

Household Alterations and Extensions



Local Development Framework
Supplementary Planning Document
Consultation Draft


Sunderland
City Council

Household Alterations and Extensions



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Summary of Points

Before you start:

Find out from the council whether a planning application is required. If you subsequently alter your proposals in any way, you should consult the council again.

Get advice if you need it:

If necessary, get skilled technical advice from an experienced architect or surveyor. They can design, prepare drawings and make an application on your behalf.

Follow the design guidance:

The notes provided will help towards a successful planning application and a good design solution. Following the advice may also lead to an early approval of your planning application.

Look at your surroundings:

Ensure your proposal respects the context of your neighbourhood.

Detailing and use of materials:

Ensure that your proposal fits in with the detailed design and materials of your existing house.

Be a good neighbour:

Consult your neighbour if your proposal may affect their home or privacy, or if you will need to gain access for building work or maintenance.

Submit full information:

Support your application with clear, accurate drawings showing the existing buildings and what is proposed, any adjoining or neighbouring buildings, and notes to show existing and proposed materials. Photographs are also recommended to support the submitted plans. A full list of requirements to make your application valid is available from the council.





NOTICE TO ADVERTISE
THE SALE OF THE
PROPERTY OF THE
SUNDERLAND DISTRICT
SOFT CLUB
BY AUCTION
ON WEDNESDAY
THE 14TH DAY OF
MAY 2013 AT 11 AM
AT THE AUCTION ROOMS
100, MARKET STREET
SUNDERLAND

SUNDERLAND
DISTRICT
SOFT CLUB

1.0 Introduction

This Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out design guidance for home owners on the design of house extensions and/or alterations. It is one of a number of documents produced by Sunderland City Council to encourage high standards of design quality in the built environment. The design guide has been produced in recognition of the visual and amenity impact that extensions can have on the quality of individual houses and the street scene in general.

1.1 Purpose of the document

This guidance aims to set out detailed design guidance on alterations and extensions and is intended to help achieve consistency in determining planning applications, whilst allowing for local characteristics, good design and the effect of previous decisions to be taken into account. The document aims to encourage good design by concentrating on issues of scale, height, massing, layout and parking. The guidance identifies the main design principles and illustrates with examples the issues that should be considered. Sunderland City Council seeks to achieve the highest possible standard of design in residential development and will assess all proposals on their individual merit.

Wherever possible, this guidance document sets out certain standards and acceptable dimensions. If the proposed extension/alteration does not meet the standards then the proposal should be discussed with a planning officer prior to submitting the application, and/or justification should be submitted with the planning application.

1.2 Status of the guide

The guide will be taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and will become part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and supplement the policies contained within the Core Strategy of the LDF and other Development Plan Documents (DPDs). In particular the guidance amplifies the city's adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policy B2 (Built Environment) and UDP Alteration No.2 Policy B2A (Sustainable Urban Design).

Policy B2 (Adopted UDP) states:

The scale, massing, layout or setting of new developments and extensions to existing buildings should respect and enhance the best qualities of nearby properties and the locality and retain acceptable levels of privacy; large scale schemes creating their own individual character, should relate harmoniously to adjoining areas.

Policy B2A (UDP Alteration No 2) states:

The City Council will seek to achieve the highest possible quality of built environment and the creation of desirable places to live, work, shop and visit (see Appendix for full policy).

2.0 Residential Context

Throughout Sunderland there is a wide variety in the type, style, age and quality of housing. Many housing areas have a distinct character, which is formed through a combination of architecture, layout and landscaping. As each individual house contributes to the general character of the street, the street scene and neighbourhood, it is important that where external alterations or extensions are proposed, the changes are in keeping with both the original house and the context of the local area.

Poor extensions and alterations can have a detrimental effect on an area, the residential amenity of neighbours and may reduce the value of a property. Extending or altering a property to a high standard and in keeping with the original design may, however, add value and enhance the character of the local area.



Grangetown



Station Road Penshaw



Thomas Hawksley Park



Ashbrooke

3.0 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

If a dwelling is situated within a Conservation Area, any extension or alteration must seek to maintain and/or enhance the character of the area. Careful assessment will not only be made of the setting and character of buildings but also the spaces between them. It must be ensured that any extension uses appropriate materials, detailing and landscaping.

Alterations and extensions to Listed Buildings will require Listed Building Consent as well as planning permission. Such applications will be carefully examined to ensure that the historic and architectural character of the property is maintained. It is strongly recommended that you employ a qualified professional to make your application in conjunction with advice from the council's Conservation Team (tel. 0191 553 1515). Where an extension involves the removal of a traditional window you may be required to salvage and re-use it in part of the extension.



West Hendon House, Ashbrooke Conservation Area.



The Cedars Proposed Conservation Area

4.0 Householder Planning Applications

4.1 When do you need planning permission?

Certain types of building works, including some extensions to dwelling houses, do not need planning permission because they are covered by permitted development rights. These rights are detailed in Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended. In some areas tighter planning controls may exist and permitted development rights may have been removed under an Article 4(2) Direction. Article 4(2) Directions can be imposed by local authorities to control certain alterations to dwellings and other works that would otherwise be automatically granted consent. For example, the replacement of windows, doors, roof coverings etc can come under planning control, the object being to refuse planning permission for works that are considered to be damaging or inappropriate to the historic fabric and features of the buildings.

If you are in doubt as to whether you will require planning permission please fill in a Preliminary Enquiry form. This can be obtained from the Development Control section, the City Council's website or via the Contact Centre. A written reply will be sent out clarifying whether planning permission is required.

You should write to:
Development Control
Development & Regeneration Services
Sunderland City Council
PO Box 102
Civic Centre
Sunderland
SR2 7DN

Most extensions to dwelling houses require building regulations approval regardless of whether or not planning permission is needed. Guidance on building control matters can be obtained from the council's Building Control section by calling (0191) 553 1550.

4.2 Information to submit with your planning application

When submitting an application it must be supported with clear, accurate drawings to scale (1:50 or 1:100) showing the existing house, the proposed changes with notes stating the relevant construction details and external materials. The drawings should also show the relationship between your house and neighbouring properties. In addition, it is useful to include photographs showing where the changes are to take place. A Design and Access Statement will be required to accompany planning applications for extensions and alterations to listed buildings or dwellings within a conservation area.

It is recommended that a suitably qualified architect or surveyor act as your agent to provide design drawings and other information appropriate to your application. Whilst this is recommended, it is not considered to be essential, although it should be noted that clear and accurate drawings and plans are essential to allow the planning authority to fully assess the proposal.

4.3 Public Consultation

Once a planning application has been submitted, a Planning Officer will process your application and consult your immediate neighbours and anyone who will be affected by the proposal. Following public consultation, a formal decision notice will usually be issued within 8 weeks under powers delegated to the Director of Development and Regeneration by the City Council. In a small number of cases it may be that Officers submit a report with a recommendation to one of the council's Development Control Sub-Committees. The committee will then make the decision on the application.

5.0 Design Guidelines for all Household Extensions

5.1 General Points

The original appearance of a property should be considered before any alterations or extensions take place. Any changes should reflect and enhance the character and style of the original dwelling and that of the local area. However, some dwellings were not designed to incorporate future extensions and therefore, careful thought is needed about the most appropriate design solution. Where possible, alterations or extensions should be confined to the rear or less prominent elevations.

Sunderland comprises of a number of neighbourhoods, towns and villages with individual character and identity. This is often reflected in the shape, layout and architectural style of the buildings, the materials and the landscape in which they sit.

Alterations and extensions should respect the style and appearance of the dwelling, and the character of the locality, particularly in relation to:

- Built form, scale and proportions;
- Roof form and pitch;
- Window and door shape, style and details;
- External materials;
- Gardens and landscaping;
- Boundary walls, gates and piers.

The above design principles should be read in conjunction with the guidance provided on front, side, corner, rear and dormer extensions as well as detached garages and other detached garden buildings.



An original dormer feature with timber sliding sash windows, a welsh slate roof and a terracotta finial to the top, repeated along the terrace at Cedars Gardens



Rectangular shaped bays on Park Parade with decorative terracotta mouldings.



Arched window detailing in Thomas Hawksley Park.

5.2 Inclusive Home Design

The potential for improving the accessibility to a property should be considered when alterations and extensions are proposed. Incorporating level access and providing a ground floor bathroom can assist elderly or disabled residents or visitors. Also, recognising that needs may change in the future, consideration should be given to design flexibility so that with the minimum of adaptation such access and use can be incorporated.

5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction

What is sustainable development?

Generally, this is considered to be: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' (Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

The City Council is committed to promoting sustainable development, minimising the adverse environmental impact of development and ensuring the prudent use of natural resources.

5.4 Making the most of sunlight for light and heat

Larger windows within the south side of an extension can maximise the natural light and heat from the sun and so reduce lighting and heating bills. This is important for main, habitable rooms such as living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens and bedrooms.

Larger windows on the north side of an extension or in areas often in a shadow may increase heat loss and the amount of energy used. Stairs, storage rooms, hallways, utility

rooms and bathrooms are ideally situated on the north side as these will require fewer or smaller windows.

Other ways to use fewer resources in the construction of an extension

There are a number of approaches that are encouraged to ensure that a development uses fewer resources. This may not affect whether planning permission is granted but can potentially save money in the long term. Consideration should be given to the following approaches:

- Re-using bricks, stones, slates and timber, especially if a building is to be demolished (this will help an extension appear part of the original dwelling). Where bricks cannot be reused, crushed bricks can be used in some circumstances as an aggregate on the site
- Use of double or triple glazed timber windows
- Using other recycled or natural products where possible
- Installation of 'low flush' or 'dual flush' toilets, and choosing energy efficient kitchen appliances, light bulbs and boilers

The City Council will continue to promote sustainability in all new development and will take into account new and emerging national policy guidance.

6.0 Alterations

Where planning consent is not required, alterations to a property should be in character with the style of your house and the neighbourhood in general. The following principles should apply:

- Replacement windows should be of a style, proportion and material suitable to the dwelling. In older properties where timber sliding-sash windows are to be replaced, modern timber versions are preferred over any other materials for visual amenity and sustainability reasons. It is rarely possible to achieve a good replica of older windows using uPVC. Replacement windows in uPVC can have a detrimental impact on a dwelling and can be very difficult to repair
- The original external appearance of a dwelling and its relationship with neighbouring buildings should be considered when repainting, re-rendering and re-pointing

- Changes to the external facing of a property can have a detrimental impact on the property itself and the street scene on the whole. The addition of stone cladding or rendered brickwork is generally not recommended
- The shape, pitch and materials of a roof are an important feature of a dwelling and alterations affecting them should ensure their character is retained. Pitched roofs are acceptable for most alterations, but they should be set lower than the top of the main roof to maintain its original character

No matter what the design or style of a dwelling, where it forms part of a wider coherent street design it is important to ensure the original appearance is maintained.



Alterations to the front elevation of a property can have a detrimental impact on the character of the locality. Original features should be retained.

7.0 Extensions

Extensions should ideally be located to the rear of a dwelling or on less prominent elevations to reduce the visual impact on the street. Overly large extensions can affect the visual quality and appearance of the surrounding area. Successful extensions typically appear subservient to the original dwelling.

The existing character and appearance of the dwelling should be retained. The style, roof pitch, windows and materials used on any extension should generally match and respect those present on the original dwelling. High quality alternatives may also be acceptable.

7.1 Effect on neighbouring properties

Privacy and Overlooking

Neighbouring properties, including gardens, should still have a reasonable level of privacy following the erection of any extension. Windows and balconies should be positioned so that they do not directly look into the windows of neighbouring homes or gardens. On many housing developments, acceptable levels of privacy are achieved by keeping a distance of 21m between main facing elevations containing habitable room windows (i.e. living/dining room, kitchen and bedrooms) and 14m between such elevations containing a main elevation and a gable elevation. These minimum distances should be increased by 5m for each additional storey of development, or where the ground level is significantly higher than that of the neighbouring property, for example, for every 1m of additional height add 2m to the horizontal distance.

Where dwellings have an angled relationship rather than directly facing one another, there may be a possibility of reducing distances between main facing elevations.

It is the intention to achieve the same standards of spacing between extensions and adjacent dwellings which have not been extended. Where an adjacent house has already been extended, the distance considered will be

that to the wall of that house as originally built.

If these standards cannot be met the application will be assessed against the character of the area, the present levels of privacy and whether other measures can reasonably be introduced to maintain privacy.

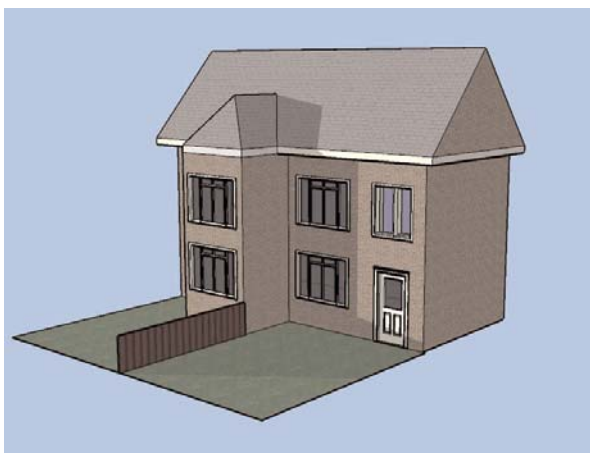
It may be possible to overcome problems caused by loss of privacy through the following measures:

- a) Move the window to another side of the extension where overlooking would not be a problem
- b) Use opaque and patterned glass if the offending window is to a non-habitable room (landing, bathroom and hallway)
- c) Use a high level window with a window sill at least 1.8m above the floor level inside rooms, except on prominent walls if a window at that height would appear out of character with existing windows
- d) In the case of offending ground floor windows, by providing screen fencing or walls of not more than 2m in height around the boundary of the property (this is unlikely to be acceptable to the front of the property)
- e) Use of roof lights
- f) Erect the proposed extension on a different exterior wall. For instance, a side extension may be more acceptable than an extension to the rear. This is however dependent on the amount of space available and the shape of the garden
- g) If the proposal relates to the erection of a balcony or high level decking, the application will be assessed against its appearance, design and potential for overlooking and loss of privacy

Overshadowing

Any extension should not overshadow neighbouring habitable room windows or private gardens to an unreasonable degree. If the proposed extension is likely to significantly reduce the amount of daylight or sunlight entering a habitable room window or result in significant overshadowing of a major part of a neighbour's garden, this may result in the application being refused planning permission. Full account will be taken of the position of neighbour's windows and the way they relate to the extension.

As a general rule, blank walls of two storey extensions should be at least 14m from the habitable room windows of surrounding dwellings.



An extension should not cast shadows over a neighbouring property's habitable room windows.

Loss of Outlook

Whilst the planning system is unable to protect private individual open views, if it is considered that an extension would have an overbearing or oppressive effect over neighbouring dwellings, this may result in the application being refused planning permission. Loss of outlook will be assessed in a similar way to overshadowing.

Loss of Amenity Space

Garden Size

Planning permission may be refused if it is considered that the proposed extension is an overdevelopment of the site. This may be the case if the remaining garden area, following completion of the development, is considered to be too small or significantly out of character with the original size of the gardens in the surrounding area. Rear extensions should not take up more than 50% of the garden.

Parking Space

Car owners normally want to be able to park their cars as close to their homes as possible, in locations where they can see their car. In meeting this aspiration, all too often developments become a car dominated environment with 'car platforms' in front of houses or integral garages facing the street.

Extensions which would result in the loss of garden space to the front of the property will be discouraged. In some circumstances it may only be possible to accommodate parking within an area to the front of the property. In such circumstances, careful consideration should be given to minimising the effect on the appearance of the property. It is important to retain as much of the hedge/boundary enclosure to the front as possible and if gateposts need to be moved this may also require planning permission and consent from the council as Highway Authority for a new dropped kerb or footway.

Effect on Road Safety

Detached garages or extensions to existing buildings should not be located in a position that would obstruct the views of motorists or pedestrians. In particular, care should be taken when preparing proposals for corner properties.

Detached garages or extensions which incorporate a garage should be at least 5.5m back from the pavement or service strip to allow a car to pull clear of the highway while the garage door is opened. If this distance cannot be achieved, planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the siting of the proposal or the design of the garage or extension would not cause serious threat to road safety. It may be possible to revise this length in instances where high quality roller shutter doors are proposed.

7.2 Front Extensions, Porches and Canopies

If the proposed extension is to front a public road or footpath, it will be required to be of a high standard of design, which respects the appearance of the existing property and the character of the street scene. The design should usually incorporate a pitched roof (unless that would conflict with the design of the existing property) and should use materials and window styles which respect or match the current style. If there is an established building line within the street, a porch or front extension that projects no further than 1.2m from the original main wall of the property (not including any bay window or other projection) will normally be allowed. Attention should be given to:

- The existing building line within the street and the need to maintain reasonable depths of porches and front extensions
- The design and depth of any front extension in relation to neighbouring properties, to ensure that the balance and symmetry between properties is not lost as a result of the development
- A requirement for the extension to be of a size that is in keeping with the main property
- The effect on windows and privacy of neighbouring properties. With regard to semi-detached or terraced properties, front extensions should be set-in a minimum of 460mm from the common boundary
- The need to maintain a minimum driveway length of 5.5m
- Two storey front extensions will not normally be permitted



Large extensions to the front of properties are generally unacceptable.

7.3 Side Extensions

Any extension to the side of a property should be designed to maintain the character of the existing property and the street scene. It should also have minimal impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. As a general rule, side extensions should be of a size which is no more than 50% of the overall width of the existing dwelling.

Side extensions should usually incorporate a pitched roof or be of a roof slope and shape that matches the existing property. However, an alternative roof design may be appropriate, for example on a contemporary dwelling or a high quality contemporary extension to a traditional dwelling. Two storey side extensions should have a ridgeline which is lower than that of the main property and a front wall set back by not less than 1m from that of the original building, at least at first floor level. Side extensions should also aim to maintain external access to the rear.

Windows with an outlook from a main living area will not normally be permitted in the side elevation of dwellings. However, small windows to bathrooms, halls, landings and secondary windows to main living areas, if fitted with obscure glazing, may be acceptable depending on the individual merits of each case.



An unacceptable extension which can lead to a terracing effect .



A first floor extension above an existing garage. The new first floor extension is subservient to the main house



A typical design solution which is subservient to the original house. The extension is set back from the front building line of the original house.



An alternative to the above shows a sloping roof and dormer window.



The examples of two storey side extensions show a set-back from the original front elevation. They are of an appropriate size in relation to the existing dwellings. The materials used match well with those of the original dwellings.

Single Storey Side Extensions

Single storey side extensions should be designed to retain a gap between neighbouring properties where it currently exists. The extension should normally be provided with a pitched roof to match the roof of the main dwelling in design, pitch and materials. The extension should not project forward of the existing front building line.

Semi-Detached Houses

Any two storey extension on a semi-detached property should be set back from the main front wall, at least at first floor level, by a minimum of 1m or leave a gap of at least 1m between the side of the extension and the boundary of the property, to avoid the possibility of creating a linked or 'terraced' effect.



Side extensions that have resulted in the terracing effect.

Detached Houses

There is greater flexibility to extend a detached property and in many cases it is less important for an extension to be subservient to the main house. However, this is dependent on the particular property and the character of the area.



Side extensions should avoid the terracing effect.

End of terraces

On end of terrace properties extensions should continue the terrace building line and roof ridge height so that the extension becomes part of the terrace. However, each application will be assessed on its individual merits and the applicant may be asked to set the extension back from the main building line.



End of terrace extension should continue the terrace

Extensions at Corners

Corner plots or properties with gables facing a public road or footpath can be particularly prominent when viewed from either street meeting at that corner. Careful regard should be given to the siting, design and external appearance of any extension so as not to appear more dominant in either street scene than the existing property.



Side extensions at corner locations should respect the established building lines.

In order to maintain the open character of the street, any extension should respect the building lines of both streets and the general spaciousness of the area. If spacious corner plots are a characteristic of the surrounding area, both single and two storey side extensions should look to maintain such spaces. It is important to maintain good visibility for both motorists and pedestrians.

Exceptions to the above may apply where:

- There are a number of properties within the surrounding area sited such that open corner plots are not a typical feature of the locality
- The site is not considered to be prominent within the street scene (e.g. end of cul-de-sac)
- The site is well screened and so the extension would not have a significant effect on the street scene

To prevent a side extension on a corner plot from dominating either the existing property or neighbouring property, the front of the proposed extension should be set back from the main wall of the original property.

Side Extensions and Parking

Reference should be made to Effect on Road Safety (p.23) and the advice set out below:

- Keep at least one parking space on the site if one is already available
- If the proposal incorporates a garage, a minimum driveway length of 5.5m between the garage door and pavement or service strip should be created
- Highway visibility splays must be either maintained or created to the satisfaction of the council both as Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority

7.4 Rear Extensions

Any extension to the rear should not dominate neighbouring properties or significantly alter a neighbour's existing level of sunlight, daylight or privacy. Applications for rear extensions will be considered on their individual merit having regard to their mass and height, distance from the boundary, windows of neighbouring properties, its position in relation to the main house and neighbouring properties, the size of the remaining garden and any other previous extensions to neighbouring dwellings. One of the key objectives is to avoid overshadowing or having an overbearing or oppressive effect on the neighbouring property, thus adversely affecting residential amenity.

The following rules apply to all rear extensions:

- On semi-detached and terraced dwellings, single storey rear extensions (including conservatories) along the common boundary will normally be limited to a maximum projection of 2.7m, with an additional 0.1m permitted for every 0.1m the extension is positioned off the boundary. The projection may also be increased if a 45° chamfer is introduced where the common boundary wall meets the front of the extension
- Two storey extensions to the rear can have a significant adverse effect on neighbouring properties and will not normally be permitted unless it can be demonstrated through careful design that there will be no unacceptable reduction in sunlight, daylight and/or privacy of adjoining occupiers, no visual intrusion and no detrimental effect on the street scene
- Where a terraced property with a back lane is to be extended to the rear, space to accommodate the parking of a vehicle, within the curtilage, should normally be retained

- A reasonable area of private garden should be retained to enable everyday domestic duties to be undertaken. Rear extensions should not occupy more than 50% of the rear garden

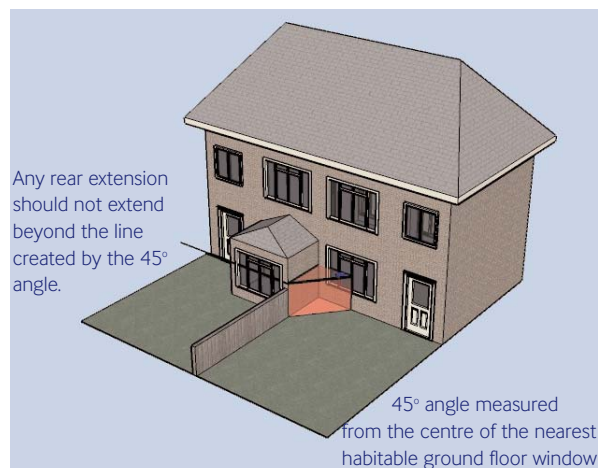
Rear Extensions - 45° rule of thumb

Extensions should be designed so as not to project beyond a 45° line (on plan) that extends from an adjoining neighbour's nearest ground floor habitable room window, which is perpendicular to the proposed extension. The reference point is the centre of the neighbour's window to the extension.

The 45° rule of thumb aims to:

- Retain a reasonable relationship between existing buildings and extensions
- Avoid an overbearing visual impact with regard to bulk and proximity to boundaries, both from inside and adjacent properties and from neighbouring gardens
- Prevent excessive daylight loss or overshadowing to habitable rooms of neighbouring properties

Irrespective of the above 45° rule, rear extensions should be designed to a maximum depth of 2.7m, plus any additions achieved by off setting from the common boundary (see below).

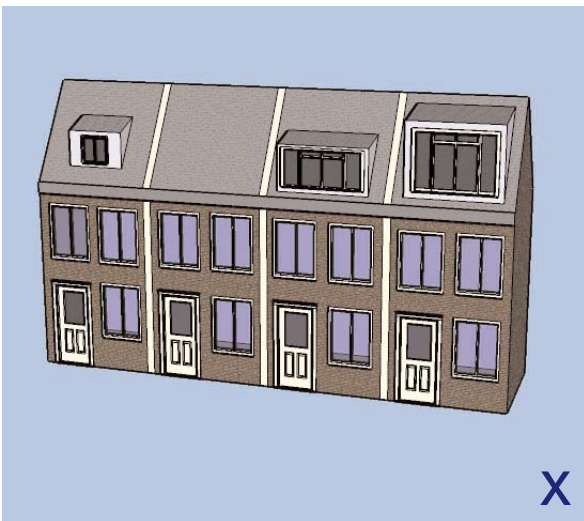


The 45° rule of thumb

7.5 Dormer Extensions

Dormer windows must be positioned and designed to minimise their affect on the appearance and character of the property and the street scene. They should also avoid compromising the residential amenity of neighbouring properties due to visual dominance, overlooking and loss of privacy. If the proposed extension does not meet with these basic requirements, planning permission will not be granted.

Wherever possible, dormer window extensions should be appropriately designed and positioned to the rear of the property in order to preserve the character of the street scene. However, where front dormers are characteristic of the street scene, applications will be assessed on their individual merits.

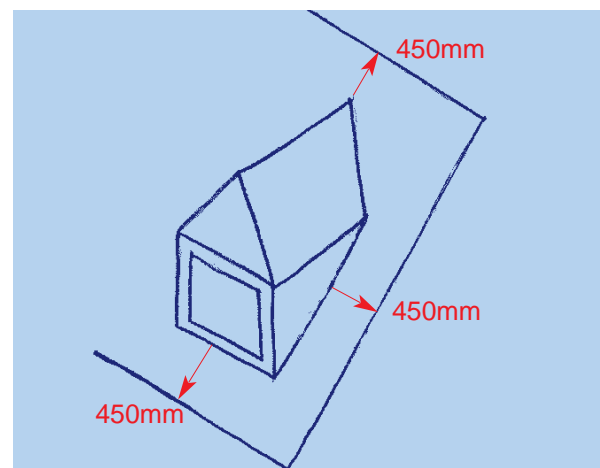


Box dormers can unbalance the appearance of a property.

Good Design

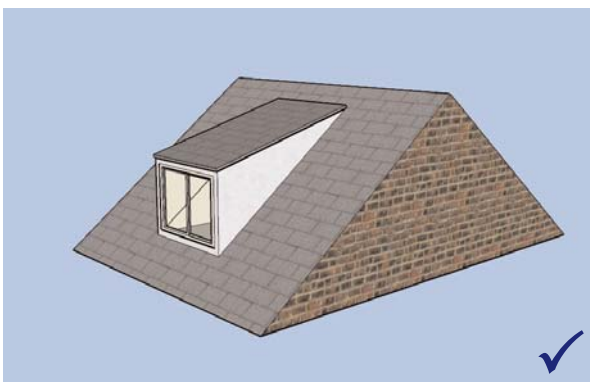
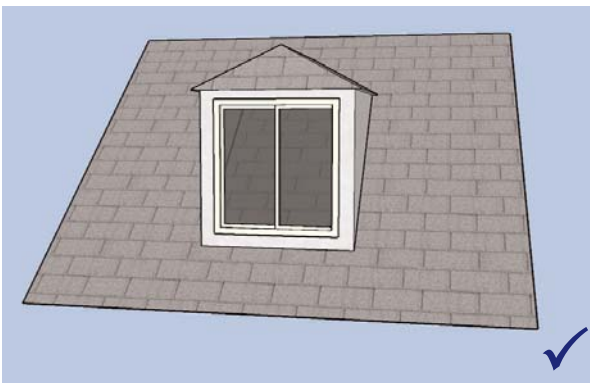
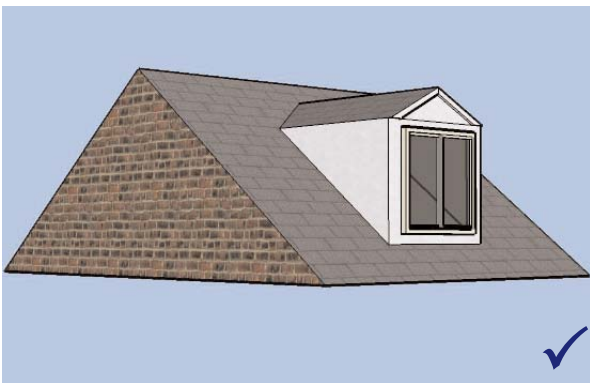
Dormer extensions should always appear as a small addition to the roof and their height and length should be kept to a minimum to avoid a 'top heavy' appearance. The extension should be in line with the following guidelines:

- Dormer window extensions will normally only be acceptable on single storey or cottage type properties
- Dormer extensions will not normally be acceptable on properties of two or more storeys, unless they are a traditional architectural feature of the locality or it can otherwise be demonstrated that there will be no detrimental effect on the appearance of the dwelling to which it relates, the street scene in general and that there will be no harmful effect on the amenities of the neighbouring properties
- Front, rear and side dormers should be set in 450mm from each common boundary and 450mm above the eaves height of the property



- Dormers should not go above the ridge of the existing roof
- Two separate small dormers will usually be more visually pleasing than one large dormer

- The materials used should closely match the existing roof and wherever possible re-use the materials of the existing roof
- Dormers should follow the vertical lines of existing windows and match their style and proportions
- Flat roofed/box dormers will generally be resisted



Typical dormer window designs



Dormers of an innovative, contemporary design may also be considered.

Dormer Extensions to the front

If the dormer proposed will be located to the front of the property, or highly visible from the street, careful attention must be given to its scale and design. Dormers that are overly dominant, top heavy or would create an obtrusive feature in the street scene will not be permitted. As a general rule, dormer windows should not occupy more than one third of the roof area to the front of the building.

Dormer Extensions to the side

Dormer windows to the side of properties should be avoided if they are likely to result in overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

Sunderland Cottages

New front dormer extensions to traditional Sunderland Cottages are not considered to be appropriate. Terraced cottage properties are unique to the area and it is vital to preserve the character of these traditional street scenes. However in circumstances where the street scene is now dominated by more than 50% of properties which have the addition of a dormer (on the side of the street which includes the property in question), new proposals of a size and design which will minimise further detriment to the visual amenity of the street scene may be acceptable.

New dormers should be of a design similar to that shown below which is in keeping with the traditional and distinctive characteristic features of the cottages e.g. such as the ground floor bay window. Dormers of an innovative, contemporary design may also be considered.



Example of acceptable Sunderland Cottage dormer design.

7.6 Roof Lights

Roof lights are a suitable way of allowing light into a loft space as they maintain the roof plane and have less visual impact than dormer windows. Roof lights should not be of a size or number that will dominate the appearance of the roof slope. As such they should ideally be located on the side or rear of a property. 'Low profile' roof lights, which reduce projections above the roof finish are preferred as they have a reduced visual impact. Light pollution from roof lights should also be considered and where possible minimised.

7.7 Chimneys

As well as their purpose as a vent for fireplaces or modern gas fires, chimney stacks and their pots can add character to a property and visual interest to a roofscape. Where they exist they should be retained when alterations are proposed and in some cases, where extensions are proposed, new ones included that are appropriate to the existing building.

7.8 Balconies and Terraces

The addition of a balcony or terrace to a property above ground floor level can be particularly problematic. Applications for balconies and terraces will be considered with close regard to their impact on the privacy of nearby residents. Balconies and terraces will not normally be approved if there is significant overlooking of a neighbouring garden/yard or a main living room window. Not only may they allow direct overlooking into neighbouring properties or private gardens, they can also increase the general level of noise and disturbance. Balconies and terraces are more likely to be approved in relation to detached dwellings with spacious gardens or where a staggered building results in an invasion of privacy not being an issue. Balconies or terraces to the front of dwellings will generally be resisted.

8.0 Detached Garages and Garden Buildings

The erection of a detached garage or garden building should be sited so as not to adversely affect the character or appearance of the street scene, neighbouring properties and/or road safety.

It should be noted that many detached garages and garden buildings (e.g. sheds, greenhouses etc) do not require planning permission dependent upon their size and location. Therefore, consultation with Development Control is recommended as to whether consent may be required.

of the street scene. Garden buildings should not be built in front of an established building line. Garden decking should not result in a significant loss of privacy for the occupants of neighbouring properties.

8.1 Detached Garages

Detached garages should reflect the design, materials, character and style of the existing property. The following rules will apply:

- Garages should be located to the side of the dwelling, behind the front line of the building
- The garage should not be located in a position which would detract from the attractiveness of the street scene
- Exceptions may apply if the site is well screened by trees or by a substantial front wall
- There should generally be a minimum driveway length of 5.5m between the garage door and rear edge of the footway or service strip. The minimum dimensions of a useable garage space are 5m x 2.9m

8.2 Other detached garden buildings

Applications relating to the erection of garden buildings will be assessed on their individual merit, having full regard to the effect of the development on the character and appearance

9.0 Walls, Fences and other means of enclosure

9.1 Is planning permission required?

Planning permission will be required for any new wall, fence or other means of boundary enclosure where it would exceed 1m in height adjacent to a road or footpath, or exceed 2m high elsewhere. Planning permission may also be required for a replacement wall or fencing, depending on height.

You will also require permission if a planning condition on any planning consent for your property states that you must get permission for such development, or if permitted development rights for your property have been removed through an Article 4 Direction. Either of these circumstances might apply if, for example, the property is on an open-plan estate or if the wall, fence or other means of boundary enclosure might otherwise obstruct the view of drivers using any road. You should contact the Development Control Section for advice on whether either of these controls is in place on your property.

9.2 Appearance

All forms of boundary enclosure to the front of properties or in prominent locations should take account of the character of the area and the scale, design and materials used on similar boundaries in the area. Particular care should be taken if the property is located in a Conservation Area, is a Listed Building, affects the setting of a Listed Building or is within the Green Belt. Planning permission for new walls, fences or other means of enclosure may be refused if they seriously detract from the appearance of the area. For example:

- On open-plan estates or cul-de-sacs where any boundary structures in prominent locations would be out of keeping
- Where there is a uniform and consistent form of boundary treatment within the surrounding area and the proposal conflicts with this

- In areas adjacent to the public realm, long runs of fencing should be broken by brick or stone piers and should not be oppressive in height. This is subject to creating an appropriate level of privacy/enclosure

Corner plots are also particularly sensitive. Fences, walls and other forms of enclosure may not be allowed on corner sites if they detract from the character of the area or are prejudicial to highway safety.

9.3 Road Safety

Walls, fences and other means of enclosure can cause issues of road safety, particularly:

- On corner properties where sight lines for traffic may be affected
- Where a property is situated on a busy road and sight lines required for access from that property are affected

In particular under article 3(6) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, any wall, fence or other means of enclosure, which obstructs the view of persons using any highway used by vehicular traffic, so as to be likely to cause danger to such persons shall not be authorised as permitted development and will require planning permission.

9.4 Security

You may wish to consider the issue of security and boundary enclosures, particularly if the property adjoins a public area or adjoins a road. Whilst high boundary walls at the entrance to estates can provide security for a property they will not be encouraged due to their detrimental impact on visual amenity and the need for natural surveillance of the public realm to help prevent anti-social behaviour.

10.0 Additional Accommodation for relatives

Additional accommodation should be linked to and form part of the existing property rather than being a separate building within the grounds. If it is not possible to link the extra accommodation to the existing property and it is the intention to convert and possibly extend an existing outbuilding (such as a garage), steps must be taken to ensure that the accommodation to be provided does not provide a fully self-contained unit and that it can be used over the long term as part of the main property.

In all cases, careful consideration must be given to the effect the proposal would have on neighbouring properties. If planning permission is granted, it may be subject to a condition that prohibits the extension from being used as a separate unit of accommodation.

11.0 Backland Development

Backland is land which lies behind existing properties which front one or more roads. It may be land comprising large garden areas, neglected land, land in other uses or a mixture of these.

"Tandem Development" usually refers to the building of one house behind the other (usually in the rear garden) sharing a single access.

Backland development refers to the development of one or more houses on an area of land to the rear of surrounding properties, usually with their own access.

The existence of large gardens does not necessarily point to scope for development. The size and appearance of gardens and other open land can be of great importance to the character of a neighbourhood which should be preserved. This is particularly true in Ashbrooke and The Cedars where it is important to maintain the established character of these areas.

Backland development can present a range of planning problems. These centre around the provision for access, impact on existing development and the pressure for development in a piecemeal manner. Such development is generally considered to be undesirable, as it produces uncoordinated development which can result in difficult relationships between development on adjacent sites within the backland. A coordinated approach to the development of such areas where more than one plot is available will generally be sought.

Applications for backland or tandem development will be assessed on their own merits and issues specific to that particular site.

Where comprehensive development of a site would be clearly preferable, applications for development of only part of a backland area

may be refused on the grounds of undesirable piecemeal development.

The relationship between the new development and existing houses should conform to the space, light, outlook and privacy guidelines set out in Chapter 7 of the Residential Design Guide.

Any proposed new plot within the garden of an existing property or to the rear must:

- Be of an appropriate scale, size and shape to allow development to be in a manner in keeping with existing properties in the locality and to reflect the character of the surrounding area
- Include a meaningful area of private (i.e. rear) garden, which is comparable to the size of the proposed dwelling
- Have adequate road frontages including unshared vehicular access to each plot
- Have adequate car parking and vehicle access arrangements in compliance with the council's Highway Standards
- Be capable of development without significant loss or damage to trees

Plots should not:

- Deprive an existing house of adequate and reasonable private garden space
- Be heavily wooded
- Have an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding properties in terms of noise and disturbance created by access and parking arrangements or through overlooking and/or overshadowing of an existing property

Any proposed building(s) should:

- Be of a form and scale appropriate to the existing character and amenity of the area
- Have adequate distance between dwellings
- Not materially infringe on the daylight or privacy of the adjacent properties, otherwise they will be refused planning permission by the council

12.0 House Extension in the Green Belt

If consideration is being given to extending a property situated in the Green Belt the following principles set out within this section should be adhered to. However, it should be noted that there will be a general presumption against development within the Green Belt.

12.1 Size, form and materials

Consideration will be given to the degree that the property has already been extended and the effect that any further extension would have on the openness of the Green Belt. The design, form and size of the proposed extension are all important components that will determine the acceptability of the extension. It is very likely that once a property has been extended by more than one third of its original volume, any further increase in volume will have an adverse effect on the Green Belt. Even if the volume of the proposed extension stays within the guidelines, the size, form and materials of the extension must also be appropriate to the original building and its setting.

Limited extensions of existing properties can be acceptable if they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Extensions must be in keeping with and not dominate the original building. It may be preferable to fill in space between existing parts of the home rather than extend beyond the outline of the original building. When assessing the acceptability of the proposal consideration will be given to the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

For large-scale proposals, particularly those in the open countryside, account will be taken of the intended purpose of the extension. If the proposal is to bring an unimproved small home up to modern standards, this may justify an extension.

12.2 Extensions to converted buildings

Most homes converted from other uses will have had their "permitted development rights" removed to prevent any further effect on the Green Belt. Please check your copy of the planning permission or contact Development Control.

12.3 Extensions beyond property boundaries

It is unlikely that planning permission will be granted if the proposed extension uses land outside the established boundary of the property. Furthermore, to extend a garden into agricultural land or open space you will require planning permission for the change of use and the council as Local Planning Authority is unlikely to grant this within the Green Belt.

12.4 Creating extra units of accommodation

Proposals for an extension to an existing property should not be used as a means of gaining permission for a new dwelling/separate home, which would be unlikely to be allowed under Green Belt policy. Proposals for an extension that would create a separate unit of accommodation will be assessed against the same criteria used for proposals for a new home and so are likely to be refused in the Green Belt.

12.5 Residential-use rights

If the building is in a dilapidated state or has not been lived in recently, you should first contact the Planning Service to find out if residential-use rights still exist, that is, if the building can be used as a home. That will be a question of fact to be determined in each individual case, having regard to the physical condition of the building, the period of non-use and the owner's intentions. If residential use rights do not exist, any application to restore the property for residential purposes would be determined against the same criteria used to assess applications for new homes.

13.0 Flats / Apartments

Where alterations and extensions to flats/ apartments occur, the following principles should be adhered to:

- Planning permission is required for any extension to ground floor flats/apartments
- New windows serving living rooms, kitchens or bedrooms or other habitable rooms should not overlook or be overlooked by adjoining properties to an unacceptable degree and should have a reasonable outlook
- Main living rooms should have a reasonable outlook and should not be lit solely by roof lights. Habitable windows should not be in close proximity to high boundary or gable walls

14.0 Glossary

Amenity

The pleasant or normally satisfactory aspects of a location which contributes to its overall character and the enjoyment of residents or visitors.

Article 4 Direction

Imposed by local authorities to control certain alterations to dwellings and other works that would otherwise not normally require consent.

Character

The combination of features of a building or an area, such as their spatial relationship, landscape and building uses etc, that give its distinct identity.

Conservation Area

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civil Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance."

Enclosure

Physical or sense of definition of space or area.

Habitable rooms

These are considered to be the main rooms within a house and include the living room, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms. Hallways, bathrooms, circulation areas and landings are not however considered to be 'habitable' rooms.

Listed Building

A building or structure identified as being of special architectural or historical interest. There are three categories of listing: Grade I (the highest quality), Grade II* and Grade II.

Local Distinctiveness

The essential character of a locality.

Ridgeline

The apex of the roof continued along the length of the roof span.

Roofscape

View resulting from a blend of roof pitches, sizes and heights within the built environment.

Roof pitch

Angle at which rafters form an apex from the supporting walls.

Streetscape

The overall effect of street facades and linked spaces.

Streetscene

That which is visible from the public domain. The street scene is considered to constitute an area particularly sensitive to development proposals, requiring a high standard of design.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Additional advice or guidance issued by a local planning authority, expanding on its statutory policies.

Sustainability

The principle that the environment should be protected in such a condition and to such a degree that ensures new development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Visual Amenity

The value of a particular area or view in terms of what is seen.

For further details and copies in large print and other languages please contact:

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