

Appendix 5 - Alterations & Extensions

The following advice should to be used as a guide to the type of design approach likely to receive favourable consideration when submitting applications for planning permission. Although orientated towards older, traditional house types, the advice applies equally to all types of domestic property, irrespective of age or size.

Most houses need altering or enlarging from time to time to meet the evolving needs of successive owners. However, many existing buildings in the District have a scale and character worthy of retention.

The following pages are intended to acquaint applicants with design standards which the District Council will seek to attain in respect of alterations and additions to any type of dwelling.

The District Council recognises that most houses have the potential to provide the increase in space, standards and amenities required by modern living. What matters is the way in which this is done.

Apart from general planning and highway considerations, it is expected that in all cases the basic size of the existing property will be respected and that alterations and extensions will take into account the scale and character of the original house.

Buildings which are allowed to fill their private garden area can provide sub-standard living conditions, and such extensions are unlikely to be permitted. Similarly, extensions which lead to a loss of daylight to neighbouring dwellings should be avoided. This point will always be taken into consideration when dealing with such applications.



Applications for Planning Permission

It is helpful if, in all cases relating to the alteration of an existing property, the drawings submitted to the Planning Department are in accordance with the Guidance Notes. The drawings should incorporate the following information:

- Plans and elevations of the existing property. Where the proposal relates to a semi-detached or terraced dwelling the submitted plans should include elevations of the neighbouring properties;
- Plans and all elevations of the property as proposed, together with sections where appropriate;
- Full details of materials, both existing and proposed;
- Location plan to 1:2500 or 1:1250 scale, taken from Ordnance Survey Sheet;
- The appropriate statutory fee.

It is strongly advised that in all cases expert advice should be obtained before submitting an application.

More detailed written guidance is available from the Planning Department.

Gaps and spaces

Gaps between buildings and spaces around buildings are important: some should be retained, and others filled in.



The effect of a building group can be severely damaged by poor extensions, or by extensions which are too large or are not in harmony with the adjoining properties.



Garages

These can be obtrusive in a rural setting, and if added to small cottages can destroy their scale and alter their character.



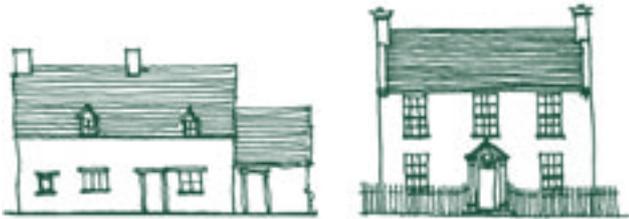
It is better to disguise garages if possible, by turning them 90° and siting them away from the property, or by building car ports instead to lighten the effect.



Character

The character of any house depends on a number of elements such as:

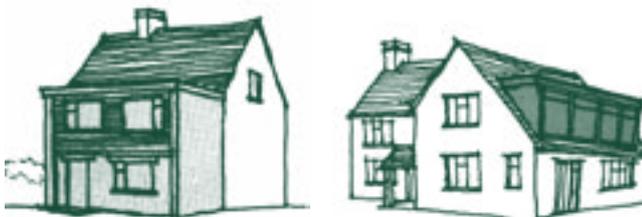
- Size and shape of the plan;
- Roof pitch;
- Window openings;
- Materials;
- Surroundings and background.



assymetrical and irregular;
small square windows;
rough rubble stone work.

symmetrical and
composed;
elegant vertical windows;
smooth faced stone work.

Older properties often
have interesting backs
which add to and
compliment the character.
Retain these if you can.



These are poor extensions, the 'completeness' of the property has been lost, the elements of the original building have not been recognised in the extensions.

Plan form & roof

Taking an existing plan form...

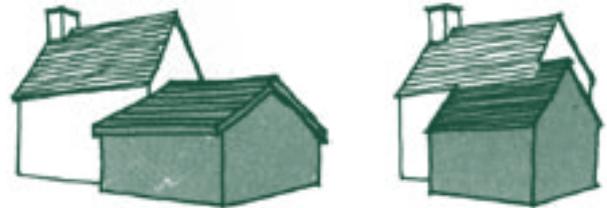


The SPAN is an important dimension.

If the house is extended
under a pitched roof of
similar span and pitch to
the original, it is usually a
visually successful addition.



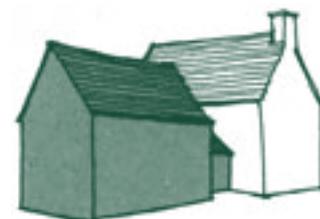
Not like these...



Consider where appropriate either carrying the roof
down to enclose the extension:



Or building a linked extension:



Windows

Older cottages usually have small windows with large amounts of wall round them. Too great an increase in the size of the openings can destroy the character...



Especially if the new windows don't match each other, the door openings are blocked up and the chimney stacks are removed.



In other words, if the windows are like this:



Either match them exactly when adding on or, to increase the light in the rooms, add new windows.

Of the same size or in scale,



But not wider and deeper and with heavy lintels.



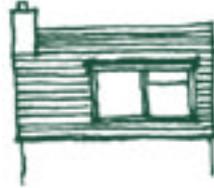
To really make them look right, set windows in stone walls a minimum of 100mm behind the outer face of the wall.

Dormers

Dormer windows should always be small and related to the scale of the building and pitch of the roof:



Rather than be of significantly different proportions or pitch:



Porches

Porches, too, should relate to the scale and proportion of the original building; roof coverings should match those of the main roof if possible.



existing

this

not this

Materials

The materials used to build an extension are important. Try to match the colour, tone, size and texture of the original material, whether it is stone, brick or rendering.



When matching roofing materials, always match the details of the original roof construction as well.

Existing building:

Simple verges – no barge boards;

Simple eaves – no overhang;

Extension to match.

Conversion of agricultural buildings

Where planning permission has been given for the conversion of an agricultural building, detailed proposals which seem to extensively alter the basic character, or which amount to a re-building, will not be acceptable (see also Appendix 8).



The character of a barn is derived from its original use as a working agricultural building.



Try to retain the original form and alter it as little as possible externally. . .



Rather than cluttering the building with additions and elaborate alterations.



Roof

Avoid raising the roof, altering the pitch or installing windows in the roof. Dormers will almost always be inappropriate.

Walls

Retain existing openings, particularly any arches or lintels. Avoid creating new windows or doors. Where openings need to be blocked up, use a contrasting material or inset from the wall by 25mm. In the case of large barn doors, dark glass or boarding may be appropriate. Minimise external pipework. Avoid modern materials (e.g. plastic front doors) or overly ornate details.

Large extensions will not normally be acceptable. Try to use the form of any other buildings in the group. This is especially important for the provision of garaging.

Permitted development

This is development strictly limited in extent, which does not require planning permission (although consent may be required under Building Regulations).

This is a complicated matter. In cases of doubt please consult the Planning Department for advice, including for confirmation of whether or not planning permission is required for the development proposed.

Two settlements in West Oxfordshire - Great Tew and Taynton - are subject to the extra protection afforded by an Article 4 Direction, which entails the open-ended removal of specified permitted development rights. Article 4 Directions also cover a range of lesser sites and parcels of land in the District.

Listed buildings

Alterations to buildings listed as of Architectural or Historic Interest will probably require Listed Building Consent even if they fall within the terms of 'Permitted Development' for normal planning control.

Design and Access Statements

Design and Access Statements must accompany all applications for Listed Building Consent and all planning applications in: Conservation Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, The Cotswolds AONB and The Blenheim World Heritage Site.

Statements should not just describe the completed scheme, but show the ways in which the design has evolved. The Statement must demonstrate how people of all ages and mobility will be able to use the buildings and places that are proposed. The Statement must show how the buildings and spaces will be arranged on the site, what they will look like, and how they will relate to their surroundings. It should be written in plain English avoiding jargon, and be succinct and well-illustrated.

In addition, applicants for Listed Building Consent must be able to justify their proposals. They will need to show why works which would affect the character of the listed building are desirable or necessary (PPG15).

Full information to allow the assessment of the likely impact on the listed building and its setting must be provided.

Sources of guidance

The general requirements for DASs are set out in paragraphs 56-110 of DCLG Circular 01/2006. This can be found at: http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/715/Circular0106DCLGGuidanceonChangestotheDevelopmentControlSystem_id1500715.pdf (The Circular recommends that applicants follow an assessment-involvement-evaluation-design process).

The CABI advice Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them can be found at: <http://www.cabi.org.uk/AssetLibrary/8073.pdf>