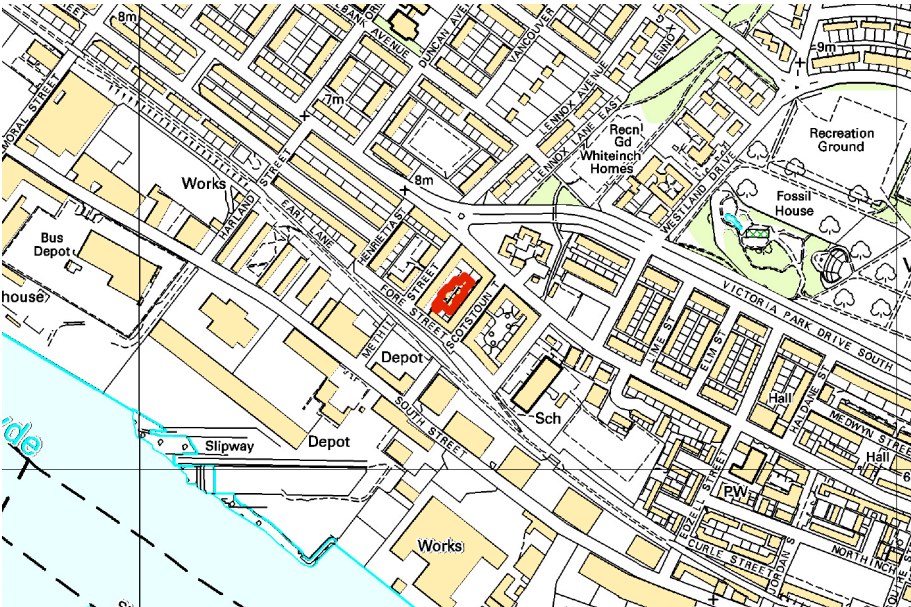
^ Creating an attractive place in an urban setting

# Mews

## Fore Street, Scotstoun

This compact set of mews houses and courtyard gardens demonstrates that infill is possible on a heavily overlooked urban site in Scotstoun, that building proximities can be resolved and attractive and safe garden spaces created.

Credits  
 Design: Hypostyle Architects  
 Image: Hypostyle Architects

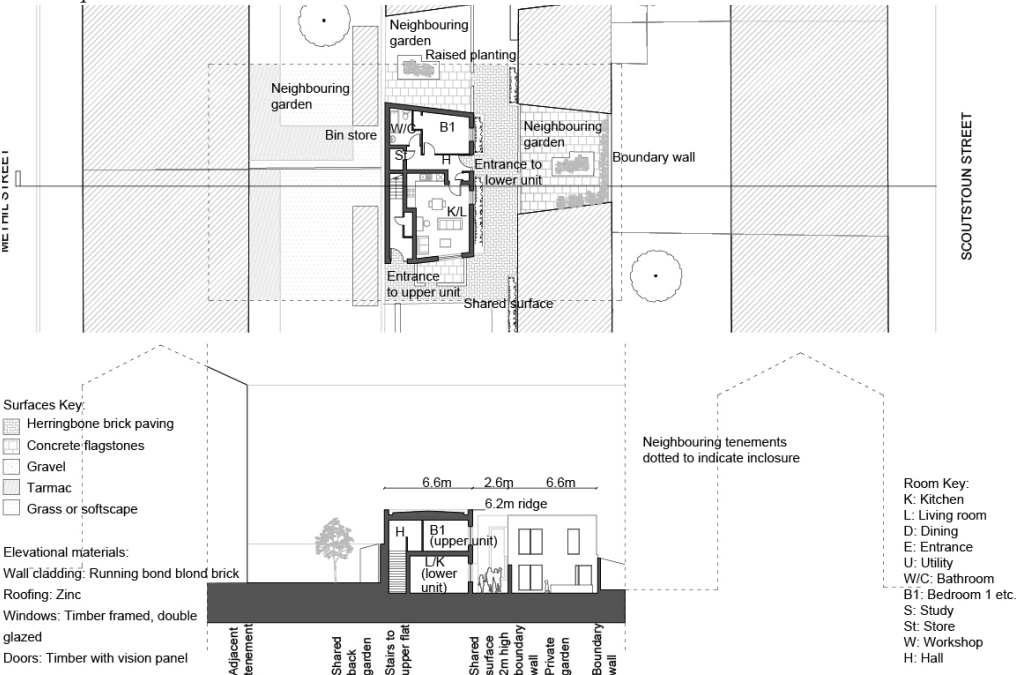


^ Location plan



^ Site plan

### Detail plan and section





## ***Woolmet Place, Greendykes Road***

A modern 2-storey mews street planned as a more informal interior street set behind an outer shell of 4-storey urban frontages marking the main thoroughfares in a network of new streets.

Attractive paving, contained parking, street trees, hedges and seats create a restful environment where houses and front doors open directly into a form of extended shared yard space.

*Credits*

*Design: Austin-Smith:Lord*

*Images: A&DS*



^ Parking is integrated into the street

^ Children can play in the street



## ***Dublin Street Lane, Edinburgh***

An example of high-density infill making efficient use of the scarce resource of land in central Edinburgh. A demonstration of positioning of buildings responsive to the hidden urban context and the natural site topography behind the Georgian townhouses.

Buildings are organized around a shared common yard space.

*Credits*

*Design: Richard Murphy Architects*

*Image: Richard Murphy Architects*

^ Parking in the common courtyard space



^ Detailed plan



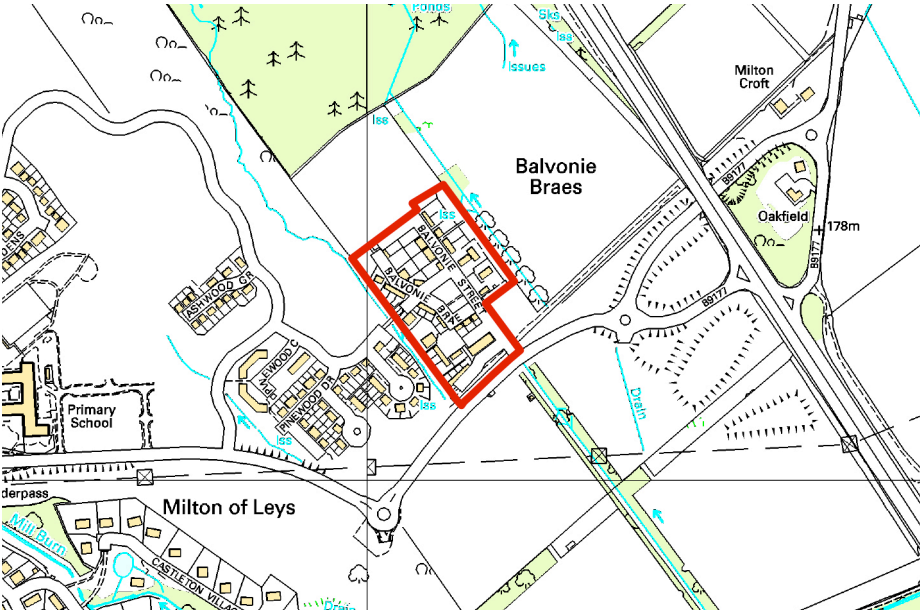
^ Corner house at lane crossing

# Lane

## Balvonie Street, Inverness

Built alongside a path leading into the countryside this corner house demonstrates how to turn a corner from street to lane, with an open-ended porch, a gable window and 'in-between' parking.

Credits  
 Design (building): Malcolm Fraser Architects  
 Design (swale bridge): AREA  
 Image: AREA

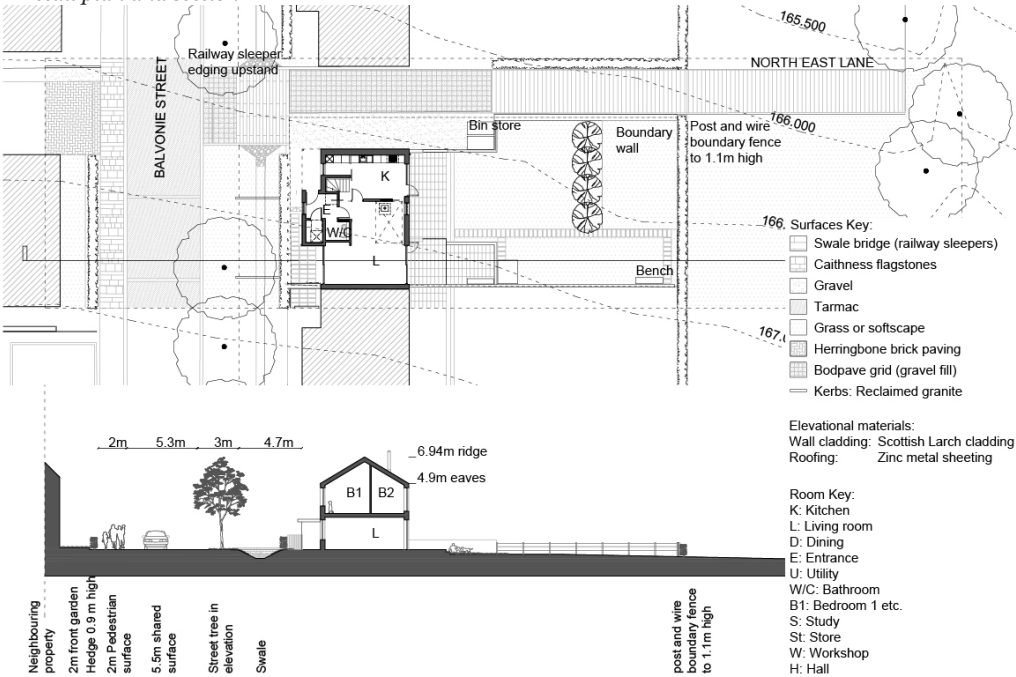


^ Location plan



^ Site plan

### Detail plan and section



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