

# House Extensions and Alterations SPD

June 2021



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# 1 Information and purpose

## 1 Information and purpose

### Purpose of the SPD

- 1.1 High-quality house extensions and alterations can enhance the appearance of an area and help improve well-being and quality of life. Well-designed development which responds to the local context, character and climate emergency can enhance your home, the quality of the neighbourhood and help mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 1.2 The importance of good design is promoted through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide which require good design to be considered in all types of development to encourage inclusivity, create a sense of place, develop safe, secure and accessible environments and respond to local character and history. This document therefore supports and applies these national documents by applying local context to ensure excellence in developments in local communities.
- 1.3 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared to help householders, developers, agents and architects who are planning and designing an extension or alterations (householder development) to an existing residential property, including conservatories and outbuildings, such as garages. It provides detailed guidance regarding the standard of development that will help achieve a well-designed house extension or alteration as required by the council.
- 1.4 The principles and guidance contained within this SPD are relevant and helpful when designing any house extension or alterations regardless of whether planning permission is required or not.
- 1.5 Supplementary Planning Documents are a material consideration in planning decisions, adding further detail to the Local Plan and are prepared to help applicants make successful applications.

1.6 This SPD is split into the following main sections:

- Advice before you begin
- Site appraisal
- General design principles for extensions and alterations
- Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

1.7 The SPD includes images that show both good and bad examples of design. The images shown in the green are good examples, while those in red are bad examples.

### Local policy

1.8 Local planning policy for good design is set out in the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted February 2019) under policy LP24 (Design) as set out below:

#### LP24 Design

Good design should be at the core of all proposals in the district and should be considered at the outset of the development process, ensuring that design forms part of pre-application consultation of a proposal. Development briefs, design codes and masterplans should be used to secure high quality, green, accessible, inclusive and safe design, where applicable. Where appropriate and in agreement with the developer schemes will be submitted for design review.

Proposals should promote good design by ensuring:

- a. the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape;

- b. they provide a high standard of amenity for future and neighbouring occupiers; including maintaining appropriate distances between buildings and the creation of development-free buffer zones between housing and employment uses incorporating means of screening where necessary;
- c. extensions are subservient to the original building, are in keeping with the existing buildings in terms of scale, materials and details and minimise impact on residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers;
- d. high levels of sustainability, to a degree proportionate to the proposal, through:
  - i. the re-use and adaptation of existing buildings, where practicable;
  - ii. design that promotes behavioural change, promoting walkable neighbourhoods and making walking and cycling more attractive;
  - iii. considering the use of innovative construction materials and techniques, including reclaimed and recycled materials;
  - iv. where practicable, minimising resource use in the building by orientating buildings to utilise passive solar design. This includes encouraging the incorporation of vegetation and tree planting to assist heating and cooling and considering the use of renewable energy;
  - v. providing charging points to encourage the use of electric and low emission vehicles;
  - vi. incorporating adequate facilities to allow occupiers to separate and store waste for recycling and recovery that are well designed and visually unobtrusive and allows for the convenient collection of waste;
  - vii. designing buildings that are resilient and resistant to flood risk, where such buildings are acceptable in accordance with flood risk policies and through incorporation of multi-functional green infrastructure where appropriate;

- viii. designing places that are adaptable and able to respond to change, with consideration given to accommodating services and infrastructure, access to high quality public transport facilities and offer flexibility to meet changing requirements of the resident / user.
- e. the risk of crime is minimised by enhanced security, and the promotion of well-defined routes, overlooked streets and places, high levels of activity, and well-designed security features;
- f. the needs of a range of different users are met, including disabled people, older people and families with small children to create accessible and inclusive places;
- g. any new open space is accessible, safe, overlooked and strategically located within the site and well-integrated into wider green infrastructure networks;
- h. development contributes towards enhancement of the natural environment, supports biodiversity and connects to and enhances ecological networks and green infrastructure;
- i. the retention of valuable or important trees and where appropriate the planting of new trees and other landscaping to maximise visual amenity and environmental benefits; and
- j. the provision of public art where appropriate.

# 1 Information and purpose

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**This SPD should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies in the Local Plan which can be viewed on the council's website and other relevant Supplementary Planning Documents.**

## **Comply or Justify**

- 1.9** The guidance and additional details on Local Plan policies set out in this SPD have been produced based on the principle of 'comply or justify'.
- 1.10** The council expects proposals for new house extensions and alterations to comply with the guidance and key design principles set out in this document. Proposals which comply with this SPD are more likely to progress through the planning process quickly and successfully.
- 1.11** Proposals which depart from the guidance set out in this SPD will need to provide a full justification. The council will be flexible where innovative and contemporary designs which enhance the appearance and character of an area are proposed.

## 2 Advice before you begin

### Permitted development

- 2.1** This SPD covers extensions and alterations to residential properties. However, not all proposals will require planning permission and certain types of small-scale extensions and alterations can be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission. These are referred to as 'permitted development'.
- 2.2** Legislation that relates to permitted development can be complex and depends on the history of a particular property. If you are planning to extend or alter a property it is strongly advised that you check first whether planning permission is required.
- 2.3** Information on whether you will need planning permission can be obtained from the council's website by searching 'Find Out if You Need Planning Permission'. Guidance is also available on the government's website (GOV.UK) by searching 'Householders Permitted Development' or via the Planning Portal's online Interactive House service.
- 2.4** If it is not clear whether your proposals are permitted development or not, it is recommended that you submit a formal pre-application to the council. Further details are provided in the Planning Advice section below.

### Certificate of lawfulness

- 2.5** If you want certainty that your proposal does not require planning permission, you can apply for a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) as proof that your household building work is lawful. An application for an LDC can be submitted, with supporting information and evidence, via the council's Planning Service at [planning.portal@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:planning.portal@kirklees.gov.uk) or the Planning Portal's online application service.

### Planning advice

- 2.6** The council welcomes and encourages discussions with the Planning Service before a planning application is submitted. We provide pre-application planning advice which could: reduce your overall cost and time to develop a project, reduce your risk by identifying and addressing potential issues early on and help discover alternative solutions that meet your aims and avoid issues.
- 2.7** You can access this service by visiting the council's website and search for 'Get Pre-application Planning Advice'.

### Building Regulations

- 2.8** The majority of extensions, regardless of whether they require planning permission, will require Building Regulations consent. Planning Permission and Building Regulations are two separate requirements. Most construction work will need to comply with Building Regulations. These include replacement of windows, new electrical installations and renovations of a building.
- 2.9** You can find more information and guidance by visiting the council's website and searching for 'Building Regulations' or contacting the Council at [building.control@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@kirklees.gov.uk) to speak with our Building Control team.

### Listed buildings and conservation areas

- 2.10** If your home is listed or located in a Conservation Area, additional design criteria will usually apply, and it is recommended you submit a formal pre-application enquiry to the council. A carefully considered and detailed design approach will be required where the proposed development would impact on a designated heritage asset, falls within the curtilage of a listed building, or affects a positive contributor to a

## 2 Advice before you begin

Conservation Area. If a development type, such as Listed Building Consent, is not covered within this document, then you are advised to contact the Conservation and Design team for further advice via the council's website.

### Green belt

- 2.11** One of the purposes of the Green Belt is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment. Any application for the extension of a building in the Green Belt must therefore have regard to its Green Belt setting so care should be taken to ensure that the design is sympathetic to countryside character, both on the building itself and in the treatment of any outside space. It should not introduce or proliferate the use of unsympathetic discordant or incongruous domestic or urban features such as porches, balconies or dormer windows. Suburban boundary treatments, such as close boarded fences, should also be avoided and hard surfaced areas should be kept to a minimum.
- 2.12** When considering any application, substantial weight will be given to any harm to the Green Belt and applications may be refused if it is considered that the development would result in the encroachment of urban character into a countryside setting.

### Security

- 2.13** Properties should be designed to be safe and secure for occupants and neighbours. The council encourages householder developments to incorporate security features, measures and materials into the design from the outset. Further information on designing security measures into household development and recommended standards can be found on the 'Secured by Design' website.

### Architect

- 2.14** The Council recommends that you consider employing an architect to help you achieve your aspirations. Architect-designed extensions are usually highly tailored to the needs of the householders, and an architect can provide options and creative solutions for your property and should be knowledgeable about the latest building regulations. It often makes sense to choose an architect who is familiar with your locality and the council's planning requirements. If you decide to use an architect, it is advised that you visit the Architects' Registration Board (ARB) website where you will find the register of fully qualified architects in the UK.

### Discussion with neighbours

- 2.15** The council encourages prospective applicants to discuss their proposal with neighbours before making an application. Not only will your neighbours feel that you have made an effort to keep them informed, it will also avoid them being surprised when they receive our planning application notification letter. It will also give you an opportunity to consider changes to address their concerns before submitting your planning application.
- 2.16** While not a material planning consideration, extensions and walls that are built right up to the property boundary can often cause problems. In many cases the consent of adjoining owners will be necessary. If you intend to carry out work on, or within close proximity to your neighbour's boundary or party walls, you will need to consider the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996. This is designed to resolve disputes which may arise between neighbours when building work is carried out. You can find more information and guidance by visiting the GOV.UK website and searching 'Party Walls' or the Planning Portal.

### 3 Site appraisal

**3.1** A full site appraisal should be undertaken to assess the characteristics of the existing house, the site and its immediate surroundings before making design decisions about an extension or alteration. This will help to understand the constraints and opportunities. Site appraisals will inform the proportion, position, size and scale of the extension and will provide a well-designed scheme that makes optimum use of the existing building which reflects the character of the original house and adjacent properties.

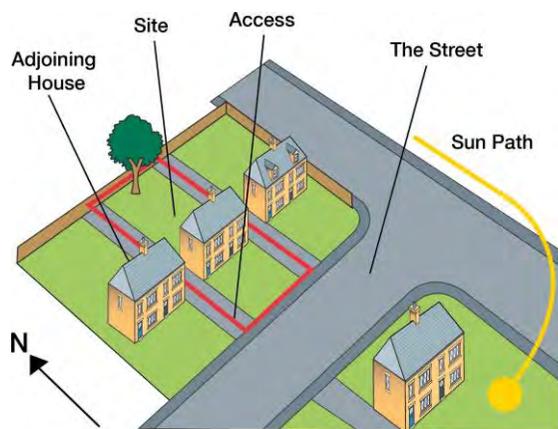


Figure 1: Site Appraisal.

**3.2** The site appraisal should include an analysis of:

**The existing house** - assess the features and characteristics of the house and site and how this affects the proposed extension or alteration, including the:

- **General characteristics of the existing house** - architectural style, materials, size and form, roof pitch and features

- **Views and landform** - views into, within, across and out of the site and site levels, including differences within the site, such as significant dips or rises and slopes
- **Garden space** – size of the existing garden, the position of trees, their canopies and root spread, and other landscaping features, such as planting, hedges and watercourse
- **Boundaries** – position and height of walls, fences and hedges that form boundaries with neighbouring properties and whether they provide a sense of privacy and security
- **Orientation** – position of the house in relation to the path of the sun and shadows that will be cast from buildings and trees
- **Access** - parking and vehicle turning arrangements
- **Designations** – designation as a Listed Building or adjacent to a Listed Building and location within or adjacent to a designation, such as a Conservation Area, Ancient Monument, the Green Belt, a Tree Preservation Order, Flood Risk Area

**The surroundings** - assess the relationship of the existing house to its immediate surroundings, including the:

- **General characteristics** – the character of the street or the area, the rhythm and the spacing between houses
- **Street scene** – relationship of the existing house to the front elevation, the street and the building line

**Neighbouring houses** - assess the relationship of the existing house with neighbouring properties and how the proposed extension or alteration may affect adjoining residents, including:

- **Overlooking** – the position of windows of neighbouring properties which could be overlooked by an extension
- **Property boundaries** – consider any impact on adjoining gardens

## 4 General design principles

### 4 General design principles

**4.1** The council will encourage proposals for house extensions and alterations to implement the key design principles set out below relating to development context, character and the relationship with the built and natural environment. Proposals should aim to achieve a balance between these principles to create sustainable, well-designed extensions and alterations which will have a positive impact on the quality of life for both occupiers and neighbours.

#### 4.1 Local context and character

**4.2** The local context, character and identity of the area will be a significant factor in determining the appropriate form and scale of house extensions and alterations.

#### Key design principle 1: Local character and street scene

Extensions and alterations to residential properties should be in keeping with the appearance scale design and local character of the area and the street scene.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (a) and (c)

**4.3** The following considerations should help ensure that proposals are appropriate to the local character and street scene of the area:

- **Terracing effect** - The siting of an extension should be in keeping with the pattern of the buildings and spacing in between them and avoid the potential to create a terracing effect in the street scene, by setting the extension down from the roofline and back from the original frontage of the building.



Figure 2: Side extensions to detached and semi-detached houses with no gap can cause the appearance of terraced housing which does not match the street scene.

- **Building line** - Where a street or group of buildings have a clearly defined building line this should be retained. Extending forward from the street's building line will only be appropriate in certain circumstances and will be assessed on the merits of the application.



Figure 3: The Building Line.

- **Local character** - Extensions should appear in keeping with the local character including the use of materials, windows form and size, architectural style and roof pitch. The use of contrasting materials, architecture styles and roof pitches will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Enhance appearance** - Where practical, opportunities should be taken to improve the appearance of existing buildings, particularly by the removal or replacement of existing unsightly extensions or alterations.

**4.4** Contemporary designs and high-quality modern interpretations of distinctive and significant local characteristics will be welcomed where they are demonstrably appropriate to the site context and make a positive contribution to the wider environment. In some cases, applicants may wish to develop proposals which do not conform to the existing character and street scene of an area. The council will assess these schemes on merit, and where an innovative architectural approach is proposed, a rationale for the approach and a clear justification as to why the scheme would enhance rather than detract from the character and street scene of the area should be submitted for consideration.

## 4 General design principles

### 4.2 The original house

#### Key design principle 2: Impact on the original house

Extensions should not dominate or be larger than the original house and should be in keeping with the existing building in terms of scale, materials and detail.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (c) and (d)

- 4.5** Proposals for extensions should normally be smaller in scale than the original property and set back from the existing building line. Two-storey extensions should be set down from the ridge line and generally smaller in footprint. The materials, design, roof pitch and detailing should normally match the existing house detailing.



Figure 4 (left to right): Extension faces onto the street and is well balanced, proportionate and sympathetic; Extension is unbalanced and over dominant in scale to the existing house; and Example of a good extension which is well proportioned and set back from the building line and ridge line of the existing house.



Figure 5: Extensions that are neither well balanced, proportionate or sympathetic to the existing house.

- 4.6** Where extensions seek to differ from the existing materials, design, roof pitch or detailing, proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The council will support innovative and modern design approaches which are of a high-quality and appropriate to the local context, including those which provide a range of climate change adaptations in their proposals. The scale and proportion of elevations and the quality of contemporary materials and detailing will be important. Such proposals should be supported by reasons and justification for their design approach.

### 4.3 Neighbouring properties

- 4.7** Proposals for extensions and alterations need to consider the impact on the amenity of residents in neighbouring properties and should not cause undue harm. Proposals will need to consider the following key design principles:

#### Key design principle 3: Privacy

Extensions and alterations should be designed to achieve reasonable levels of privacy for both inhabitants, future occupants and neighbours.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (b)

- 4.8** A reasonable amount of space should be provided around new extensions in the interests of the amenity of future residents and to prevent overlooking and undue loss of privacy to any existing residents, as shown in Figures 6 and 7.
- 4.9** The principal criteria for determining space requirements should be good design, respect for site levels, and the achievement of privacy through well planned layouts whilst retaining adequate amenity space for existing and future residents.

- 4.10** In general, the following minimum separation distances and those shown in Figure 7 should be considered to ensure reasonable privacy between the original house and neighbouring properties. A minimum separation of:

- no less than **12 metres** is recommended between windows of habitable rooms that face onto windows of a non-habitable room
- no less than **21 metres** is recommended between facing windows of habitable rooms

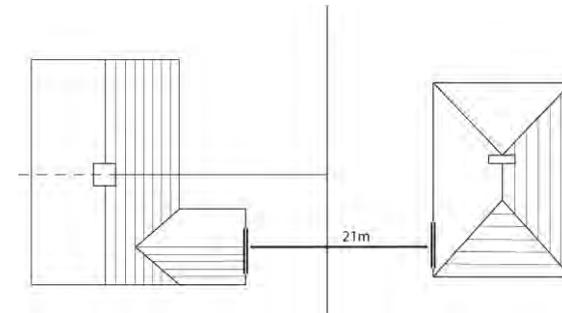


Figure 6: 21m recommended distance between habitable rooms.

## 4 General design principles

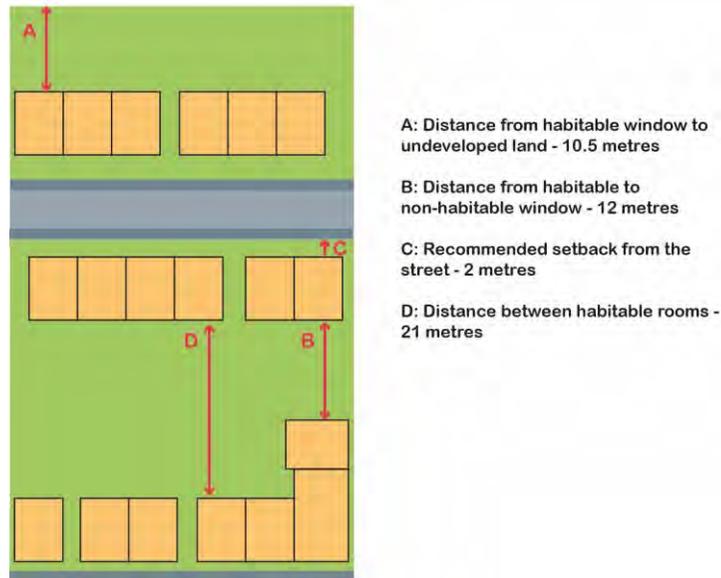


Figure 7: Minimum recommended separation distances.

**4.11** These distances should have regard to the character of the original house, local context and topography of the site. Proposals that do not comply with these distances will need to be justified.

**4.12** In certain situations, harmful overlooking can be avoided by using obscure glazing in rooms or areas of a dwelling which are non-habitable and by appropriate screening at ground floor level, such as boundary treatments which protect the privacy of neighbouring properties.

### Key design principle 4: Habitable rooms and side windows

Extensions and alterations should consider the design and layout of habitable and non-habitable rooms to reduce conflict between neighbouring properties relating to privacy, light and outlook.

### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (b)

**4.13** Both light and outlook can be of greater importance for some rooms than others. Limited weight will be given to protecting light and outlook from non-habitable rooms. Greater weight and protection will be afforded to rooms that most people spend much of the day in, known as habitable rooms. In relation to kitchens, greater weight will be given to protecting light and outlook where they include a dining area.

#### Habitable rooms

- Dining kitchens (e.g. kitchen with an open shared dining room)
- Living rooms
- Dining rooms
- Bedrooms
- Studies
- Conservatories

#### Non-habitable rooms

- Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Toilets
- Stairways
- Landings
- Small porches
- Garages

**4.14** In some cases, properties may have habitable rooms with windows on the side of the house (secondary windows). In these circumstances, development may be allowed closer to an affected main window.

**4.15** Side windows should not be included in extensions where they would unacceptably overlook neighbouring gardens or otherwise constrain the development potential of adjoining land.

### Key design principle 5: Overshadowing/loss of light

Extensions and alterations should not adversely affect the amount of natural light presently enjoyed by a neighbouring property.

### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (b)

**4.16** Any house extensions or alterations are expected to not materially affect the amount of natural light presently enjoyed by a neighbouring property. Therefore, extensions will not be permitted if they unreasonably overshadow neighbouring habitable rooms and private gardens.

**4.17** When assessing the impact of overshadowing on neighbouring properties, the council will, as a starting point, have regard to the 45° guidelines. A line will be drawn from the midpoint in the nearest habitable room window of the adjacent property, at an angle of 45°, across the proposed extension. The extent to which the line infringes upon the proposed extension will indicate the levels of light that may be lost to

the neighbouring property. In appropriate circumstances, where local context supports this, larger guidelines may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

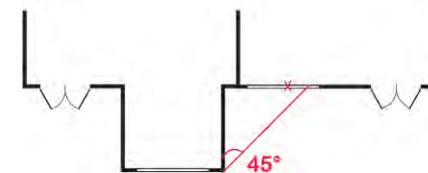
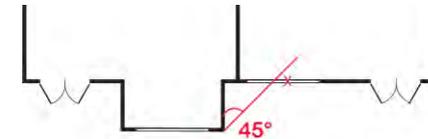


Figure 8: The top image shows an extension which passes the 45-degree rule, while the bottom image shows one that has failed the 45-degree rule.

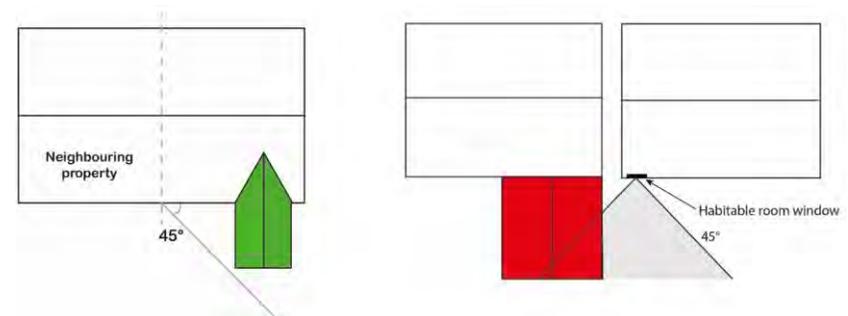


Figure 9: The image on the left shows an extension which achieves the 45 degrees rule while the image on the right does not achieve the 45 degree rule.

## 4 General design principles

**4.18** Consideration should also be given to the position of the proposed extension in relation to the sun's path and the impacts of different times of day and year when considering the impact of the 45° guidelines.

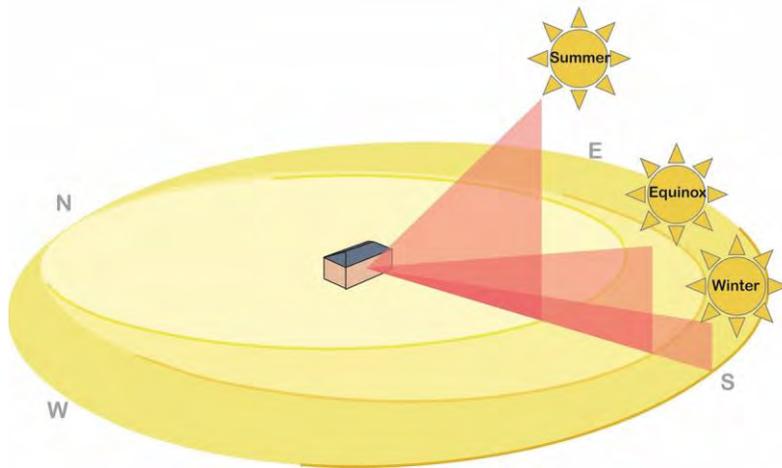


Figure 10: Sun path diagram for different times of year.

**4.19** Consideration of the outlook of neighbouring properties will also be considered in assessments of extensions and alterations. Dominance and outlook relate to how an extension will change the character of the neighbouring house and garden and affect the outlook from a neighbour's window. Proposals which would result in a poor or reduced outlook from neighbouring properties are unlikely to be acceptable.

**4.20** When assessing the impact that an extension or alteration may have on outlook, regard will be given to the established character of an area and the existing feeling of openness. It is important that neighbours do not feel unduly 'hemmed-in' by the proposals.

### Key design principle 7: Outdoor space

Extensions and alterations should ensure an appropriately sized and useable area of private outdoor space is retained. Normally at least half the garden area should be retained as part of the proposals.

### Key design principle 6: Preventing overbearing impact

Extensions and alterations should not unduly reduce the outlook from a neighbouring property.

### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (b)

### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (b) and (c)

**4.21** Proposals should seek to retain adequate and useable private outdoor space for the occupiers of the building, such as garden space, paved or patio areas. Proposals which would result in outdoor space which are too small or significantly out of character with the local area are unlikely to be acceptable.

**4.22** Normally, front gardens will not be considered adequate useable private amenity space due to the lack of overall privacy for occupants.

### 4.4 Sustainable design

**4.23** Planning for climate change is an important part of a successful response to the climate emergency. The council is committed to a target of zero carbon by 2038. Sustainable design can influence the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced, both during construction and through the development's lifecycle. All development proposals, however small the footprint of the development, should embed key sustainable design principles for mitigating and adapting to climate change. Consideration should be given to opportunities to further embed energy efficiency measures into the existing building. Proposals should therefore have regard to the following design principles for all extensions and alterations:

#### Energy efficiency

##### Key design principle 8: Energy efficiency

Extensions and alterations should, where practicable, maximise energy efficiency.

##### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (d) (iv)

**4.24** The design of a building can greatly affect the consumption and use of energy within it. Buildings should be designed to stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer, without the need for air conditioning or excessive heating. Proposals for extensions and alterations therefore should seek to achieve the following principles:

- Maximise solar gain;
- Maximise natural light; and
- Maximise natural ventilation and cooling

**4.25** To achieve the principles above, proposals for housing extensions and alterations should consider adopting a fabric-first approach to maximising energy efficiency. The following opportunities should be considered to help achieve energy efficiencies and plan for climate change:

- Siting buildings and extensions to minimise overshadowing;
- Orientating buildings so that they broadly run east west and face south;
- Locating garages on the north side of homes to act as additional thermal buffers;
- Ensuring that the roof structure includes south facing slopes to facilitate the installation of solar panels;
- Locating main rooms on the south side of the building;
- Optimising glazing on the south side of buildings while providing appropriate shading opportunities such as blinds or external louvres;
- Minimising the area of north-facing windows;
- Careful design to avoid excessive surface area and associated heat loss;
- Using construction materials with a high thermal mass, such as concrete, tiles and stone, which absorb excess heat during the day and release it slowly;
- Using landscaping and porches to provide shelter from winds;
- Extra insulation of walls, roofs and floors;
- Advanced glazing systems such as triple glazing;
- High efficiency heating boilers that respond to solar gain and have multi-zone temperature control; and

## 4 General design principles

- Considering low energy/emissions build standards where appropriate to ensure the development meets the required real-world performance expectations.



Figure 11: Illustrative example of an extension achieving energy efficiency methods through the use of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

## Materials

### Key design principle 9: Construction materials

Extensions and alterations should seek to use innovative construction materials and techniques, including reclaimed and recycled materials where possible.

### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (d) (iii)

**4.26** The choice of materials for construction should consider the carbon footprint of the source of these materials and overall life upkeep. Proposals should consider the following when choosing materials:

- Sourcing materials locally to reduce the need for transport;
- Selecting materials that have a long life and require little maintenance;
- Selecting materials that have low levels of embodied energy (energy used in manufacture);
- Considering the full life cycle of alternative materials i.e the impacts of raw material extraction, processing, manufacture, transport, use and disposal; and
- Maximising the use of timber from sustainable Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) sources. If other timber is used it should be from a known source with a sustainable purchasing policy.

### Renewable energy

#### Key design principle 10: Renewable energy

Extensions and alterations should consider the use of renewable energy.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (d) (iv)

Policy LP26 Renewable and low carbon energy (a), (b), (c), (d) and (l)

**4.27** Microgeneration of renewable energy can support a strong reduction in household greenhouse gas emissions. Household extensions should strongly consider the opportunities for microgeneration of renewable energy. Proposals should have regard to opportunities to include renewable microgeneration technologies such as solar photovoltaics, solar water heating (aka solar thermal), ground, air and water source heating/cooling systems and hydro-electric generation in new extensions.

### Water retention

#### Key design principle 11: Water retention

Extensions and alterations should consider designing water retention into the proposals.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP34 (5)

**4.28** Consideration should be given to designing water retention into proposals. The following measures could be included:

- Rainwater harvesting (collecting rainwater from a building's roof and storing this in a tank);
- The use of water butts;
- Grey Water recycling (water which has already been used) for toilet flushing and garden watering; and
- Water efficient devices (e.g. toilets, taps, showers and appliances).

## 4 General design principles

### 4.5 The natural environment

**4.29** The natural environment plays a key role in supporting the ecosystem and health and well-being of occupiers and neighbours. Proposals for extensions and alterations need to have careful consideration of how they impact the natural environment and should seek to enhance this.

#### Key design principle 12: Natural environment

Extensions and alterations should consider how they might contribute towards the enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (h) (i)

Policy LP34 Conserving and enhancing the water environment

**4.30** The protection and enhancement of biodiversity is an important aspect of development. It is important that all building work, however small, recognises the impact that their development could have on biodiversity and consider how no significant loss or harm will be caused and where possible how net gain in biodiversity can be achieved.

**4.31** Household extensions and alterations can provide opportunities to include features to support biodiversity net gain. Potential opportunities include:

- Providing gentle transitions between different habitats and incorporating measures in walls, fences and roads that support the movement of animals;
- Retaining gardens where possible;
- Using green roofs; and
- Incorporating measures such as bat boxes and swift bricks in buildings

**4.32** Some extensions and alterations may have an impact on protected species, particularly in relation to bats and birds. Where this occurs, applications will need to be supported by the appropriate surveys for protected species if the council determines there is a likelihood of their presence. Statutory obligations are in place to ensure habitats are protected, and applicants would be required to show how these habitats would be protected as part of any planning permission. Further standing advice on protected species can be found on the Natural England website.

### Vegetation and tree planting

#### Key design principle 13: Vegetation and tree planting

Extensions and alterations should seek to retain existing vegetation and trees and enhance this provision through landscaping where possible.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (d) (i) (iv)

Policy LP33 Trees

- 4.33** Vegetation and trees play a key role in supporting a sustainable natural environment. They support climate change mitigation, enhance biodiversity and support the health and well-being of occupants and neighbours.
- 4.34** Proposals for extensions should normally retain valuable and important trees in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP33 (Trees) and where appropriate, plant new trees to increase environmental benefits as well as support improved visual impacts of proposed developments. The council will not grant planning permission for developments which directly or indirectly threaten trees or woodlands of significant amenity value. Further guidance on trees is available on the council's website.
- 4.35** Consideration should also be given to providing boundary treatments and potential shading from sunlight and wind to help control natural cooling and ventilation using appropriate species of trees and vegetation. Where possible, proposals should seek to use native and local trees and vegetation.
- 4.36** To avoid the footprint of extensions and alterations causing increased risk of flooding on the land or elsewhere, the council strongly encourages the retention of garden space and landscaped areas.
- 4.37** Where the loss of garden space is unavoidable, surfaces should be permeable and preferably finished with a natural material, such as grass mesh for parking areas, to reduce the effect and appearance of hard surfaced areas. Where impermeable surfaces are unavoidable, it is essential that any run-off is directed to a porous or permeable surface to avoid excessive run-off into highway drains. If this is not possible, planning permission will be required for laying traditional, impermeable driveways.
- 4.38** Where a proposed extension site is located in Flood Zone 2 or 3, a site-specific flood risk assessment is required that is appropriate to the scale, nature and location of the development. Householder development is not subject to a flood risk sequential test or exception test but should still meet the requirements for flood risk assessment. The flood risk assessment should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal. Further advice relating to flood risk and householder extensions can be found at Gov.uk by searching 'Flood risk assessment standing advice for minor extensions' and the councils Strategic Flood Risk Assessment can be found on the councils website by searching 'Strategic Flood Risk Assessment' and pre-application advice can be obtained from the Environment Agency on their website in cases of close proximity to main rivers.
- 4.39** Where single storey extensions containing bedrooms are proposed within Flood Zones 2 and 3, careful consideration and adequate mitigation measures will be required to ensure safety.

### Drainage and flood risk

#### Key design principle 14: Drainage and flood risk

Extensions and alterations should ensure that all new developments are resilient and resistant to flood risk.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (d) (vii)

Policy LP27 Flood risk

Policy LP34 Conserving and enhancing the water environment

## 4 General design principles

### 4.6 Parking

**4.40** Proposals for extensions and alterations need to ensure that they maintain appropriate access and parking to ensure that highways are not affected by development.

#### Key design principle 15: Provision for parking

Extensions and alterations should maintain appropriate access and off-street 'in curtilage' parking.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP22 Parking (f)

**4.41** Proposals for extensions need to carefully balance the requirement for off-street parking and cycling storage against the retention of private amenity space and soft landscaping areas within the curtilage of the property.

**4.42** Proposals should maintain appropriate access and parking arrangements, including for bicycles. The number of parking spaces required are dependent on the size of the property and the prevailing local characteristics and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An initial point of reference for residential development is as follows:

- 2 to 3 bedroom dwellings provide a minimum of 2 off-street car parking spaces
- 4+ bedroom dwellings provide 3 off-street parking spaces

**4.43** Where alternate parking areas are required in the property boundary, careful consideration should be taken to retain as much of the garden boundary and soft landscaping as possible. Proposals should not result in street scenes dominated by large areas of hard surfaces and parked cars. Where parking surfaces are in the curtilage of the dwelling these should be permeable and preferably finished with a natural material.

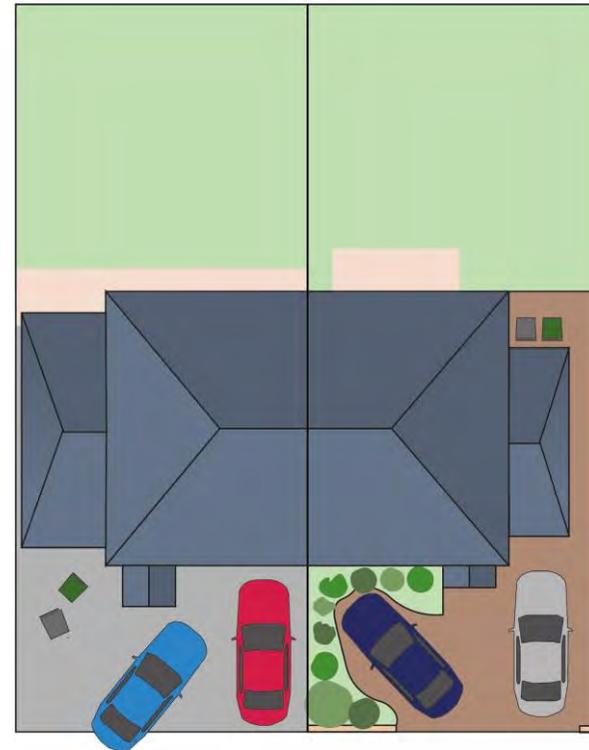


Figure 12: Left image is a poorly designed extension with limited hardstanding parking, poor bin storage, no access to rear garden and loss of garden boundaries. Right image is a well-designed proportionate extension with permeable parking area, planting, access to rear garden and hidden bin storage.

### 4.7 Waste storage

#### Waste Storage

##### Key design principle 16: Provision for waste storage

Extensions and alterations should maintain appropriate storage arrangements for waste.

##### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (d) (iv)

- 4.44** Consideration should be given to the storage of bins and recycling. Proposals for extensions should consider appropriate storage for bins. Bin storage should provide easy, level access from the storage location to the collection point. Bin storage areas should be well integrated in enclosed or otherwise discreet/well screened areas and must meet fire safety standards. Further guidance on emergency access, waste management, servicing and deliveries can be found in the Council's Highways Design Guidance SPD and waste strategy available on the council's website.

## 4 General design principles

### 4.8 Access for all users

**4.45** Well-designed extensions and alterations should be accessible or adaptable for all current and future occupiers to support the changing needs at different stages of life. This includes inclusive access for those who are disabled, elderly and families with small children and will help ensure that residents are able to meet their housing needs. Consideration should be given to the following key design principle.

#### Key design principle 17: Access for all users

Extensions and alterations to existing houses should consider how the needs of a range of different users can be met in facilitating access and movement.

#### Relevant Local Plan Policy

Policy LP24 Design (f)

**4.46** While there is no requirement under current planning legislation or building regulations to create disabled access to your proposed extension, you should consider the provision of a level access to any new external doorway to your extension and appropriate accessibility to gardens. This will enable occupiers and visitors with mobility difficulties to gain access more easily. You can find more information and guidance on the Lifetime Homes website.

**4.47** Extensions for disabled people may need to be larger than the council would normally permit, for example to incorporate a downstairs bedroom or toilet/shower room and wheelchair turning, and could be acceptable where appropriate evidence of need and assessment can be demonstrated.

**4.48** Dementia is a growing condition within the population, and consideration should be given to designing future extensions and alterations to homes which provide an ease of access and legibility around the whole building. When designing extensions and alterations with dementia in mind, consideration should be given to the following:

- Providing clear sight lines with signage at lower levels;
- Using clear, simple and clutter free designs to increase legibility;
- Providing even lighting, including clear unobstructed access to daylight;
- Installing matt, even coloured flooring;
- Reducing noise and reverberation through using sound absorbent materials. Curtains and soft furnishings will help;
- Accessing green outside spaces;
- Providing clear landmark features within buildings as wayfinders; and
- Providing space for future installations of equipment that may be required.

**4.49** Further information on dementia friendly design can be found at the Design for Dementia guide at the Housing Learning and Improvement Network website.

### 5 Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

#### 5.1 Rear extensions

5.1 Rear extensions should maintain the quality of the residential environment and relate well to the neighbouring buildings. Rear extensions should generally not be visible from the street and should retain a reasonable living environment for the property being extended. This should include consideration of the following:

- Preserving a back garden of a reasonable size, with a general principle that at least half the garden area is retained;
- Being set behind the original building, and not projecting beyond the sides; and
- Maintaining external access to the rear garden.

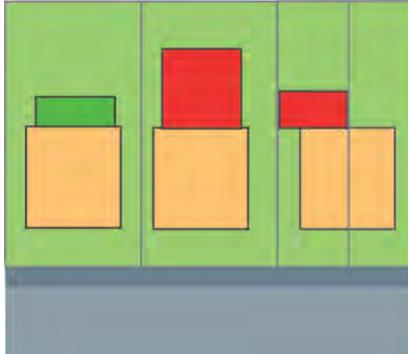


Figure 13: Left: Example of a well-designed rear extension situated at the back of the original property. More than 50% of the garden space is retained and access to the rear of the property is available down the side. Central: Poorly designed extension which is large and has more than 50% of the rear garden removed. Right: Access to the rear garden is prevented due to the siting of the rear extension.

5.2 As a general rule, a rear extension should:

- respect the original house and garden in terms of its size and scale;
- use appropriate materials which match or are similar in appearance to the original house; and
- not have an adverse impact by way of overshadowing or loss of outlook of neighbouring properties.

5.3 Rear extensions commonly encounter problems by causing overshadowing and loss of outlook to neighbouring properties. Figure 14 shows how unacceptable heights of single storey and two-storey rear extensions can have adverse impacts on neighbouring properties through these principles and would not be permitted.

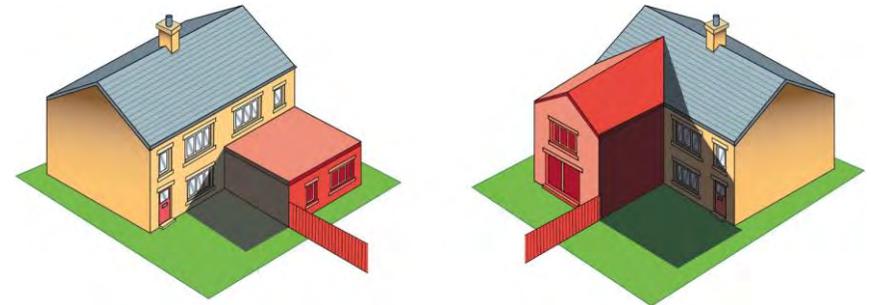


Figure 14: Left image shows a single storey extension built to the boundary of the neighbouring property overshadows more than the 45 degrees permitted. The right image shows a two-storey rear extension built to the boundary of the neighbouring property overshadows more 45 degrees.

5.4 To avoid the problems caused by loss of light, as well as loss of privacy and outlook, the sizes and projections of rear extensions need to be strictly controlled.

## 5 Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

### Single storey rear extensions

**5.5** Single storey rear extensions can have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties and gardens. Careful consideration should therefore be given to the design of these extensions to ensure their height and windows do not harm the privacy of neighbours.

**5.6** Single storey extensions should:

- be in keeping with the scale and style of the original house;
- not normally cover more than half the total area around the original house (including previous extensions and outbuildings);
- not exceed 4 metres in height;
- not project out more than 3 metres from the rear wall of the original house for semi-detached and terraces houses or by 4 metres for detached properties;
- where they exceed 3m in length the eaves height should generally not exceed 2.5 meters; and
- retain a gap of at least 1 metre from a property boundary, such as a wall, fence or hedge.

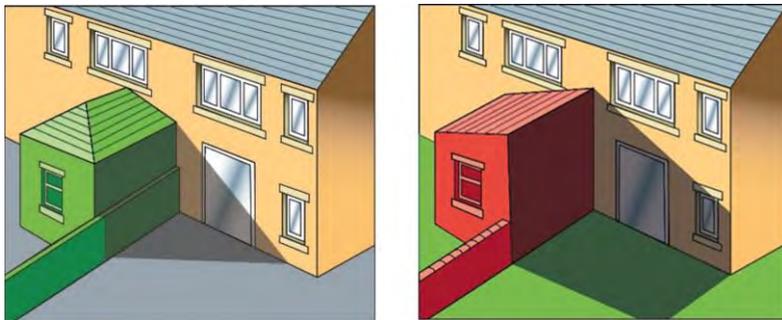


Figure 15: The left image's extension keeps the eaves height low ensuring that the neighbouring property is not overshadowed. The right image's extension eaves are too high causing the neighbouring property to be overshadowed.

### Conservatories

**5.7** Conservatories and summer rooms are classed as extensions. They should be in keeping with the original house, not overlook a neighbouring property and not over dominate adjacent gardens. A conservatory which would overlook a property next-door will not be allowed unless the view from to the neighbouring boundary is sufficiently screened by a fence, wall or hedge to protect the privacy of adjoining neighbours.

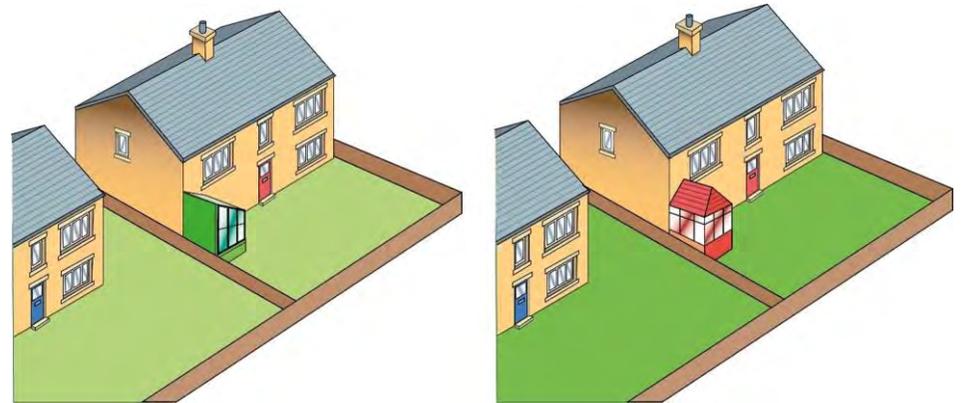


Figure 16: The left image shows a good example of a conservatory, while the right image shows a bad example of a conservatory.

### Two-storey rear extensions

**5.8** Two-storey rear extensions will be considered based on the extent of overshadowing, loss of privacy and outlook. Generally, two-storey rear extensions should:

- be proportionate to the size of the original house and garden;
- not normally exceed 50% of the total area of land around the original house (including previous extensions and outbuildings);
- not project out more than 3 metres from the rear wall of the original house or by 4 metres for detached properties;
- not exceed a height at the eaves of 3 metres where the extension is within 1.5 metres of the property boundary;
- be separated from the property boundary, such as a wall, fence or hedge, by at least 1.5 metre; and
- not adversely affect habitable room windows where they adjoin a neighbour's boundary.

**5.9** Larger extensions may be acceptable in certain circumstances if this can be justified, such as where neighbouring houses have already been extended, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**5.10** Where two storey extensions introduce additional bedrooms overall parking requirements will need to be considered, as stated in Key Design Principle 15.

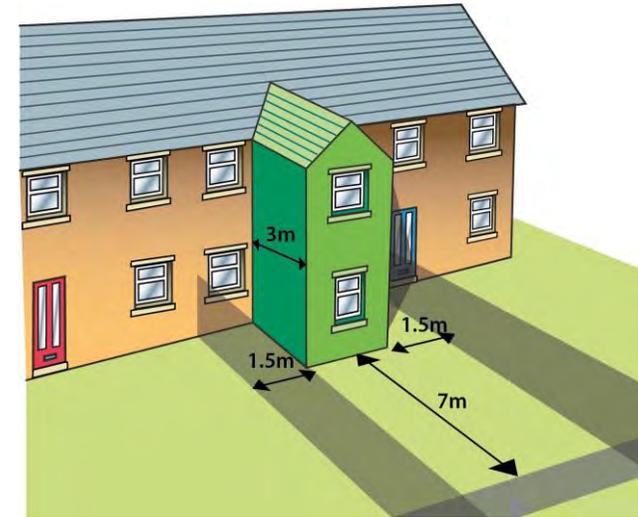


Figure 17: Acceptable two-storey rear extension which does not impact on the neighbouring properties.

## 5 Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

### Part two storey, part single storey extensions

- 5.11** Careful consideration should be given to the design of part two-storey, part single storey rear extensions to ensure the proportions reflect those of the original house and that they do not overlook, overshadow or dominate neighbouring properties and gardens.
- 5.12** Care needs to be taken to ensure that the placement of windows takes account of neighbouring gardens. A stepped extension where the single storey addition lies close to the neighbouring boundary helps reduce the impact on neighbours. If the site is level and the rear elevations of the dwellings are flush, a 3.0m depth is acceptable provided that the single storey extension is set a minimum of 1.0 metre away from neighbouring side boundary and the two-storey extension a minimum of 1.5 metre from the shared side boundary.

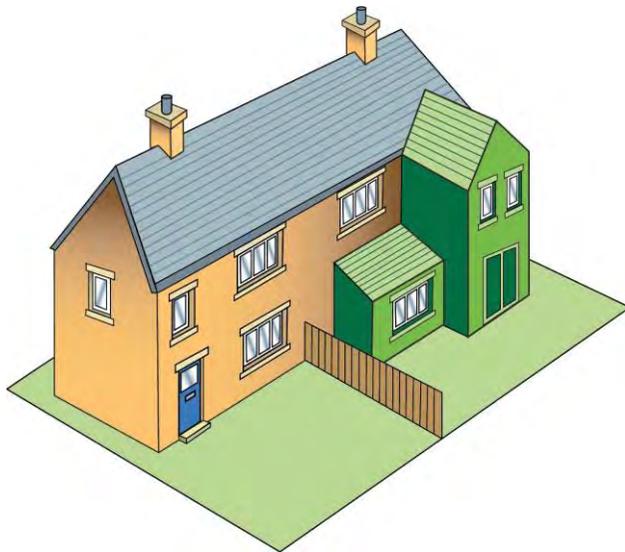


Figure 18: Acceptable part two storey, part single storey rear extension which does not affect the neighbouring property.

### 5.2 Front extensions

**5.13** Front extensions are highly prominent in the street scene and can erode the character of the area if they are not carefully designed. Large extensions (single and two-storey) and conservatories on the front of an existing house are likely to appear particularly intrusive and will not normally be acceptable.

**5.14** Single storey extensions on the front of a house and two-storey or first floor front extensions are usually unacceptable due to the impact on the character of the area and visual amenity and will not normally be permitted unless:

- The house is set well back from the pavement or is well screened; and
- The extension is small, subservient to the original building, well-designed and would not harm the character of the original house or the area; and
- The materials and design match the existing features of the original house; and
- The extension would not unreasonably affect the neighbouring properties.

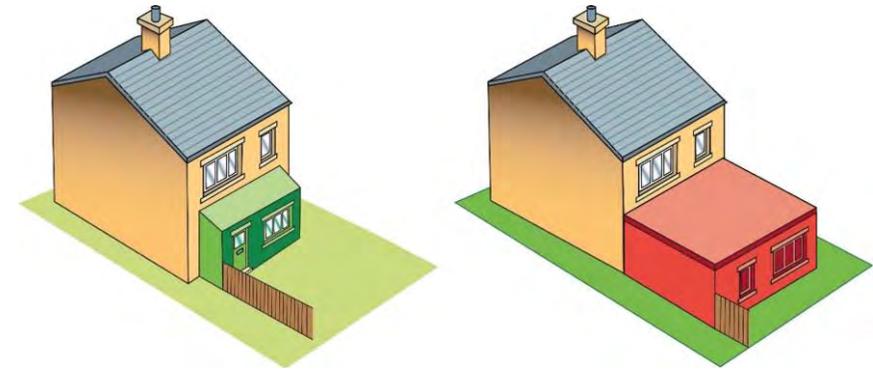


Figure 19: The left image shows a suitable small scale front extension with an appropriate roof detailing. The right image shows an over dominant and unproportioned extension with a flat roof which does not match the existing house.

## 5 Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

### 5.3 Side extensions

**5.15** Side extensions should be located and designed to minimise the impact on the local character of the area. The design should reflect the design of the original building in terms of roof style, pitch materials and detailing.

**5.16** Side extensions should maintain the quality of the environment for neighbours by:

- Ensuring reasonable levels of natural light to the habitable rooms in neighbouring properties; and
- Positioning windows to minimise or avoid any potential overlook into neighbouring gardens.

#### Single storey side extensions

**5.17** Single storey side extensions should be offset and complement the original building. As such, single storey side extensions should:

- not extend more than two thirds of the width of the original house;
- not exceed a height of 4 metres; and
- be set back at least 500mm from the original building line to allow for a visual break.

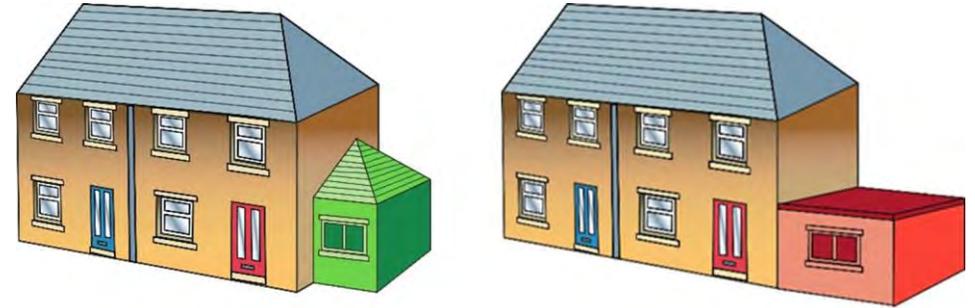


Figure 20: The left image shows a single storey extension proportionate and set back from the existing building line with an appropriate roofing design to match the existing house. The right image shows a poorly designed single storey side extension which is not set back from the building line and with a flat roof which does not match the existing house.

**5.18** In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for single storey dwellings to use lean-to roof designs against a gable wall to reduce potential impacts on neighbouring properties.

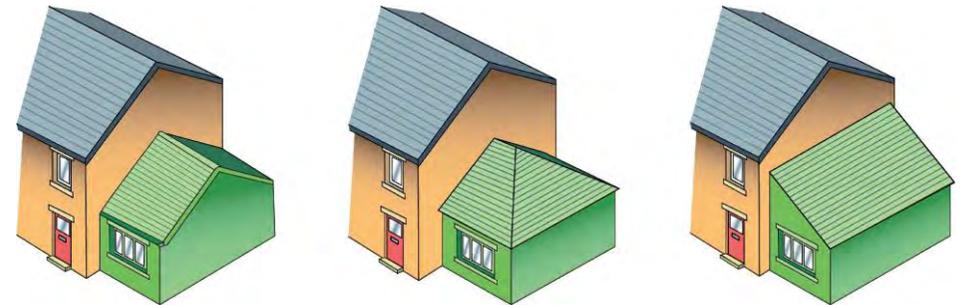


Figure 21: Examples of types of roofs which are acceptable for side extensions.

### Two-storey side extensions

**5.19** Two-storey side extensions can have a significant effect on the character of the original house and the street. Adequate space between buildings should be retained to provide a sense of space which is important to the character of an area.

**5.20** Two-storey side extensions should:

- not take up all or most of the space to the side of a house;
- maintain a 1 metre gap to the side boundary to ensure the building is not too close to a neighbouring property; and
- be set back at least 500mm from the front wall of the house.

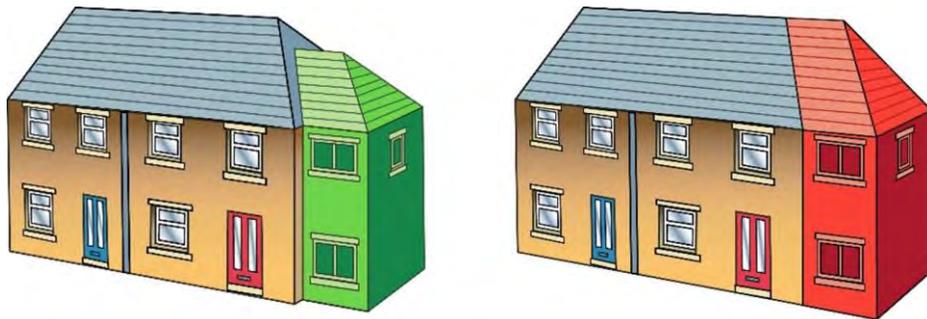


Figure 22: Left image shows a side extension which is set back from the existing building line and is proportionate to the existing building in scale. The right image shows a side extension which is not set back from the existing building line and is overly dominant in relation to the original building line.

### Two-storey and first floor side extensions

**5.21** Spaces between houses, including driveways, are important in providing a sense of space, local character and attractive appearance of an area and should be retained. Two-storey and first floor side extensions can cause a negative impact on the street when used to close the gap between semi-detached or detached houses. This can create a terracing effect in a non-terraced street, as shown in Figure 23, and must be avoided.



Figure 23: Left image shows two detached properties which include a 1m gap between the boundaries and are set back by 500mm from the building line to provide a lowered ridgeline. The right image shows a side extension to detached dwellings providing no gap between the buildings causing a terracing effect.

## 5 Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

### 5.22 Two-storey and first floor side extensions should:

- ideally be visually smaller in relation to the original house;
- be set back at least 500mm from the front of the original house to provide a vertical break from the roof plane and for the lowering of the ridgeline from the original house;
- have a roof design that follows the form of the existing roof; and
- retain a gap of at least 1 metre to boundary walls to avoid a terracing effect and to retain rear access to gardens.



Figure 24: Acceptable two-storey side extension which has an appropriate set back from the building line and ridgeline of the original building.

### Corner plots

**5.23** On corner plots, side extensions should be considered as being both side and front extensions and as such will relate to both street frontages. Therefore, both elevations should be designed as street frontages. On corner plots, side extensions should contribute to the local character by:

- Facing in both directions to create two frontages, each with windows overlooking the street;
- Being set back from the existing building line on both streets; and
- Following the boundary treatment along both streets, in relation to its position, height and materials.

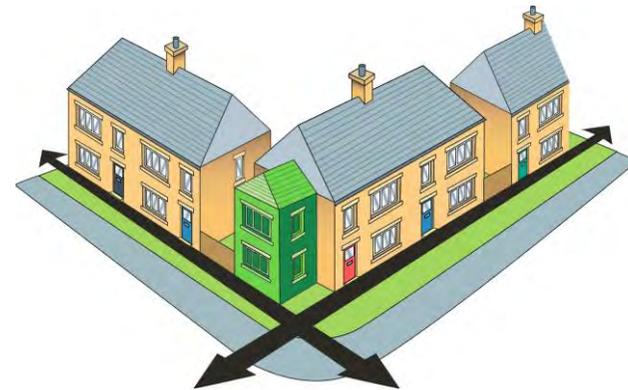


Figure 25: Good example of a corner plot which relates well to street frontages.

### 5.4 Dormer windows & roof extensions

**5.24** Roofs are a prominent and visible element of the street scene. Unsympathetic roof extensions and dormer windows can have a significant effect on the visual appearance of both the individual building and street scene. Poorly designed roof extensions and dormer windows can make a building appear top-heavy, cluttered and asymmetrical.

**5.25** The design of dormer windows and roof extensions should reflect the character of the area, the surrounding buildings and the age, appearance and materials of the existing house. Ideally, dormers should be located to the rear of a house and should be as small as possible with a substantial area of the original roof retained. There are different roof types, as shown in Figure 26, which can be used to provide extra space within a home.

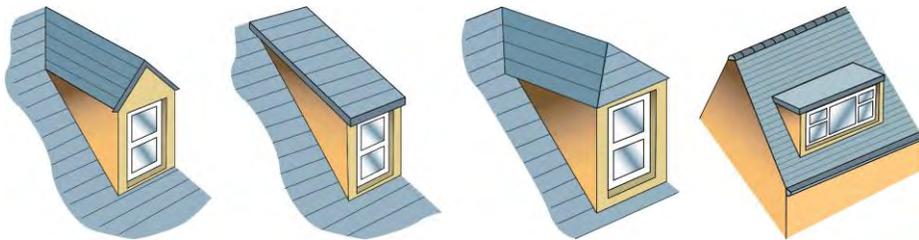


Figure 26: Example of roof types for dormer windows left to right: Gable, shed, hipped and flat.

**5.26** To assess whether a dormer window is appropriate on the front elevation, consideration should be given to the surrounding buildings in the street. Traditional vertical dormer windows usually complement the character and roof pitch of the existing house and will normally be acceptable. Modern flat roof dormers may be considered acceptable if they are well-designed, small in scale and appearance and are characteristic of the street scene.

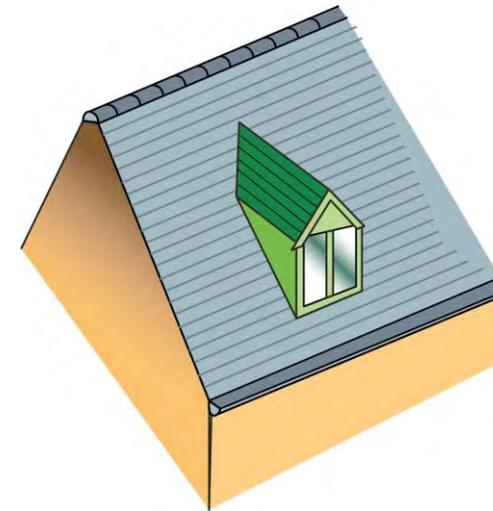


Figure 27: Example of a traditional vertical dormer which complements the existing pitched roof.

## 5 Detailed guidance for extensions and alterations

### 5.27 Dormer windows should:

- relate to the appearance of the house and existing roof;
- be designed in style and materials similar to the appearance of the existing house and roof;
- not dominate the roof or project above the ridge of the house;
- be set below the ridgeline of the existing roof and within the roof plane; and
- be aligned with existing dormer windows on neighbouring properties in the same roof plane where relevant.



Figure 28: Placing of traditional dormers below the ridge line, away from party walls, in line with windows below and in neighbouring roof plane and set back from the eaves and gable.

### 5.5 Balconies

**5.28** Balconies and roof terraces on existing buildings should not negatively affect neighbouring properties or alter the local character of the area. Balconies and roof terraces should be:

- Positioned, and screened if required, so that they do not overlook neighbouring homes or gardens.
- Sited away from locations that are sensitive to additional noise levels or disruption.

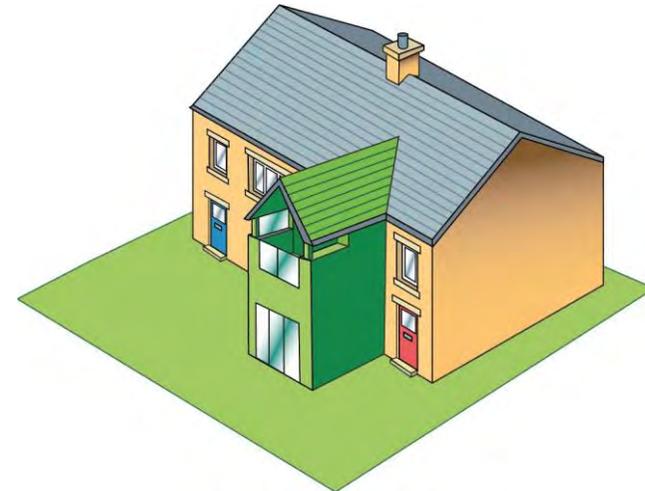


Figure 29: Example of a good balcony with appropriate obscure glazing to provide privacy to neighbouring dwelling.

### 5.6 Outbuildings

**5.29** Outbuildings, such as garden offices, detached garages and granny annexes, can have as much of an impact on the appearance of the building as any other extension. Wherever possible these should reflect the style, shape and architectural features of the existing house and not be detrimental to the space around the building.

**5.30** Outbuildings should normally:

- be subservient in footprint and scale to the original building and its garden taking into account other extensions and existing outbuildings;
- be set back behind the building line of the original building so that they do not impact on the street scene; and
- preserve a reasonable private amenity space appropriate to the potential number of occupants of the house, and follow a general principle that no more than 50% of garden space should be lost.

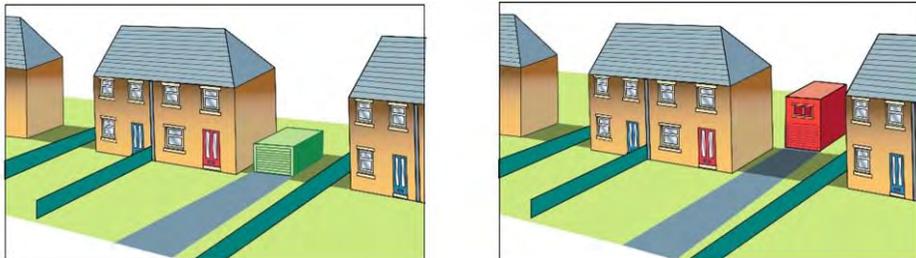


Figure 30: The left image shows an example of a suitable single storey outbuilding set back from the building line with suitable garden space retained. The right image shows an unsuitable outbuilding which is two-storey, set back too far from the building line and removes too much garden space.

### 5.7 Bungalows

**5.31** Careful consideration should be given to two storey and first floor extensions to bungalows. These can cause a negative impact on the street scene and character of the area through changing the height, rhythm or form of a roof in relation to the rest of the street scene.

**5.32** Increasing the height of the property by amending the roof pitch or eaves height will significantly affect the character and proportions of the building and will impact on the surrounding street scene (see Figure 31) and is usually unacceptable where the roof pitches and heights in the street scene are consistent.

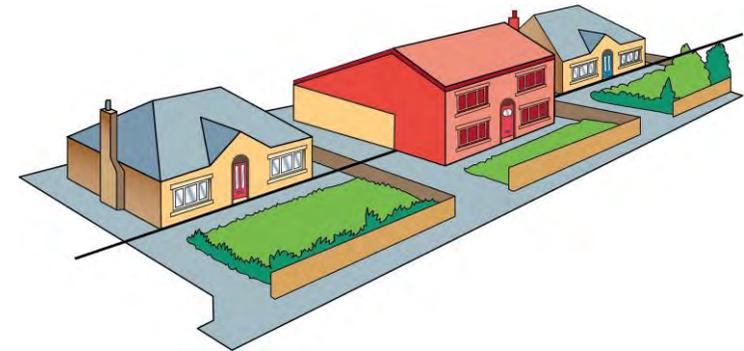


Figure 31: Example of how raising the eaves height of a bungalow has caused a shallower pitched roof from the neighbouring properties. This makes it incongruous with the rest of the street, over dominant in scale and out of step with the building line.

