

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Residential Extensions

Adopted 25th September 2003



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 These guidelines are for people who want to extend and alter their home. It supports the guidance set out in the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003, and contains general advice and design principles for residential extensions.
- 1.2 The principles in this guidance are relevant whether you need planning permission for your extension or not. However, this advice does not cover all aspects of residential extensions and should not restrict imaginative designs where these are in line with our overall policy on house extensions. The information will show you the best way to provide extra accommodation without harming the appearance of your home and the surrounding area.
- 1.3 This guidance replaces the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance approved in October 1994.

Planning Policy

- 1.4 The Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 includes many policies designed to protect and improve both the natural and built environment. The Local Plan is available to view at the Planning Help Desk, our website, local Libraries and is available for you to buy. The following policies are particularly relevant to residential extensions:

POLICY H8: EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS IN THE URBAN AREAS

PLANNING PERMISSION TO EXTEND DWELLINGS IN THE URBAN AREAS WILL BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT:

1. HAS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE SCALE AND CHARACTER OF THE DWELLING;
2. HAS NO UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES ENJOYED BY THE OCCUPANTS OF ADJACENT BUILDINGS IN TERMS OF PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO SUNLIGHT AND DAYLIGHT;
3. HAS NO UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE EXISTING CONTEXT AND CHARACTER OF THE ADJACENT BUILDINGS AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS.

POLICY H9: EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

OUTSIDE THE URBAN AREAS OF GUILDFORD AND ASH AND TONGHAM, EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT:

1. WILL NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF A SMALL DWELLING;
2. WILL HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE SCALE AND CHARACTER OF THE DWELLING;
3. WILL HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES ENJOYED BY THE OCCUPANTS OF ADJACENT BUILDINGS IN TERMS OF PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO SUNLIGHT AND DAYLIGHT;
4. WILL HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE EXISTING CONTEXT AND CHARACTER OF THE ADJACENT BUILDINGS AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS.

- 1.5 The 'General Policies' section of the Local Plan also outlines general standards for development and the Council's Design Code. The 'Historic Environments' chapter is relevant if your property is in a Conservation Area, is listed, or is locally listed.
- 1.6 If your property is in the Green Belt, extensions are more restricted and will not be allowed if they are disproportionate to the size of the original dwelling. We also have a 'small dwellings' policy which aims to maintain a mix and balance of dwelling types and sizes to cater for a range of housing needs. *Policy H9: Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside* in the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 sets out our policy for both these issues.

Planning Permission

- 1.7 You will need planning permission for most alterations and extensions to existing properties. Some smaller residential extensions and outbuildings do not need planning permission.
- 1.8 The Government's booklet 'Planning - A Guide for Householders' is available free of charge from the Planning Help Desk and includes information on whether you will need planning permission. If you are not sure whether you will need planning permission, we will be happy to talk to you before you make an application. We will give you advice before you apply to make you aware of relevant planning policies, and we can also help you put together your application. This generally takes the form of a meeting, which may help our development control team deal with your application more efficiently. Once you have arranged a meeting, you will need to send the plans of your proposals to the officer at least seven days beforehand. They need time to look at your plans in detail and to talk to colleagues, if necessary. We recommend that you write to us with your question or contact us on 01483 444609 or 01483 444699.
- 1.9 Although the advice that our officers will give you will be objective and balanced, it is not the officer who will decide whether to approve or refuse your application. Case officers can only make recommendations to the Head of Development and the Planning Committee. It is the Committee or the Head of Development who will make the decision. This decision may or may not agree with the officer's recommendation. It is possible that information might become available that was not known when the officer was giving their advice.
- 1.10 Most building work will also need Building Regulation Consent, which relates to the building and safety aspects of any alteration. For more information, please contact the Building Control Team on 01483 444680.
- 1.11 Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas need particular attention to detail and any alterations and many repairs both external and internal may need Listed Building Consent and/or Conservation Area Consent. You should always ask a Design and Conservation Officer for specialist advice. Please note that the Council offers historic building grants for appropriate traditional repairs to Listed Buildings and historic buildings. For further advice you can contact the Conservation Team on 01483 444664.

2.0 General Principles

Character and Street Scene

- 2.1 It is important that your extension respects the scale and character of your property and street. It is important that design features are understood and valued for their contribution and that these include proportions, massing, and siting as well as decorative details. It is very important that you pay attention to details such as decorative brickwork and to the proportion of the windows that are characteristic of your home. Whether the design of the proposed extension is contemporary or matches the existing, it is more likely to be acceptable and successfully integrated if it is sympathetic to the existing style of the property.
- 2.2 All extensions should aim to:
- achieve a design of high quality;
 - complement the size, shape and character of your existing property;
 - use external materials to match or complement those of your existing property;
 - fit into the general street scene, respecting the character of nearby buildings and the spaces between them;
 - avoid projecting in front of the characteristic pattern of development if this is a consistent feature of the street;
 - have a roof form and pitch that respects the visual character of your existing property (original roof features such as chimneys, gables and dormers can make a valuable contribution to the skyline);
 - ensure that they are subordinate to the main dwelling;
 - not significantly reduce the levels of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring buildings and gardens;
 - not unduly affect the privacy of your neighbours, either within their homes or their gardens;
 - not visually dominate neighbouring homes.

Respecting your Neighbours' Amenity

- 2.3 It is important to make sure that your extension does not unacceptably affect the amenities of your neighbours. This includes privacy, sunlight and daylight, and outlook. We will take account of your neighbours' views when we assess your application for planning permission. So you should always discuss your proposal with them before you submit a planning application.
- 2.4 You will need your neighbours' permission if foundations or guttering encroach onto their land or if an extension overhangs or attaches to their property. For further information please see the Party Wall Act 1996. You will also need to tell us this when you submit your planning application by filling in the certificate attached to the back of the planning application form.

- 2.5 Although less relevant to householder extensions you may wish to take into consideration safety and security issues and sustainable development practices.

Privacy

- 2.6 Your extension should not result in any significant loss of privacy to your neighbours. Generally, try to avoid windows where they will overlook your neighbour's home, for example, placing a window in a sidewall which directly overlooks your neighbour's garden.
- 2.7 In some circumstances, obscure glazing can be a solution if the window is for a bathroom or landing. Try to restrict the size of dormer windows if they overlook your neighbour's garden and set them back from the eaves. High-level windows to other rooms may be acceptable in some situations. A lot will depend on the ground-floor levels of the properties concerned and any screening such as fencing or hedges.
- 2.8 We will only allow balconies if they are well screened and do not adversely effect neighbouring properties.

Daylight and Sunlight

- 2.9 Your extension must not seriously affect the amount of daylight and sunlight available to neighbouring properties. Normally, we would not expect any extension to encroach within 45 degrees of the centre of a neighbouring property's window on the same axis (figure 1). This general principle should be applied to all extensions, whether they are single or two storey, front, rear, or side extensions.

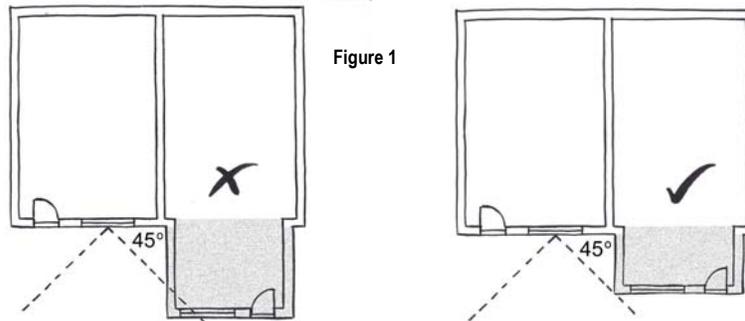


Figure 1

Figure 2 is an example where the 45-degree rule is applied. This two-storey extension is acceptable as it does not encroach within 45 degrees of the centre of a neighbouring property's window.

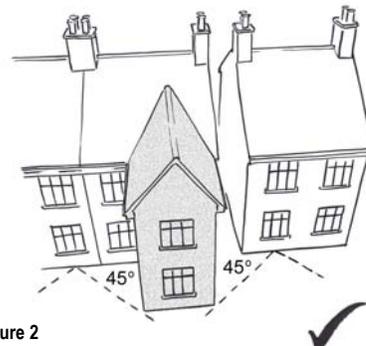


Figure 2

- 2.10 The Council will consider any impact on existing side windows, although loss of light to these windows will not normally justify a reason for refusal on its own.

Outlook

- 2.11 Although the effect of your extension on someone's view is not a planning matter, your extension should not dominate your neighbour's property.

3.0 Design Considerations

Single Storey Extensions

- 3.1 Single storey rear extensions are generally acceptable as long as they do not have a negative effect on the amenities and privacy of your neighbours.

- 3.2 Single-storey side extensions should normally be set back from the main front wall of your property (figure 3). In this way, the character of the original property is maintained.



- 3.3 In general, pitched roofs (figure 3) provide more harmonious designs than flat roofs, as well as being longer lasting with less chance of water penetration. A simple lean-to may provide a cheap and trouble-free solution. The shape and colour of new tiles and slates on pitched roofs should match those of your existing property.

- 3.4 The pitch of the roof should be the same as on your existing property (figure 3). However, in some cases, windows on the sidewall above ground floor level are awkwardly placed and careful detailing is needed.

Porches

- 3.5 Adding a porch can have a significant effect on the appearance of your property and street. It is important that a new porch reflects the design and character of your property, and it should be made to appear to be part of your original property and not an obvious addition (figure 4). Details such as materials, arrangement of windows and roof pitch should complement the original building's design, age and scale.

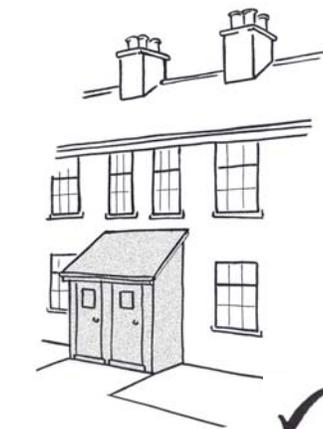


Figure 4

- 3.6 On semi-detached and terraced properties, it is particularly important to consider the symmetry and design of neighbouring porches (figure 4). A porch of poor design and quality that bears no relation to the symmetry of neighbouring properties or the terrace can damage the appearance of the whole street.

Two Storey Extensions

- 3.7 A two-storey extension must respect the amenities of the adjoining occupiers, as well as the character of the street scene. There may be 'terracing' effect when gaps between houses are filled by extensions. This can usually be avoided by setting your extension back from the main front wall and away from the boundary (figure 5). This may be particularly necessary on extensions to semi-detached properties, to respect the form of the original building and the spaces between them in the street scene.



- 3.8 Flat roofed extensions will rarely be acceptable as they can detract from the character of your house (figure 6). You should use a shape and pitch that matches the form and angle of the existing roof. For example, a house with a hipped roof will need a hipped roof on its extension (figure 5).
- 3.9 The colour of new tiles and slates should match those on your existing property (figure 5). This is particularly important where the new roof connects directly to the existing. Where this happens, it may be possible to re-use some tiles from where the connection is made to help the new roof merge with the existing.
- 3.10 The design and detail of the junction between the old roof and the new roof, particularly at eaves level, is very important both visually and to avoid future maintenance problems. The eaves of extensions at the side and rear of properties should line up with those of the existing house.

Roof Extensions

- 3.11 Loft conversions should not substantially increase the roof volume. Natural light should be provided by roof lights that are flush with the roof slope (figure 7). This is particularly important in the case of historic buildings or buildings in Conservation Areas.



Figure 7

3.12 Dormer windows should respect the appearance of your property and not adversely affect the street scene. The size and design of dormer windows should be sympathetic to your existing property. Pitched roofs on dormer windows will normally be considered more favourably than flat roofs where permission is needed (figures 8 and 9).

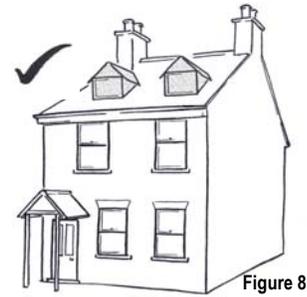


Figure 8

3.13 Dormer windows should not be higher than the existing ridgeline and should reflect the vertical lines, emphasis and positioning of existing doors and windows of your existing property (figures 8 and 9). The materials and window design should also match those of your original property. Please remember that the purpose of a dormer window is to provide light and not to gain increases in floor area.



Figure 9

Solar & Photovoltaic Panels

3.14 More domestic consumers are using solar thermal panels that produce hot water and photovoltaic (PV) panels that produce electricity. There are a number of different designs and types of solar panels and PV systems. Solar systems can be installed in the roofs and facades (face of building) of domestic buildings. PV tiles are now available that look like traditional tile and slate roofs and so blend well with traditional pitched roofs. These systems need to be positioned so they capture as much sunlight as possible. Shadows from buildings, trees or other structures can significantly reduce their performance.

3.15 Any solar thermal panels or PV systems that are installed on or in roofs should not unduly dominate the roof and should be sensitive to the character, colour and style of the existing roof.

3.16 Some systems may need planning permission. This is usually the case if PV or solar thermal panels are fitted on the roof so that they are well above the roof plane. Solar panels or PV cells installed on Listed Buildings will need Listed Building Consent and those within Conservation Areas will need Conservation Area consent. If you are not sure whether you need planning permission or any other consent, we recommend that you write to us or contact us on us on 01483 444609 or 01483 444699.

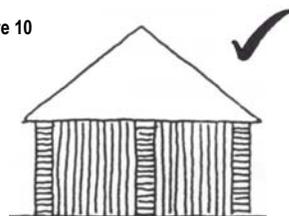
3.17 Funding may be available for householders who want to install solar thermal panels or PV systems. We may be able to give you a grant towards installation when you get planning permission, plus a 50% refund on planning fees for successful applications. National grants are also available for all types of solar systems. For more information on funding or the different types

of systems available, we recommend that you contact our Home Energy Officer on 01483 4444304.

Garages

- 3.18 Garages should be made of matching or similar materials to your home and should have a pitched roof. Doors should reflect the design of your home with a vertical emphasis to reflect the proportions of openings (figure 10).

Figure 10



- 3.19 You must consider the scale of any proposed garage in relation to: the plot size and the size of your existing home; and its effect on your existing property and neighbouring properties.

- 3.20 If usable space is to be provided in a garage roof space for storage, we may seek to control the insertion of windows in the roof, and/or restrict the use of this roof area, normally by imposing conditions. Top-heavy garage roofs that are out of scale with the garage will be resisted (figure 11).

Figure 11



- 3.21 Front gardens that are used to park vehicles can damage the character of residential streets. If you convert a garage into living accommodation, you must normally provide replacement parking within the curtilage without damaging the character of the street scene.

Conservatories

- 3.22 Conservatories are becoming more common in residential areas. It is important that the design of a conservatory respects the form, character, period and style of your existing home.
- 3.23 Conservatories made of timber and painted white are more appropriate on older properties of character. In Conservation Areas and on Historic Buildings high-quality natural materials should be used.

Annexes

- 3.24 As well as respecting the character of the property and street scene, annexes should be attached to the main home to avoid creating a separate independent dwelling.
- 3.25 The entrance and preferably one main facility, usually the kitchen, will normally be expected to be shared with the main dwelling to avoid creating a separate independent dwelling. The inclusion of a second staircase for an annexe will be resisted.

4.0 Detailed Design Considerations

Windows and Doors

- 4.1 The style and material of new windows and doors should generally match those on your existing home. New windows and doors should also match the size and position of those on your existing property. Windows must be positioned to match to the original symmetry and pattern of your existing home. Where existing windows are set back, new windows should also be set back to the same depth as the existing ones.

Materials

- 4.2 The materials you choose for your extension are very important. Materials used on the outside of any extension should be in keeping with the appearance of the original building. Your extension should be built in the same materials as those originally used. You should try to match as far as possible the original mortar colour, pointing and bonding of the bricks and tiles. In some circumstances, high-quality modern materials that complement those of your existing property may be appropriate.

Detailing

- 4.3 The architectural detailing on your existing property should be repeated, where appropriate, on any extension. This includes the continuation of plinths, stringcourses, decorative brickwork, bargeboards and fascias as they are important elements in the overall design.

Trees and Hedges

- 4.4 Your extension should respect the contribution of existing trees and hedges in the area and avoid causing the felling of any trees. You should contact our Trees and Woodland Officer if any trees may be affected by your extension. There are contact details in the 'Further Information' section at the end of this guidance.

5.0 Special Architectural and Historic Considerations

- 5.1 Guildford Borough contains many historic areas and buildings where the design of an extension will be particularly sensitive. Within these areas, extensions must be designed with particular care in order to complement the character of the existing buildings.
- 5.2 To promote this, we now expect all planning applications that affect Listed Buildings or those in a Conservation Area to be accompanied by a design statement that justifies the design approach of the proposal. The Design Statement should show how your proposal fits the context of the site and the local area and how it relates to its immediate surroundings.

6.0 Design Statements

- 6.1 A design statement will be expected to accompany all planning applications except in the following circumstances: extensions to unlisted buildings outside Conservation Areas e.g. general householder applications; changes of use (where this does not affect the physical appearance of the property). We can give you advice on design statements and what you might need for your proposal. You should do this before you make a planning application. For further information please see Guildford Borough Design Statement - Planning Application Guidance Notes.

7.0 Further Information

Planning Permission, Pre-Application Discussions & Design Statements

Contact the Development Control Team on:

- 01483 444623 (for applications in the west of the Borough); or
- 01483 444622 (for applications in the east of the Borough) or
- Email: planningenquiries@guildford.gov.uk

Building Control Regulations

Contact the Building Control Team on 01483 444680.

Trees and Woodland Officer

Contact the Trees and Woodland Officer on 01483 444768.

Conservation and Historic Buildings

Contact the Conservation Team on 01483 444664.

Solar Systems – funding and information

Contact the Home Energy Officer on 01483 444304.

8.0 Appendix

- Better Places to Live – DTLR 2000
- By Design DETR 2000
- Guildford Borough Council Design Statement Planning Application Guidance Notes
- Planning A Guide for Householders – DTLR 2002
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 “Planning and the Historic Environment”
- The Party Wall Act 1996
- The Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
- Surrey Design – A strategic guide for quality built environments 2002

9.0 Glossary

Listed Buildings – A building which is included on the List of Buildings of special architectural and historic interest and protected by statute.

Locally Listed Buildings – A building deemed by Guildford Borough Council to be of local special architectural or historic interest.

Roof light – A window inserted into the slope of the roof. In buildings of special historic architectural interest or within a Conservation Area, a Conservation Area roof light will be required.

Conservation Area roof light – A roof light which is flush to the pitch of the roof and has an integral vertical glazing bar.

Vertical emphasis of doors (Para 3.18) - where properties are characteristically narrow garage doors should reflect this in the form of vertical rather than horizontal detailing.

Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House
Millmead
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 4BB
www.guildfordborough.co.uk