



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

No.3 HOUSE EXTENSION GUIDELINES

JANUARY 2002

Introduction

Probably your most important asset is your home, improving it makes it more comfortable to live in and should add to its value. But sometimes your needs outgrow the space available and you then have two basic choices -move to a bigger home, or extend.

This guidance provides some simple advice if you are considering a home extension.

What permissions do I need?

Many minor extensions do not need planning permission but they may need approval under the Building Regulations. Whether or not you need planning permission depends on the size of the extensions and a lot of other detailed matters. If your house is a listed building, you will also need Listed Building Consent as well as planning permission

What will the Council look for?

There are two fundamental points in the consideration of almost every residential extension:

- What will the extension look like in the street scene?
- Will it have any unreasonable impact on neighbours?

In drawing up your plans, it is vital that you bear in mind these two questions. The Council will also have in mind a list of other material considerations or additional impacts that will have to be balanced against your desire to extend your property.

Permitted development

Unless the Council has removed those rights by condition or direction (please check with the Development Control Group), your house as originally built (if after 1948) may be extended by a limited extent without planning permission being required This is known as "permitted development".

The sketch shows some typical examples

When your home is sold, the purchaser may need to know whether any extensions or alterations you undertook required planning permission. You should therefore write to the Development Control Group before undertaking any extensions to ask whether anything you intend to do needs formal planning permission or is permitted development. We will write back to confirm the position and you should keep that correspondence for future record.

In a Conservation Area there are even tighter restrictions, which include restrictions on dormer windows, cladding of the property, the volume of extensions you can build before planning permission is needed and the of detached buildings such as sheds and garages. The Council has additional leaflets available that provide further information on both listed buildings and conservation areas.

Always ask for advice from the Council beforehand -preferably with a detailed sketch plan showing what you hope to do.

Permitted Development

Certain House Extensions

In many cases domestic extensions can be built without the need for planning permission. These include extensions under 70 cubic metres to detached or semi-detached houses and under 50 cubic metres to a terraced house. These figures apply to the total volume of extensions to be constructed since the house was new. However, any extension which is closer to the road, pavement or any other public footpath than the house is, will require planning permission. Planning permission will also be required if any part of the extension is within 2 metres of a boundary and if the extension is higher than 4 metres.

Other restrictions apply but these generally do not affect extensions of this size. If a garage is to be constructed within 5 metres of the house it will be considered as an extension to the house.

Garages, Sheds, Greenhouses, etc

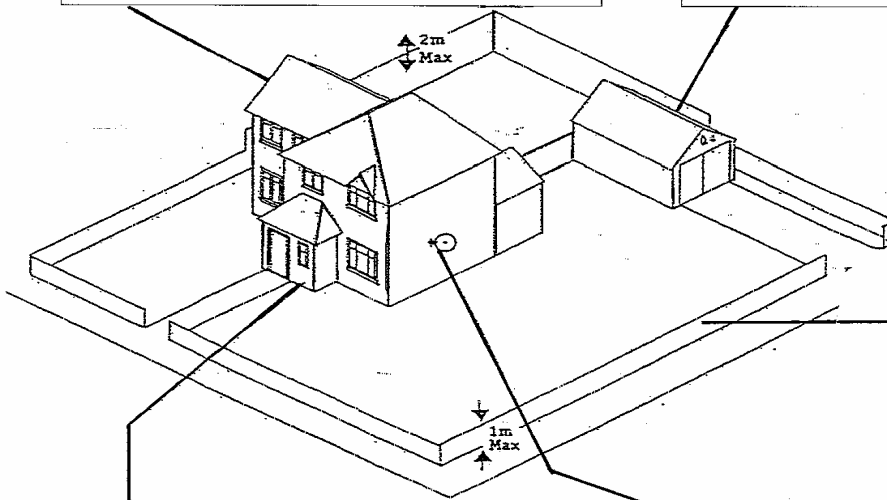
If a proposed shed or other structure exceeds 10 cubic metres and is within 5 metres of any part of the house it is classed as an extension to the house and will need planning permission if the sizes for house extensions (paragraph A) are exceeded.

Otherwise the proposed building would only require planning permission if any of the following apply:

- It exceeds 3 metres in height, or 4 metres if it has a pitched roof;
- It is closer to the road, pavement or any public footpath than the house;
- More than half the garden area will be taken up with buildings.

Walls and Fences

A boundary wall or fence can be erected without planning permission if it does not exceed 1 metre in height where it is within 2 metres of any road, pavement or other footpath, or 2 metres in height when erected elsewhere.



Porches

A porch with a roof area less than 3 square metres and under 3 metres in height can be built without planning permission provided no part of the porch will be within 2 metres of the road, pavement or public footpath.

Satellite Dishes

Planning permission is not required to install one satellite dish on a house provided its diameter does not exceed 90cm and it is not located higher than the roof. If it is to be installed on the chimney the maximum diameter is reduced to 45cm. The dish must be installed (as far as practicably possible) so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building.

Factors for impact assessment

The Council and planning officers will need to balance a large number of factors in considering whether planning permission should be granted for any extensions, The list below is not comprehensive and each factor will need to be accorded appropriate weight:

- Extent of overlooking / loss of privacy
- Dominance of extension over neighbours
- Impact of proposal on street scene
- Terracing
- Impact on design and appearance of dwelling
- The 45° rule -see later
- Impact on trees or other landscape features
- Access and highway safety
- Space and amenity standards
- Fenestration

What do I need to do first?

Have a general idea of what you want to do. It usually helps to seek professional help in drawing up plans but that choice is up to you.

When you have a firm idea of what you want to do it is always good practice to go and see your neighbours -try to avoid your extension affecting their privacy or dominating their home. Be prepared to compromise if planning permission is required, the Council will automatically consult neighbouring householders and will take into account their views,

The following advice will help you prepare your scheme.

Design

Why does design matter?

So that the character and appearance of your home and the street scene in general, is not spoilt. Hopefully a well-designed extension will actually enhance the appearance of your property and the neighbourhood.

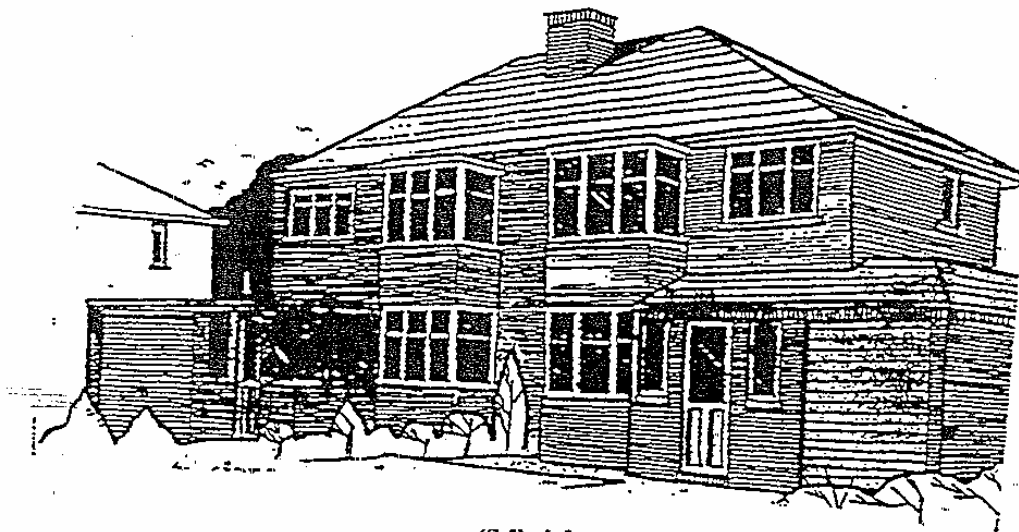
So, what general design points need to be considered?

- The need to harmonise with the general character and appearance of the street scene
- The particular style of your home
- The space around the dwelling
- The roof and window design
- The effect upon neighbours

Design guidance in detail

Front extensions

Extensions to the front of your house, or the construction of garages or other detached buildings, between the house and the road can often be obtrusive and such proposals are unlikely to be given planning permission. However, front building lines are not necessarily sacrosanct and in some instances, where space allows, there may be scope for modest and well designed extensions or alterations that take due account of the characteristics of the plot and the area in general.



“Mind the gap”

First floor side extensions

The space around a dwelling and the gap(s) (if any) to the boundary usually make a very important contribution to the appearance of the house and the character of your neighbourhood.

First floor extensions are therefore of particular concern, and the Council is anxious that such gaps are protected so that detached and semi detached homes do not appear to be terraced, cramped, or unreasonably 'squeezed' into the plot. In some cases, in roads characterised by spacious settings, the gap to the boundary should never be filled, or the space to the boundary may need to be generous -3 metres or more

Many roads in the Borough contain semi-detached houses linked at ground level by garages three metres or so wide. To erect a usable first floor extension over the garage usually means building to the boundary unless an alternative acceptable siting can be found. This has the potential for a terracing effect which the Council would normally resist.

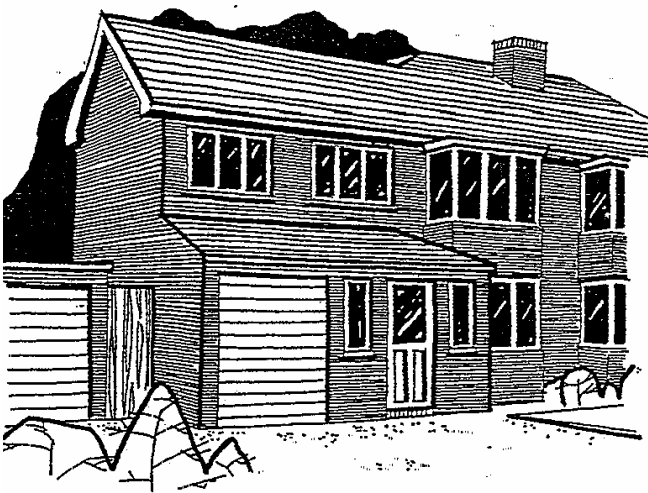
The following broad criteria will apply to all first floor extensions, although each case will be considered on its individual merits:-

- All possible alternative locations for extension should be thoroughly examined to find a place which has the least impact on neighbouring property and on the street scene.



✘ Terracing effect where properties originally built as semi-detached

- Any terracing effect between dwellings is to be avoided. A reasonable gap to the boundary must be retained of at least one metre in most cases, although two metres or more may be necessary for properties in spacious settings.



✘ Overdominant



✓ Subservient

- A first floor extension must be subservient to the existing dwelling in design and external appearance, with a lower ridge height and should be set back from the front main wall of the house
- Where there is a joint passageway between otherwise closely related dwellings or where there is little likelihood of the gap to the boundary of the adjacent dwelling being filled, that space may be considered sufficient to prevent terracing. Nevertheless, the extension must appear subservient.
- Some modern estates within the borough are characterised by an "open plan" approach. This will include areas of open space on road corners and alongside properties, which may be owned by the occupier of the adjacent house. Such areas are very important to the appearance of the area and the Council will generally not allow them to be incorporated into

a scheme for the extension of the property in their entirety, although some limited encroachment may be acceptable for a suitably designed scheme.

Style and character

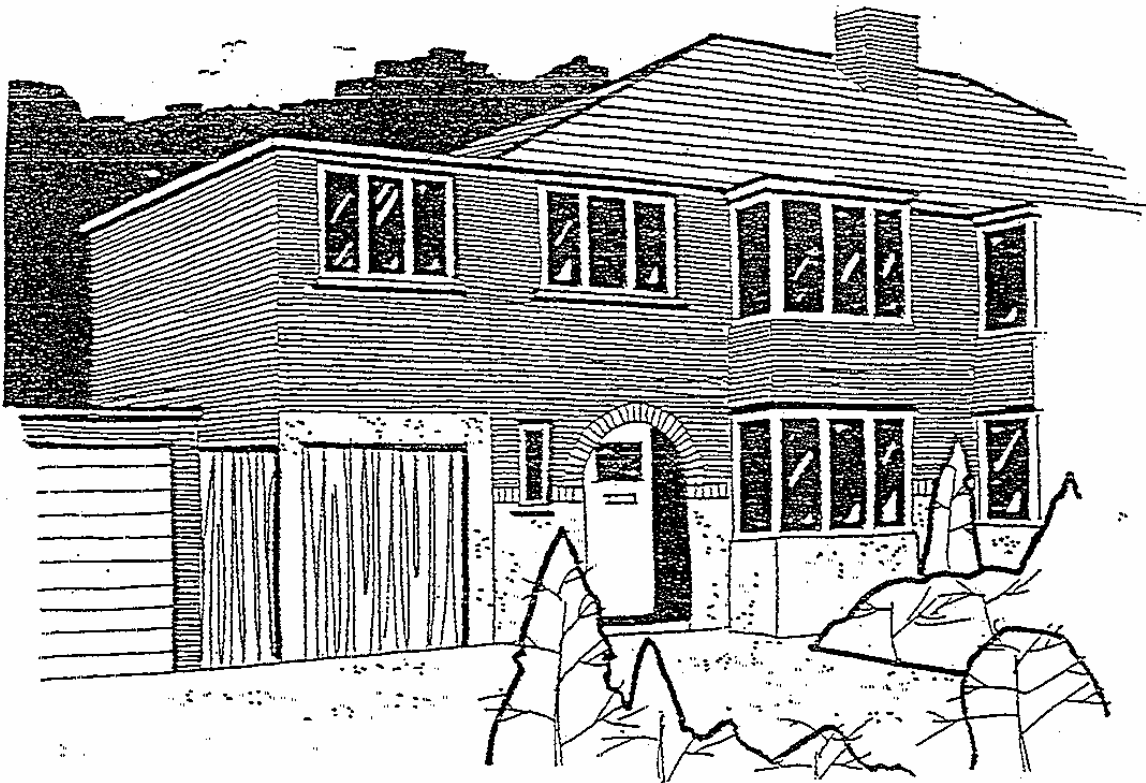
Try to follow the style, character and appearance of your original home. Extensions should look to be an integral but subservient part of the existing house and not appear to be something 'tacked on' as a later addition.

Materials

- Try to match the colour of the facing brick or render of the existing house.
- Try to match the brick size, bonding and mortar colour
- Continue string courses or any other special features
- Use the same colour, pattern and type of tiles

Roofs

- Avoid flat roofs – they are prone to long term maintenance problems and often look ugly
- Use a pitched or hipped roof, dependent on the character of the home
- Normally the roof extension should be at a lower ridge height than the main house
- Carry through the eaves line
- Avoid clumsy junctions between new and old guttering – avoid overhanging the boundary because you may be trespassing onto a neighbour's property
- Use tiles from the back of the house on the front to help matching



✘ Flat roof – unsightly, future maintenance problems

Dormers

Under some circumstances, dormers do not require planning permission They will need permission where: -

- They are higher than the highest part of the roof on which they are mounted
- They are placed on a roof slope fronting a highway
- They increase the cubic content of the house by more than 40 cubic metres on a terraced property or 50 cubic metres in any other case (there are other restrictions on increased size - check with the Council)
- The house is in a conservation area

Whether or not the dormer is permitted development, it should be well proportioned and echo the vertical proportions of the main elevations. On the front elevation dormers may not be acceptable unless they are particularly well designed and unobtrusive. The gable should be set below the main ridge so as not to dominate the existing roof.

On the front elevation where permission is required, large flat-roof dormers should be avoided wherever possible, unless the house is of a design that would accommodate them. Large side dormers to afford access to loft conversions can look very clumsy and should be avoided. Wrap-around dormers or dormers above the ridge height are most likely to be refused.



Windows and doors

Use the same pattern of windows and doors as on the existing house carrying throughout the dwelling the line of sills and lintels.

Use the same shape and alignment of materials as the existing house

Garden Space

If you are extending to the rear, make sure that you leave adequate space in your back garden

Impact On Your Neighbours

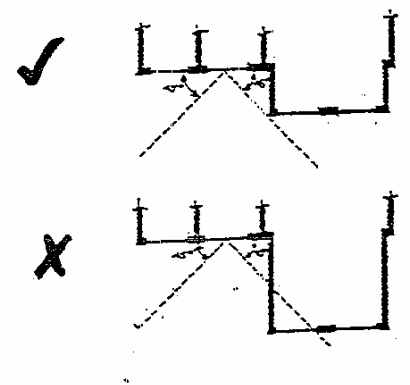
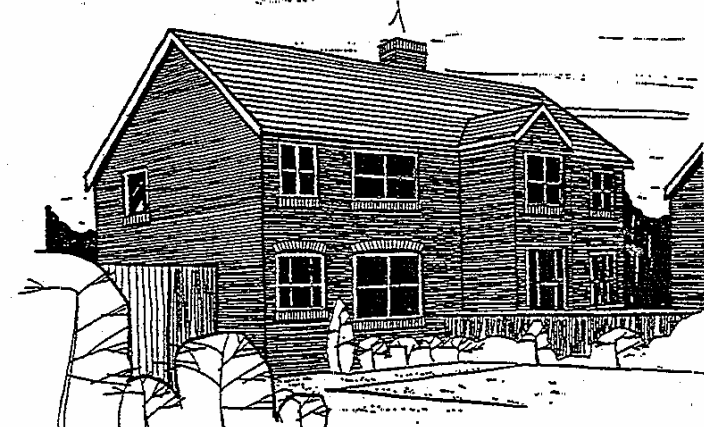
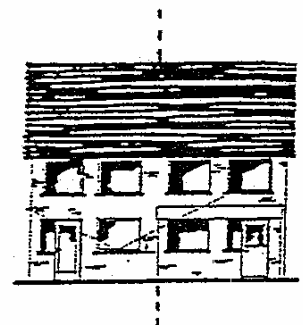
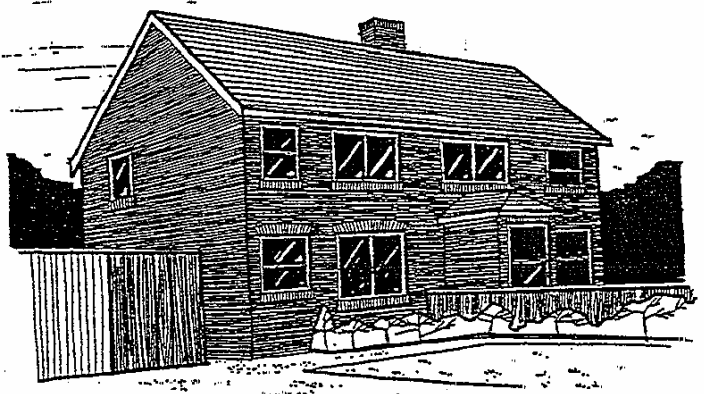
How might my extension affect my neighbours?

The main impact on neighbours is through loss of direct sunlight or general daylight; a general overbearing or dominating effect from an extension that is too large or too close to the adjacent property; and unreasonable loss of privacy from overlooking windows, usually at first floor level,

How do I overcome these concerns?

Ground floor rear extensions are usually straightforward providing they do not extend too far beyond the windows in your neighbour's rear wall. Although the Council does not formally operate the '45° rule' (see sketch) it nevertheless gives a good guide as to what is likely to be acceptable. The 45° rule will not always be appropriate, and there will always be other factors that will carry as much and more weight in certain cases, but it is a useful "rule of thumb" when drawing up an extension. The angle is calculated from the centre point of the nearest main habitable room window on the neighbouring property and any extension that breaches that angle can reasonably be expected to have some impact on the daylight reaching the neighbour's room. However, this is not a formally applied or rigid rule, as there will always be exceptions.

First floor rear extensions are usually the cause of most neighbour objections. They should be modest in scale and avoid any unreasonable loss of sunlight or daylight to your neighbour's house and garden. Keep the extension off the boundary wherever possible. Avoid windows which look directly into your neighbour's property; if unavoidable, consider the use of obscure glazing and or 'high level' windows which will sometimes overcome the problem.



Green Belt House Extensions

In green belts there are restrictions on the type of development that can take place generally. Policy guidance allows for limited extensions or alterations to dwellings if they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original buildings. Otherwise they are inappropriate development. Most properties have (without planning permission) rights to carry out a limited amount of extension, but the Council imposes restrictions on the size of extension beyond that.

As well as external appearance and design, the concern of the Council is that extensions should not turn small houses or cottages in the green belt into large mansions. The cumulative effects of previous extensions will be taken into account.

The original* habitable floor space of the dwelling should not be increased above 20% or to more than 140 square metres in total. Dwellings that include any integral garage are also subject to this rule and any buildings in the same curtilage within five metres of the dwelling will be included within the calculations. Proposed demolitions can be deducted in calculations if they are an integral part of the dwelling.

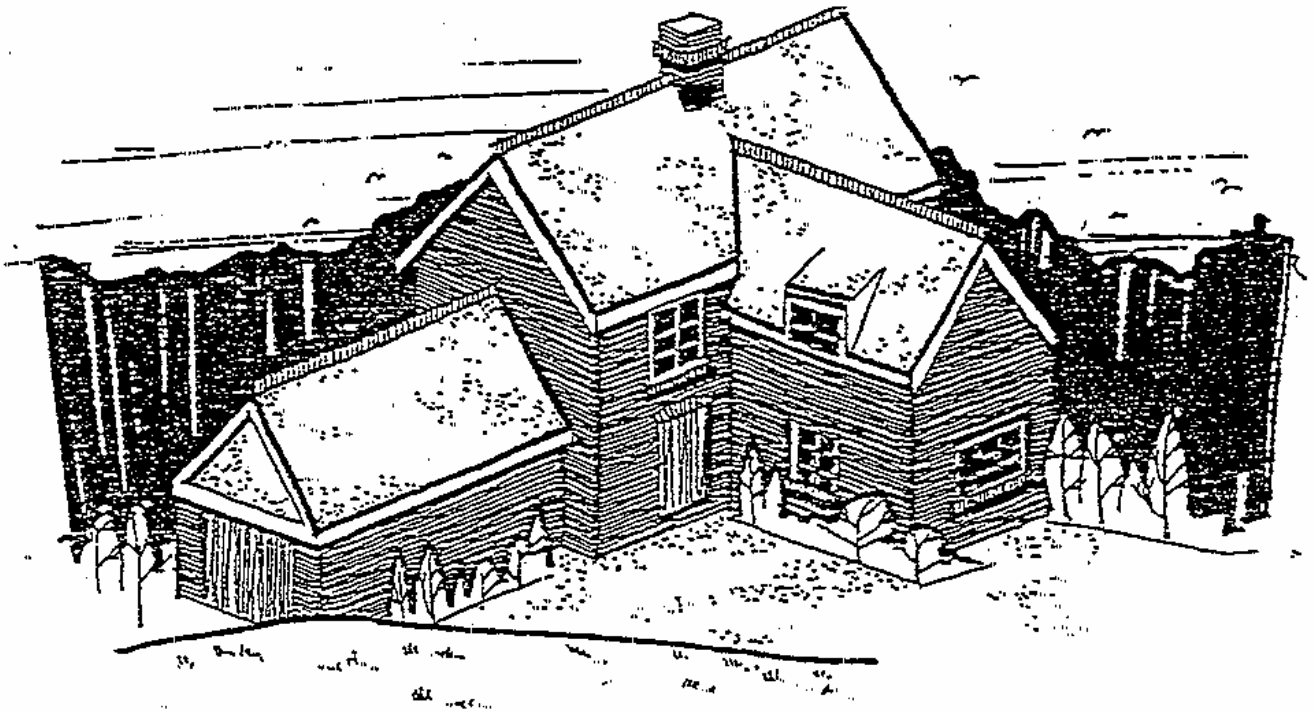
*original = before 1947 or when the dwelling was built, whichever is earlier All measurements are external.

There may be cases where more than a 20% increase is justified to produce a better design solution but there may also be cases where less than 20% is appropriate, to avoid a disproportionate extension to a dwelling or where the site is especially prominent. These policies are primarily concerned with dwellings outside defined settlements and do not usually apply within established ribbons of development. The calculations will include unused permitted development right extensions accordingly. This means, for example, that where an extension is proposed and approved but not implemented, and then a scheme is submitted for further works under permitted development rights, the volume of the approved extension will be calculated as if it were part of the permitted development rights allowance and the "new" scheme will thus generally also require consent. The exception to this will be where the original scheme has not been implemented within 5 years and has thus lapsed, or where the applicant agrees to the extinguishment of unimplemented permissions or parts thereof.

In all cases the Council will require a detailed survey which also shows the curtilages and the outbuildings.

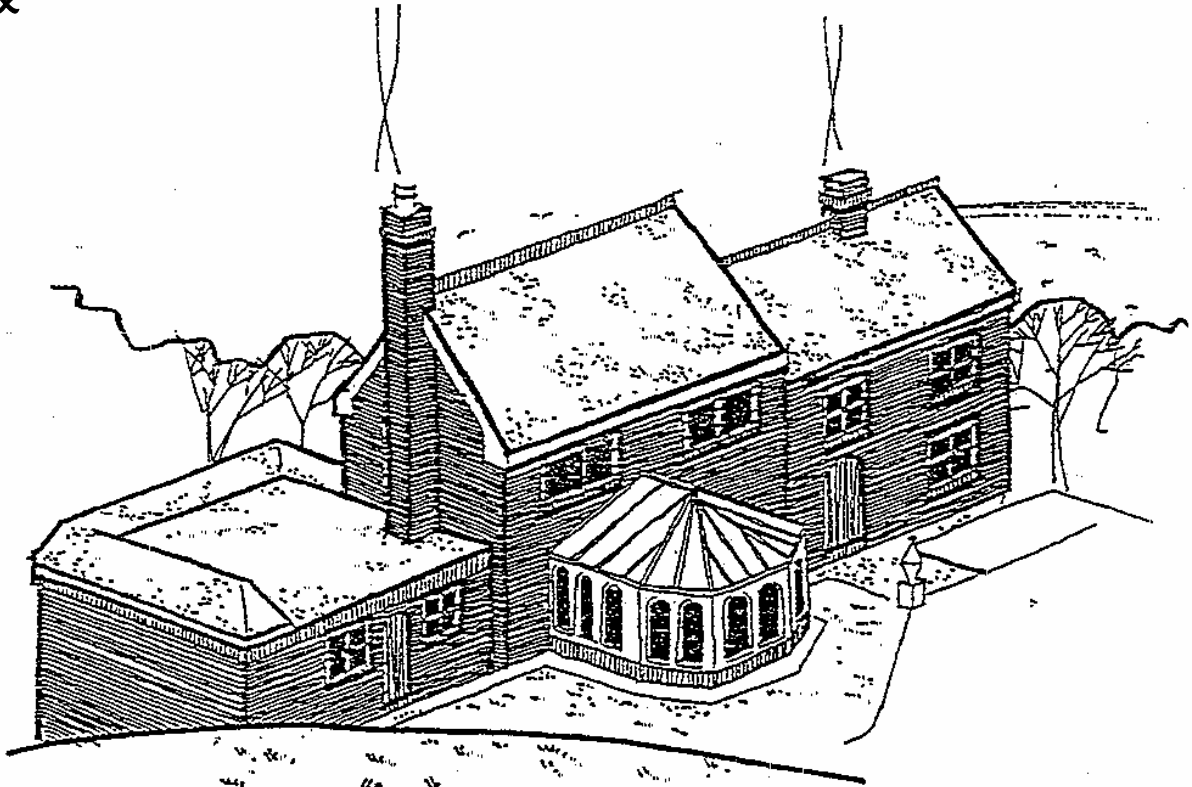
Green Belt

✓



Sympathetic limited extensions

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Extensive cumulative and unsympathetic extensions to a property in the Green Belt.

General matters

Householder forms:

The Council has a simple-to-complete householder application form for use in proposals to extend or alter dwellings. These forms are available on our website.

These set out details of the plans that need to be submitted together with details of the proposal, a certificate of ownership and fee details.

Your neighbour's property

Sometimes the construction of an extension on or close to your neighbour's property means that the eaves or gutters will overhang the boundary, or the foundations need to encroach onto your neighbour's land. This can often lead to a neighbour dispute and it is usually best to design the extension so that **all works** are within your own property.

If your extension **does** encroach, we advise that you discuss the matter with your neighbours first and obtain their permission: your planning application will need to confirm that you have served due legal notice on your neighbours.

Secured by Design

Extensions should not compromise the security of your own or neighbouring premises. If you destroy natural surveillance, you may be creating an environment in which the criminal can work unhindered.

If you wish to discuss security any further, talk to the Crime Prevention Officer at your local police Station.

Can I obtain further advice from the Council?

Yes, If having read these guidelines you would like to discuss your ideas with the Council before proceeding, please contact a Planning Officer who will be pleased to assist: we want to help you to get your application right first time.

Planning Services
Solihull Council
PO Box 11652, Central Library, Solihull B91 9YA
developmentcontrol@.solihull.gov.uk
www.solihull.gov.uk
House Extensions Guidelines 2002

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE No. 3
HOUSE EXTENSION GUIDELINES
Statement on consultation

This supplementary planning guidance document was the subject of wide-ranging consultation. The draft document was the subject of reports to Planning Committee on the 12th November 2001.

The draft document was advertised in the Solihull Times on 23rd November 2001, with interested parties being given until 4th January 2002 to comment on it.

The draft document was sent out to the following in February 2001:-

Residents Association	Parish Councils	Amenity Societies and Agents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balsall Common & Village Residents' Association • Bentley Heath Residents' Association • Billsmoxe Green Residents' Association • Burton & Aken Residents' Association • Catherine-de-Baillies Residents' Association • Cheswick Green Residents' Association • Dickens Heath Village Residents' Association • Domdige & District Residents' Association • Harwood Grove Residents' Association • Hockley Heath Residents' Association • Marston Green Residents' Association • Olton Residents' Association • Shirley Residents' Association • Solihull Residents' Association • Tidbury Green Residents' Association • Triangle Residents' Association • Wells Green & Lyndon Residents' Association • White House Residents' Association • Solihull Residents' Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balsall Parish Council • Barston Parish Council • Berkswell Parish Council • Bickenhill Parish Council • Castle Bromwich Parish Council • Chelmsley Wood Town Council • Fordbridge Parish Council • Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council • Hockley Heath Parish Council • Kingshurst Parish Council • Meriden Parish Council • Smiths Wood Parish Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berkswell Society • Knowle Society • Hampton-in Arden Society • Council for the Protection of Rural England • Shirley Chamber of Trade • Solihull Chamber of Trade • Solihull Access Group • Solihull Ratepayers' Association • The Victorian Society • Cross & Craig Associates • Charles Church Development • Dilworth Design • David Vincent • Green Design Group • GVA Grimley • JAF Design • Kenton Manor • Martyn Bramich Associates • Michael Edwards Associates • Mason Richards Partnership • MVM Planning Ltd • Planaconstruct Ltd • Roy AGeden • Rajkowski Architects • Taylor-Made Conservatories • Tyler Parkes Partnership • Wood Frampton • The Window Centre (Solihull)