

HOUSE EXTENSIONS

The design of house extensions needs professional advice as early as possible. You are therefore advised to come into the Development Control office and discuss your proposals well before submitting an application.

After preliminary discussions your ideas will have to be drawn up in sufficient detail to apply for both planning permission which you may be required to obtain and building regulations approval, which you must have before starting work on site.

Extensions can make or mar existing houses. In certain cases no extension to the house would be acceptable - in particular a listed building of outstanding or unique character.

These guidelines apply to all members of the public in North Devon who are considering extending their house - whether it is new or old, listed or not.

Design Elements

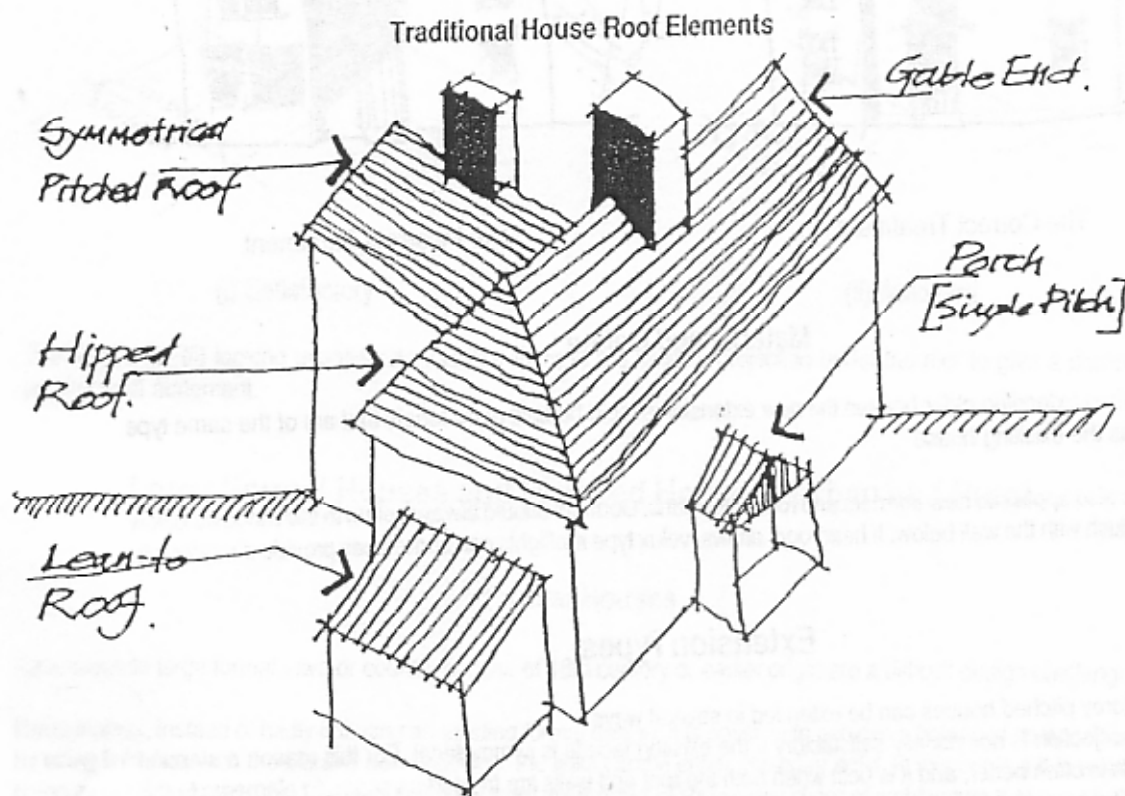
In considering extensions to individual detached or semi-detached houses, the most important design elements affecting extensions are as follows:

- (i) The roof form
- (ii) Windows and doors
- (iii) Materials (walls etc) and colour.

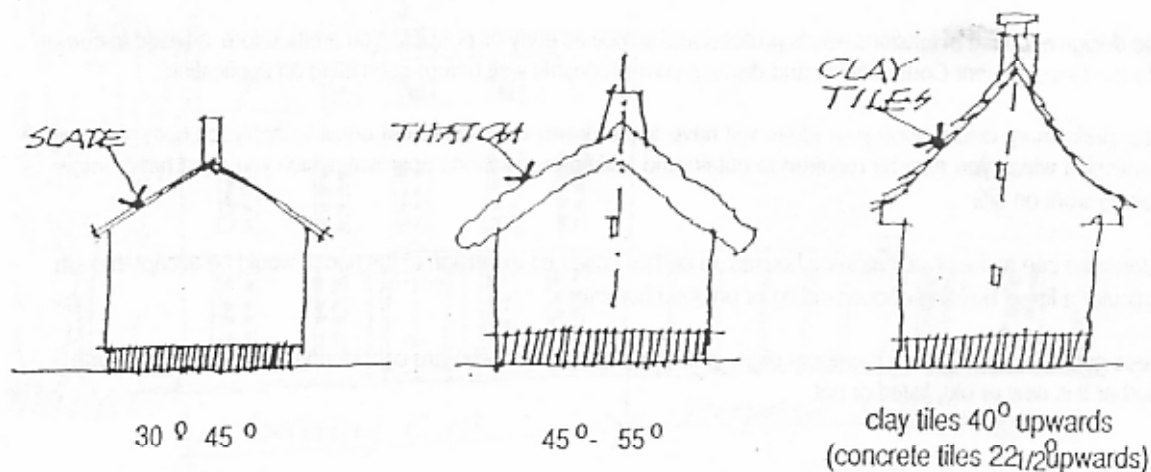
The Roof Form

Old houses generally consist of several separately identifiable volumes each with a pitched roof. Because the roof forms are similar they give sense of unity to the house as a whole.

The main elements are (a) symmetrically pitched roofs (b) mono-pitched roofs & (c) hipped and half-hipped roofs which consist of three inclined planes.



The actual pitch of the roof is determined by the roof covering.

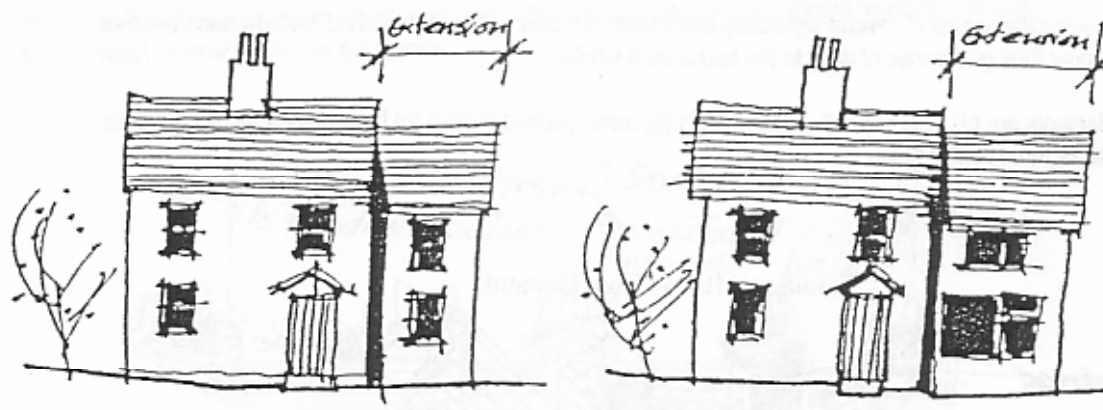


In North Devon thatched roofs are generally of a lower pitch than in Central and Eastern England.

Doors and Windows

Reference should be made to the N.D.D.C. design guide on "Replacement Windows in Historic Buildings" for detailed advice on window types.

However general rules do apply to all house extensions - in particular where the existing house has vertically proportioned windows, these should be reflected in the new extension.



The Correct Treatment

The Incorrect Treatment

Material and Colour

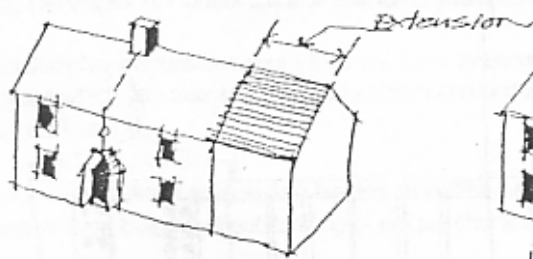
Generally, when extending older houses the new extension should be built of materials that are of the same type and quality as the existing house.

This principle also applies to new dormers and roof extensions. Dormers should always relate to the windows below and not rise flush with the wall below. If headroom allows, velux type rooflights can sometimes provide a neater job.

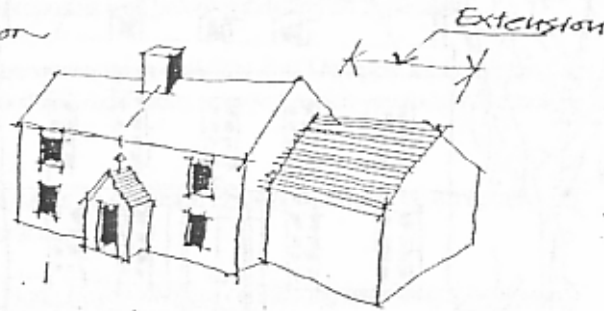
Extension Types

Simple two storey pitched houses can be extended in several ways.

A lengthwise projection is not visually satisfactory if the existing facade is symmetrical. For this reason a stepped back extension is often better, and it is best when both the roof and walls are treated as separate elements to the main body of the house.



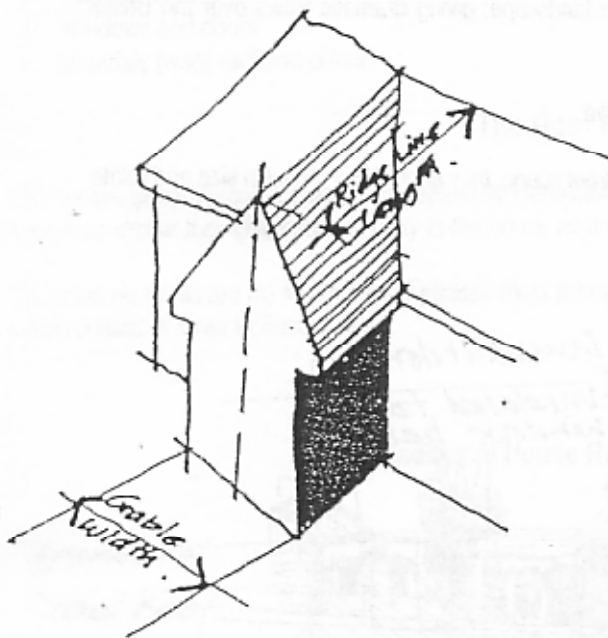
Lengthwise Projection



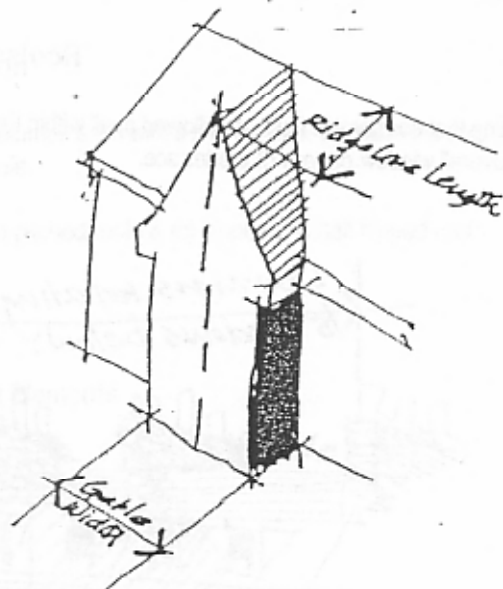
Stepped-back Projection

Gabled Extensions

Gabled extensions can provide useful additional accommodation to small house. Generally their width should not be greater than the width of the main building. Also gabled extensions look awkward if the ridge line length is shorter than the gable width.



(i) Satisfactory



(ii) Awkward

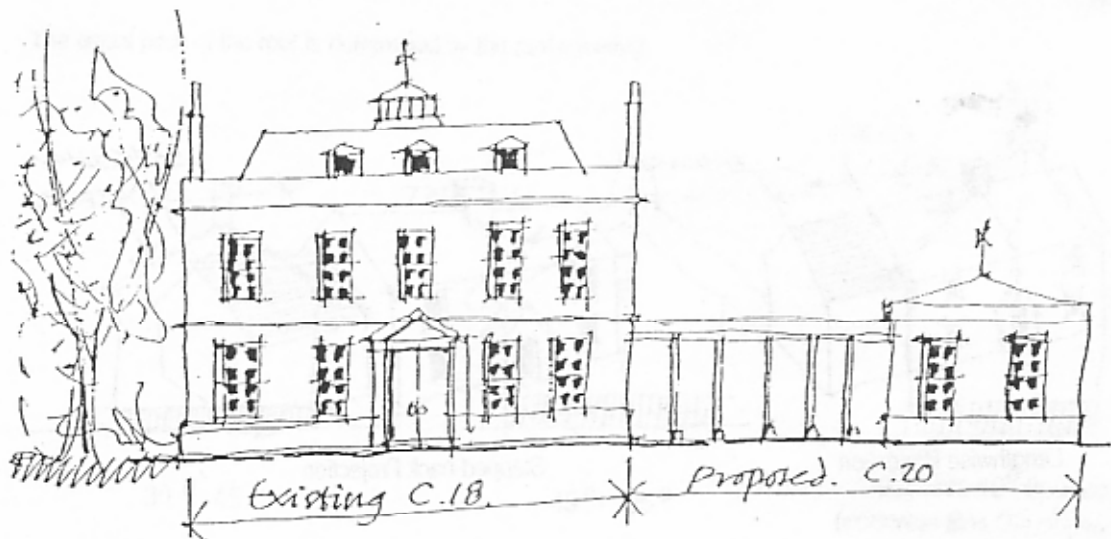
The reason for (ii) looking unsatisfactory is that there is too small a projection under the roof to give a positive architectural statement.

Large Formal Houses and Terraced Houses - Urban and Rural

Formal Houses

Extensions to large formal town or country houses of 18th century or earlier origin are a difficult design challenge.

Nevertheless, instead of badly imitating an existing formal design, it is possible to achieve a balanced composition by using links between the old and new buildings. the links can be either glazed or solid. In this context it is worth being aware that many major historical buildings were the product of successive styles of architecture that were built over a long period of time.

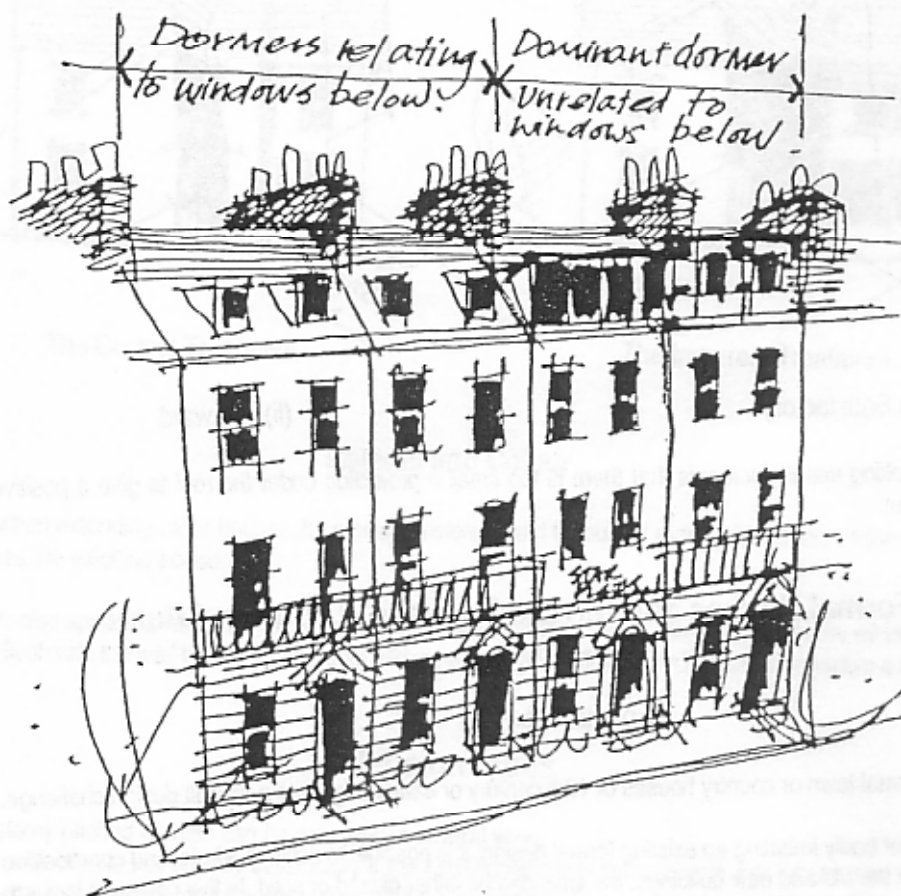


Terraced Housing

The main architectural elements of many British historic towns consist of terraced houses. In North Devon, even most small villages have a "row" of two storey cottages. In Barnstaple there are several impressive terraces of four or more storeys in height. The seaside resort of Ilfracombe, is largely an early 19th century town, dominated by several large four and five storey terraces, that straddle across its hillside landscape; giving dramatic views over the Bristol Channel.

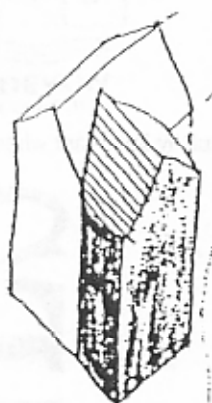
Roofscape

Assuming that dormer windows are allowed at all within the street scene; they should be modest in size and relate to the overall window pattern of the terrace.

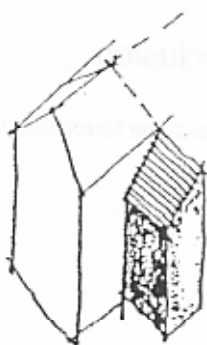


Rear Extensions

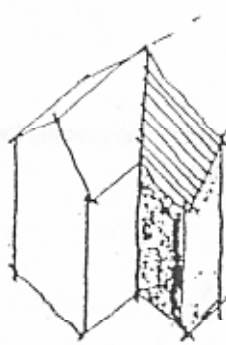
For obvious reasons in terrace housing the only place for extensions is at the rear. The use of gabled, catslide, or monopitched roofs can ensure that new work blends in with the existing building.



Gabled



Catslide



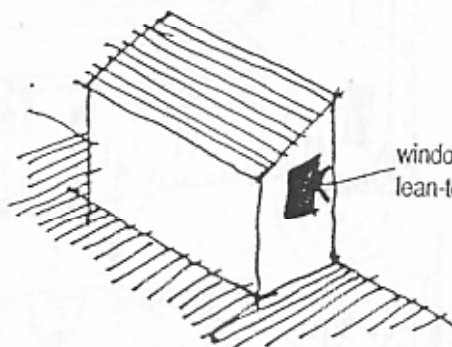
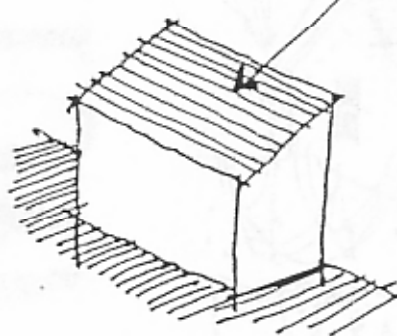
Monopitch

Details

Lean to extensions

Generally lean-to extensions are an unsatisfactory way of extending historic buildings. However, when out of view, they may be acceptable. In most cases windows are better located at the side rather than on the main face of the extension.

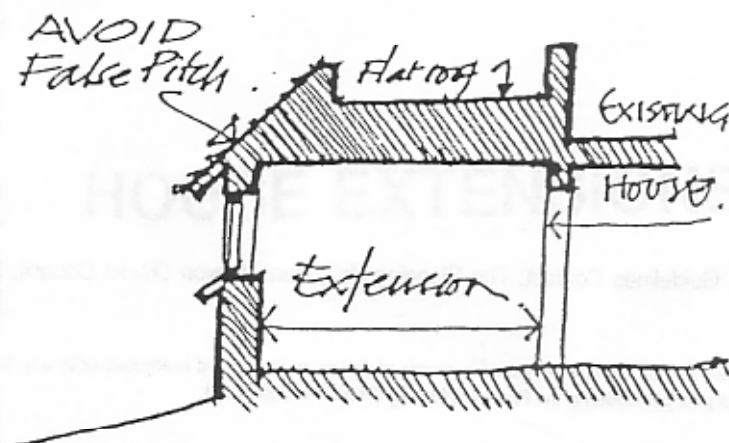
Roof should not be flat; but pitch should be slightly lower than main body of house



windows best at side of lean-to extension

Flat Roofs

Flat roofs are almost always an unacceptable way of extending historic houses. However they should not be disguised by a false pitch.



Garages

New garages should relate to any existing old outbuildings nearby. Where a double garage is needed, a pyramid style roof may be the most suitable form to adopt.

Conclusion

Roof Pitches: In historic houses the lower the elevation the lower the pitch. this is particularly important when extensions are proposed.

Acknowledgements

Hugh Lander "House and Cottage Conversion" 1979 Acanthus books.

Essex County Council - Conservation in Essex. No 4 "Historic Buildings."

City of Durham: House Extension Guide 1975.

For full list of Policy and Design Guidelines Contact: The Planning Unit, North Devon District Council, Civic Centre, Barnstaple. EX31 1EA.

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