

Altering and Extending Your Home

Adopted September 2002



The Planning Service

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Introduction

1.0

1.1 The Planning System

The Planning System plays an important part in shaping the character of the Borough and your local area. New buildings and landscape can have a serious impact on the environment and your quality of life. Brent Council's Planning Service is responsible for assessing planning applications to ensure that extensions to your home are well designed and do not have an adverse impact on your neighbours.

If you are in any doubt whether you require planning permission please check with the Planning Service. If you live in a property that has more than one family unit (a flat) you will normally require planning permission.

1.2 Purpose of the Guidance

The guidance in this leaflet gives a detailed explanation of, and supplements the policies outlined in the London Borough of Brent **Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 and the revised draft 2000 - 2001**. The Plan is a legal document containing all the planning policies and standards that are used to help the Council make decisions on all planning applications. The sections of the Unitary Development Plan which relate to alterations and extensions can be found in section 5.3 of this document.

This guidance also provides the basis for assessing any planning applications for extensions or alterations to your home. It will help you to ensure that your proposed extensions or alterations are well designed and will complement your home and your neighbourhood. It will also ensure that any extension or alteration does not have an unacceptable impact on your neighbour. **The Planning Service is happy to provide guidance and pre-application advice on any application. Consequently, if your proposal does not follow this guidance your application may ultimately be refused unless there are special**

planning reasons to justify a departure.

This guidance does not necessarily apply if your house is within a Conservation Area or is a Listed Building. You should check with the Planning Service to see if any other guidance applies.

1.3 Other Permissions you may require

Getting planning permission does not mean that it is either legal or safe for you to carry out the approved demolition or building works. Planning permission does not relieve you of your responsibility to obtain all other necessary consents. You may also require Listed Building or Conservation Area Consent and/or Building Regulations approval. If you are in any doubt, call the Planning Service or Building Control. A list of useful telephone numbers has been included at the end of this guidance.

1.4 What to include in your Application

You will need to provide clear, accurate drawings (4 copies) of your extension or alteration with any application. You will need drawings of how your home looks before building works start and drawings of how your home will look when the building work is completed, including floor plans, elevations and sections at a scale of 1:50. You will also need to provide:

- 4 copies of the relevant application forms
- 4 copies of the certificate of ownership
- 4 copies of an Ordnance survey Plan (Min 1:1250 Scale)
- The correct fee.

This is the minimum amount of information required to allow the Planning Service to make a decision about your application. To help you provide this information you may need to contact a suitably qualified person such as an architect (see section 2.5& SPG1).

2.0

The Council is committed to making the Borough a part of London that can be recognised by the high standard of its residential buildings and is keen to help you to build well-designed extensions and alterations. Therefore, if you propose to alter or build an extension to your home you should consider the following points when you are designing your proposals:

2.1 Your Street

You should ensure that your extension takes into consideration:

- + The established line of houses in your street
- + Any change in level between buildings
- + Street and building features
- + The shape, size and height of other neighbouring buildings

2.2 Your Neighbours

You should ensure that your extension does not have an unreasonable impact on:

- + The light into your neighbour's home
- + Your neighbour's privacy - Can you easily see into their home or garden?

2.3 Your Garden Plot

You should ensure that your extension:

- + Is completely within your garden.
- + Takes into consideration any existing features in your front and rear garden plot (lawns, walls, trees and hedges)

Design: What you should consider ?

2.4 Your House

You should ensure that your extension:

- + Is positioned and attached to your home in a manner that suits your street, neighbour and garden
- + Is of a size, shape and height which will not unbalance the appearance and character of your existing house (IS THE EXTENSION TOO BIG?)
- + Complements your existing house - It should take into consideration the design of the existing windows doors and other features
- + Will not require the removal or building over of existing character features (such as decorative window heads, sills, jambs, wall quoins, plinths, corbels, brick diaper work, decorative eaves, parapets and copings)(see glossary for a definition of these technical terms)

2.5 Getting help with the Design

There are a number of Institutions that can provide you with a list of suitably qualified persons who can help you design your extension, including the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) or the British Institute of Architectural Technologists (BIAT), the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). Whilst you are not required to employ a professionally qualified agent it may help you achieve a design which both meets your own needs and the Council's policies.

3.0

Your extensions and alterations will have a wider impact than the immediate garden setting of your house. As a result, to balance the size, shape and height of your extension you should apply the basic design advice given in section 2 and the following detailed advice:

3.1 Single Storey Side Extensions

Many terraced houses already have two-storey rear sections which project from the back of the house. Single storey side or infill extensions to these properties are not allowed as they cause problems for neighbours who already suffer from restricted light into their homes.

Width

Single storey side extensions should be modest and of a size, shape and height that complements rather than dominates your house. As a guide, side extensions should be no wider than the internal measurement of the front room of the original house.

Set in from joint boundary

Single storey side extensions will normally be allowed to be built up to the common boundary. This will ensure that if your neighbour also extends there is not an awkward narrow gap between the two extensions which cannot be maintained. There are exceptions to these rules that include:

- + Where the light into any existing side window on an adjoining property, which provides the only means of light for any habitable room, is unduly affected

- + for Corner properties

If your corner property is on a road junction with an open character (Where the corner houses have a gap of more than 5 metres between their side wall and their garden boundary wall or fence). Any single-storey side extension must be set in by 2 metres from the boundary. If you have an angled boundary you must keep an average set in from that boundary to the side wall of your new extension.

Extending your House: Detailed Guidance

At other road junctions where the character is not as open a 1 metre set in from the boundary will be required. If your home is a **terraced** property on a corner the position of your extension, in relation to your boundary, will be considered on its merits.

Set back from the main front wall of the house

Any single storey side extension should be set back from the main front wall of the house to expose any existing quoin detail or by at least 250mm or one brick length. This prevents difficult construction junctions.

Height / Roof detail

Flat roofed single storey side extensions should be no more than 3.0 metres high at the site boundary. If a pitched roof is proposed it should have an average height of 3.0m and match the materials used on the main roof of the house. False pitch roofs (see glossary) are unacceptable.

Building design features

Extension features like doors and windows should have similar proportions and be constructed in the same materials as the other windows of the house. Particular consideration should be given to the positioning of windows and doors. The inclusion of windows in the side walls of extensions is not permitted because of the loss of privacy for neighbours. However, if the extension is set off the boundary by at least 1.0 metre then obscure glazed non opening windows may be permitted.

Other details such as unusual Brick bonds, Quoins, Corbelled eaves, stone or Tile creased Lintels etc. found on the original house should also be considered for inclusion in your design.

3.2 Two Storey Side Extensions

Width

Two-storey side extensions should be of a size, shape and height that complement rather than dominate your house. **As a guide side extensions should be no wider than the internal measurement of the front room of the original house.**

Set in and Set back from the front wall of house

A set in and/or set back is required from the main front wall to prevent the in filling of gaps between buildings. Set back and /or Set ins are required from the main front wall to prevent the in filling of gaps between buildings. If a set back is not provided a row of detached or semi-detached homes may appear to change character and become a row of terraced houses.

Any first floor side extension must be set back by **2.5 metres** from the main front wall of the house. At ground floor level an extension may be flush with the main wall of the house (Not the front bay or porch) if you have an existing side extension or garage which is already flush with the main wall of the house. Any guttering must be within your site boundary. A parapet at first floor eaves is not acceptable.

A reduced set back of **1.5 metres** may be permitted if a set in from the joint boundary of at least **1.0 metre** can be achieved. Two Storey side extensions to corner properties must have a 1.5 metre set back. At ground floor level an extension may be flush with the main wall of the house (Not the front bay or porch) if you have an existing side extension or garage which is already flush with the main wall of the house.

For Corner Properties

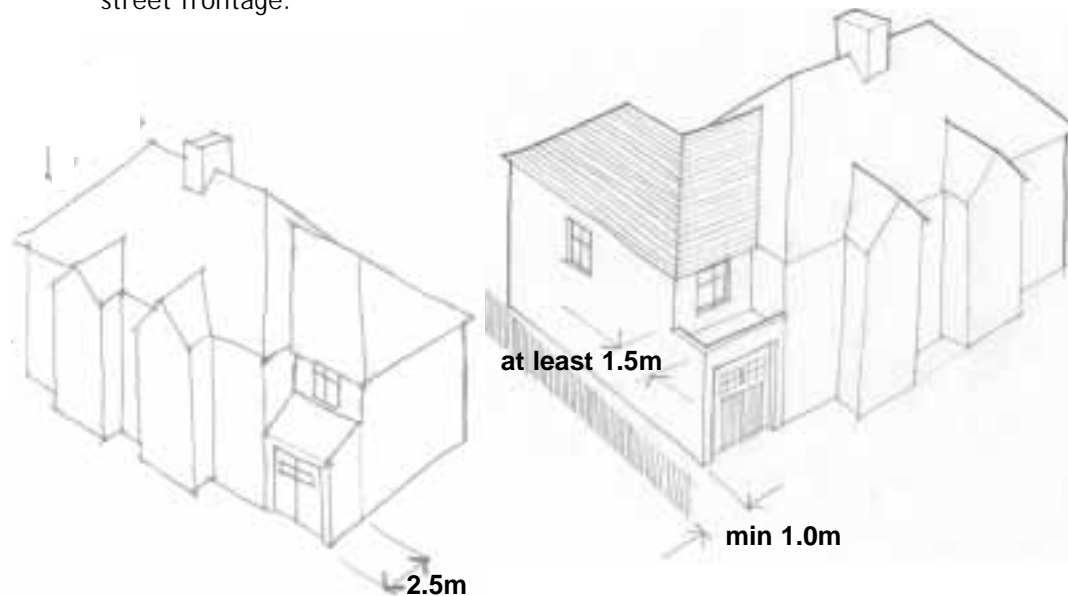
If your corner property is on a road junction with an open character (Where the corner houses have a gap of more than 5 metres between their side wall and their garden boundary wall or fence). Any two storey side extension must be set in by 2 metres from the boundary. If you have an angled boundary you must keep an average set in from that boundary to the side wall of your new extension. At other road junctions where the character is not as open a 1 metre set in from the boundary will be required.

Height/roof details

The roof should match the pitch angle and materials used on the main roof of the house. Flat roofed or "False pitch roofs" (see glossary) are unacceptable. The ridgeline of the new extension should be set below the ridgeline of the original house to reduce its visual impact. Every effort to retain features like chimney pots, stacks, party walls and ridge tiles should be made.

Building design features

Extension features like doors and windows should have similar proportions and be constructed in the same materials to the other windows of the house. Particular consideration should be given to the positioning of windows and doors. It is important that the arrangement of windows is complementary to the arrangement of the existing windows. The inclusion of windows in the side-walls of extensions will only be allowed if they are to stairwells and bathrooms/toilets and they are obscure glazed and non-opening. However, windows will be permitted on **corner properties** in order to ensure an interesting street frontage.



3.3 Single Storey Rear Extensions

Rear extensions should be designed to respect the character and size of your house. You will have to be particularly careful with the design of your extension if your home is located at the **end of a terrace** or is **corner property** as it is likely to be visible from the street. **Extensions to extensions** are usually not acceptable except where no material harm arises. However, any extension may be required to be set off the boundary.

Depth

Terraced Houses, including End of Terrace: the maximum depth permitted is 2.5 metres. However, if your neighbour's house is set at a lower level or has a different rear building line this depth may have to be reduced.

Semi-detached Houses: the maximum depth permitted is 3.0 metres. However, if your neighbour's house is set at a lower level or has a different rear building line this depth may have to be reduced.

Detached Houses: the maximum depth permitted is 3.5 metres. However, if your neighbour's house is set at a lower level or has a different rear building line this depth may have to be reduced.

The following rules apply to terraced, semi-detached and detached properties:

Width

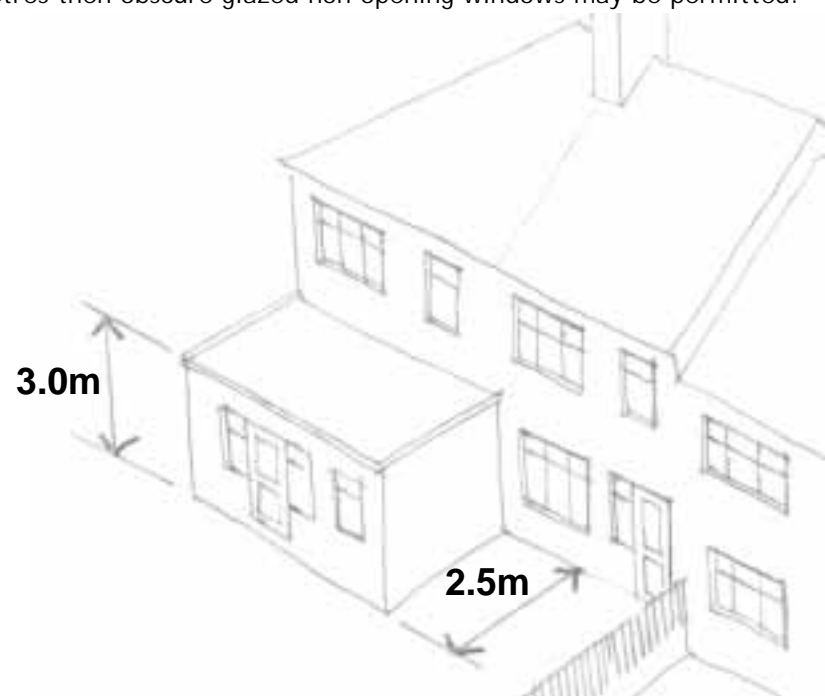
Single storey rear extensions can extend to the full width of your house as long as the roofing (including guttering) and foundations are kept within the boundary. However if the adjoining property is set at a lower level the extension may need to be set in from the boundary to reduce loss of light. If you are proposing a party wall you will need to ask the Planning service and /or the Building Consultancy for more advice.

Height

Height can have a significant impact on the light into your neighbour's home. Therefore, the maximum height permitted for a flat roof is **3.0** metres. If a pitched roof is proposed the maximum permitted height is an average of 3 metres at the mid point of the pitch on the site boundary. In some cases a pitched roof may have an unreasonable impact on your neighbour and will not be permitted.

Building Design Details

Extension features like doors and windows should have similar proportions and be constructed in materials that are the same as the original house. The inclusion of windows in the side-walls of extensions is not permitted because of the loss of privacy for neighbours. However, if the extension is set off the boundary by at least 1.0 metres then obscure glazed non opening windows may be permitted.





Conservatories

Conservatories are essentially single storey glazed extensions and they must comply with the guidance for single storey rear extensions set out above. In particular the permitted **depth** for a conservatory to a terraced house is 2.5m, to a semi detached house 3.0m, and for a detached house 3.5m. Again, if your neighbour's house is set at a lower level this depth may have to be reduced.

To prevent problems of light pollution, glazed roofs to conservatories should be obscured safety glass or polycarbonate sheeting.

The inclusion of windows in the side-walls of conservatories is not permitted if the conservatory extends to the boundary because of the loss of privacy for neighbours. However, if the conservatory is set off the boundary by at least 1.0 metre then obscure glazed non opening windows may be permitted.

3.4 Two-Storey Rear Extensions

Terraced Properties

Two-storey rear extensions to **terraced** properties are normally unacceptable due to the adverse impact (loss of light and outlook) on adjoining occupiers. However, in some circumstances two storey rear extensions to **end-of-terrace** properties may be acceptable if they are able to comply with this guidance, in particular the 1:2 rule, set out below.

Semi-detached and Detached Properties

Two-storey rear extensions should be designed to respect the character and size of your house. You will have to be particularly careful with the design of your extension if your home is a **corner property** as it is likely to be visible from the street.

Depth

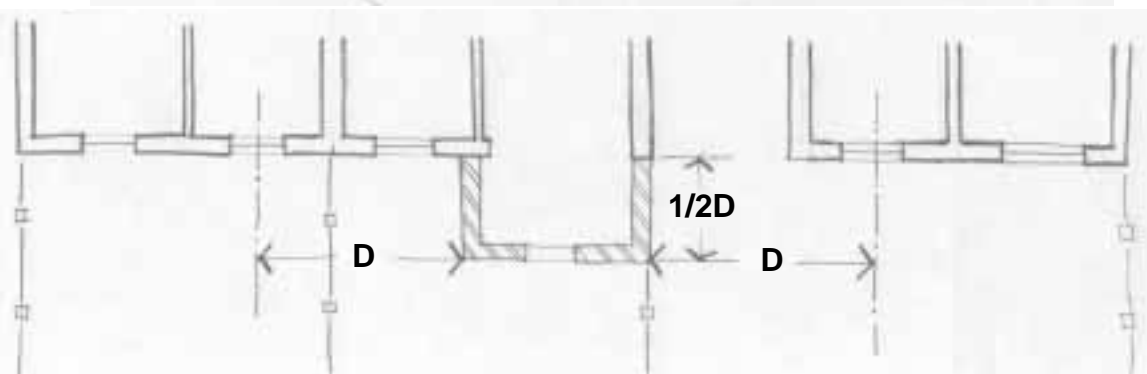
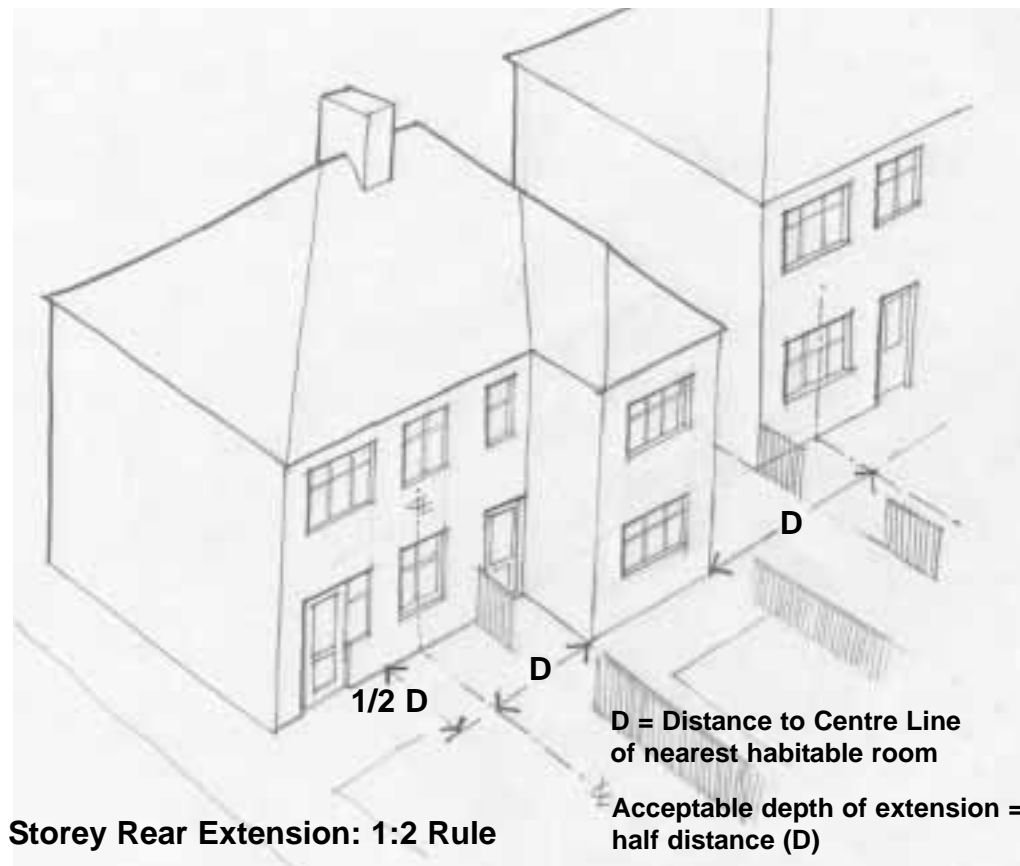
The depth of any two storey rear extension is restricted to half the distance between the side wall and the middle of **both** your neighbours nearest habitable room window (this includes kitchens but excludes bathrooms, storage cupboards etc). This rule ensures that the loss of amenity and light to the neighbouring properties is kept within reasonable limits. Where there is a flank wall window which provides sole light to a habitable room (including kitchens) any loss of light to this room will be taken into account.

Height/roof details

The ridgeline of two-storey extensions should normally be set below the ridgeline of the original house to keep the roof of the existing house dominant over the roof of the extension. The design, shape and materials of the roof must complement the character of the original roof. Every effort to retain roof features should be made.

Building Design Features

Extension features like doors and windows should have similar proportions and be constructed in the same materials as the other windows of the house and care in the positioning of windows and doors. The inclusion of windows in the side-walls of extensions is not permitted.



3.5 Roof Extensions & Alterations

The roof form of your house and other houses in your street is a significant part the area's character. Alterations to your roof should be designed to complement your home and the original street character.

Roof lights

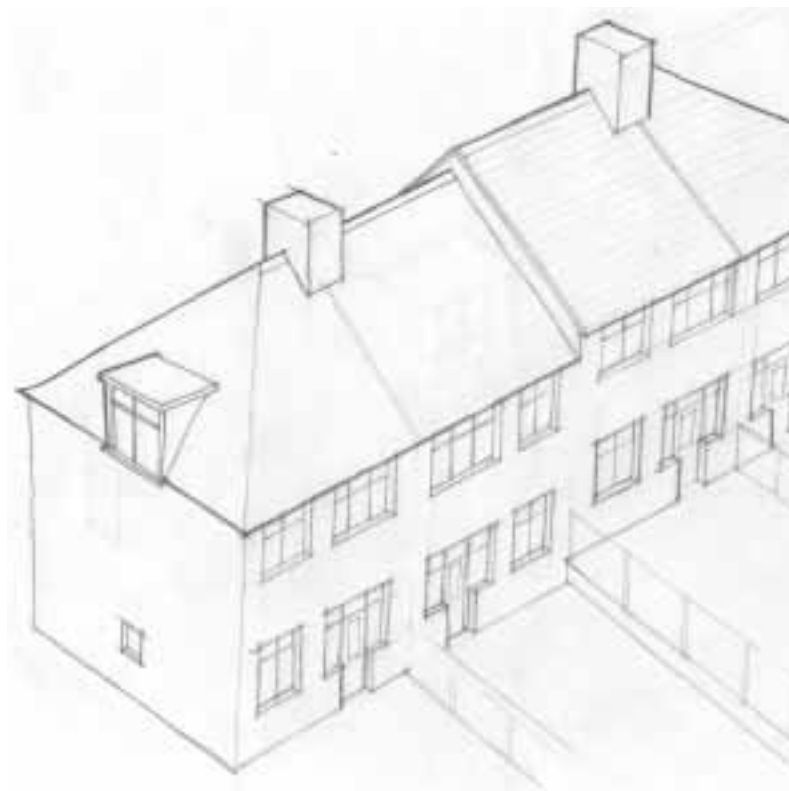
The number and size of roof lights must not dominate any roof plane. No more than two roof lights will be permitted on the road facing roof slope. Roof lights should be positioned to respect the arrangement of windows/doors below. Roof lights should be designed and installed to have the minimum projection from the roof plane.

Front Dormer Windows

Dormer windows will not normally be permitted on the front roof slope. Exception may be made on some areas of the Borough where front dormer windows are a common feature.

Side Dormers Windows

Side dormers will only be allowed if well designed and where the dormer does not compromise the street character or your neighbour's privacy. Any application for a side dormer needed to provide access to the roof must confirm (with accurate detailed drawings including sections) that it will provide the minimum head clearance internally to allow access from a stair to the roof space. Please check with Building Control if you have any queries (see contact details section 5.1).



Rear Dormer Windows

Rear dormers should be of the same proportion as the original windows below. Rear dormers should be no wider than half the width of the **original** roof plane. They should be set down from the ridge by at least 0.3m and must be set up from the eaves line by at least 0.5 metre and the dormer should be positioned on the centre line of the roof plane.

Care should be taken with the design of any rear dormer. To ensure that you get the maximum light from your new dormer window the front face should be mainly glazed. The style of windows installed into dormers should be in keeping with the rest of the house.

Alterations to the roof line

Additional storeys to residential properties will generally not be permitted if they are out of character with the area. However, there may be some locations and types of property (for example purpose built blocks of flats) where a comprehensive extension at roof level may be acceptable. This type of development is not acceptable on terraced, semi detached or detached dwelling houses. You are advised to discuss any such application with a planning officer before submitting an application.

Hips and Gables

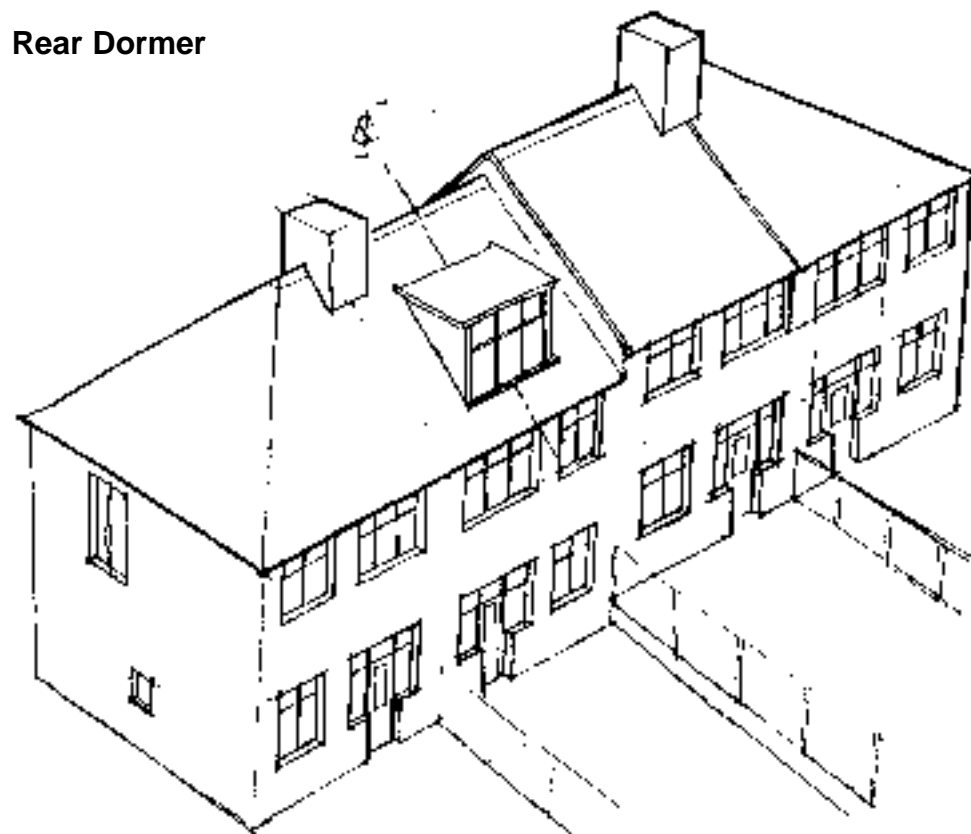
The conversion of a hipped roof into a full gable will not normally be permitted as this results in a significant change to the character and appearance of your house and the streetscene. However, this type of conversion may be permitted if the following conditions are met:

- + If your property is not situated on a corner.
- + if your property is not within a Conservation Area or an Area of Distinctive Residential Character.
- + If there is a gap between the side wall of your house and your boundary (or mid point of a shared drive) of at least **2.0** metres or a minimum of 4.0 metres between houses.
- + If your property does not have an existing two storey side extension

- + Where one of a pair of semis has this alteration it may be acceptable for the other to install a gable to achieve a balance in the design.

Permission will not be granted for a side extension to a house that has a conversion from a hipped roof to a full gable end.

Rear Dormer



3.6

Balconies and Roof Terraces

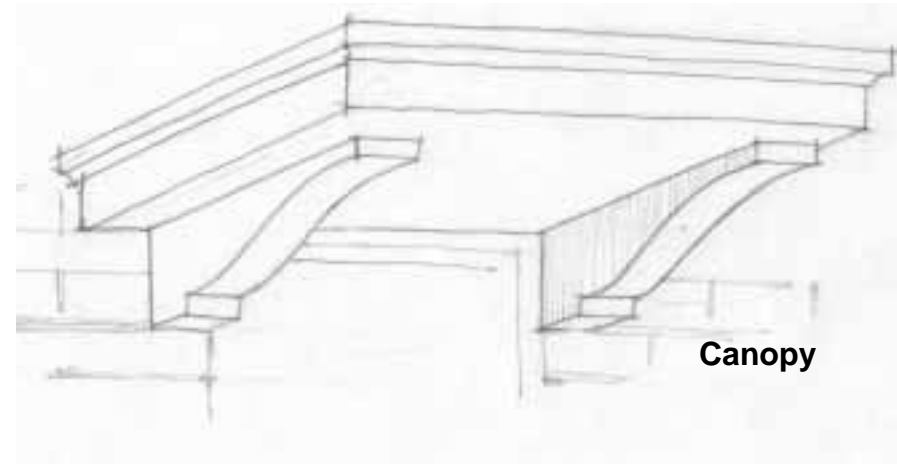
The provision of balconies and roof terraces is problematic in that they can compromise the outlook and privacy of neighbours. In particular the Council seeks to preserve your neighbours privacy in the area immediately to the rear of their house. Therefore balconies and roof terraces will not normally be permitted unless details that show how the privacy and outlook of your neighbours will be maintained are submitted as part of an application. Projecting balconies should be proportioned to complement the design of the house whilst providing adequate outdoor space.

3.7 **Front Extensions**

Front extensions will not be permitted unless these are the predominant character of the area. This includes porches that are linked to front bays or garages and front extensions to garages. This type of extension detracts from the character of your house and the area.

Porches and Canopies

If you propose to build a porch or canopy the design should take into account the most appropriate position, size, shape and height that will complement the design of your home. In most cases the porch should not project beyond or connect to a bay window or garage.



A correctly designed porch or canopy will enhance your house



Enclosed Porch

3.8 Garages

New Garages

Garage location and Design

Garages should be designed to compliment the character of your house and your street. Careful consideration should be given to the shape, pitch, materials and detailing of the roof. All rainwater goods should be within your property boundary.

Width and Depth

New garages should have a minimum internal **width of 2.4m and an internal depth of 4.8m** to allow sufficient space to allow you to get in and out of your car within the garage. In most circumstances within the Borough double garages attached to the main house will not normally be permitted as they normally have a bulky appearance that is out of scale and balance with the original house. The front main wall of new garages built to the side of the house should comply with the guidance for single storey side extensions (see section 3.1).

Garage Conversions

Unless you live in a Conservation Area that has an Article 4 Direction or your garage is protected by planning condition or is attached to a flat the conversion of an integral garage (garaged attached to or part of your house) into a habitable room is permitted development. If your Garage is conditioned or is attached to your flat converting your garage into a habitable room will only be acceptable if:

- + Your garage is less than **2.4 m wide and 4.8m deep**, measured internally
- + You are able to comply with the minimum off street car parking standards for your part of the Borough.
- + You are able to comply with the guidance for parking in the front gardens (section 4 of this Guide). Additional landscaping may be required.
- + You are able to comply with the guidance for side extensions.
- + Any changes to the front elevation, particularly the installation of new windows should respect the character of the original house.

If your property is within a conservation area and you wish to convert your garage you should always check the specific rules with a Planning Officer.

4.0

4.1 Boundary walls and Fences

Boundary walls contribute to the character and appearance of your house and your street. You should always keep a boundary wall, fence or hedge line. When building a new boundary wall or fence it is always best to use high quality long lasting materials; it will be cheaper in the long run. The design of your new boundary:

- + Should not have a driveway access any wider than 3.0m. In the case of a shared access the opening should be no more than 3.5m
- + Should be arranged and constructed to complement the character of the rest of your street
- + Should provide suitable visibility splays which comply with the Council's traffic and visibility standards (see also SPG3 and 4).

4.2 Parking In Front Gardens

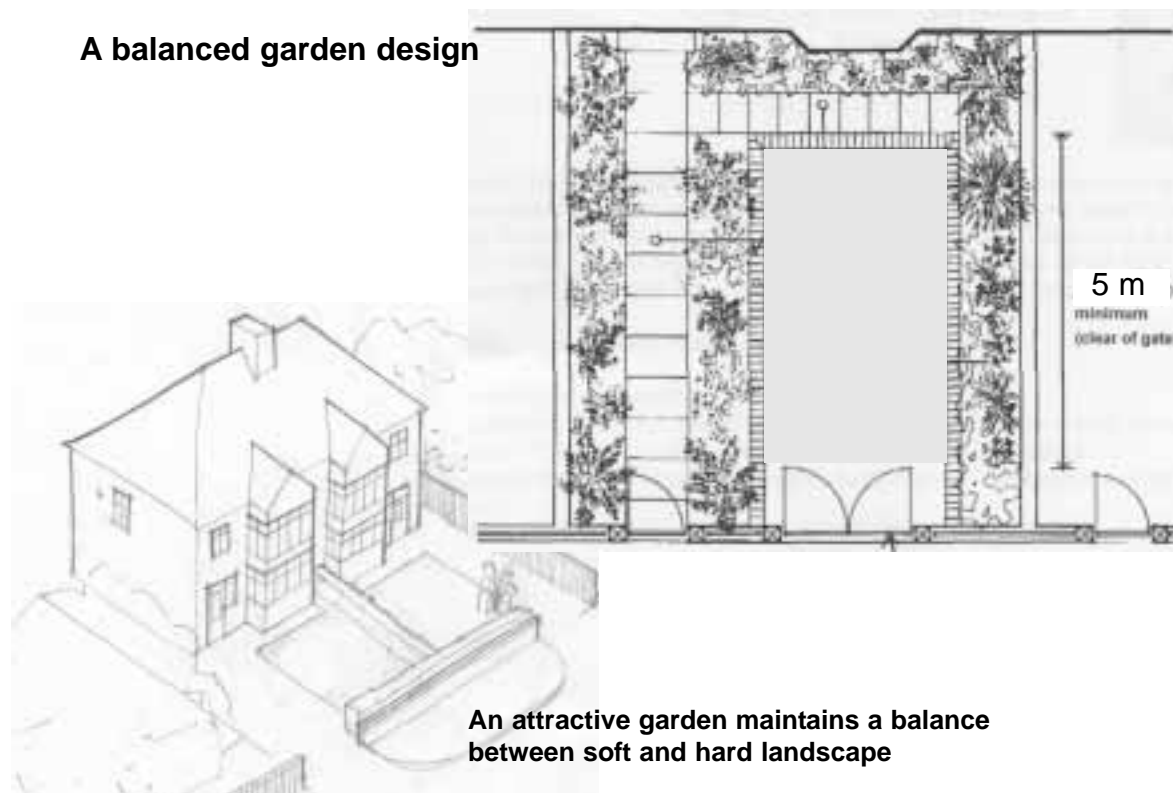
Creating a parking space in your front garden is acceptable if the following requirements can be met: (see also SPG 3 & 4).

- + The distance from the back edge of the public footpath to the front wall of your house is at least 5.0m so that your car does not overhang the pavement.
- + The design of your front garden maintains a 50% / 50% balance between soft and hard landscaping.
- + The position of the drive or parking space will not have a significant negative impact on the street, your neighbour, your garden and your house.

Your Garden: Detailed Guidance

- + The Hardstanding surface is constructed in high quality materials.
- + Parking spaces do not block the main entrance door
- + A front wall is provided to prevent vehicles crossing the pavement access to any other part of your front garden other than from the driveway.

A balanced garden design



An attractive garden maintains a balance between soft and hard landscape

5.0

5.1 Contact details

The Planning Service
London Borough of Brent
349 High Road,
Wembley,
Middlesex HA9 6BZ
Telephone 0208 937 5018
Fax 0208 937 5207
E-mail tps@brent.gov.uk

Building Control Consultancy Services
London Borough of Brent
349 High Road,
Wembley,
Middlesex HA9 6BZ
Telephone 0208 937 5499
Fax 0208 937 5475
E-mail bccs@brent.gov.uk

5.2 List of Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 1 Making a Planning Application
- SPG 2 Commenting on a Planning Application
- SPG 3 Forming an access onto a road
- SPG 4 Parking in front gardens
- SPG 6 Satellite dishes
- SPG 7 Shopfronts and shop signs
- SPG 8 Advertisements (other than shops)
- SPG 9 Special needs housing
- SPG 10 Community safety
- SPG 11 Non-residential development adjoining residential gardens
- SPG 12 Access for people with disabilities: designing for accessibility
- SPG 13 Layout standards for access roads
- SPG 14 Childcare facilities
- SPG 15 Medical practice accommodation
- SPG 16 Special standards for Hassop Road
- SPG 17 Design Guide for new development
- SPG 18 Employment Development
- SPG 19 Sustainable design, construction and pollution control (Draft)

5.3 Glossary

Brick Bond

Arrangement of bricks in a wall, combining bricks laid lengthways (stretchers) and bricks laid widthways (headers).

Casements

The hinged opening sections of window frames.

Console Bracket

A decorative bracket, which supports a bay window, or part of a roof.

Corbel

Where one brick is set projecting out from the brick beneath

False Pitched roofs

Are short single pitched roofs used to hide a flat roof behind

Glazing Bars

The bars of wood or metal which separate individual panes in a window.

Half timber

Often called 'timber framing', this means timbers applied vertically or horizontally to the walls of houses as a decorative feature.

Hopper Head

A cast iron box for collecting rainwater which feeds into a drainpipe.

Imperial bricks

The bricks that were used to build older houses, which are larger than today's 'metric' bricks.

Jambs

The side sections of a door or window frame.

Leaded light

A window made of small pieces of glass joined by strips of lead.

Pantile

A roof tile moulded in an 'S' curve that interlocks.

Quoins

Decorative corner features usually in stone that bond with the brickwork

Roughcast

Cement Wall finish with small stones added to the mixture **Roughcast elements**

Small areas of roughcast used decoratively.

Sill

The bottom section of a window frame that projects from the wall to allow rain to run away.

Spalled bricks

Bricks that have lost their front faces or outer skins through frost damage.

String course

A projecting band of brickwork or stone, usually between the ground and first floors.

Terracotta details

Specially shaped bricks used as decorative features.

Appendices

5.4 Relevant Sections of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

Adopted UDP 1996

- E1** Design Considerations
- E2** Local Character
- E4** Landscaping Requirements
- H22** Extensions and Other Building Alterations

Revised Replacement Draft UDP 2000 - 2001

- BE2** Townscape Local Context and Character
- H24** Domestic Extensions