

Maidstone Local Development Framework



RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS

Supplementary Planning Document



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Preface

**This document is produced by
Maidstone Borough Council**

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1 Introduction

What is the Supplementary Planning Document?

- 1.1** This supplementary planning document (SPD) is part of Maidstone Borough Council's Local Development Framework. It provides further detail about how national, regional and local planning policies will be applied in relation to extensions to properties in built up areas and within the countryside.
- 1.2** Extensions are a common form of development in the Borough and therefore have an important influence on shaping the local environment. They may also impact directly on neighbours. Whilst the focus of the guidance is on residential extensions, the SPD is equally applicable to buildings in other uses.
- 1.3** The SPD is intended for applicants, agents, planning officers and local residents to assist with improving the quality of development and address the issues of design, amenity and other important considerations. It is intended to create a high-quality, sustainable built environment in line with the Council's aspirations for its present and future residents. The SPD refers only to planning aspects of development and separate advice should be sought on Building Regulations. The SPD takes into account the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008. It indicates the general parameters and the criteria by which planning applications for home extensions will be judged.
- 1.4** The SPD refers to organisations which provide useful advice and guidance. The Appendix contains the relevant web page addresses for these organisations. The Appendix doesn't form part of the SPD.

Will I need Planning Permission?

- 1.5** The principles contained in this guidance promote good practice and should be relevant whether planning permission is required or not.
 - 1.6** Some minor extensions can be carried out without the need to obtain planning permission – these are generally referred to as "Permitted Development". They are subject to the proposal meeting very strict criteria, for example relating to size and detailed positioning.
 - 1.7** As the law relating to planning permission is complex, and the rules governing "Permitted Development" can change from time to time, you are strongly advised to seek advice from the Council before carrying out any development to check whether permission is required for what you want to do. You may apply for a Certificate of Lawful Development in order to obtain a formal view from the Council.
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- 1.8** Particular care must be taken if the property is a listed building, within a conservation area, affected by an Article 4 Direction, or is in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In these circumstances special rules apply.
- 1.9** A short amount of time spent obtaining advice can save a great deal of wasted time later.
- 1.10** The Planning Portal: Information can be found on the Planning Portal web page (see the Appendix for the web page address). The visual guide to planning permission for householders will provide useful information.

Objectives

- 1.11** This SPD aims:
- To raise awareness and guide applicants in achieving high quality design outcomes by providing design guidance on the appropriateness of proposals for different types of extensions
 - To supplement adopted design policies for assessing proposals to extend properties within the Borough, and
 - To assist the appraisal of particular proposals
 - To deliver improved designs on the ground which enhance the character of the area

Status

- 1.12** The SPD adopted by Maidstone Borough Council is a material consideration in determining planning applications for residential extensions in the Borough.
- 1.13** The SPD has been subject to consultation and a sustainability appraisal to ensure the document contributes to the achievement of sustainability objectives.

Definition

- 1.14** For the purposes of this SPD 'extensions' include all new buildings suitable or potentially suitable for use as habitable accommodation and any other buildings such as garages or outbuildings situated within the curtilage.
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2 Policy Context

- 2.1** The SPD is consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with regional planning policies as well as the policies set out in the development plan documents contained in the local development framework.

National Planning Policies

- 2.2** *Planning Policy Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)* states that the Government is committed to protecting and enhancing the quality of the natural and historic environment, in both rural and urban areas. Planning policies should seek to protect and enhance the quality, character and amenity value of the countryside and urban areas as a whole.
- 2.3** Planning should seek to maintain and improve the local environment and help to mitigate the effects of declining environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as design, conservation and the provision of public space.
- 2.4** Planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.
- 2.5** Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally. Local planning authorities should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness particularly where this is supported by clear plan policies or supplementary planning documents on design.
- 2.6** *Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing)* affirms that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.
- 2.7** The guidance advocates that Local Planning Authorities should develop a shared vision with their local communities of the type(s) of residential environments they wish to see and develop design policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the local area, aimed at:
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- Creating places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity and maintain and improve local character.
- Promoting designs and layouts which make efficient and effective use of land, including encouraging innovative approaches to help deliver high quality outcomes.

- 2.8** Good design is fundamental to using land efficiently. Local Planning Authorities should facilitate good design by identifying the distinctive features that define the character of a particular local area.
- 2.9** Careful attention to design is particularly important where the chosen local strategy involves intensification of the existing urban fabric. More intensive development is not always appropriate. However, when well designed and built in the right location, it can enhance the character and quality of an area.
- 2.10** *Planning Policy Statement 7: (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas Sustainable Development in Rural Areas)* aim to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all. New building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements should be strictly controlled.
- 2.11** *Planning Policy Guidance 15: (Planning and the Historic Environment)* sets out the Government's policy for the protection of the historic built environment. It offers guidance and advice on controls over Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.
- 2.12** *The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)*, the Government advisor on architecture, urban design and public space, publishes design advice on their web page (see the Appendix for the web page address).

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) March 2001

- 2.13** This Supplementary Planning Document supplements adopted and emerging regional guidance.
- 2.14** Policy Q1 advocates that development plans should ensure that new development in and around urban areas is well designed and consistent with the overall strategy for urban renaissance and sustainable development.
- 2.15** Policy Q2 urges that the quality of life in urban areas, including suburban areas, should be raised through significant improvements to the urban environment, making urban areas more attractive places in which to live, work, shop, spend leisure time and invest, thus helping counter-trends to more dispersed patterns of residence and travel.
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The Emerging South East Plan 2006

- 2.16** The Secretary of State has published Proposed Changes to the draft South East Plan for consultation.
- 2.17** Within the Proposed Changes, POLICY CC6 (Sustainable Communities and Character of the Environment) seeks to promote the creation of sustainable and distinctive communities by developing and implementing a local shared vision which respects, and where appropriate, enhances the character and distinctiveness of settlements and landscapes throughout the region and uses innovative design processes to create a high quality built environment which promote a sense of place
- 2.18** Once adopted (anticipated spring 2009), the South East Plan will supersede the Kent and Medway Structure Plan.
- 2.19** This SPD will supplement the South East Plan when it is adopted.

Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006

- 2.20** The Structure Plan will eventually be replaced by the South East Plan once the latter is approved. In the meantime, this document supplements Structure Plan Policy QL1 (Quality of Development and Design) which stresses the importance of development responding well to the distinct character of each settlement.

Kent Design Guide 2005/06

- 2.21** This Supplementary Planning Document should be read in conjunction with the Kent Design Guide 2005/6 with which it shares a common approach to achieving high quality design appropriate to its context. The Design Guide is endorsed by the Borough Council as Supplementary Guidance and can be viewed on the Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council web pages (see the Appendix for the web page addresses).

Saved Local Plan (Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan 2000, amended 2007)

- 2.22** This SPD supplements Saved Local Plan Policies H18 (Extensions to Residential Properties) and H33 (Extending Dwellings in the Countryside) both of which seek an appropriate scale and design for extensions and respect for the amenities of adjoining residents.

Core Strategy

- 2.23** This SPD will supplement policies in the Core Strategy once adopted.
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Character Area Assessment SPDs

- 2.24** The Borough Council is producing SPDs for built up parts of the Borough which identify the locally distinctive features that define their character. The SPDs provide appropriate design criteria for assessing development proposals within each of the identified character areas and, in assessing the appropriateness of extensions within the built up area, regard should be had to the Character Area Assessment for that area, if produced.

Landscape Character Area Assessment

- 2.25** The Borough Council will produce an SPD which assesses the unique character of the Borough's countryside (including the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Beauty which has national status) and provide appropriate design guidance for areas with distinctive characteristics. In assessing the appropriateness of extensions within the countryside, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, regard should be had to the Landscape Character Area Assessment SPD when adopted.

3 Community Involvement

- 3.1** Community involvement in the preparation of the SPD has closely followed the Borough Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
 - 3.2** The timetable for production of the SPD was included in the Borough Council's Local Development Scheme. Progress on its development was publicised on the Borough Council's website in Council report agendas and through the September and December issue of the Planning Viewpoint newsletter.
 - 3.3** Formal consultation on the Residential Extensions SPD was undertaken during November and December 2009 and copies of the SPD were made available for comment at the Borough Council offices, in local libraries and on the website.
 - 3.4** Statutory consultees as well as the existing network of resident, community and specialist interest groups known to the Borough Council and the information exchange group, Planning Viewpoint, were all consulted. The SPD was publicised in the local press, on the website and to the Planning Viewpoint group.
 - 3.5** Representations received during the public consultation have been used to amend and improve the final document.
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4 Extensions within Settlements

4.1 This section applies to extensions within the built up part of the towns and villages of the Borough.

Design Considerations

4.2 Achieving good design is an aim in the development process and the Local Planning Authority will reject poor designs. Planning policy and other guidance provide basic principles to ensure that new development is not only well designed in itself, but is also sympathetic to its surroundings. This may mean closely following the features of the existing property and the street scene, or producing an innovative solution which follows the design principles set out below particularly in relation to siting, scale, and amenity considerations. The following design principles have been adopted by the Borough Council and will be applied to residential extensions within the built up area.

4.3 The Borough Council is producing SPDs for built up parts of the Borough which identify the locally distinctive features that define their character. The SPDs provide appropriate design criteria for assessing development proposals within the built up area and regard should be had to the Character Area Assessment for that area, if produced.

Design Principles

Proposals should be accompanied by a design statement that explains how the proposed extension:

- **Responds to the positive features of the area which contribute to the local distinctive character and sense of place,**
- **Improves the character and quality of the area by reinstating or reinforcing positive features, and**
- **Is of high quality which is visually attractive and places emphasis on the local context, good design, sustainability and achieving a high quality of life.**

4.4 More information on design statements can be found in Paragraph 6.4.

4.5 The basic components of design are siting, scale, form and external appearance. The principal considerations of these, and their detailed application within the built up area, are set out below.

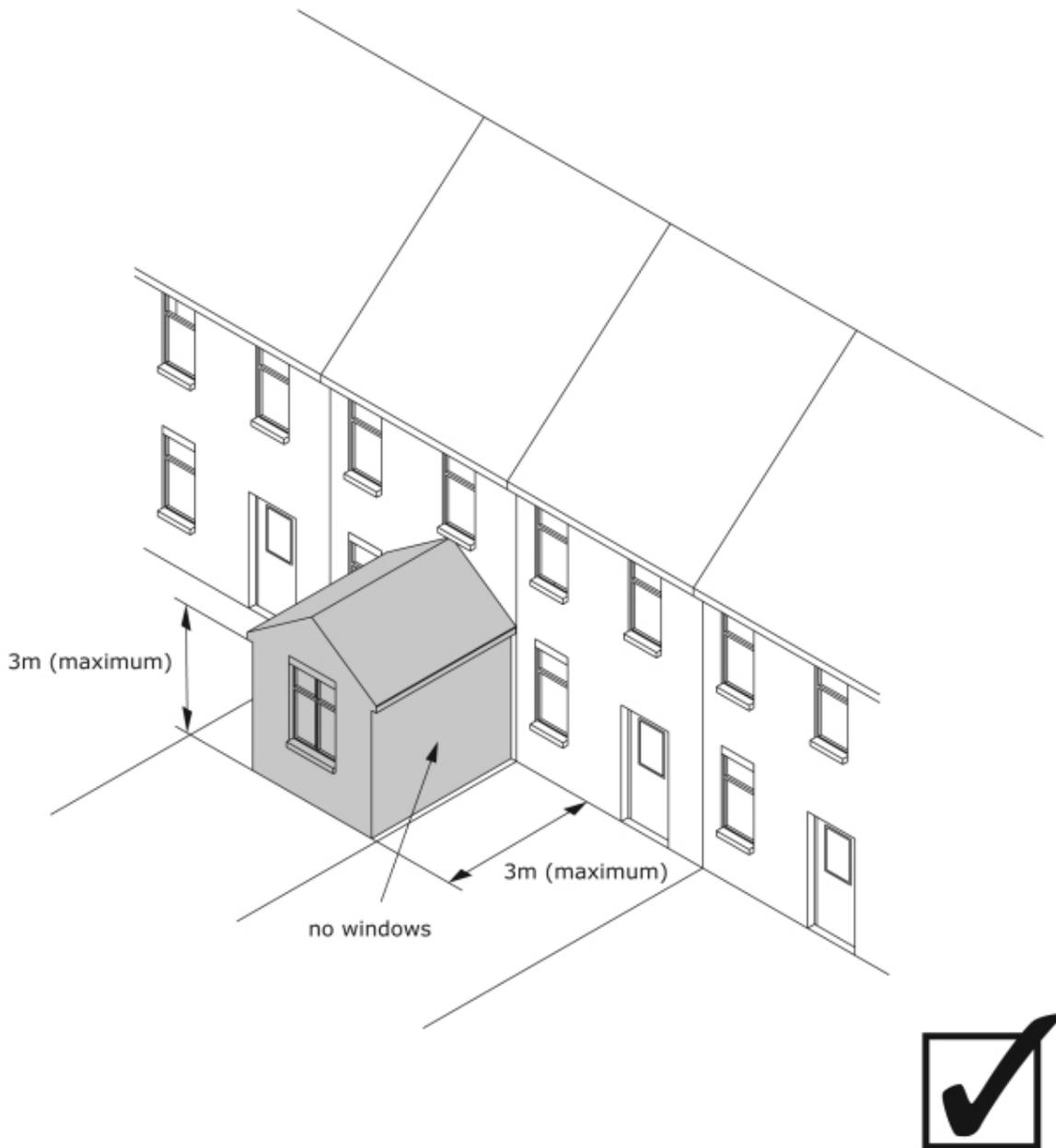
Siting: Rear Extensions, Side Extensions, Corner Plots, Porches, Front Extensions & Loft Conversions

Siting

- 4.6** To integrate successfully, the siting of new extensions should normally respect existing building lines and the pattern of buildings and spaces between them. For this reason, rear extensions are preferable to those on the side or front extensions.
- 4.7** Occasionally, there will be circumstances where it is impossible to design an acceptable extension due to the sensitivity of the site or the building, limited space, or the relationship of neighbouring properties.

Rear Extensions

- 4.8** Whilst usually having least impact on the street scene, for reasons of potential impact on a neighbour's outlook or amenity space and the potential loss of light or privacy, the size of an extension at the back of a property needs careful consideration.
- 4.9** The acceptable depth and height of a rear extension will be determined by the ground levels, distance from the boundaries and also the size of the neighbouring garden/amenity space. Amenity considerations set out elsewhere in the document are important factors in determining the appropriateness of the depth of any rear extension. For example, distance to neighbouring windows is important especially when there is just one window lighting a habitable room and/or kitchen and a BRE light assessment test should be carried out to ensure impacts on daylight to adjoining properties are acceptable. See the Appendix for the BRE web page address.
- 4.10** In normal circumstances, this SPD advocates that rear extensions on semi-detached or terraced houses should not project more than 3 metres from the rear elevation.
- 4.11** On detached houses situated close to a neighbouring property, extensions should generally extend no more than 4 metres from the rear elevation.
- 4.12** The eaves height of single storey extensions within 2 metres of a boundary should be no more than 3 meters above the existing ground level.
- 4.13** To protect against overlooking, the side wall facing a neighbour should not normally contain a window unless it maintained privacy by, for example, containing obscure glazing or being non-opening.
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Picture 4.1 Preferred dimensions for rear extensions

- 4.14** In the case of semi-detached or terraced houses, rear extensions should not normally exceed 3 metres in depth from the rear of the property, and, in the case of single storey development, 3 metres to eaves height and an overall height of 4 metres.
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In the case of semi-detached or terraced houses, rear extensions should not normally exceed 3 metres in depth from the rear of the property and, in the case of single storey development, 3 metres to eaves height and an overall height of 4 metres.

Side extension

- 4.15** The acceptable height of a side extension will be determined by the ground levels and the distance from the boundaries. Providing the guidance on the form of the extension set out below is followed, a single-storey extension to the side of a property should normally be acceptable if it does not have a significant adverse impact on the nature of space between buildings.
- 4.16** When the proposal is for a two-storey extension, the loss of space will be more apparent. In a street of traditional detached and semi-detached houses, the infilling of the spaces between with two-storey extensions could create a terraced appearance at odds with the rhythm of the street scene when the gaps, often with associated landscaping or allowing longer views, are important elements. A side extension built flush with the existing front elevation of the house may also affect the symmetry of a pair of semi-detached properties with adverse impact on the street scene.
- 4.17** Where there is a pattern of gaps between properties within a street, as a guide, a minimum of 3 metres between the side wall of a two storey side extension and the adjoining property for the full height of the extension is normally desirable. This will allow a pattern and rhythm of gaps in the street. This gap may need to be wider depending on the context. A side extension should be subordinate to the original building.
- 4.18** The use of, for example, a set back from the front elevation of the original house and lower roof can assist in assimilating the development where it is desirable that the form, proportions or symmetry of the original building are respected; the rhythm of buildings in a street follows a regular form or buildings are regularly spaced; a close match of materials is not available; or there is a need to break down the mass of the resultant building.

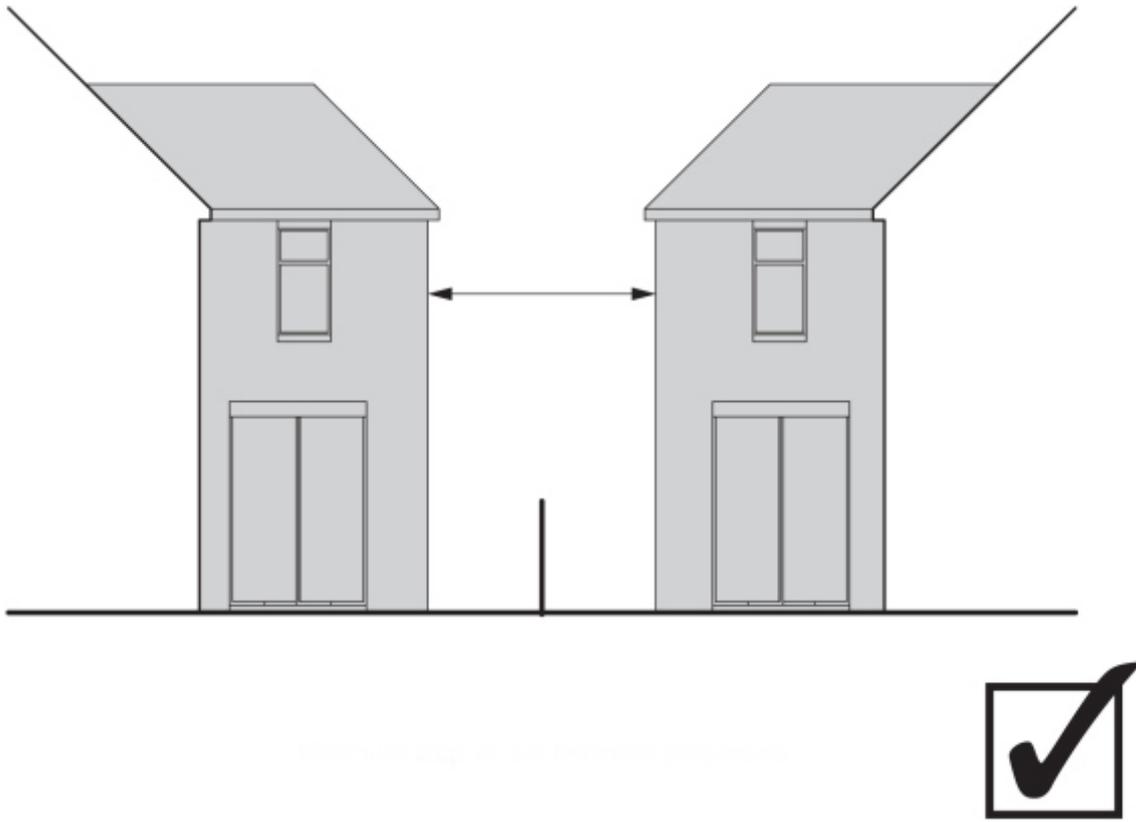


Figure 4.1 Minimum Gap of 3m between properties



Figure 4.2 Insufficient gap between properties

The pattern of gaps in a street scene should be maintained.

Other than in areas with significant spacing between dwellings, there should normally be a minimum gap of 3 metres between the side wall of a two storey side extension and the adjoining property for the full height of the extension.

Corner Plots

- 4.19** The side elevation of houses on corner sites is often built in line with the fronts of houses on the side street. Thus, a side extension on a corner plot could have an effect on the 'building line' of the adjoining street.

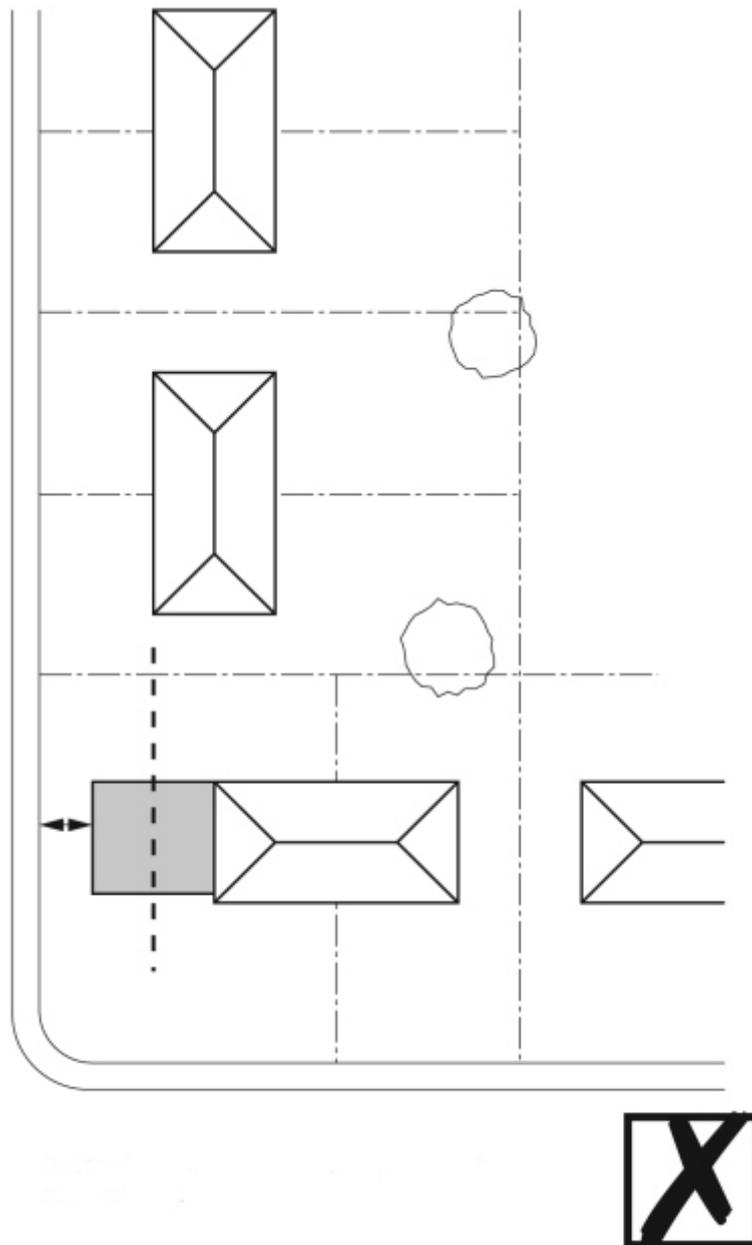


Figure 4.3 Extension too close to the boundary and forward of building line

4.20 In considering side extensions on corner sites, in addition to meeting the general design criteria applying to side extensions, proposals will also be judged against the following:

- whether there is a strong character or common building line in the 'side street' which should be respected;
- the distance from any adjacent property – the greater the distance the less the impact;

- pedestrian and vehicular visibility which should be maintained;
- the height of the extension and its impact on the 'side-street' which should be minimal;
- the loss of garden space on the character of the street(s) and
- the degree to which the site is already screened and enclosed beyond the building line, by fences and planting.

4.21 A side extension at a street corner should not be left with a blank wall but should contain windows to allow informal surveillance of the street and also break up the appearance of a solid mass.

Development on corner sites should respond sensitively to the character of the adjoining street created by a common building line, the scale, form, and architectural features of development and the spaces around buildings. Side windows which overlook the street should be created.

Porches

4.22 Porches have an important effect on the appearance of a dwelling and on the street scene. In most circumstances, small porches of less than 3 square metres ground area (measured externally) do not require planning permission. They can be successfully incorporated where they are appropriate to the scale of the dwelling and its features such as windows.

4.23 A large porch, where the size and proportion is out of scale with the original dwelling, or where it projects excessively, or competes with existing features such as bay windows, is unlikely to complement the house or the street scene.

4.24 Where buildings are set back a consistent distance from the street along a common building line or where there is already a strong character of no porches, porches can appear unduly prominent and incongruous within the street scene. The visual integrity of a whole terrace or the wider street scene should not be compromised.

4.25 Porches can be inappropriate in cases where front doors are paired with a neighbouring house for reasons of appearance or outlook from the neighbouring property. A porch should not obstruct the outlook from adjacent windows of a terraced and semi-detached house. For these reasons, a joint scheme with the neighbouring property should be considered.

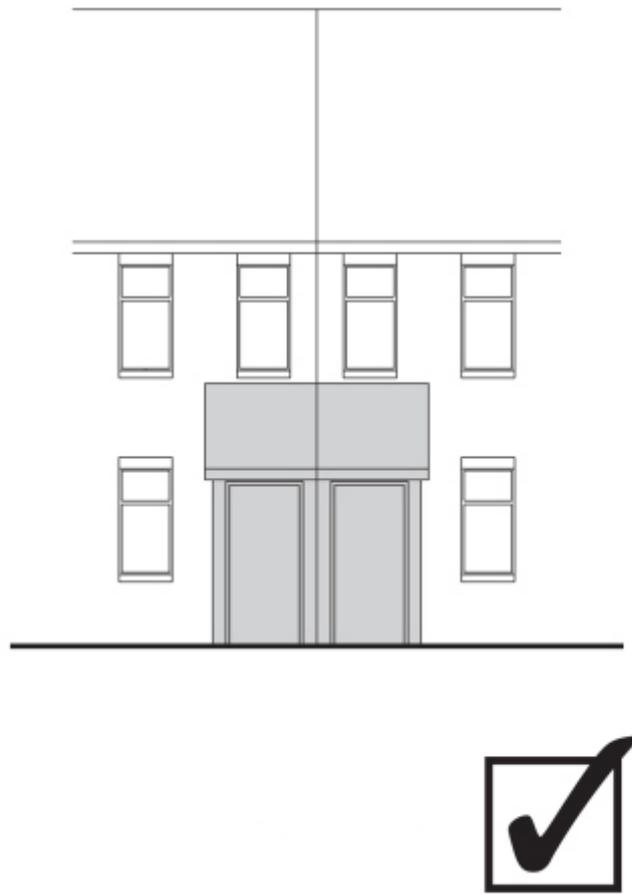


Figure 4.4 A successful joint scheme for two porches



Figure 4.5 Discordant scale, form and details

A porch should respect the scale of the building to which it is attached, should not closely abut, or obstruct the outlook from, adjacent windows and should not compromise the visual integrity of a whole terrace or the wider street scene.

Front Extensions

4.26 Front extensions can have an adverse effect on the street scene because of their prominence on the front elevation.

4.27 Front extensions may be acceptable in a street where

- there is already considerable variety in the building line,
- there is a strong tradition of projecting elements such as gables facing the street,
- a front extension would enhance the townscape by, for example, providing a new landmark feature or increasing the visual attractiveness to an otherwise unexceptional street scene,

- it is an extension to a detached house, where there is no strong visual relationship with adjoining properties,
- the loss of garden space would not significantly diminish the quality of front garden areas or the character of the street scene.

4.28 Where an extension is acceptable, the roof should match the roof of the original house in style in order to complement the existing building and the character of the area.



Figure 4.6 Scale, form and roof pitch appropriate to the original property

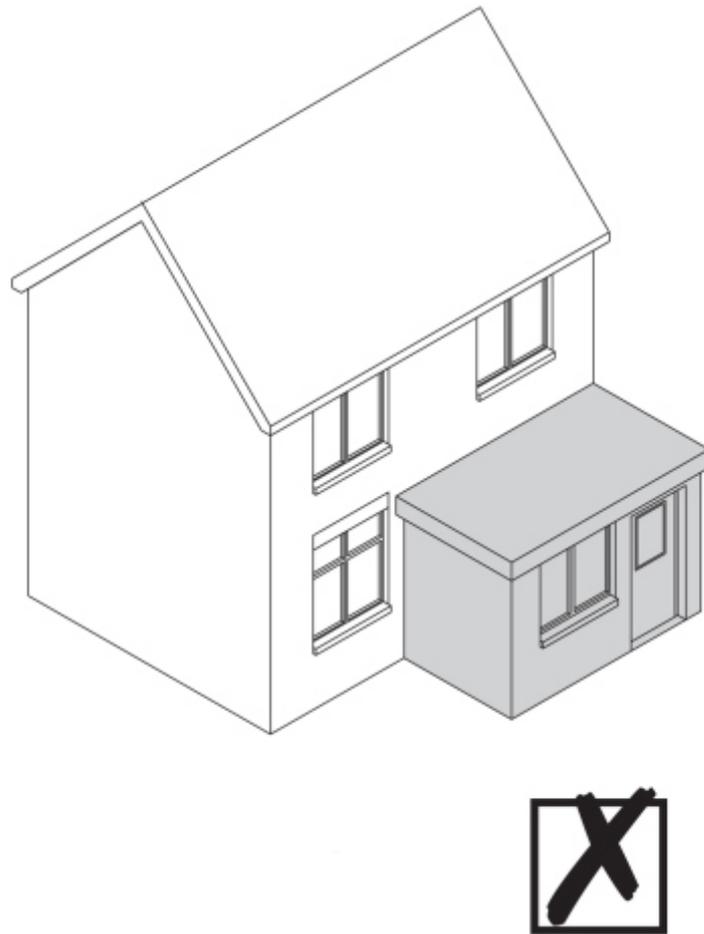


Figure 4.7 Flat roof extension to the front of the property

Where a front extension would be acceptable within the street scene, the scale should respect the scale of the building to which it is attached and the roof should be of the same form. A front extension should not closely abut, or obstruct the outlook from, adjacent windows and should not compromise the visual integrity of a whole terrace, or significantly diminishing the quality of front garden areas or the character of the street scene.

Loft Conversions

- 4.29** Loft conversions are often the most difficult to integrate with the external appearance of an existing building.
- 4.30** Increasing the roof height of a dwelling by altering the eaves height or the pitch of the roof can have a detrimental impact on the dwelling and street scene and should be avoided.

- 4.31** In a group of houses where there is a clear consistent line or distinctive roof form which face the street, loft extensions should not detract from that characteristic roof profile. 19th century terrace houses with a common roof profile and 1930s hipped semi-detached houses are typical examples.

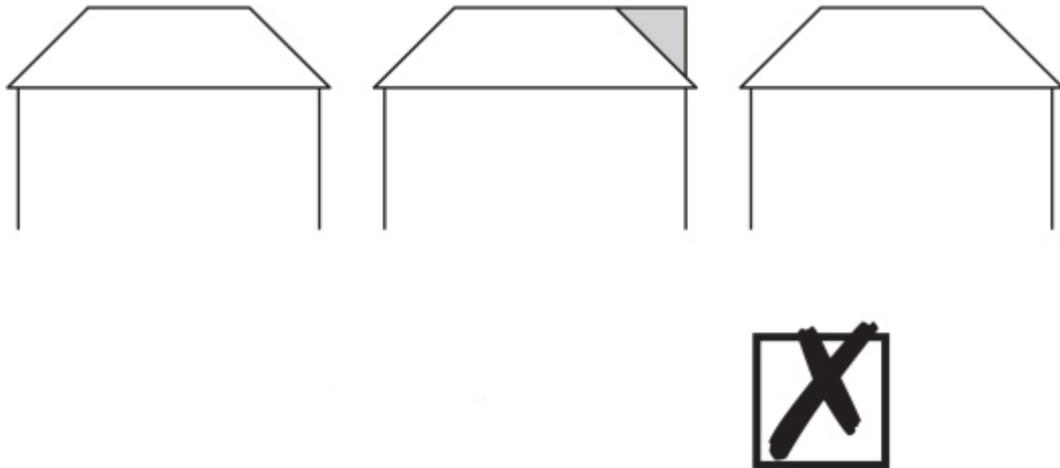


Figure 4.8 Common roof profile broken by loft extension

- 4.32** New dormers will not normally be allowed to front elevations in streets where there are none already. Roof lights, particularly on the front elevation, are a preferable alternative to the use of dormers or roof extensions. The number and size of roof windows should not visually dominate the roof plane. Roof windows need not be large, as more sunlight and daylight reaches a sloping roof than a wall. Roof windows should be designed and installed to have a minimum projection from the roof plane. The glazing of the traditional roof light is flush with the roof covering, and all roof window ranges now include a 'conservation style' roof light which meets this requirement.
- 4.33** Loft extensions are preferred on the back elevation in order to preserve the character of the street.
- 4.34** Where acceptable, dormer windows should be proportionate in scale to the roof plane and where there is a logical or symmetrical layout of doors and windows, should follow the vertical lines of these openings. They should never project above the original ridgeline and should be set back a minimum of 20 centimetres from the eaves to maintain the visual appearance of the roof line.

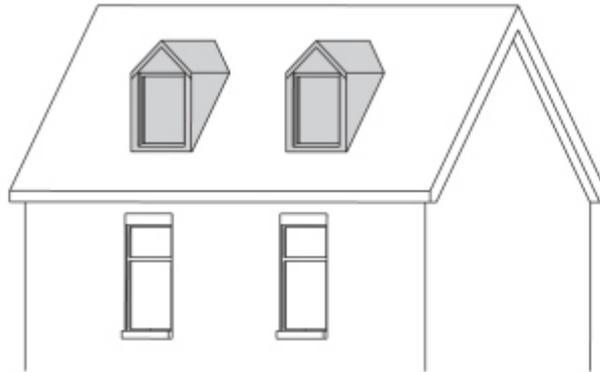


Figure 4.9 Dormer windows proportionate in scale and follow vertical alignment of existing

- 4.35** Large dormers/roof extensions requiring planning permission, which are disproportionate to the house, will not be allowed.

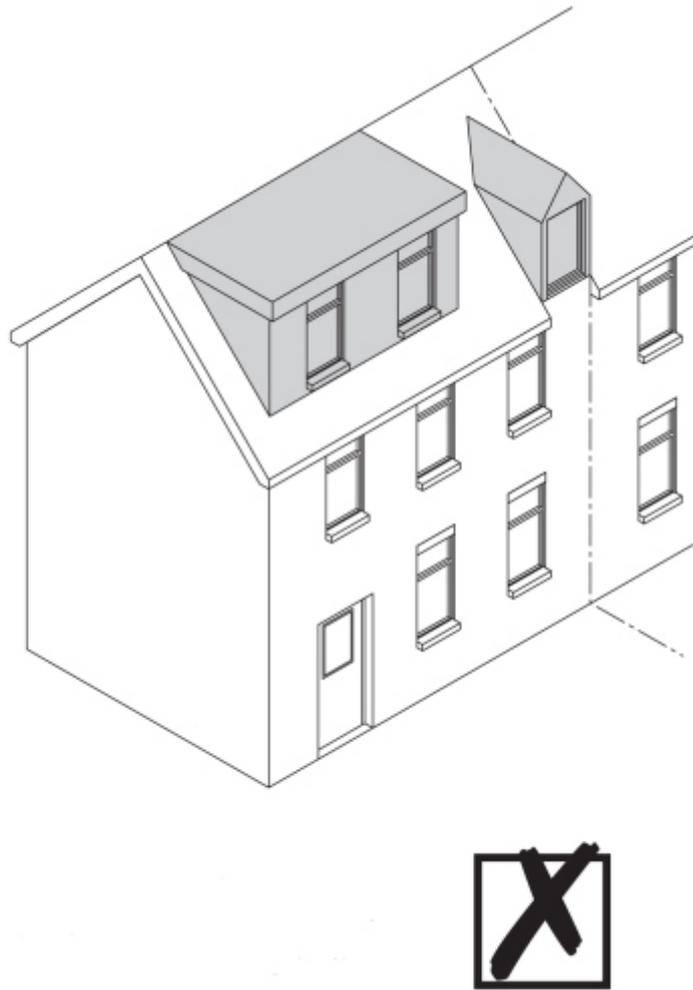


Figure 4.10 Disproportionate scale of loft extension. Single dormer not aligned with windows in existing building and breaks eaves line

- 4.36** Any dormer/roof extensions requiring planning permission that results in unacceptable overlooking of a neighbouring property will not be allowed (see section on amenity considerations).

Loft extensions should not detract from the characteristic roof profile of a street and, where there is a logical or symmetrical layout of doors and windows, should follow the vertical lines of these openings.

Scale and Form

- 4.37** The scale and form of an extension are important factors in achieving a successful design. The extension should respond sensitively to the positive features of the area which contribute to the local distinctive character and sense of place in terms of scale, proportion and height.
- 4.38** The scale and form of an extension should fit unobtrusively with the building and its setting and be compatible with the surrounding properties.
- 4.39** An extension should not dominate the original building or the locality, and should be subservient to the original dwelling.
- 4.40** The subordinated form of an extension is particularly important where:
- the rhythm of buildings in a street follow a regular form or are regularly spaced;
 - it is desirable that the form, proportions, symmetry and detail of the original building should be respected;
 - a close match of materials may not be available; or
 - there is a need to break down the mass of the resultant building
- 4.41** A range of devices are available to subordinate an extension such as set backs, lower roofs, changes in materials or detailing.
- 4.42** The form of an extension should be well proportioned and present a satisfactory composition with the existing property. The respective forms of the existing property and extension should be in harmony; their combination not discordant.
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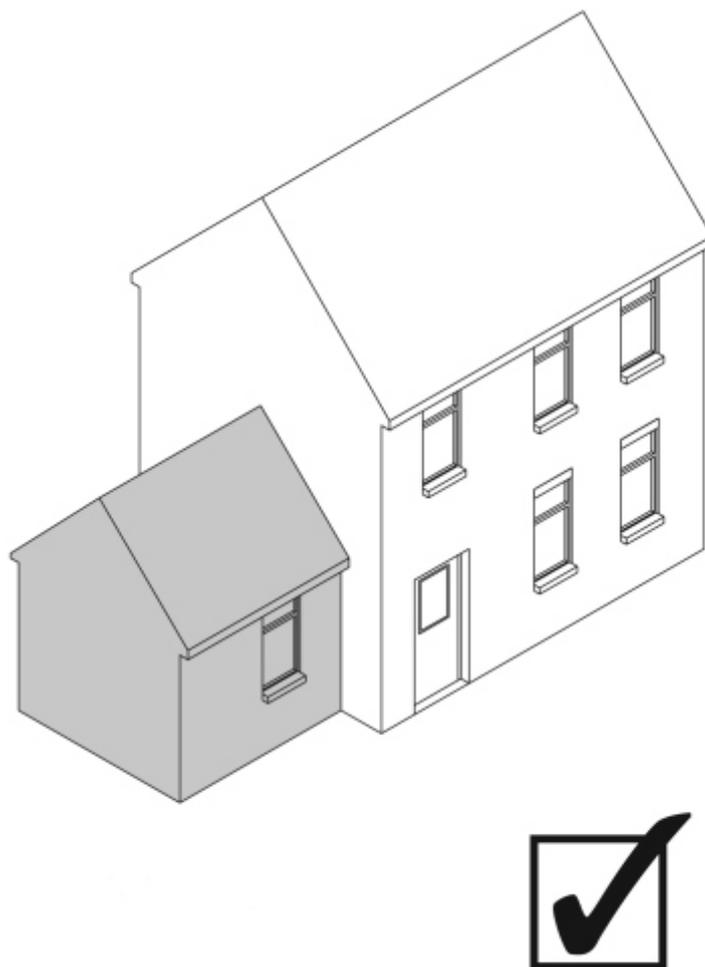


Figure 4.11 Subservient extension of similar proportions to house

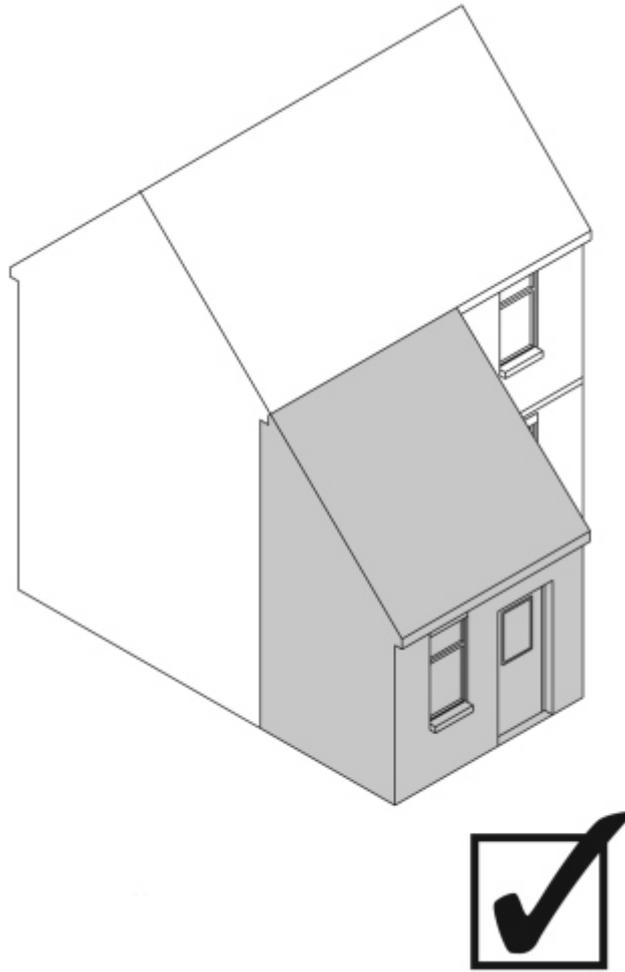


Figure 4.12 Lean-to solution

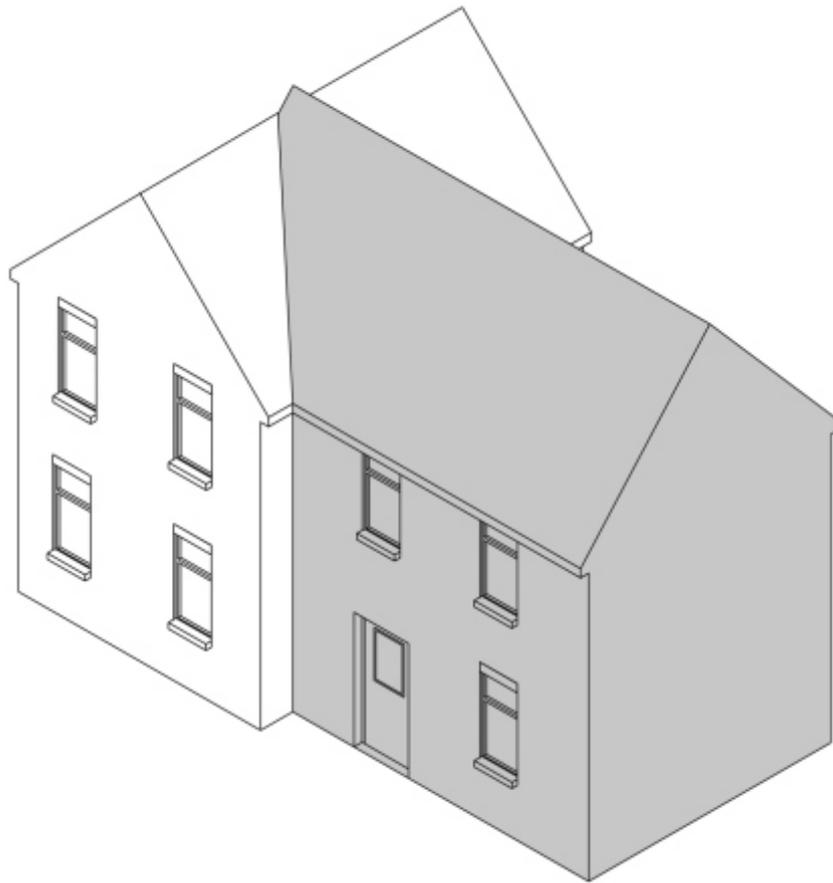


Figure 4.13 Extension too wide and too high

- 4.43** Where visible from public view, roof shape is critical to creating a successful built form. The pitch of extension roofs should normally be as, or similar to, the main house roof pitch.
- 4.44** Where visible from public view, flat-roofed extensions are unlikely to be permitted as they can appear unsympathetic to the form of the original building. Hipped roofs should ideally be used only on houses with a hip, or where local buildings have hips and the use of a hip or half hip is appropriate.

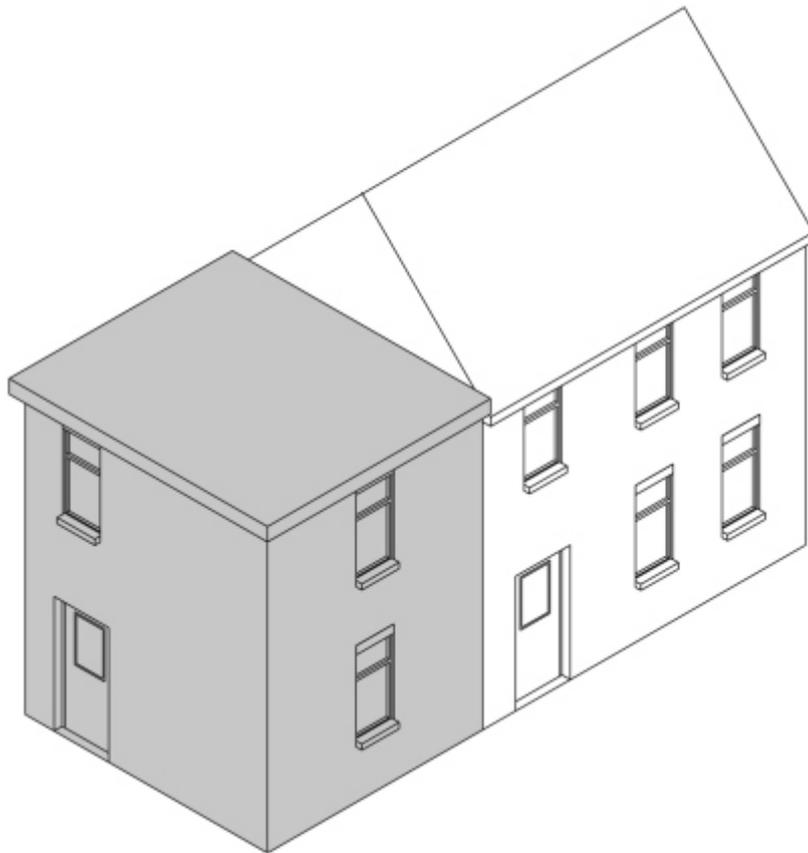


Figure 4.14 Large flat roof extension

The scale, proportion and height of an extension should not dominate the original building or the locality, should be subservient to the original house and should fit unobtrusively with the building and its setting.

The form of an extension should be well proportioned and present a satisfactory composition with the house. The extension should normally be roofed to match the existing building in shape. Where visible from public view, a flat roof extension would not normally be allowed.

Garages and Outbuildings

- 4.45** Garages and other outbuildings should not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings. They must be smaller in scale and clearly ancillary to the property.
- 4.46** In order to appear ancillary to the property, fit well within the street scene and prevent a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties, such as excessive overshadowing of a garden or principal window, garages and outbuildings should not generally be located in front of the building line of domestic properties.

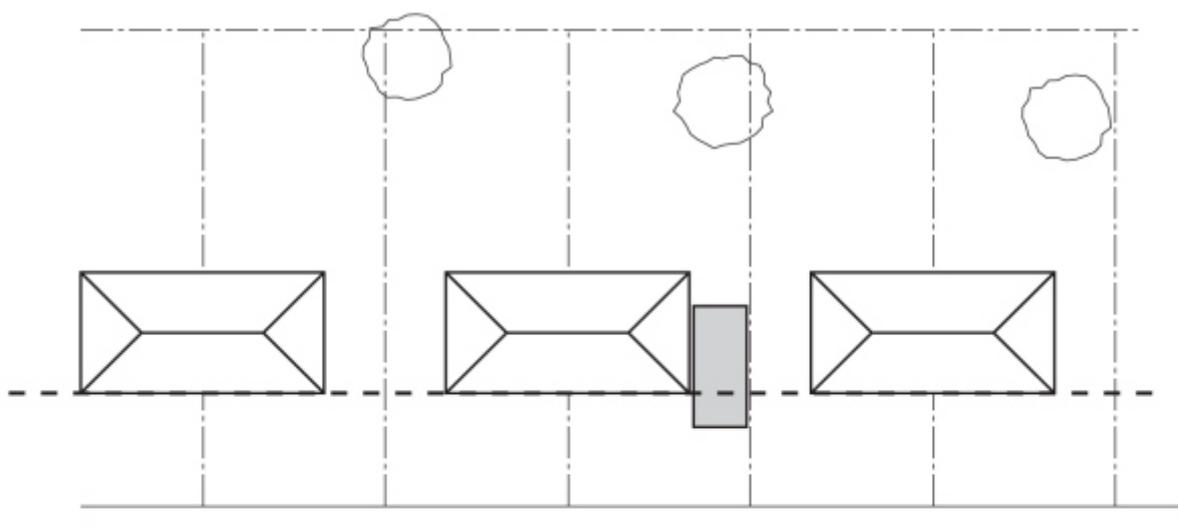


Figure 4.15 Garage forward of building line

- 4.47** The form (including roof pitches) and materials of garages and outbuildings should be in keeping with the existing and surrounding properties.

Garages and other outbuildings should be subservient in scale and position to the original dwelling and not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings or the street scene by virtue of their scale, form or location. Garages or outbuildings set in front of the building line will not normally be allowed.

Parking

- 4.48** In many parts of the Borough, the space surrounding a property, including mature vegetation, is important to the character of an area.
- 4.49** Extensions to properties result in increased built form and reduced space around a building. The Council will seek to retain adequate off-street parking spaces (and also turning space within the curtilage where there is access onto a classified road) without diminishing the quality of front garden areas or the street scene.

When designing an extension, there should be scope within the plot for sufficient off-street parking and turning space where necessary without diminishing the quality of front garden areas or the street scene.

Appearance: Windows, Doors, Materials and Detailing

Windows and Doors

- 4.50** The type, proportions, sub-divisions and materials of the new windows and doors are important features in successfully integrating an extension with an existing property and its surrounding context. Integration will be achieved where such features match those of the original house, though alternative solutions which are justified in the design statement may be suitable particularly where the windows on the original house are poorly proportioned.
- 4.51** The proportion of windows is particularly important in successfully integrating an extension with an existing building. For example, an extension to a house with windows of vertical proportion should not normally have windows that are square or horizontal in proportion.

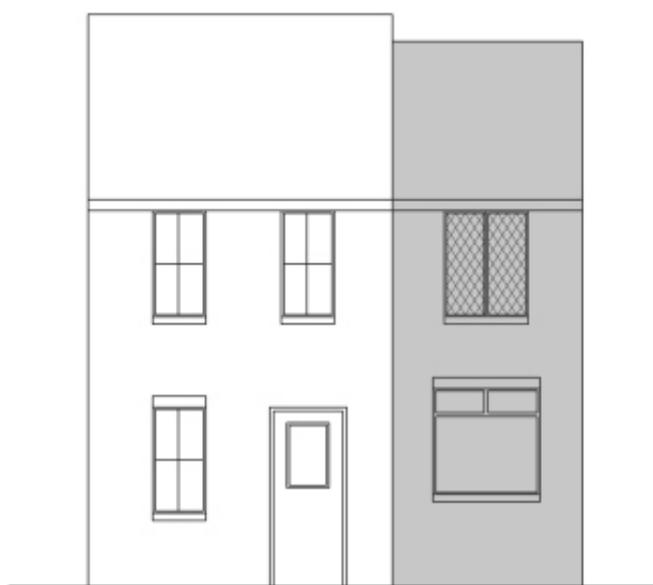


Figure 4.16 Inappropriate window proportion and style

- 4.52** The careful use of glazing bars can be a useful design tool to integrate different size windows, as is attention to window detail.
 - 4.53** New windows should usually be arranged to line up vertically and horizontally with those of the original house, to give a sense of balance and proportion.
 - 4.54** Where acceptable, dormer windows should also relate to the shape, position, design and size of the existing windows.
 - 4.55** Additionally, the proportion or ratio of solid wall to window should normally reflect that of the house or local buildings. The number and size of windows in an extension should generally be limited to those absolutely necessary; otherwise the elevation could appear too cluttered.
 - 4.56** Modern materials, such as uPVC and aluminium are generally unacceptable for traditional buildings.
-

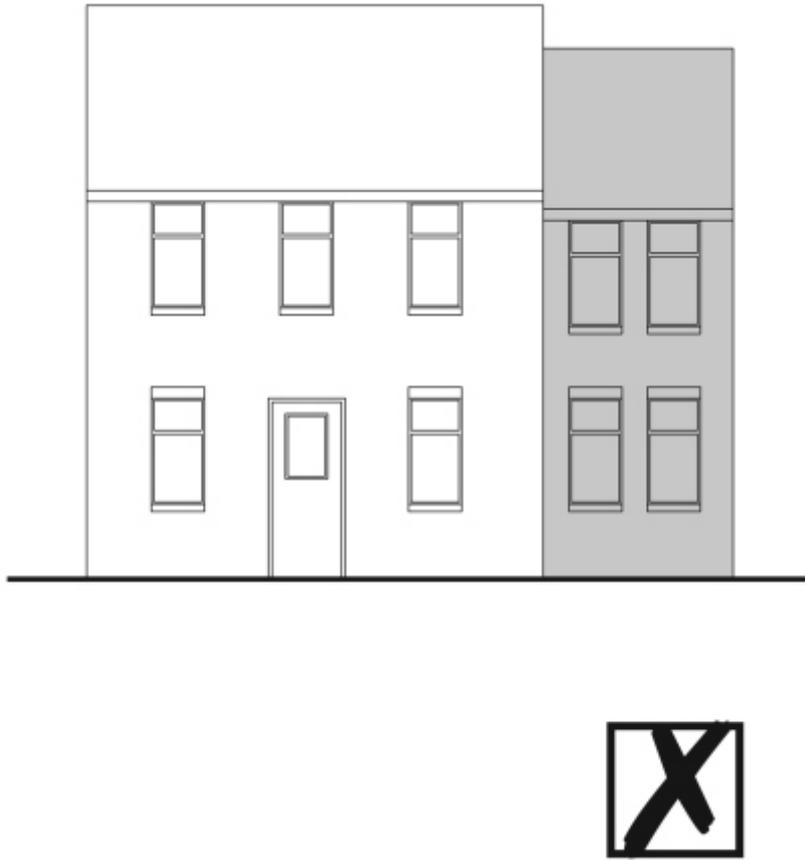


Figure 4.17 Over-fenestrated

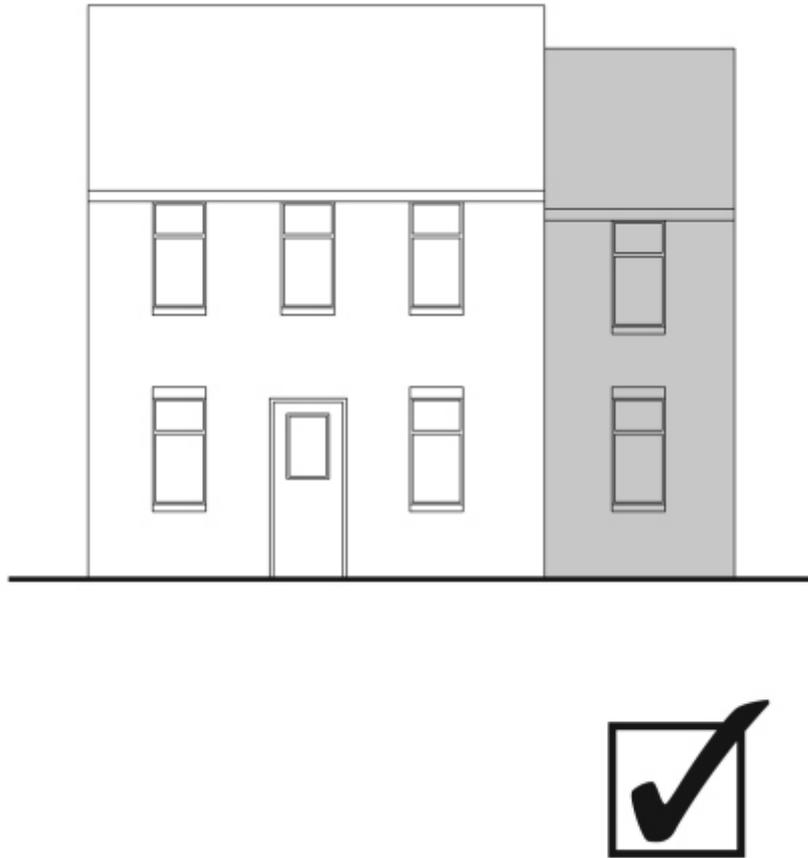


Figure 4.18 Lower ratio of window to wall

The doors and windows of the extension should normally match the proportions, design and materials of the original building and follow the main lines of the existing openings.

Materials

- 4.57** Good quality design relies on the choice and combination of materials. This is crucial to the success of a scheme. The choice of materials should respond to, and reinforce, the character of the area. Generally, the materials of an extension within the built up area should match those used on the original building. However, often secondary buildings or extensions were traditionally erected in different materials which can help reinforce the subservience of the extension and maintain the visual primacy of the original. Hence, if it is compatible with the materials of the existing building, it could be appropriate to use other local materials on an extension.

Detailing

- 4.58** It is often desirable for extensions to have matching brick banding, often found at eaves and first floor level; moulded, rendered architraves, brick arches above doors and windows and quoins and decorative barge boards where these are characteristic. However, details can be simpler particularly on smaller extensions.
- 4.59** Roof overhangs, gable treatments and verge detailing should normally be consistent with those of the original house.

The facing materials and detailing of an extension should normally match those used in the existing building or, if this is not the case, should be in harmony with it.

Innovative Designs

- 4.60** In designing extensions to existing buildings within the context of a built up area, the design principles set out in this Supplementary Planning Document should be followed. Subject to the context, it may be possible to arrive at an innovative design which responds to the positive features of the existing building and the area and ensures sufficient references to reinforce the distinctive character of the building and its surrounding context.

Boundaries

- 4.61** The boundaries to properties have a significant impact on the character of an area and its visual amenity. They help enclose the road space, define the boundary between public and private space and act as a strong link to the history of the area and the locally derived materials.
- 4.62** Unsympathetic boundary treatment (such as close boarded fences) should be avoided on front or side boundaries facing the street.
- 4.63** Unless it is characteristic of the street, frontages should not be totally enclosed behind high boundaries (normally above 1 metre in height) as this would detract from the street scene and reduces informal surveillance of the street.
- 4.64** In designing an extension the loss of a traditional boundary which is characteristic of an area (such as a hedge, brick or ragstone wall, possibly with coping, or railings) should be avoided. Through the development process there will be opportunities to reinstate or reinforce the positive features which contribute to the character of an area. Where it is feasible in relation to the building of an extension, a new boundary which is

characteristic of the traditional boundary treatment in the area would help integrate the new building into the street scene and should be included within the scheme.

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce the traditional boundary treatment.

Surface Treatment

- 4.65** Extensions and outbuildings and an increased tendency for the creation of hard standing – usually for off-street car parking can all increase flooding and associated water pollution. Householders’ use of impermeable materials for converting front gardens to car parking spaces has been part of this trend.
- 4.66** With climate change and increased amounts of hard surfacing in urban areas, the Government has changed householders’ permitted development rights to allow them to pave over front gardens of more than 5 square metres without planning permission only if the surface is made of porous materials such as permeable paving or gravel, or unless provision is made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable surface within the curtilage of the dwelling.
- 4.67** The Borough Council would wish to see the use of permeable materials if hard surfacing is required. Natural materials such as gravel can also assist in softening the appearance of the garden area.
- 4.68** Within parts of the built up area, landscape features are important to the street scene and partially or completely screen development. Extensions and hard surfacing can put pressure on such features through additional built form (see the section on Trees and Landscape below) and also through erosion of the landscape features to accommodate car parking.
- 4.69** Greater permeability should increase soil moisture levels which would benefit street and garden trees. This is likely to reduce the risk of trees drying out soils and consequently would decrease the risk of subsidence. The use of permeable surfaces would also support replenishment of water resources via ground water recharge.

Applicants should ensure that the character of the garden space is not harmed by an extension or hard surfacing and, wherever possible, that permeable surfaces are used which are in keeping with the character of the curtilage of the property and the street scene.

Amenity Considerations

- 4.70** Extensions should not cause significant harm to the amenity of adjoining occupiers. Saved Local Plan Policy H18 states that extensions to residential properties should respect the amenities of adjoining residents regarding privacy, daylight, sunlight and maintaining a pleasant outlook.

Privacy

- 4.71** Extensions can materially affect the privacy of adjoining occupiers.
- 4.72** In order to safeguard the privacy of neighbours, the introduction of windows in extensions which would overlook windows of habitable rooms in any adjoining property at a close distance and would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy will not be permitted. For similar reasons, a window overlooking the private area immediately adjacent to the rear of an adjoining dwelling is also inappropriate. The Borough Council will normally calculate the private amenity area as a depth of 5 metres from the back of the property which, if it has been extended, will be measured from the back edge of the extension.

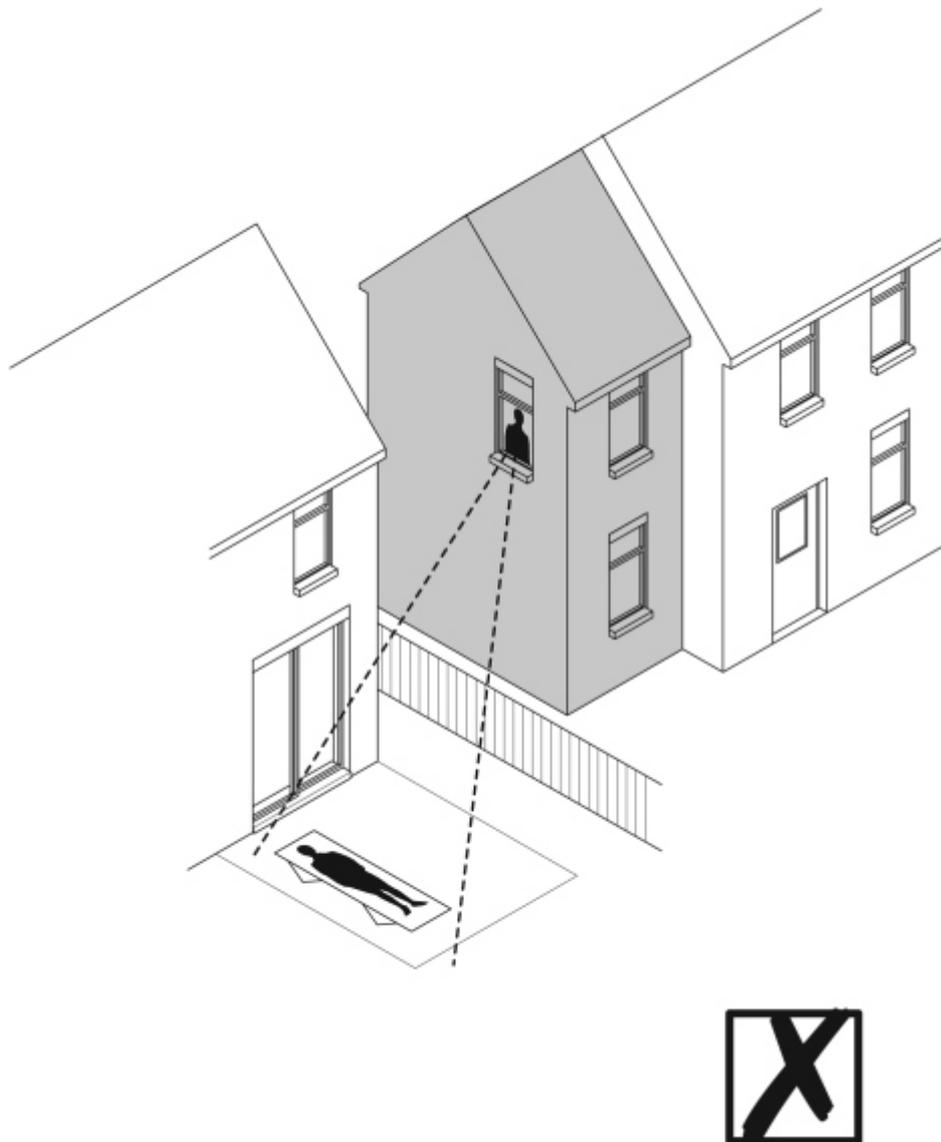


Figure 4.19 Overlooking

- 4.73** Visual privacy can be achieved by a range of methods other than the distance between buildings or spaces. Through design, the careful positioning of windows to give oblique views of neighbouring windows can resolve direct overlooking. Use of projections or set backs, high-level windows, obscure glazed or non-opening windows (unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room) may be used. At ground level the use of appropriate screen walls, fences or vegetation can provide privacy.
- 4.74** Care should be taken with balconies, roof gardens, first floor conservatories and verandas which can pose problems of overlooking.

Windows, roof terraces, balconies (including Juliet balconies) and verandas in an extension should not directly overlook the windows or private amenity space of any adjoining dwelling where this would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy.

Overshadowing and Loss of Light

- 4.75** Overshadowing occurs when an extension is in such a location, and/or is of a size that it would cause significant overshadowing of a neighbour's property or amenity space.
- 4.76** An extension should not cause any significant loss of **daylight** or the cutting out of **sunlight** for a significant part of the day to principal rooms (including lounge, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms) in neighbouring properties or private amenity space. Daylight is the volume of **natural** light that enters a building to provide satisfactory illumination of internal accommodation between dawn and dusk. Sunlight refers to **direct sunshine** and is very much brighter than ambient daylight. Loss of light is particularly sensitive when there is just one window lighting a principal room.

The 45° Test

- 4.77** A useful guideline to measure the likely impact of an extension on neighbouring property is the '45° test'. Its purpose is to make sure that a development does not take away too much daylight. However, this is guidance only and passing the test does not necessarily mean that the proposal would be acceptable. Application of the test is set out below.

1	From the elevation of the wall in which the neighbour's window is placed, draw diagonally down at an angle of 45° away from the near top corner of the extension wall;
2	Take the plan and draw diagonally back at an angle of 45° towards the window wall from the end of the extension;
3	If the centre of a window to a habitable room of the next door property lies on or within these 45° lines, then the extension may well cause a significant reduction in the light received to the room.

Table 4.1 Key for Figure 4.21

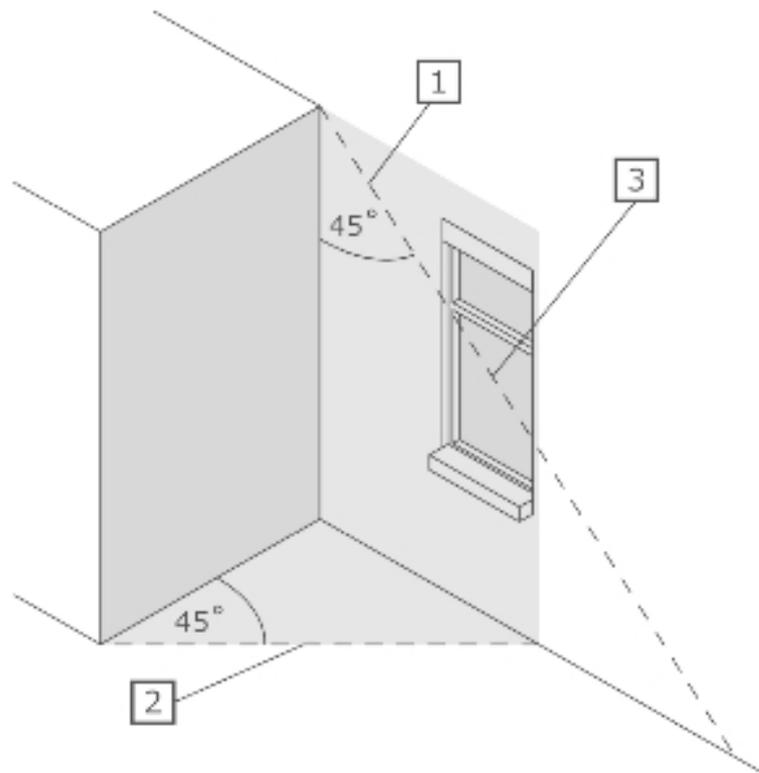


Figure 4.20 The 45 degree test. Checking the effect of proposed extensions on daylight. Centre of windows should be outside the shadows.

4.78 See the Appendix for web links to BRE and DCLG guidance.

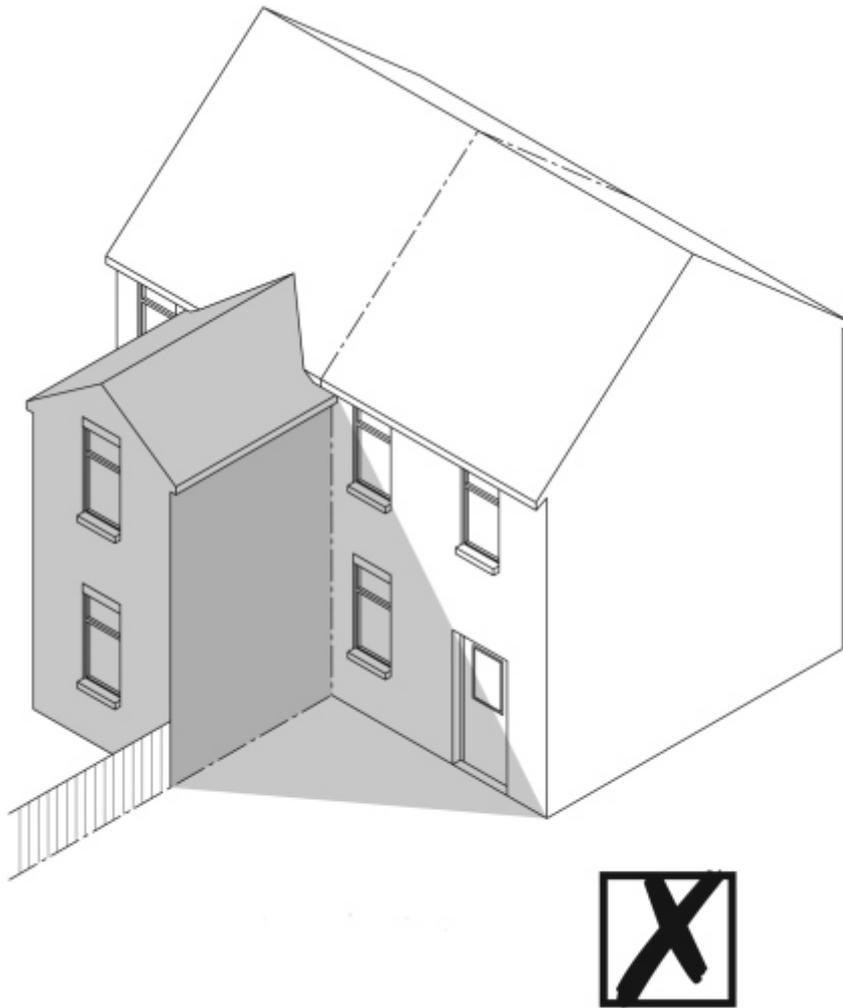


Figure 4.21 Overshadowing leads to loss of daylight

In the case of semi-detached or terraced houses or detached houses built close to each other, single storey extensions should not be either too high or too deep such that they would adversely affect the light reaching an adjoining property or amenity space.

Advice on preferred dimensions is given in the Rear Extensions Section.

Outlook

- 4.79** The Borough Council is primarily concerned with the immediate outlook from neighbours' windows, and if a proposal significantly changes the nature of the normal outlook. For example, it would be unacceptable for the resulting outlook from a main window to be of a large wall of a residential extension.

An extension should respect the amenities of adjoining properties in respect of daylight and sunlight and maintain an acceptable outlook from a neighbouring property.

5 Extensions within the Countryside

- 5.1** This section applies to extensions within the countryside where residential extensions may have a significant environmental impact on visual openness, landscape and the character of the property or its setting. Careful consideration of rural extensions is consistent with the general approach of minimising the intrusion of development in the countryside.
- 5.2** In the countryside, all proposals should respect local distinctiveness and be of high quality design in order to maintain character. The design principles set out below will be adopted by the Borough Council and applied to residential extensions in the open countryside.

Design Considerations

- 5.3** Achieving good design is an aim in the development process and the Local Planning Authority will reject poor designs. Planning policy and other guidance provide basic principles to ensure that new development is not only well designed in itself, but is also sympathetic to its surroundings. This may mean closely following the features of the existing property and the street scene, or producing an innovative solution which follows the design principles set out below particularly in relation to siting, scale, and amenity considerations. The following design principles have been adopted by the Borough Council and will be applied to residential extensions within the countryside.
- 5.4** 5.4The Borough Council will produce an SPD which assesses the unique character of the Borough's countryside and provide appropriate design guidance for areas with distinctive characteristics. In assessing the appropriateness of extensions within the countryside, regard should be had to the Landscape Character Area Assessment SPD when adopted.

Design Principles

Proposals should be accompanied by a design statement that explains how the proposed extension:

- **Responds to the positive features of the area which contribute to the local distinctive character and sense of place,**
- **Improves the character and quality of the area by reinstating or reinforcing positive features, and**
- **Is of high quality which is visually attractive and places emphasis on the local context, good design, sustainability and achieving a high quality of life.**

- 5.5** More information on design statements can be found in Paragraph 6.4.
-

- 5.6** The basic components of design are form, scale, siting and external appearance. The principal considerations of these, and their detailed application within the countryside, are set out below.

Scale, Form and Siting

- 5.7** Policies⁽¹⁾ allow for modest or limited extensions to an original dwelling currently in residential use provided proposals do not adversely impact on the form and character of the original building or the character of the countryside.
- 5.8** For the purposes of this SPD, the term original dwelling refers to the dwelling as it existed on 1st July 1948, or, in the case of a building constructed after 1st July 1948, as it was first built and granted planning permission.
- 5.9** The terms “modest” or “limited” have inevitably been open to a range of interpretations. The Borough Council recognises that, in considering applications to extend existing dwellings in the countryside, no two situations will be identical. This guidance therefore includes a number of criteria against which proposals will be tested:
- the impact on the character of the countryside,
 - the impact on the form and appearance of the original building, and
 - the scale of the extension.

The impact on the character of the countryside

- 5.10** The Government’s overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all.
- 5.11** In order to meet such policy objectives, any extension should be limited in scale. This applies whether the extension is in a prominent and highly visible location or if there are limited or no public views of it as, if allowed, the argument could be repeated, with a potentially more serious cumulative impact on the countryside.
- 5.12** An extension should cause no adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside. The impact of an extension on the countryside is clearly greater if located in prominent locations where it would be highly visible and in some locations any extension may be inappropriate.
- 5.13** In relation to screening, existing mature screening can help assimilate a modest extension into the rural landscape. However, the reliance on new planting is unlikely to make an over-large or prominently located extension acceptable. Attempting to conceal what would otherwise be harmful development within the countryside would not accord with Government

1 PPS2, PPS7 and the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006

objectives. In any event, the planting itself may be alien to the openness or landscape character of the area, would take an appreciable time to have any noticeable screening effect and it could not reasonably be secured in perpetuity.

The impact on the form and appearance of the original building

- 5.14** Extensions to dwellings in the countryside which have been converted from buildings originally in non-residential use, such as oast houses, barns and other farm buildings, will not normally be permitted where this would have an unacceptable impact on the original form and character of the building. Many rural buildings have a simple form such as a rectilinear floor plan which fits well with their original function and the character of the countryside and others have an historic form and character which should be retained. In granting consent for conversions the Council seeks to preserve the original form and character of the building. Proposals for extensions to such buildings should not therefore destroy that form or character and will not normally be considered acceptable.
 - 5.15** Where an extension is acceptable in principle, its form should be well proportioned and present a satisfactory composition with the house. Roof shape is critical to creating a successful built form. The pitch of extension roofs should normally be as, or similar to, the main house roof pitch.
 - 5.16** Particular account will be taken of the cumulative impact of extensions, including the effect on the character of the original property. Repeated extensions to properties impact significantly on the original form and appearance and are unlikely to be appropriate.
-



Figure 5.1 Scale of two storey extension does not overwhelm the existing property, is set back from the existing building and repeats the design elements from the original building



Figure 5.2 Scale of single storey rear extension subordinate to existing dwelling and the position and design ensure no reduction in the character or openness of the countryside



Figure 5.3 Extension too wide and too high

The size of the extension

- 5.17** The size of the original building rather than the size of the plot will be used in assessing the appropriate size of an extension.
- 5.18** In considering an extension to a residential dwelling in the countryside, the Local Planning Authority would normally judge an application as modest or limited in size if, in itself and cumulatively with previous extensions, it would result in an increase of no more than 50% in the volume of the dwelling. Proposed new garages and outbuildings within 5 metres of the existing dwelling will be calculated as part of this volume. The gross volume will be ascertained by external measurement taken above ground level and include the volume of the roof.
-

- 5.19** The guidance as to the term “modest” should not be seen as a maximum to be sought and will not normally apply to dwellings converted from non-residential buildings. It is likely that, depending on the particular situation of the building, and the circumstances of each proposal, the size of the extension and any previous extensions will fall in a range around the figure listed although in some cases an extension may be inappropriate.
- 5.20** National Policy⁽²⁾ states that building new development in the open countryside away from existing settlements should be strictly controlled. For this reason, an extension should not create a separate dwelling; be of a scale and type of accommodation that would lend itself to future sub-division to form a separate dwelling or be used as a separate dwelling.

An extension should be modest in size, subservient to the original dwelling and should not overwhelm or destroy its original form.

Extensions will not be permitted to dwellings created from traditional rural buildings including oast houses, barns and other farm buildings where they would have an unacceptable impact on the form or character of the original building.

An extension should not create a separate dwelling or one of a scale and type of accommodation that is capable of being used as a separate dwelling.

An extension should cause no adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside.

Loft Conversions

- 5.21** Loft conversions are often the most difficult to integrate with the external appearance of an existing building, particularly rural buildings of a simple form and roof plane and buildings of historic interest.
- 5.22** Increasing the roof height of a dwelling by altering the eaves height or the pitch of the roof should be avoided where this would have a detrimental impact on the dwelling or from public viewpoints.
- 5.23** Roof lights, particularly on the visible elevations, are a preferable alternative to the use of dormers or roof extensions. Roof windows need not be large, as more sunlight and daylight reaches a sloping roof than a wall. Where acceptable, roof windows should be designed and installed to have a minimum projection from the roof plane. The glazing of the traditional roof light is flush with the roof covering, and all roof window ranges now include a ‘conservation style’ roof light which meets this requirement.

- 5.24** Loft extensions are preferred on elevations not visible from public viewpoints in order to preserve the character of the countryside from such places.
- 5.25** Where acceptable, dormer windows should be proportionate in scale to the roof plane and where there is a logical or symmetrical layout of doors and windows, should follow the vertical lines of these openings. They should never project above the original ridgeline and should be set back a minimum of 20 centimetres from the eaves to maintain the visual appearance of the roof line.

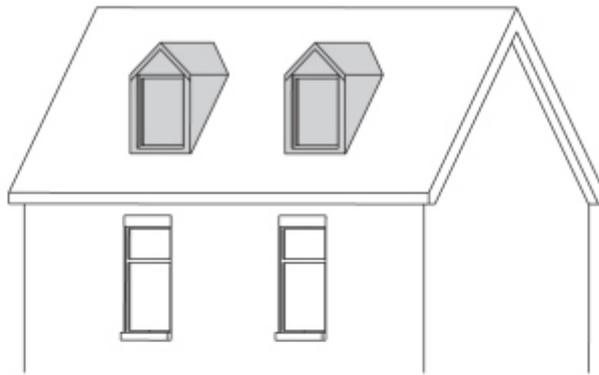


Figure 5.4 Dormer windows proportionate in scale and follow vertical alignment of existing windows

- 5.26** Large dormers/roof extensions requiring planning permission, which are disproportionate to the house, will not be allowed.

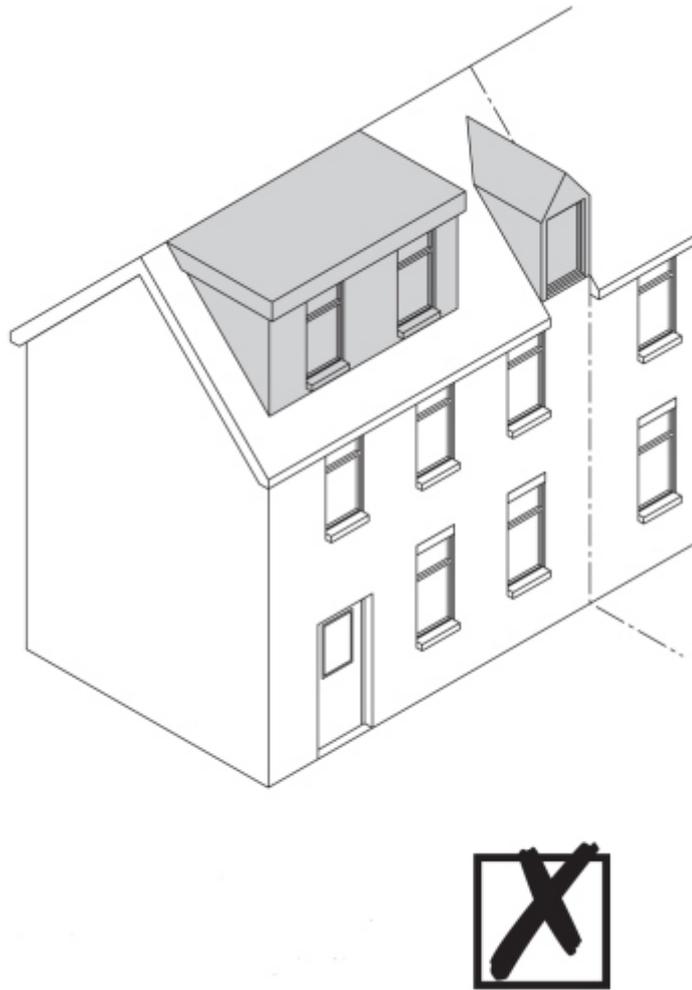


Figure 5.5 Disproportionate scale of loft extension. Single dormer not aligned with windows in existing building and breaks eaves line

- 5.27** Any dormer/roof extensions requiring planning permission that results in unacceptable overlooking of a neighbouring property will not be allowed (see section on amenity considerations).

Loft extensions should not detract from the characteristic roof profile of a street and, where there is a logical or symmetrical layout of doors and windows, should follow the vertical lines of these openings.

Garages and Outbuildings

- 5.28** Garages and other outbuildings should not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings. They must be smaller in scale and clearly ancillary to the property.
- 5.29** Their scale should not exceed what might reasonably be expected for the function of the building. Garages and outbuildings for domestic purposes do not normally need to exceed a single storey in height or have excessive volume.
- 5.30** There should be no adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside. In order to contain the sprawl of buildings, any separate buildings should be located close to the original dwelling.
- 5.31** The impact of a garage or other outbuilding would be greater if located in a prominent location where it would be highly visible although, even if not prominently located, the cumulative impact of a number of buildings may have an adverse impact on the character and openness of the countryside.
- 5.32** Garages and outbuildings should not compete with the main house and consequently should be sympathetically positioned away from the front of the house and should be simpler buildings. Often secondary buildings or extensions were traditionally erected with a simplicity of design and more easily available materials. This may be used to good effect to reinforce the distinction between the original building and the subservience of the extension.
- 5.33** The form of garages and outbuildings (including roof pitches) and architectural features should be in keeping with the existing and surrounding properties.

Garages and other outbuildings should not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings or the character and openness of the countryside by virtue of their scale, form or location.

Their scale should not be in excess of what might reasonably be expected for the function of the building.

Parking

- 5.34** Within the countryside, the space surrounding a property, including mature vegetation, is important to the character of the area.
-

- 5.35** Extensions to properties result in increased built form and reduce this space around a building. The Council will seek to retain adequate off-street parking spaces (and also turning space within the curtilage where there is access onto a classified road) without diminishing the quality of garden areas or the character of the countryside.

When designing an extension, there should be scope within the plot for sufficient off-street parking and turning space where necessary without diminishing the quality of garden areas or the character of the countryside.

Appearance: Windows, Doors, Materials and Detailing

Windows and Doors

- 5.36** The type, proportions, sub-divisions and materials of the new windows and doors are important features in successfully integrating an extension with an existing property and its surrounding context. Integration will be achieved where such features match those of the original house, though alternative solutions justified in the design statement may be suitable particularly where the windows on the original house are poorly proportioned.
- 5.37** The proportion of windows is particularly important in successfully integrating an extension with an existing building. For example, an extension to a house with windows of vertical proportion should not normally have windows that are square or horizontal in proportion.
- 5.38** The careful use of glazing bars can be a useful design tool to integrate different size windows, as is attention to window detail.
- 5.39** New windows should usually be arranged to line up vertically and horizontally with those of the original house, to give a sense of balance and proportion.
- 5.40** Dormer windows should also relate to the shape, position, design and size of the existing windows.
- 5.41** Additionally, the proportion or ratio of solid wall to window should normally reflect that of the house or local buildings. The number and size of windows in an extension should generally be limited to those absolutely necessary; otherwise the elevation could appear too cluttered.
- 5.42** Modern materials, such as uPVC and aluminium are generally unacceptable for traditional buildings.

The doors and windows of the extension should normally match the proportions, design and materials of the original building and follow the main lines of the existing openings.

Materials

- 5.43** Good quality design relies on the choice and combination of materials. This is crucial to the success of a scheme. The choice of materials should respond to, and reinforce, the character of the area. Generally, the materials of an extension should match those used on the original building. However, often secondary buildings or extensions were traditionally erected in different materials which can help reinforce the subservience of the extension and maintain the visual primacy of the original. Hence, if it is compatible with the materials of the existing building, it could be appropriate to use other local materials on an extension.

Detailing

- 5.44** It is often desirable for extensions to have matching brick banding, often found at eaves and first floor level; moulded, rendered architraves, brick arches above doors and windows and quoins and decorative barge boards where these are characteristic. However, details can be simpler particularly on smaller extensions.
- 5.45** Roof overhangs, gable treatments and verge detailing should normally be consistent with those of the original house.

The facing materials and detailing of an extension should normally match those used in the existing building or, if this is not the case, should be in harmony with it.

Innovative Designs

- 5.46** In designing extensions to existing buildings within the context of the countryside, the design principles set out in this Supplementary Planning Document should be followed. Subject to the context, it may be possible to arrive at an innovative design which responds to the positive features of the existing building and the area and ensures sufficient references to reinforce the distinctive character of the building and its surrounding context.

Boundaries

- 5.47** The boundaries to properties have a significant impact on the character of an area and its visual amenity. They help enclose the road space, define the boundary between public and private space and act as a strong link to the history of the area and locally derived materials and traditions.
- 5.48** Unsympathetic boundary treatment (such as close boarded fences) should be avoided as they are urban in character and detract from the openness of the countryside. Similarly, large close boarded gates are also inappropriate. Hedges and wooden post and rail fences are normally more appropriate.
- 5.49** In designing an extension the loss of a traditional boundary which is characteristic of an area (such as a hedge) should be avoided. Through the development process there will be opportunities to reinstate or reinforce the positive features which contribute to the character of an area. Where it is feasible in relation to the building of an extension, a new boundary which is characteristic of the traditional boundary treatment in the area and would help integrate the new building into the countryside should be included within the scheme.

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce the traditional boundary treatment.

Amenity Considerations

- 5.50** Extensions should not cause significant harm to the amenity of adjoining occupiers. Saved Local Plan Policy H33 states that an extension should not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity or privacy for adjoining residential properties.

Privacy

- 5.51** Extensions can materially affect the privacy of adjoining occupiers.
- 5.52** In order to safeguard the privacy of neighbours, the introduction of windows in extensions which would overlook windows of habitable rooms in any adjoining property at a close distance and would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy will not be permitted. For similar reasons, a window overlooking the private area immediately adjacent to the rear of an adjoining dwelling may also be inappropriate. If a window which overlooks a habitable room or amenity space is included, it should protect against overlooking and maintain privacy by, for example, containing obscure glazing or being

non-opening. The Borough Council will normally calculate the private amenity area as a depth of 5 metres from the back of the property which, if it has been extended, will be measured from the back edge of the extension.

- 5.53** Visual privacy can be achieved by a range of methods other than the distance between buildings or spaces. Through design, the careful positioning of windows to give oblique views of neighbouring windows can resolve direct overlooking. Use of projections or set backs, high-level windows, obscure glazed or non-opening windows (unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room) may be used. At ground level the use of appropriate screening may provide privacy.
- 5.54** Care should be taken with balconies, roof gardens, first floor conservatories and verandas which can pose problems of overlooking.

Windows, roof terraces, balconies (including Juliet balconies) and verandas in an extension should not directly overlook the windows or private amenity space of any adjoining dwelling where this would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy.

Overshadowing and Loss of Light

Overshadowing occurs when an extension is in such a location, and/or is of a size that it would cause significant overshadowing of a neighbour's property or amenity space.

An extension should not cause any significant loss of **daylight** or the cutting out of **sunlight** for a significant part of the day to principal rooms (including lounge, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms) in neighbouring properties or private amenity space. Daylight is the volume of **natural** light that enters a building to provide satisfactory illumination of internal accommodation between dawn and dusk. Sunlight refers to **direct sunshine** and is very much brighter than ambient daylight. Loss of light is particularly sensitive when there is just one window lighting a principal room.

The 45° Test

A useful guideline to measure the likely impact of an extension on neighbouring property is the '45° test'. Its purpose is to make sure that a development does not take away too much daylight. However, this is guidance only and passing the test does not necessarily mean that the proposal would be acceptable. Application of the test is set out below.

1	From the elevation of the wall in which the neighbour's window is placed, draw diagonally down at an angle of 45° away from the near top corner of the extension wall;
2	Take the plan and draw diagonally back at an angle of 45° towards the window wall from the end of the extension;
3	If the centre of a window to a habitable room of the next door property lies on or within these 45° lines, then the extension may well cause a significant reduction in the light received to the room.

Table 5.1 Key for Figure 5.6

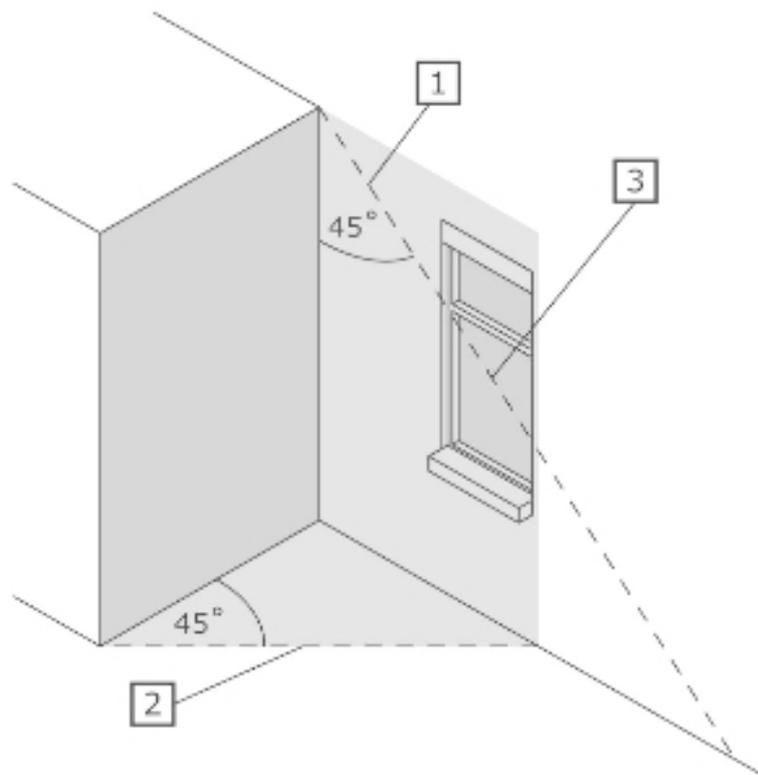


Figure 5.6 The 45 degree test. Checking the effect of proposed extensions on daylight. Centre of adjacent windows should be outside the shadows.

See the Appendix for web links to BRE and DCLG guidance.

Outlook

- 5.55** The Borough Council is primarily concerned with the immediate outlook from neighbours' windows, and if a proposal significantly changes the nature of the normal outlook. For example, it would be unacceptable for the resulting outlook from a main window to be of a large wall of a residential extension.

An extension should respect the amenities of adjoining properties in respect of daylight and sunlight and maintain an acceptable outlook from a neighbouring property.

6 General Considerations

1 APP

- 6.1** From 6 April 2008 all applications under the Planning Acts must be made using the new national application process. This standardised process makes applying for planning permission easier. Apply online at the Planning Portal or use the application forms and guidance on the Maidstone Borough Council web page. The relevant web page addresses can be found in the Appendix.

Validation Checklist

- 6.2** Applicants are reminded that Borough Council has introduced a validation checklist to ensure that all applications are accompanied by the correct information.
- 6.3** Details can be found on the Maidstone Borough Council web page (see the Appendix for web page address)

Design Statements

Proposals should be accompanied by a design statement that explains how the proposed extension:

- **Responds to the positive features of the area which contribute to the local distinctive character and sense of place,**
- **Improves the character and quality of the area by reinstating or reinforcing positive features, and**
- **Is of high quality which is visually attractive and places emphasis on the local context, good design, sustainability and achieving a high quality of life.**

- 6.4** The design statement should be a single document explaining the design principles and concepts and how they accord with the Design Considerations of this Supplementary Planning Document. The Statement will cover the amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance of the development. It should be concise but will need to cover all the necessary issues. The level of detail included within the statement will depend on the scale and complexity of the proposal.

- 6.5** In particular, the design statement will cover the following aspects of an extension:
- 6.6** **Siting** – where the extension is to be positioned in relation to the original building in respect of existing building lines and the pattern of buildings and spaces between them and, if located in the countryside, in relation to the character or openness of the countryside.
- 6.7** **Scale** – how the scale and form of an extension fit unobtrusively with the original building, the surrounding properties and setting, and present a satisfactory composition with the original dwelling.
- 6.8** **Landscaping** – the treatment of private (garden) and public spaces to enhance or protect the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated, including, in those cases outside the built up area, the character or openness of the countryside. Details of the landscaping and how it will be maintained (in accordance with adopted Landscape Guidelines) should also be included.
- 6.9** **Appearance** – The visual impression that the development will make in relation to the existing dwelling and the character of the area, including
- the form of its architecture – to include the siting, proportions, design and materials of doors and windows in relation to the openings in the original building,
 - the facing materials of the extension in relation to the existing building, and the type of boundary treatment in relation to the traditional boundary treatment of the area,
 - the details such as brick or stone detailing or woodwork features,
 - the colour and texture of the materials used for the extension, boundary treatment and surfacing.

Sustainable Design and Construction

- 6.10** Designing an extension provides an ideal opportunity to carry out other improvements to upgrade the environmental impact of both construction and the efficiency of an existing home.
- 6.11** During the construction stages, waste can be reduced by the re-use of materials on site. This can offer a cost effective source of materials, as well as reducing landfill. Recycled materials can also be obtained through an increasing number of sources. Where new materials are to be used, the Borough Council will promote the use of materials that have been obtained from verifiable sustainable sources.
- 6.12** As part of extending a home, there is the opportunity to achieve improved energy efficiency of the property through upgrading insulation, installing new energy efficiency products such as condensing boilers, low energy lighting etc. Subject to amenity considerations and the sensitivity of the environment, consideration should also be given to incorporating small scale
-

renewable energy generation options, e.g. photovoltaic cells, solar water heating etc. Such measures can help reduce running costs as well as emissions of carbon dioxide.

- 6.13** If an extension includes a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, equipment / fittings that help reduce water consumption should be incorporated, such as dual flush cisterns, regulated taps and showers or installing rainwater recycling systems. Wherever possible rain water run-off should be channelled into soak-aways and not directed into the waste water sewers.
- 6.14** Subject to harmonising with the materials used on the existing building and the impact on the wider street scene, the use of green roofs and walls should be considered for use on extensions. Due to the high degree of insulation that they provide, green walls and roofs provide a constant temperature throughout the year. During the winter they keep the heat in, and in the summer they provide a relatively cool environment. Consequently, they reduce heating and cooling energy costs and consumption. Green walls and roofs also reduce stormwater run off, reduce greenhouse gases and provide habitat for insects and other wildlife.

When designing an extension, a sustainable approach should be taken to design and construction through the minimising on site waste, maximising recycling, improving energy efficiency and reducing water consumption.

Lifetime Adaptability

- 6.15** When designing an extension, it is helpful to consider how you might need to use your home in the future as your family circumstances change. Rather than having to move home every time circumstances change, the incorporation of features which help adaptation in the future will help make the home flexible enough to meet changing needs. For example, extensions which incorporate sufficient space for a growing family, including for pushchairs and heavy shopping, and which consider future mobility needs, are likely to meet changing circumstances. This is particularly valuable as life expectancy increases and allows the elderly, infirm and disabled to remain in their homes.

Designing Out Crime

- 6.16** Designing an extension provides the opportunity to consider measures to deter crime and provide a more secure and welcoming environment, through:
- A clear definition of public/private space (see Boundaries section)

- A layout which allows natural surveillance (see Boundaries and Corner Plot sections)
- Security equipment and measures on the property

Flood Risk

- 6.17** Where there is a proposal for an extension within a flood zone, reference should be made to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Standing Advice and Planning Policy Statement 25 (see the Appendix for the web page addresses). In addition, where a potential extension is proposed adjacent to or on a flood defence, the Environment Agency should be consulted at pre-planning application stage.

Listed Buildings

- 6.18** Buildings are listed for their intrinsic architectural/historical importance. Extensions to listed buildings are likely to be particularly sensitive.
- 6.19** In the case of listed buildings special consideration will be given to the architectural and historical integrity of the building or groups of buildings. The Design Considerations and Design Principles will be strictly applied to assess the effect on the existing building, including the interior spaces, structure and detailing.
- 6.20** Any extension to a listed building will require Listed Building Consent, even if they do not require planning permission.

Conservation Areas

- 6.21** Conservation Areas are designated in order to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the area. The design of extensions in relation to the host property, adjoining properties and other features must demonstrate that it will preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The specific character and appearance of a conservation area may be described in a Conservation Area Appraisal where one has been prepared.

Trees and Landscaping

- 6.22** In a Borough of high landscape value, with areas designated for their landscape importance, proposals should ensure that existing site features are retained and, ideally, enhanced. The need to extend must therefore be balanced with the need to maintain landscape character.
- 6.23** The layout of any extension should be designed to avoid direct loss or damage to important landscape features. Trees with Tree Preservation Orders and trees in Conservation Areas are statutorily protected. Even if the layout may not directly affect trees or hedges at the construction stage,

it should not place pressure for future removal or excessive pruning. During construction work, trees must be adequately protected in accordance with BS5837 (Trees in relation to construction Recommendations).

- 6.24** New landscape features associated with new development or enhancement measures should use species and detailing as set out in the Borough Council's most recent Landscape Character Guidelines.

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce important landscape features.

Designing in Wildlife Habitats

- 6.25** Residential extensions provide good opportunities to include design features to provide roosting and nesting opportunities for wildlife. This may be particularly important if extensions are created from the conversion of existing buildings which provide habitats for species which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such as bats and barn owls, making it an offence to damage or destroy places used for shelter or protection. It is possible to address the needs of owls, bats and other species in any development proposal. For example, entrances can be left into the roof space, with roosting spaces and nest boxes provided retained.

Where protected species are present within a building to be used for a residential extension, the Borough Council will expect development to retain such habitats. In designing an extension, applicants should consider opportunities for the creation of wildlife habitats.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 6.26** Parts of the Borough are designated as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which has been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The prime consideration in such areas is the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. Particular attention will be given to the siting, size, form, materials and detailed design of proposals within the AONB, or which affect its setting. Permitted development rights are reduced in these areas in order to retain the natural beauty.

Green Belt

- 6.27** Within the Green Belt, limited extension of an existing dwelling is considered appropriate provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building and the openness of the Green Belt is not adversely affected.

Specialist Advice

- 6.28** This SPD should be read in conjunction with specialist advice. Relevant links are included in the Appendix. These links will be added to and updated over time.

7 Designing Your Extension Toolkit

When designing your extension you will need to think about how the extension relates to the existing building and the surrounding street or area of countryside. The principles contained in this guidance promote good practice and the Borough Council would recommend that they be followed whether planning permission is required or not.

Will I need Planning Permission?

You are strongly advised to seek advice from the Council before carrying out any development to check whether permission is required for what you want to do. Information can be found on the planning portal website (see appendix for webpage address). You may apply for a Certificate of Lawful Development in order to obtain a formal view from the Council.

Submitting a Planning Application for an Extension

In order to demonstrate that the extension fits well with the original building and its surroundings, the Council expects your planning application to be accompanied by a design statement - a single document which explains how the proposal meets the design principles and the design considerations of this Supplementary Planning Document. Depending on the context, it may be possible to arrive at an innovative design which responds to the positive features of the existing building and the area and ensures sufficient references to reinforce the distinctive character of the building and its surroundings. Such an approach should be justified in the design statement.

The level of detail included within the design statement will depend on the scale and complexity of the proposal.

Proposals should be accompanied by a design statement that explains how the proposed extension:

- **Responds to the positive features of the area which contribute to the local distinctive character and sense of place,**
- **Improves the character and quality of the area by reinstating or reinforcing positive features, and**
- **Is of high quality which is visually attractive and places emphasis on the local context, good design, sustainability and achieving a high quality of life.**

If the property is located within a settlement:

The design statement should cover the following aspects of an extension:

Siting

Rear Extensions

In the case of semi-detached or terraced houses, rear extensions should not normally exceed 3 metres in depth from the rear of the property and, in the case of single storey development, 3 metres to eaves height and an overall height of 4 metres.

Side extension

The pattern of gaps in a street scene should be maintained.

Other than in areas with significant spacing between dwellings, there should normally be a minimum gap of 3 metres between the side wall of a two storey side extension and the adjoining property for the full height of the extension.

Corner Plots

Development on corner sites should respond sensitively to the character of the adjoining street created by a common building line, the scale, form, and architectural features of development and the spaces around buildings. Side windows which overlook the street should be created.

Porches

A porch should respect the scale of the building to which it is attached, should not closely abut, or obstruct the outlook from, adjacent windows and should not compromise the visual integrity of a whole terrace or the wider street scene.

Front Extensions

Front extensions may be acceptable in a street where

- there is already considerable variety in the building line,
- there is a strong tradition of projecting elements such as gables facing the street,
- a front extension would enhance the townscape by, for example, providing a new landmark feature or increasing the visual attractiveness to an otherwise unexceptional street scene,
- it is an extension to a detached house, where there is no strong visual relationship with adjoining properties,
- the loss of garden space would not significantly diminish the quality of front garden areas or the character of the street scene.

Where a front extension would be acceptable within the street scene, the scale should respect the scale of the building to which it is attached and the roof should be of the same form. A front extension should not closely abut, or obstruct the outlook from, adjacent windows and should not compromise the visual integrity of a whole terrace or significantly diminishing the quality of front garden areas or the character of the street scene.

Loft Conversions

Loft extensions should not detract from the characteristic roof profile of a street and, where there is a logical or symmetrical layout of doors and windows, should follow the vertical lines of these openings.

Scale and Form

The scale, proportion and height of an extension should not dominate the original building or the locality, should be subservient to the original house and should fit unobtrusively with the building and its setting.

The form of an extension should be well proportioned and present a satisfactory composition with the house. The extension should normally be roofed to match the existing building in shape. Where visible from public view, a flat roof extension would not normally be allowed.

Garages and Outbuildings

Garages and other outbuildings should be subservient in scale and position to the original dwelling and not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings or the street scene by virtue of their scale, form or location. Garages or outbuildings set in front of the building line will not normally be allowed.

Parking

When designing an extension, there should be scope within the plot for sufficient off-street parking and turning space where necessary without diminishing the quality of front garden areas or the street scene.

Appearance: Windows, Doors, Materials and Detailing

The doors and windows of the extension should normally match the proportions, design and materials of the original building and follow the main lines of the existing openings.

The facing materials and detailing of an extension should normally match those used in the existing building or, if this is not the case, should be in harmony with it.

Boundaries

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce the traditional boundary treatment.

Trees and Landscaping

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce important landscape features.

Surface Treatment

Applicants should ensure that the character of the garden space is not harmed by an extension or hard surfacing and, wherever possible, that permeable surfaces are used which are in keeping with the character of the curtilage of the property and the street scene.

Amenity Considerations

Windows, roof terraces, balconies (including Juliet balconies) and verandas in an extension should not directly overlook the windows or private amenity space of any adjoining dwelling where this would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy.

An extension should respect the amenities of adjoining properties in respect of daylight and sunlight and maintain an acceptable outlook from a neighbouring property.

Sustainable Design and Construction

When designing an extension, a sustainable approach should be taken to design and construction through the minimising on site waste, maximising recycling, improving energy efficiency and reducing water consumption.

If the property is located within the countryside:

The design statement should cover the following aspects of an extension:

Scale, Form and Siting

An extension should be modest in size, subservient to the original dwelling and should not overwhelm or destroy its original form.

Extensions will not be permitted to dwellings created from traditional rural buildings including oast houses, barns and other farm buildings where they would have an unacceptable impact on the form or character of the original building.

An extension should not create a separate dwelling or one of a scale and type of accommodation that is capable of being used as a separate dwelling.

An extension should cause no adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside.

An extension should be modest in size, subservient to the original dwelling and should not overwhelm or destroy its original form.

Extensions will not be permitted to dwellings created from traditional rural buildings including oast houses, barns and other farm buildings where they would have an unacceptable impact on the form or character of the original building.

An extension should not create a separate dwelling or one of a scale and type of accommodation that is capable of being used as a separate dwelling.

An extension should cause no adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside.

The Local Planning Authority would normally judge an application as modest or limited in size if, in itself and cumulatively with previous extensions, it would result in an increase of no more than 50% in the volume of the dwelling. Proposed new garages and outbuildings within 5 metres of the existing dwelling will be calculated as part of this volume. The gross volume will be ascertained by external measurement taken above ground level and include the volume of the roof.

The guidance as to the term "modest" should not be seen as a maximum to be sought and will not normally apply to dwellings converted from non-residential buildings. It is likely that, depending on the particular situation of the building,

and the circumstances of each proposal, the size of the extension and any previous extensions will fall in a range around the figure listed although in some cases an extension may be inappropriate.

Loft Conversions

Loft extensions should not detract from the characteristic roof profile of a street and, where there is a logical or symmetrical layout of doors and windows, should follow the vertical lines of these openings.

Garages and Outbuildings

Garages and other outbuildings should not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings or the character and openness of the countryside by virtue of their scale, form or location. Their scale should not be in excess of what might reasonably be expected for the function of the building.

Parking

When designing an extension, there should be scope within the plot for sufficient off-street parking and turning space where necessary without diminishing the quality of garden areas or the character of the countryside.

Appearance: Windows, Doors, Materials and Detailing

The doors and windows of the extension should normally match the proportions, design and materials of the original building and follow the main lines of the existing openings.

Boundaries

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce the traditional boundary treatment.

Trees and Landscaping

When adding an extension to a property, the Borough Council will expect development to retain and, where feasible, reinforce important landscape features.

Amenity Considerations

Windows, roof terraces, balconies (including Juliet balconies) and verandas in an extension should not directly overlook the windows or private amenity space of any adjoining dwelling where this would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy.

An extension should respect the amenities of adjoining properties in respect of daylight and sunlight and maintain an acceptable outlook from a neighbouring property.

Sustainable Design and Construction

When designing an extension, a sustainable approach should be taken to design and construction through the minimising on site waste, maximising recycling, improving energy efficiency and reducing water consumption.

Glossary

Acronym	Term	Description
1APP	The Standard Planning Application Form	The standard planning application form was introduced by Government and is the only legal way to apply for planning permission for extensions in England.
-	Amenity	A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For - example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as privacy or outlook.
-	Ancillary	A subsidiary or secondary use or operation closely associated with the main use of a building or piece of land.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	An area designated by the Countryside Agency with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
-	Architraves	The moulding around a door or window.
-	Article 4 Direction	Direction issued by the local planning authority removing some or all permitted development rights, for example within a conservation area or curtilage of a listed building.
-	'Conservation Style' roof light	Ultra-low profile, finely detailed roof windows.
-	Core Strategy	The Core Strategy is a Development Plan Document. Once adopted it will set out in general terms, how, where and when development will take place in Maidstone Borough over the period 2006 to 2026.
-	Eaves	The lower edge of a sloping roof, usually projecting beyond the sides of a building.
-	Elevation	The facade (or face) of a building.
EA	Environment Agency	The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales.
-	Gable	The triangle formed by a sloping roof.
-	Green walls and roofs	Roofs and walls that are intentionally vegetated.

Acronym	Term	Description
LDF	Local Development Framework	The LDF is a folder of different types of Local Development Documents which comprise the suite of planning documents against which a planning application will be assessed.
LDS	Local Development Scheme	The LDS is a timetable listing the documents the Council will produce under the LDF within a minimum 3-year time frame, explaining how documents will be prepared and when they will be published.
LBC	Listed Building Consent	Consent required for the demolition, in whole or in part of a listed building, or for any works of alteration or extension that would affect the character of the building.
MBWLP	Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000	The Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 2000 and 'saved' policies are part of the LDF.
PPS	Planning Policy Statements	Published by the government, PPSs set out national planning policy.
-	Rectilinear	Consisting of straight lines.
-	Roof light	A window in a roof.
RPG9	Regional Planning Guidance 9	Current RPG9 covers the period up to 2016, was published in March 2001 and will be replaced by the South East Plan.
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy/South East Plan (SEP)	The RSS sets out the region's policies for the development and use of land. The RSS forms part of the development plan. The South East Plan will replace RPG9 following final approval.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out the processes to be used by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and development control decisions.
-	Street Scene	The environment that seen and experienced when travelling along streets and public spaces
-	Townscape	The appearance of a town or part of a town.
uPVC	Unplasticised Polyvinyl Chloride	

Appendix: Web Pages referred to in the SPD

Page Number	Organisation	Web Page Address (Correct March 2009)
2	The Planning Portal : Information can be found under 'household planning rules' in the 'general public section' on the planning portal website. The visual guide to planning permission for householders will provide useful information.	http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/genpub/en/111531194777.html
4	The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), the Government advisor on architecture, urban design and public space, publishes design advice.	http://www.cabe.org.uk
9, 38 & 55	BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight: P J Littlefair	http://www.bre.co.uk
38 & 55	DCLG Planning Factsheet 3 - Overshadowing	http://www.communities.gov.uk
5	Kent Design Guide 2005/06	http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/council-and-democracy/kent-design-guide.htm
57	Apply for Planning Permission online at the Planning Portal or use the application forms and guidance on the Maidstone Borough Council webpage.	http://www.planningportal.gov.uk
57	Validation Checklist	http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/planning_building_control/apply_for_planning_permission/guidance_advice/checklist.aspx
60	Environment Agency's Flood Risk Standing Advice	http://www.pipernetworking.com/floodrisk/
60	Planning Policy Statement 25 (Annex D) and the associated Practice Guide	http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/

Appendix: Web Pages referred to in the SPD

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Residential Extensions SPD (Adopted May 2009)

Page Number	Organisation	Web Page Address (Correct March 2009)
		planningpolicystatements/ planningpolicystatements/pps25/