



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Design Guidance for House Extensions

A Guide for Home Owners on How to get
Planning Permission to extend your home



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INTRODUCTION

Many home owners are choosing to extend their house rather than to move. Before doing any work you need to know if planning permission is required; and if it is, whether permission will be granted.

This Design Guide is intended to provide general guidance on planning legislation, and practical advice on how it may be possible to extend your home.

The first section of the guide provides a general introduction explaining the main points of planning legislation and procedures.

The second section sets out recommended design principles that should be followed when extending your home. These principles are aimed at ensuring that your extension will be built in character with your existing house, and will fit well into the surrounding area.

The third section sets out guidance on how to ensure your proposal will be acceptable in terms of its effect on your neighbours. Recommended distances are given to avoid dominance, overlooking and overshadowing. This section can only give typical examples, and it is stressed that each application will be assessed on its own merits. Where proposals exceed the guidance in this document a supporting justification should be submitted identifying, for example, the presence of good screening on the boundary which may prevent overlooking.

Whilst the Design Guide has been prepared to assist you in considering how to extend your house, it cannot be authoritative and can only discuss typical proposals. You may wish to seek professional advice from an Architect or Surveyor in preparing a particular proposal to extend your home.

SECTION I

1. PLANNING LEGISLATION AND PROCEDURES

1.1 WHEN DO I NEED PLANNING PERMISSION?

Smaller extensions or alterations to your house may not require planning permission. The legislation is, however, quite complex. You should complete a “Do I need Planning Permission” form if you are unsure, and submit it to the Council. Forms are available at all Customer Service Centres, and can be downloaded from the Council’s website: www.eastriding.gov.uk

Whilst the form may look daunting, many sections may not apply to your proposal. The benefit of completing and submitting this form is that you will receive a written response advising you as to whether the work is “permitted development”, or requires planning permission. This formal response should be retained as part of your house records, and will avoid possible delays when you come to sell your house as purchasers’ solicitors are now requiring evidence that planning permission was not required.

If you submit this form, the Council will also advise you as to whether the proposed work requires Building Regulations approval.

1.2 APPLYING FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

If planning permission is required the Council has prepared a simplified planning application form for HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATIONS. The form comes complete with guidance notes setting out the plans and information that has to be submitted. Copies of the application form are available at Customer Service Centres and from the Council’s Website: www.eastriding.gov.uk

Householder applications will normally be dealt with in eight weeks from the submission of a valid application. Your application will be acknowledged on receipt, and you will be advised if further information is required to validate the application.

The Council encourages applicants to submit plans for informal consideration BEFORE submitting planning applications. The benefits of this are that potential problems can be addressed before consultations are sent out to neighbours, and applications are more likely to be dealt with quickly, and approved. The Council aims to respond to pre-application consultations within 10 days. For more information relating to planning issues contact Planning and Development Control, Customer Services Directorate, County Hall, Beverley, Tel: 01482 393647 or visit the Council’s website, or e-mail your query to beverley.dc@eastriding.gov.uk

From 10th August 2006 the Government has introduced the need for many planning applications to be accompanied by a design and access statement. House extensions are however exempt from this requirement unless the property is a Listed Building or in a Conservation Area.

1.3 DO I NEED TO GET PROFESSIONAL ADVICE?

Whilst it is not necessary to employ someone to prepare your plans and application, you will need to provide accurately drawn plans of the existing and proposed development. The plans need to be to a scale sufficient to show not only details of the extension, but also its relationship to adjoining properties and boundaries. Should you have any doubts about how this may best be achieved you may find it worthwhile to employ professional advice. The more complex an application the more likely it is that you will need to seek professional advice from an Architect or Surveyor.

1.4 WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL CONSIDER WHEN DETERMINING AN APPLICATION?

The Council will consider applications against the policies set out in the four adopted Local Plans for the area. Detailed design policies may also be set out in a Village Design Guide for your village. The main factors that will be taken into account are the effect on neighbouring properties, and the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area.

The Council will consult neighbouring properties by letter, and you may find it beneficial to talk with your neighbour before submitting an application. The Local Parish or Town Council will be notified, and in certain cases press and site notices will be posted. The impact of your proposal on your neighbours' property in terms of potential loss of daylight, dominance and overlooking will be taken into account.

The Council will give particular consideration to design and materials if your property is located within or adjoining a Conservation Area. The Council is required by law to give special consideration to the preservation or enhancement of Conservation Areas. More than half the Council's Conservation Areas have appraisals and these can be a useful source of information which should help you in making an acceptable application. Applicants should note that proposals, which normally would be acceptable in other locations, may be refused because they do not meet the special requirements of a particular Conservation Area. For more information relating to Conservation Areas contact Conservation, Landscape and Archaeology at County Hall, Beverley, HU17 9BA, Tel: 01482 393726, visit the Council's website, or e-mail your enquiry to beverley.dc@eastriding.gov.uk

If your property is a building listed because of its Special Architectural or Historic Interest (a "Listed Building") then you will also have to submit an application for Listed Building Consent for any alterations, and you will have to justify your proposal in terms of its impact on the building's special interest and its setting. There is no fee for this application. If you have any doubts as to whether the property is listed, please contact Conservation Landscape and Archaeology, County Hall, Beverley, HU17 9BA, Tel: 01482 393726, visit the Council's website or e-mail your enquiry to beverley.dc@eastriding.gov.uk. Listing does not necessarily prevent the alteration or extension of a building, but it is intended to ensure that the special character of the building is protected.

The Council is anxious to preserve existing trees and landscape features wherever possible. Proposals to extend properties should avoid the loss of existing trees or landscape facilities such as boundary hedges. The loss of any trees or hedgerows should clearly be marked on any plans. If the loss of an existing landscape feature is unavoidable, the Council would normally expect adequate replacement as part of the submitted proposal. Even where existing features are not to be lost, a good quality landscape scheme will improve a proposal and assist in integrating development into its surroundings. For more information relating to landscape issues contact Trees, Landscape, Hedgerows and Nature Conservation, County Hall, Beverley, HU17 9BA, Tel: 01482 393719, visit the Council's website or e-mail your enquiry to beverley.dc@eastriding.gov.uk

1.5 OTHER LEGISLATION

The likelihood is that your proposal will also require Building Regulations approval. If this is the case you will be advised of this in the Council's response to your "Do I need Planning Permission?" form, or when you submit your planning application.

Building Control Officers will be able to assist you in determining the best method of meeting this requirement. Building Regulations are intended to secure adequate health and safety standards in the construction work, and examine entirely separate issues from those considered by the Council in determining your planning application.

Applicants are advised to check the requirements of the Party Wall Act relating to extensions on or adjacent to a common boundary. Leaflets are available from the Building Control Office and the Council's Customer Service Centres. For more information relating to Building Regulations contact Building Control, Customer Services Directorate, County Hall, Beverley, Tel: 01482 393823 or visit the Council's website, or e-mail your query to beverley.bc@eastriding.gov.uk

1.6 HOW TO USE THIS GUIDANCE

Applicants are encouraged to follow the guidelines in this document. The guide has been prepared to address common problems, and to show the type of extensions which will normally be acceptable.

THIS GUIDE INEVITABLY ONLY DEALS WITH SOME TYPICAL SITUATIONS. IF THE ADVICE GIVEN IS FOLLOWED THE PERMISSION IS LIKELY TO BE GRANTED, BUT EACH APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED ON ITS INDIVIDUAL PLANNING MERITS. THERE MAY BE CASES WHERE THE SCOPE FOR AN EXTENSION WILL BE MORE RESTRICTED THAN INDICATED HERE AND OTHERS MAY BE PERMITTED THAT EXCEED THE CRITERIA LAID DOWN. APPLICANTS SHOULD CLEARLY INCLUDE IN THEIR SUBMISSION ANY SPECIAL REASONS THAT MAY EXIST TO OFFSET AGAINST THE ADVICE CONTAINED IN THIS GUIDE.

SECTION 2:

2. DESIGN PRINCIPLES TO BE FOLLOWED IN EXTENDING YOUR HOUSE

As well as providing the space you require inside, the extension will be seen from outside, and should blend with the design of your dwelling, and with the surrounding area. A badly designed extension can spoil the character of an area and therefore, the overall aim should be that any extension should compliment the existing dwelling and form an integrated part of it.

You will need to identify the elements of design that are important in the appearance of your existing dwelling and which should be included in the design of your extension. These include:-

- (i) the building form, or shape;
- (ii) proportions (ratio of height to width), particularly of windows and doors;
- (iii) materials of construction; and
- (iv) the detailed design of eaves, windows etc.
- (v) site constraints.

Matching or harmonising these should produce a complete building (dwelling and extension) with a unified appearance.

2.1 Roof Form

Any two-storey extension to a dwelling with a pitched (sloping) roof should have a roof of similar form to the existing and it should slope at a similar angle. Normally, single-storey extensions should match this design feature.

The separate parts of the completed building should appear as one single design. As a basis for achieving this the form of the extension should match the form of the existing dwelling. Thus, if your dwelling has a pitched roof, so too should your extension. Flat roofs are less likely to harmonise with an existing pitched roofed building, but may be acceptable for garages or single storey rear extensions on modern estates where they would not appear as an incongruous feature.

Chimneys provide a varied and interesting roof form and should be retained both for their appearance and to allow a choice of heating methods.

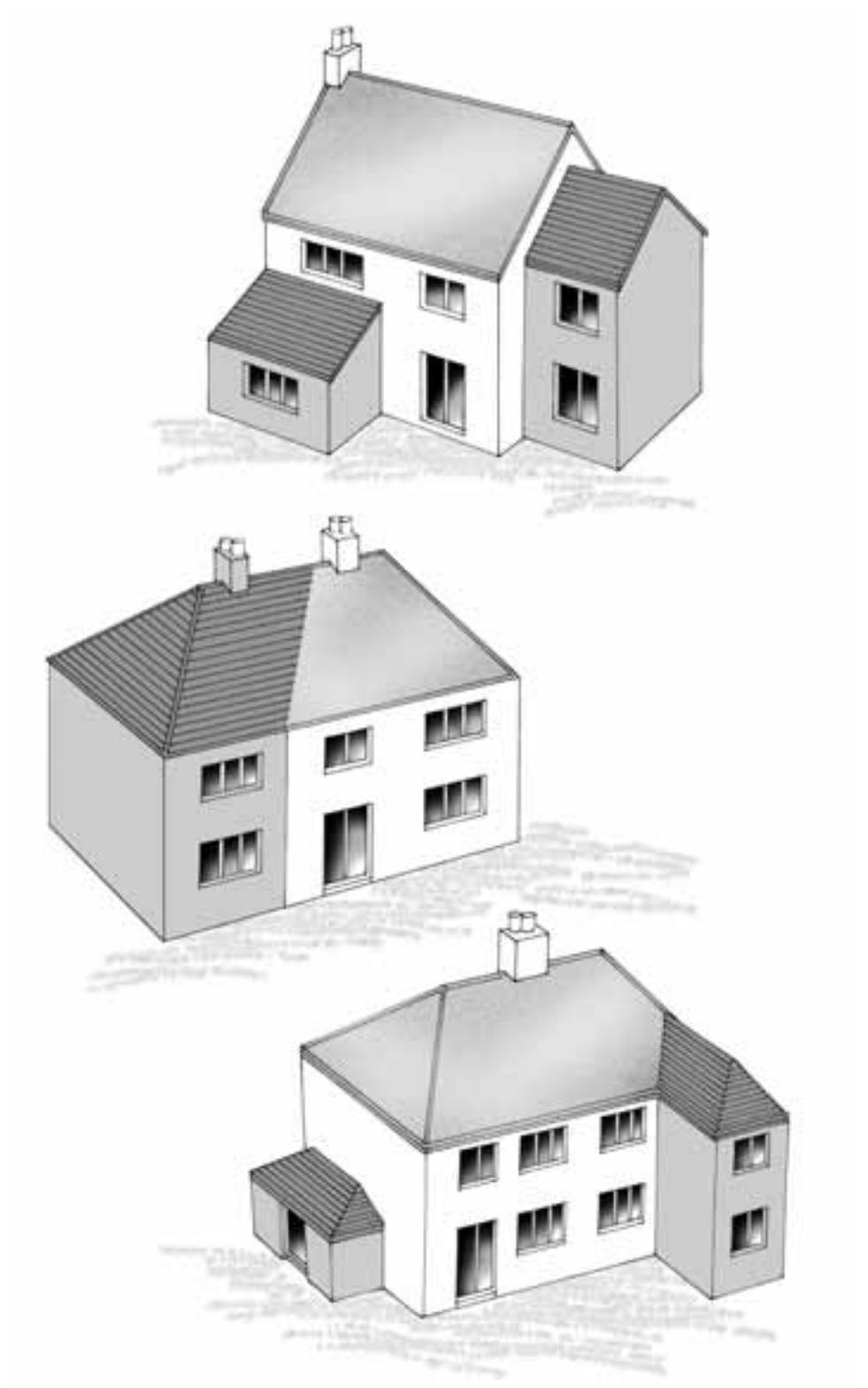


FIG 1. ROOF FORM The roof of the extension should normally reflect that of the main house.

2.2 DORMER WINDOWS

If you intend to utilise the roof space of your dwelling, great care must be taken with the size of any dormers to ensure that the original dwelling remains dominant and that there is not an excessive increase in scale. Large dormers are generally undesirable, especially at the front of a dwelling or on other elevations facing a highway. The use of smaller dormers, aligned with existing windows in the elevation will normally produce a well-balanced appearance.

With dormers, the main roof needs to dominate which generally means that the dormer will have to be set down from the ridge of the main roof and away from the gables. It will also be necessary to set the dormer well back from the eaves. Set backs from the eaves/gables and set downs from the ridge-line are required to ensure that the dormer(s) is/are subordinate to the roofscape of the host building. Wherever possible, dormers should have a pitched or sloping roof, particularly at the front of the dwelling.

The use of roof lights is an acceptable alternative to dormers and may provide a means of lighting an attic room, with minimal alterations to the roof construction and appearance. Roof lights also reduce the potential for overlooking.

Dormers should be kept subordinate to the main roof and NOT dominate the original house.

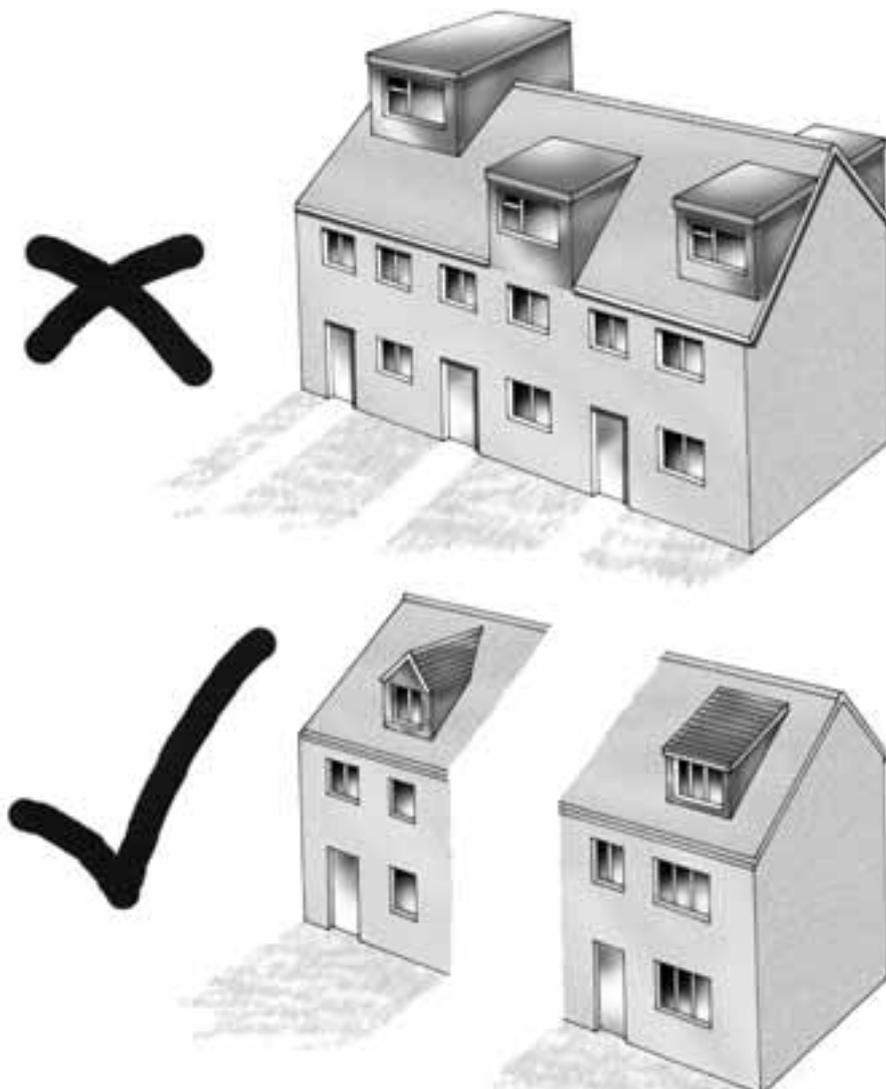


FIG 2 DORMERS Dormers should be kept subordinate to the main roof and NOT dominate the original house.

2.3 SIZE AND SCALE OF EXTENSION

The ridge and eaves lines of any extension should be level with or lower than the ridge and eaves lines respectively of the existing dwelling.

The appearance of the extension should also be considered in the context of the whole street. An extension, which is larger than the existing dwelling, will appear out of scale, and will tend to make the whole building seem unbalanced.

Generally, extensions should be smaller than the existing dwellings.

In most cases it may be better to make a distinct break in both the roofline and the wall-line, to avoid unsightly matching in of new and old materials and to maintain the existing dwelling as the dominant part.

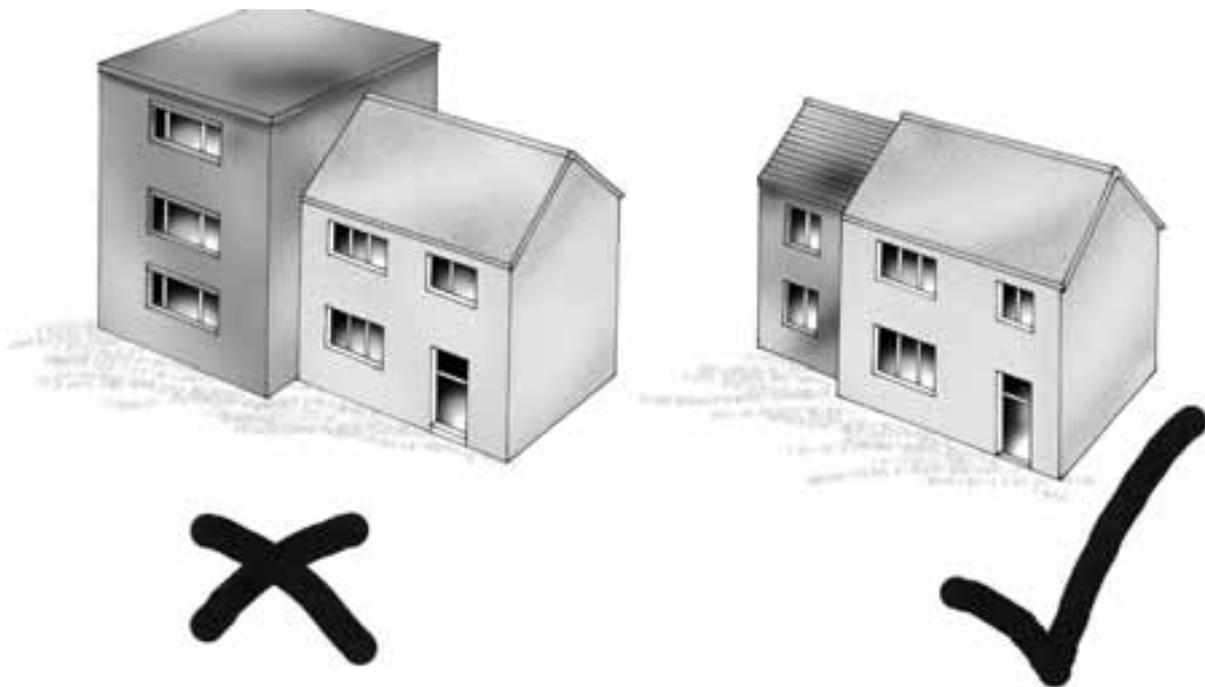


FIG 3. SIZE AND SCALE The extension should be subservient and not dominate the original dwelling.

2.4 DOORS AND WINDOWS

Any extension should have window and door openings which reflect the size and proportion of original windows and doors. Dormers and the windows in them should be positioned so as to relate to the windows below.

The appearance of an extension can be spoiled by the use of window and door openings which look completely different to those in the existing dwelling.

If, for example, the original windows have a vertical emphasis (ie, the height of the windows or their divisions are greater than the width) the windows of the extension should also have a vertical emphasis, to avoid giving the whole building an unbalanced appearance.



FIG 4 DOORS AND WINDOWS

Doors and windows should be similarly proportioned and detailed to compliment the original ones.

2.5 MATERIALS

The materials used for extensions should closely match or harmonise with existing materials in terms of type, colour and method of construction.

Older buildings will have been constructed with local materials (mainly brick with pantile roofs in the East Riding). Even on a new building the use of the same materials as those of the original house will help blend with the dwelling, and in many cases with the area as a whole.

It may be impossible to exactly match new materials to the old. In these cases it would be better to create a complete break in the roof and wall lines, to avoid unsightly matching in.

It is not only the materials but also the way they are used which is important. Stone may be laid to regular courses or random laid; brick colour may vary on string courses; roofs may be of large stone slabs or machine cut tiles. Window frame materials may also be significant in the overall appearance - timber frames are larger than metal; leaded lights reflect light in a different way to plate glass. UPVC window frames will be acceptable in most locations but within Conservation Areas and on extensions to Listed Buildings more traditional window frame materials will normally be required.

Where stone or brick is used, this should match the existing sizes, coursing, bonding course heights, finish and method of pointing.

Pitched roof extensions and dormers should have materials to match the existing pitched roof. Where flat roof dormers are necessary, the cheeks of these should closely match the materials of the existing roof. In many cases roof slates/tiles removed to build the dormer can be re-used on the cheeks. Equally the use of lead is traditional in the area and would be an acceptable solution for roofs with pantiles (as pantiles cannot readily be fitted to dormer cheeks). The use of timber boarding for cladding dormer cheeks is not encouraged because the painting of such can have a detrimental effect on the completed dormer.

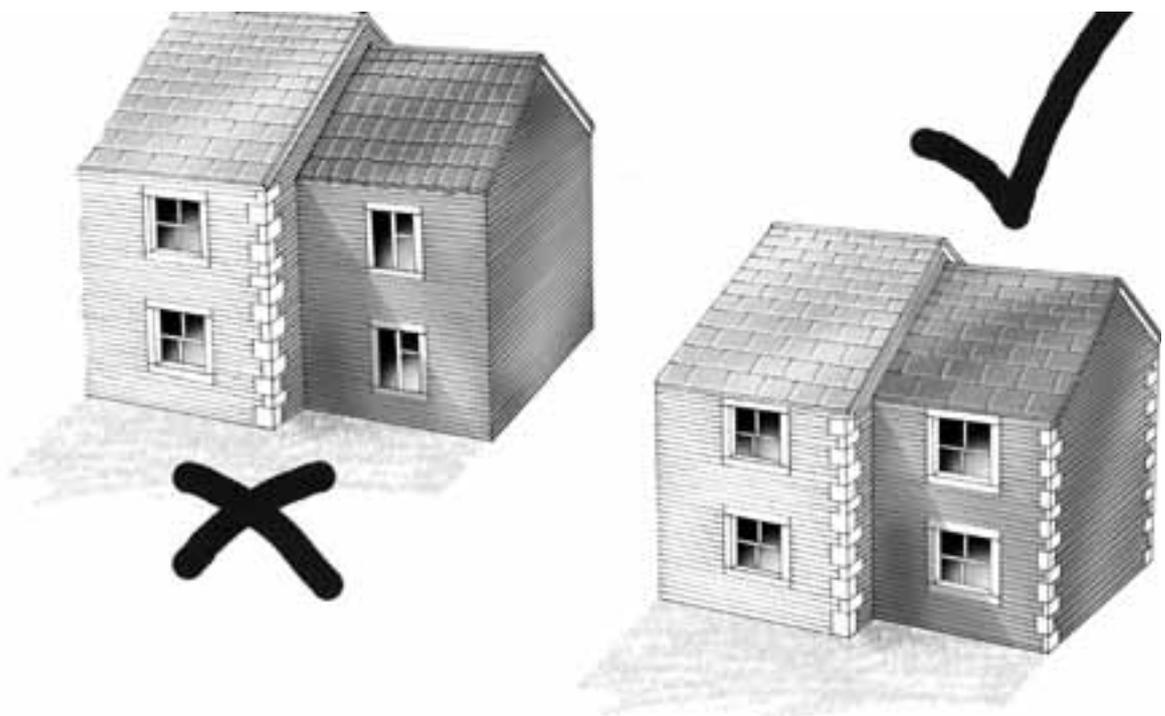


FIG 5. MATERIALS Materials on the extension should closely match those of the original dwelling.

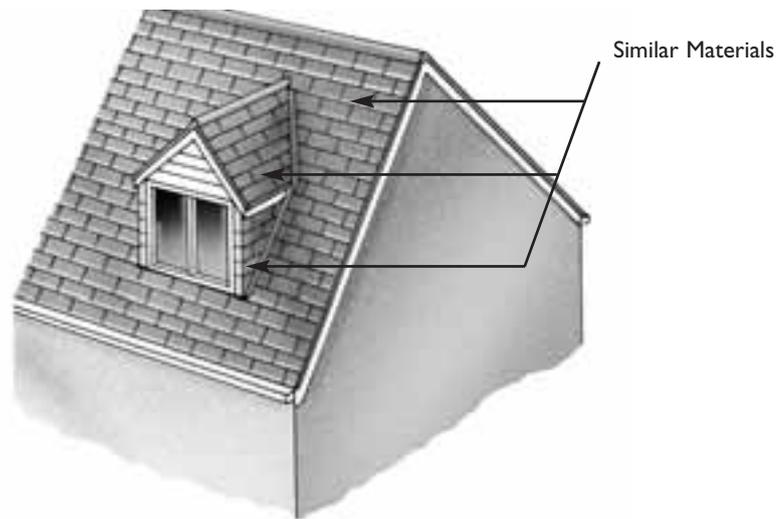


FIG 6. MATERIALS FOR DORMERS Dormers should be subservient to the main roof and be in similar materials.

2.6 DETAILS

On some houses design details are used at the junction between one building material and another. Thus, between the roof and the wall, a dwelling may have overhanging or flush eaves; between the window and the wall, window heads and sills may be expressed in brick, stone or timber.

It may be impracticable to copy exactly the details of an older, existing house unless there are special circumstances which require it, for example if the property is a Listed Building or is located within a Conservation Area. Nevertheless details can play a significant part in the appearance of a building, and the use of details which honestly reflect the method of construction (which should be similar to the existing house), and are not simply fake additions, will help to create a unified and pleasing overall appearance.



FIG 7. DETAILS The extension should pick up the detail of the main house.

2.7 STREETScape

The streetscape character of an area may also be a major determining factor in deciding whether an extension is acceptable. This is particularly the case with a large extension. Basically the streetscape of an area is determined by:-

- (a) the degree of enclosure created by the built environment in the street;
- (b) the character of the space between buildings and whether it is primarily building or landscape dominated;
- (c) the form and detail of the buildings;
- (d) the form and detail of the landscaping, both hard and soft.

In areas with large houses in spacious grounds, especially with strong landscape boundaries, it would in most cases be inappropriate to allow extensions so close to the boundary that the landscaping would be threatened or the feeling of spaciousness destroyed.

Similarly, with semi-detached and detached dwellings with drives between, an extension right up to the side boundary may destroy the impression of space, which is so characteristic of the area or of a group of buildings. The resultant terraced appearance can be reduced if the extension is set back far enough from the face of the properties, and this may be acceptable for a single dwelling. If an existing gap is to be lost entirely this is likely to be unacceptable.

2.8 PORCHES

A well-designed porch should not be over-dominant. Many small porches will usually be “permitted development” (see paragraph 1.1) but should in any event be designed to be in keeping with the character of the existing property.

2.9 FRONT EXTENSIONS

Extensions forward of the front wall of a dwelling are likely to be particularly prominent in the streetscene. It is therefore essential that they respect the appearance of the front elevation and relate well to the character of the area. Front elevations should normally be small in scale, and repeat the window and roof details of the main building.

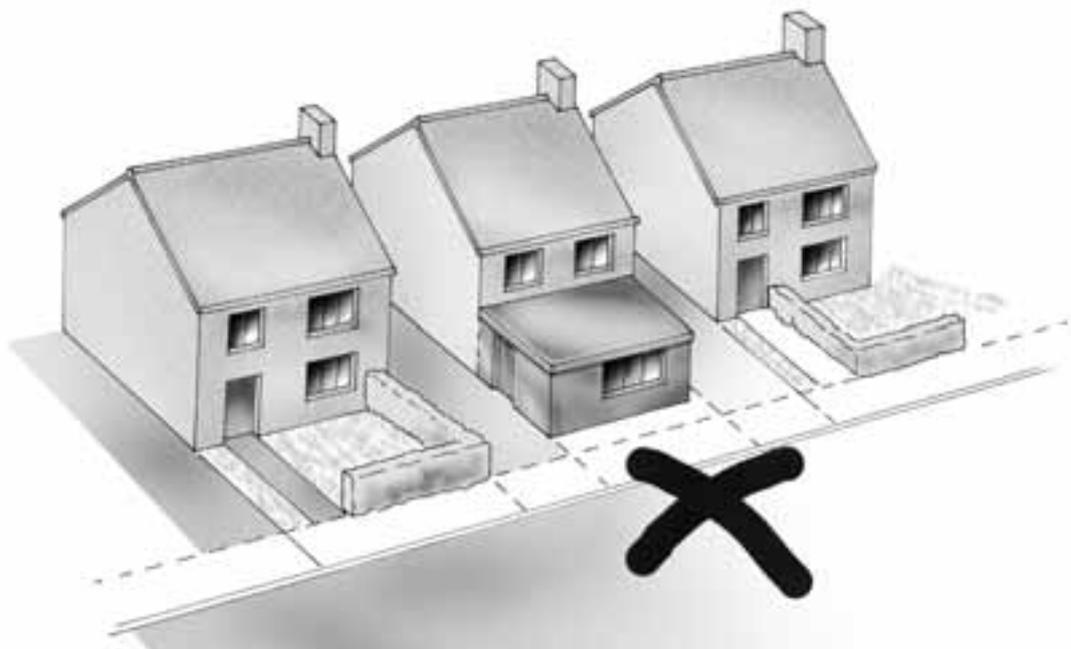


FIG 8. FRONT EXTENSIONS

SECTION 3

3. ENSURING YOUR HOUSE EXTENSION HAS AN ACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

3.1 The design of any extension must ensure that it does not unreasonably reduce the privacy of neighbouring properties including their private garden areas. The use of obscure glazing or in some cases, screening by existing buildings, fences, walls, trees or shrubs can help address concerns. Remember that such screening should be effective and permanent.

3.2 On new estates the Council will normally seek a minimum rear window to rear window separation of 20 metres to avoid privacy problems. This standard normally results in 10 metre rear gardens. It is considered reasonable to reduce this standard to permit single storey extensions given that established development will normally have reasonable boundary treatment in place. It is suggested that in general no window should be closer than 7 metres to a boundary it faces, but this may be reduced further dependent on the level of screening/mitigation measures in place or proposed. Above ground floor level, it is less likely that there will be adequate screening and therefore it is suggested that 10 metres should remain as the normal distance required between a first floor window on an extension and any boundary it faces.

3.3 The degree of impact in terms of dominance and overshadowing also needs careful consideration. The further an extension projects behind the rear wall of an adjacent dwelling the greater impact on that dwelling. The orientation of the extension also plays a crucial part in determining the effect an extension would have on its neighbours.

3.4 In order to provide general guidance it is suggested that single storey extensions should not normally extend more than 3.5 metres if directly adjoining a side boundary. This is to prevent unacceptable overshadowing and loss of light to the neighbouring property. The extension could be increased by setting in the extension from the boundary. Two storey extensions have a much greater potential to overshadow and dominate a neighbouring property, so unless set back from the adjoining boundaries two storey extensions will normally only be permitted to extend 1.5 metres out.

3.5 TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF HOUSE EXTENSIONS

To assist applicants typical examples of household extensions are considered below with relevant criteria given where appropriate. **THESE EXAMPLES ARE FOR GUIDANCE ONLY.**

Proposals that meet the guidance will normally be approved, however, each case needs to be assessed on its own planning merits. Additional factors that need to be taken into account could include:-

- (1) The degree of screening afforded from boundary features such as walls and hedges, and also garages or outbuildings.
- (2) The orientation of the extension and adjoining property, especially whether the extension would block direct sunlight to a significant degree.
- (3) Existing extensions on adjoining properties will be taken into account (in some cases it may be appropriate to submit a joint application with a neighbour).
- (4) The distance the adjoining building is situated away from the boundary.
- (5) Whilst the response from a neighbour will be taken into account, the Council does have to consider the amenity of future occupants so a letter supporting a particular application will not automatically make it acceptable.

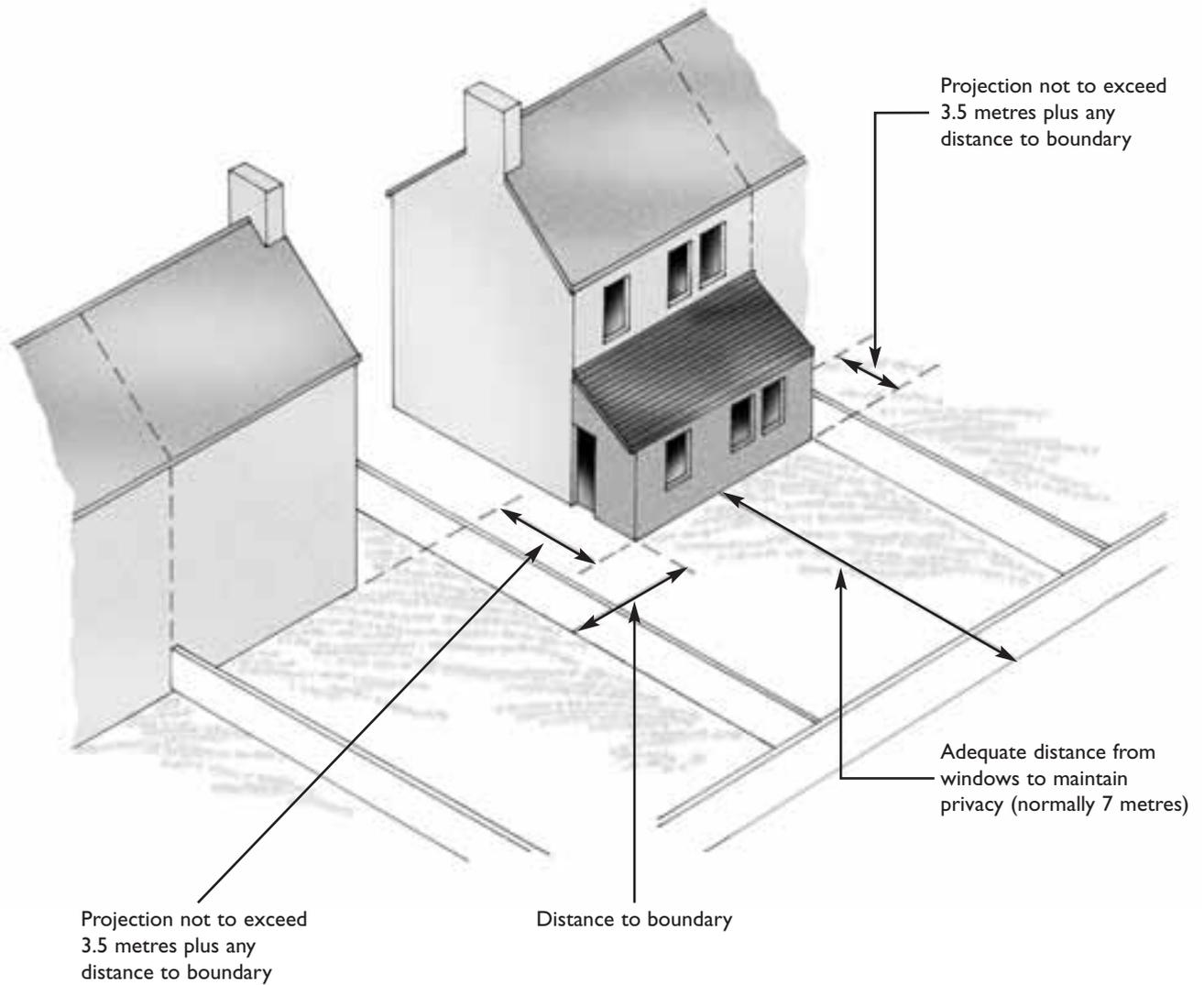
Where proposals seek to exceed the guidance given in this section, you are advised to clearly explain why you consider that the proposed extension would be acceptable referring, for example, to the presence of good screening and boundaries or outbuildings/garages which may prevent overlooking.

EXAMPLE 1 : SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION

A single storey rear extension will normally be acceptable provided that:-

- (a) it does not project more than 3.5 metres behind the rear wall of the neighbouring property. If the extension is set away from the boundary this projection may be increased, usually by the distance it is from the boundary.
- (b) There are generally no windows closer than 7.0 metres to boundaries unless screening / mitigation measures are in place or proposed.

SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION

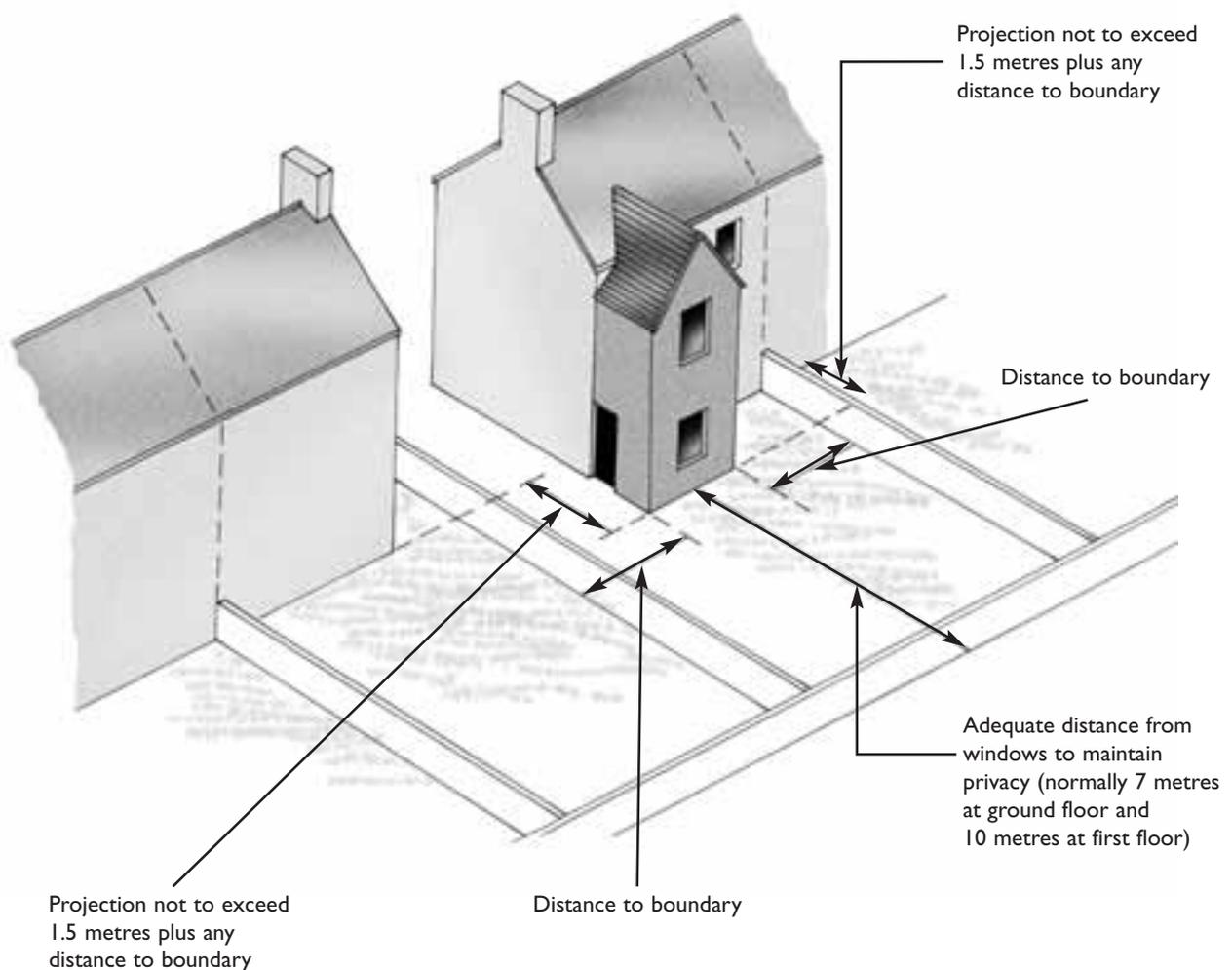


EXAMPLE 2 : TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION

A two storey rear extension will normally be acceptable provided that:-

- (a) it does not project more than 1.5 metres behind the rear wall of the neighbouring property. If the extension is set away from the boundary this projection may be increased, usually by the distance it is from the boundary.
- (b) There are no ground floor windows closer than 7 metres to adjoining rear boundaries unless screening/mitigation measures are in place.
- (c) There are no first floor windows closer than 10 metres to adjoining rear boundaries unless screening/mitigation measures are in place.
- (d) There are no overlooking windows on the side elevations within 7.0 metres of the overlooked boundary unless screening/mitigation measures are in place.
- (e) Any difference in land level is accounted for.

TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS

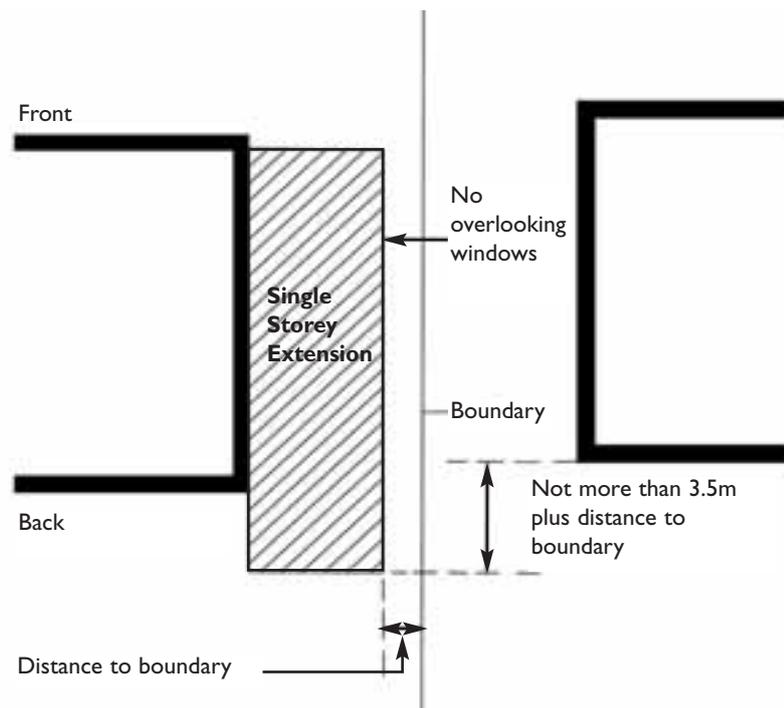


EXAMPLE 3 : SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION

It will normally be acceptable to have a single storey extension, up to the side boundary if necessary, provided that:-

- (a) adequate parking and access is still provided;
- (b) if it does project forward of the main front wall it will need to be well designed;
- (c) it does not project more than 3.5 metres behind the rear wall of the neighbouring property. If the extension is set away from the boundary this projection may be increased, usually by the distance it is from the boundary;
- (d) difference in land levels should be accounted for and may reduce the size of extension that would be allowed.
- (e) there are no clear glazed windows in the extension closer than 7.0 metres to the side or rear boundaries unless screening/mitigation measures are in place or proposed.
- (f) Any side windows in the neighbouring property will not be unacceptably overshadowed.

SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSIONS

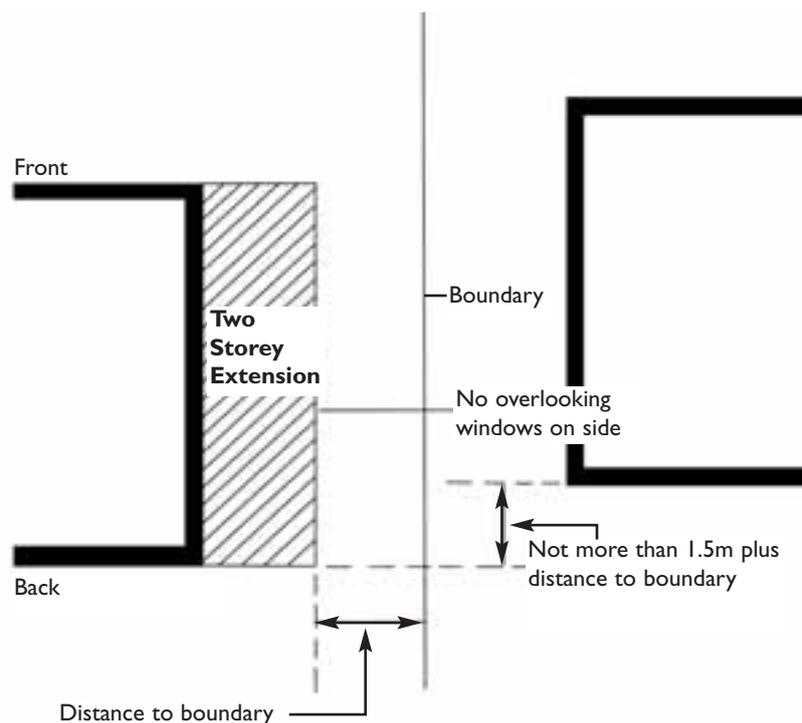


EXAMPLE 4 : TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSION

These will normally be acceptable provided all the following can be met:-

- (a) Adequate parking and access is still provided;
- (b) if it does project forward of the main front wall it will need to be well designed;
- (c) it does not project more than 1.5 metres behind the rear wall of the neighbouring property. If the extension is set away from the boundary this projection may be increased by the distance it is from the boundary;
- (d) difference in land levels should be accounted for and may reduce the size of extension that would be allowed;
- (e) there are no clear glazed windows in the extension closer than 7.0 metres to the side and rear boundaries at ground floor level or 10.0 metres at first floor level, unless screening/mitigation measures are in place or proposed;
- (f) any side windows in the neighbouring property will not be unacceptably overshadowed;
- (g) a two storey side extension to the property boundary may be unacceptable if it entirely closes a gap in the street scene (see 2.7 above).

TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSION



3.6 CONSERVATORIES

These are usually at the rear and therefore the rear extension considerations given in example 1 above would be applicable. However, conservatories allow the occupants to look out in all directions which can cause additional problems to side adjoining properties. It will usually be necessary to protect side adjoining gardens and properties from being overlooked if existing fences and hedges are inadequate to provide screening. This can be done by using solid walls or obscure panels/glazing in the conservatory itself, or by the use of screen fences and walls

3.7 DORMERS

Overlooking from dormers can be a problem. Generally the same considerations will apply as for a window in a first floor extension ie. there should be 10 metres to a rear boundary unless there is adequate screening. Side panels in dormers will need particular care to avoid overlooking of properties to the side.

3.8 GARAGES AND OTHER OUTBUILDINGS

In most circumstances, garages and other domestic outbuildings should be sited at the side or rear of the property. It is important that they are sympathetically related to the main dwelling in both materials, style and proportion. Because of the nature of such buildings there are no prescribed dimensions but the siting of these buildings should be such that they do not create over-dominance or an undue sense of enclosure which would affect adjoining neighbours. Unless situated in a particularly large garden 2 storey outbuildings are unlikely to be acceptable.

Whether the parking area within the curtilage is merely hardstanding, a car port or a garage, the following apply:

- (a) if the new access from the curtilage is onto a classified road, it may be necessary for provision to be made for internal turning facilities so that the car may drive into and out of the site in forward gear;
- (b) when the exit from the curtilage is onto an unclassified minor road, internal reversing facilities are unlikely to be required but adequate sight lines will be needed (these may vary dependant on circumstances);
- (c) when a garage is provided, it is normally required that there is an area of hardstanding outside the garage, large enough to enable garage doors not to open over the highway and to provide adequate visibility for emerging vehicles (minimum 5.5 metres long).

3.9 BALCONIES

Open air balconies attached to first and higher floors or on existing flat roofs are likely to overlook the gardens of neighbouring residential properties. Such balconies are only acceptable if they do not introduce significant overlooking of neighbouring rear gardens. The concern is related to the invasion of privacy in private garden areas, usually rear gardens. Balconies which overlook an area of garden open to public views, usually front gardens, will be unlikely to generate concerns relating to overlooking. It is not practicable to specify minimum space distances and each proposal should be judged on its own merits. In assessing such proposals the following will be taken into account;

- (a) the distance to any common boundary;
- (b) the difference in level between the proposed site and adjoining properties;
- (c) level of landscaping existing between the proposal and any common boundaries;
- (d) any screening measures applied to the balcony to reduce potential overlooking problems.

HOME OWNERS ARE REMINDED THAT THIS GUIDE CAN ONLY DEAL WITH TYPICAL EXAMPLES. THE ADVICE IN THE GUIDE IS GIVEN TO ASSIST YOU IN PREPARING A PLANNING APPLICATION, BUT EACH APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED ON ITS INDIVIDUAL PLANNING MERITS.

NOTES

