Balance and proportion are achieved between the existing houses and the buildings of the new county complex by the use of scale manipulation. The larger masses of the new buildings are provided with the proportionally larger public lawn and wider sidewalks. The distance between the residences and the complex buildings is great enough to distort this scale difference.

It should be noted that formality of the entrance onto the porch from the lawn steps is emphasized by gable articulations at the porch roof between the buildings. This is done to avoid overemphasis of the individual buildings.

Images:
(left) Photo of 1"=30'-0" scale model – view along the length of the public lawn toward the rear of the existing Courthouse.
(above right) Photo of 1"=30'-0" scale model – view of new and existing Courthouses along King Street.
(below right) Photo of 1"=30'-0" scale model of lawn from above.
The characteristics of the different county functions to be provided in this complex can best be understood as secured, restricted, and open.

Some security requirements are best met by a structure of heavy masonry and/or concrete. These spaces are relatively tight in experience and rigidly divided into regimented controlled spaces. The functionality of these spaces (i.e., sheriff’s office, court chambers, jail) calls for a secured character, reassuring to the community.

Other functions [i.e. Department of Environmental Management and Education Department buildings] are less secure but still must maintain some restricted quality to the spaces. Here, the same structural characteristics of security apply to the building along its perimeter but the central area is large and open. Steel framing and glass panels spanning the central space are supported by the mass of the securely constructed perimeter walls.

Finally, open and inviting functions [i.e. Social Services and Health Department buildings] are best served by larger expanses of light gage steel framing and glass panels across the exterior. Secure spaces, those necessary for privacy, are still required but reduced in number.

With the new Courthouse function provided to balance that of the existing Courthouse, buildings of secure character cluster at the south end of the public lawn. From this point the different buildings of the complex experientially open as they extend along the edge of the lawn, the most open being along Queen Street.

Images:
(above left) Section sketch at buildings parallel to lawn.
(above right) Photo, by author, of existing neighborhood house.
(left center) Schematic character axon sketch of secure building.
(left below) Schematic character plasticene model of secure building.
(center center) Schematic character axon sketch of restricted building.
(center below) Schematic character plasticene model of restricted building.
(right center) Schematic character perspective sketch of open building.
(right below) Schematic character plasticene model of open building.
As will be demonstrated, the design for buildings with restricted access, those along the central portion of the complex, is the focus of more detailed development. Specifically, the design of the Department of Environmental Management building is examined for its necessary balance of secured and open spaces.

The masses of the large brick chimneys consistently found on each side of the houses in Edenton visually frame these houses. In this same way, the new masonry masses visually frame and physically support the relatively light framing of the central space of the D.E.M. building. The roof is bisymmetrical, formal and raised above the side masses. This allows for natural light to penetrate the space from between the framing members.

Images:
(above left) Section sketch of building construct.
(above right) Photo by author of existing neighborhood house.
(right center) Section sketch at building - parallel to lawn.
(below) Schematic character plan sketches demonstrating flexibility of tectonic responses to desired openness. The secure building is on the left, the restricted buildings are in the middle and the open building is on the left.
Single-story masses at the sides of the D.E.M. building visually brace the higher central space walls. These basilica-like masses draw attention from the structure of the roof and emphasize the depth of the supporting walls. Challenged by the construction of the secure perimeter spaces of this building, the intermediate wall common to both the perimeter and the central spaces takes on many purposes. For the two different spaces it serves as structural support, space delineator and light filter.

Images:
(above left) Section perspective drawings at building perimeter wall construction parallel to lawn.
(above right) Sketch section at building parallel to lawn.
(below left) Drawing of rear elevation.
(below right) Section sketch at building perpendicular to lawn.
At the front of the single-story masses are raised masonry masses which serve as the borders between the open spaces and the formal entrances of the buildings themselves. These masses serve to hold the stairs and elevators which connect the public porch to the parking area below. Since the porch is articulated between the buildings, locating the stairs and elevators here also emphasizes that entry is made from the lawn or parking area onto the porch, not to the individual buildings.

Images:
(above left) Perspective sketch of building perimeter wall.
(above right) Photo, by author, of Edenton house.
(below left) Sketch section at building stair parallel to lawn.
(below right) Perspective sketch of porch entrance and stair tower mass.