

SPG1

Design Guidance for House Extensions

Introduction

- 1.1 Extending a house provides a cost-effective option for increasing living space and improving the appearance of a house. However, if everyone extended their properties as they wished problems could be caused to neighbouring properties and others living in the vicinity. Similarly, the whole appearance of an area might be spoiled.
- 1.2 One aim of this guidance is to ensure that new housing extensions respect the local character. This does not infer that all new extensions should copy the designs of the past, but rather an appreciation of traditional local architecture combined with thoughtful application of modern building techniques and suitable materials should influence basic design principles.

Legislation

- 1.3 The Government has established the legal framework concerning the types of work that require planning permission. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 sets out the types of development which can take place without the need to apply for planning permission, and hence planning permission is not always required in order to erect an extension. Table 1 at the back of this document offers assistance in deciding whether a proposal is exempt from the need for planning permission. GREATER DETAIL AND/OR CONFIRMATION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT PLANNING

PERMISSION IS REQUIRED CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE COUNCIL'S DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SECTION.

- 1.4 The definition of an extension covers all external additions to a dwelling and can include conservatories, garages and dormer roof extensions. Any other building, including sheds, greenhouses and aviaries erected within 5 metres of the dwelling and of a volume greater than 10 cubic metres, is also classed as an extension.
- 1.5 The following need planning permission without exception:
- all extensions to flats (including garages, garden sheds and similar structures); and
 - all material alterations (whether internal or external) to Listed Buildings (buildings of architectural and historic importance); and
 - all sub-division of dwellings to create another separate dwelling, for example "Granny Flats"; and
 - any structure intended for non-domestic use (i.e. related to a business or commercial activity being undertaken in addition to the main domestic use of the property).
- 1.6 Applicants for planning permission and persons carrying out works permitted under the circumstances outlined in paragraph 1.3 above should also check with the Council as to whether an application for approval is required under the Building Regulations which are the national regulations that control the minimum standards of construction for most types of building.

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The Importance of Good Design

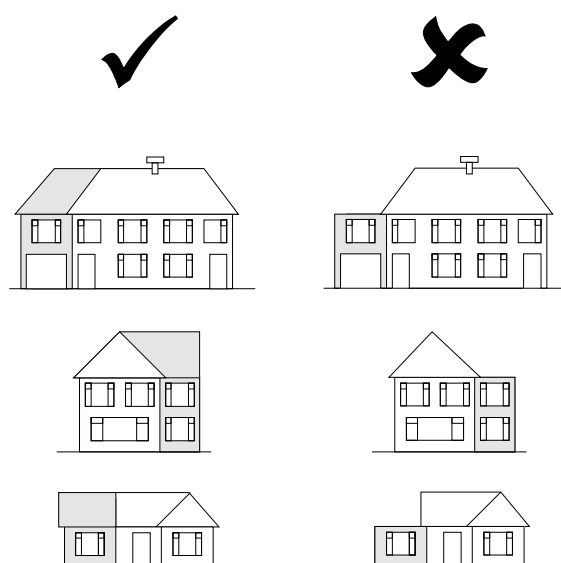
- 1.7 It is always worth making the effort to work out a good design which will fit in with the appearance of the original house. It is beneficial to seek professional advice on the layout and design of extensions, because, whilst this may result in a greater initial expense, in the longer term there may be benefits from reduced maintenance costs and increased property values. There may be more than one way of providing additional household space, and rough sketch plans can be helpful in comparing different schemes. Informal advice on design matters can be offered by the Council's Development Control Section at this stage, and may save unnecessary expenditure on preparing detailed plans which would not meet Council policies.
- 1.8 One of the basic facts that must be recognised is that every property, by its nature, has limits for extension. It is worth bearing in mind that some houses were never designed to be extended at all, or have already been extended to their limit. For example,

a loft conversion with dormers cannot be fitted into an existing shallow roof pitch, or there may be insufficient garden ground left to allow another room to be added onto the existing property at ground floor level. Attempts to mask an inappropriately large-scale extension, e.g. by applying cosmetic styling, are likely to fail.

Design Principles

General

- 1.9 Extensions to houses should be in keeping with the design of the original house in order to not appear as an "afterthought". Care must be taken particularly when extending older properties to ensure that their character is not spoiled through the addition of inappropriately designed extensions. Extensions should not dominate the original building in scale, materials or situation. Indeed, the most successful extensions in visual terms are ones where the extension appears as if it has always been part of the house.



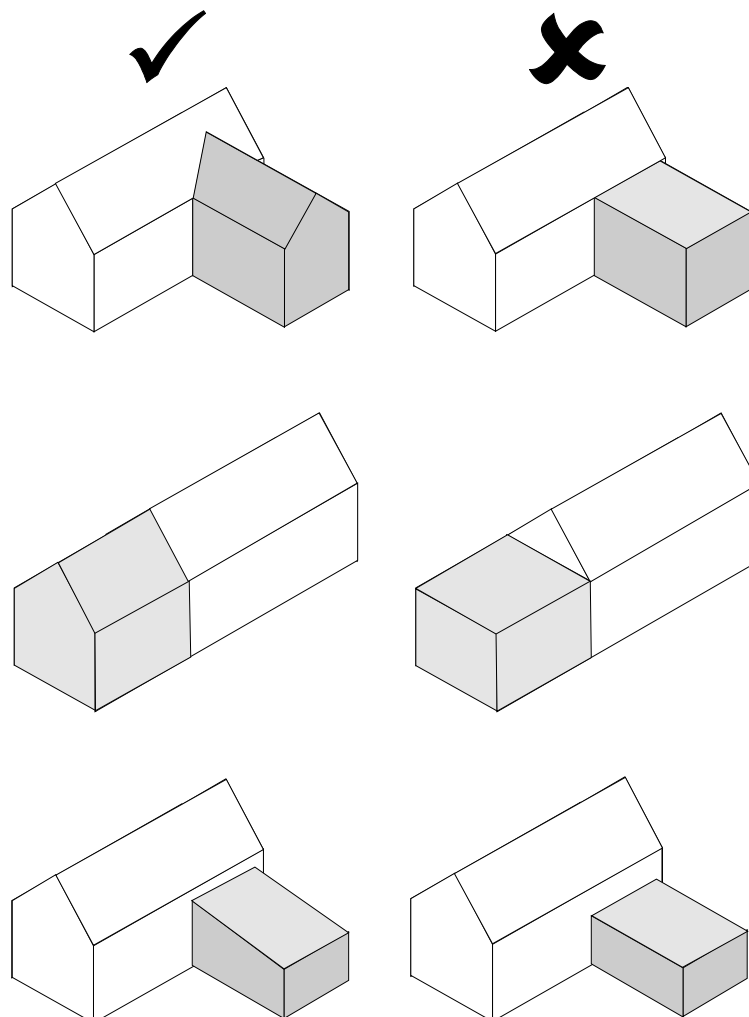
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- 1.10 In the case of older houses the use of traditional local building styles ensures that the new extension complements the existing dwelling. Strong vertical emphasis is one of the dominant design features of most traditional buildings in this area and should be used when extending traditional buildings. Mixing up different styles of window shape, size, means of opening, etc., on any building style can result in a very messy and haphazard appearance. Modern doors can also look out of place on older dwellings, and it is worthwhile choosing a style of door which suits the age and character of the house. Simple vertical boarded doors, or those with recessed

moulded panels will tend to appear more visually satisfying than a more fussily detailed type. Modern framing materials, such as uPVC, will appear particularly visually inappropriate on older dwellings, especially in the case of statutory Listed Buildings and/or those located within conservation areas.

Roofs

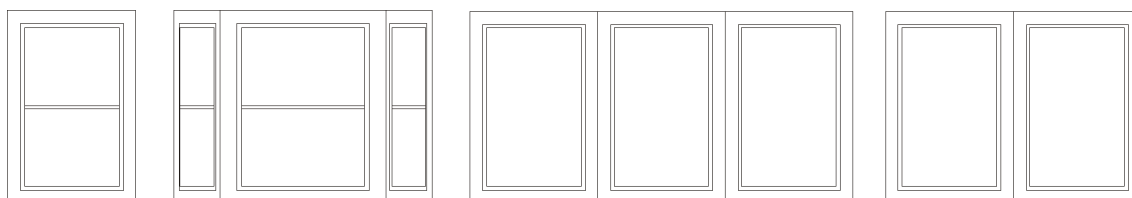
- 1.11 Extensions to dwellings are, generally, one or two storey in height with a pitched roof. Two storey flat roofs tend to be difficult to reconcile with traditional building design and should be avoided.



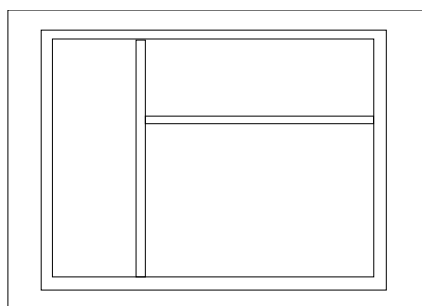
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Windows

- 1.12 There are many different window styles available and each can change the appearance of the building.



Traditional house styles tend to have a narrow window shape with a vertical emphasis



as opposed to the horizontal, which is common in modern houses.

Dormer Windows

- 1.13 Dormer windows should be smaller than windows on lower floors, should respect the proportions of existing openings on the house frontage, and should normally have gabled or hipped roofs. It is better to have two small dormers rather than one large one. Painted or stained boarding to the side cheeks and apex of dormers should be avoided; render or sheet lead is more appropriate in the local content.

particularly where the materials and detailing match that of the main dwelling. Fully enclosed porches need particular care so that they do not become obtrusive and out of scale with other elements of the facade.

- 1.15 Modern porches look better when they are designed to suit the existing house. In semi-detached or terraced housing it is particularly important that porch extensions should be designed in such a way as to complement neighbouring properties.

Porches

- 1.14 The appearance of a dwelling can be enhanced or adversely affected by the addition of a porch. A simple gabled or lean-to roof supported on shaped brackets may be more appropriate,

Materials

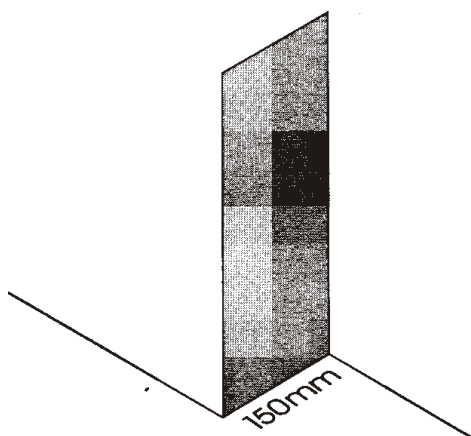
- 1.16 Matching the roof and wall materials as far as possible is an obvious way of improving the appearance of an extension. Using more than two different materials on the walls of the

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buildings can create a rather clumsy appearance and will not be encouraged.

Visual Separation

- 1.17 When old and new materials are joined together hairline cracks can result due to settlement and it is difficult to achieve a perfect match when the older materials have been exposed to the weather for many years. These differences can be minimised by creating a checkback between the walls - only 150mm (6 inches) is needed and can make quite a difference to the final appearance.



Planning Standards

- 1.18 When planning permission is required for an extension one of the Council's aims is to prevent the development from having an adverse effect on neighbouring properties. The likely effect of an extension on the occupants of surrounding properties should, therefore, be carefully considered.
- 1.19 On receipt of a planning application the Council will consult all adjoining occupiers for their comments in

relation to the proposed development. For this reason applicants are advised to discuss the proposed extension with their neighbours prior to submitting the planning application so as to avoid disputes and formal objections which tend to slow down the Council's determination of the application. Policy DS5 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan sets down the policy against which planning applications for domestic extensions will be considered.

Loss of Privacy

- 1.20 Rooms such as kitchens, lounges, playrooms and studies should not directly overlook private areas of a neighbouring garden or look directly into the windows of another house. Balconies and first floor patios, in particular, can cause overlooking problems and loss of privacy and are rarely looked on favourably by the Council.

Loss of Light and Overshadowing

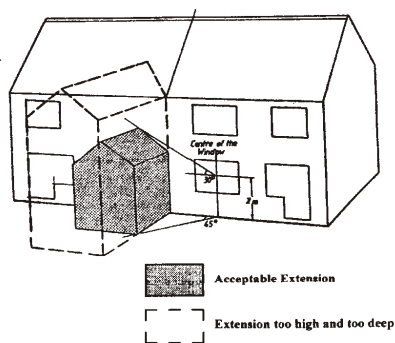
- 1.21 The loss of a view beyond one's property boundaries is not a material planning consideration when an application is being determined. However, if it is considered that a proposed extension would seriously reduce the amount of daylight/sunlight which neighbouring properties enjoy, it is likely that planning permission will not be granted. The following paragraphs provide detailed guidance on how the Council will undertake this assessment.

The Depth of an Extension

- 1.22 The sketch below shows the normal maximum depth of extension which

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the Council considers would be acceptable without the adjoining property suffering any adverse loss of daylight/sunlight. Taking a line drawn vertically through the central point of the nearest ground floor main window of the neighbouring property, where this line meets the ground a line projecting at 45° angle to the horizontal shows the maximum acceptable depth of extension which is permissible. Beyond this line an unacceptable degree of light loss may result. If the extension is to be built onto a south or south west facing elevation direct sunlight is received for the longest period of the day. As a result (at the discretion of the Council) a 45° angle of acceptance may be extended providing there is reasonable evidence to suggest an adjoining occupier will not suffer undue overshadowing or loss of daylight.



The Height of an Extension

- 1.23 When a two storey extension is proposed, greater potential for light loss exists. The sketch above shows the angle of acceptance for the maximum height of such an extension. A point is taken 2m from ground level at the centre of the nearest main ground floor window of the neighbouring property, and projected at an angle of 30° from the horizontal to show the greatest permissible height of an extension

allowed. An extension infringing this angle of acceptance would be likely to result in a refusal of planning permission or a request that the submitted plans be amended to reduce the height. In effect, two storey extensions abutting or close to a curtilage boundary with a neighbouring property are likely to be refused planning permission.

- 1.24 The principles outlined above will also be applied to detached structures proposed within residential curtilages. Large detached garages, for example, can also have significant overshadowing effects if sited too close to a curtilage boundary. A significant gap (i.e. beyond the extent of the 45° maximum accepted depth line) can often overcome these problems.

Parking Space

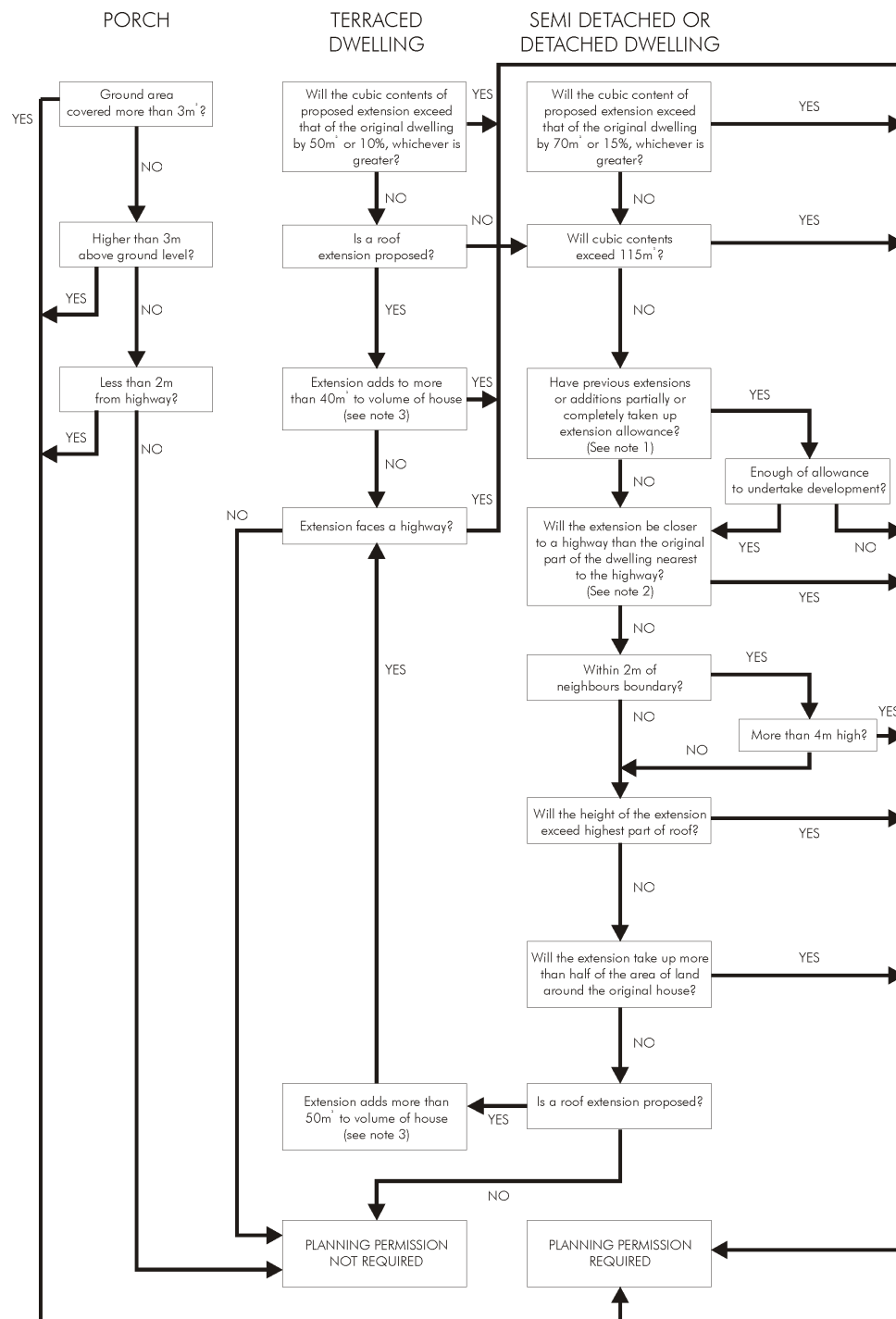
- 1.25 In the case of a house where garden area is limited the extension should not reduce available on-site parking space below that required to park two domestic vehicles. Any application where on-street parking will result from the extension will not be given favourable consideration.

Trees

- 1.26 An extension which would result in root or branch damage to trees on, or immediately outside, the application site should be avoided wherever possible. Any proposal which would result in the loss of a tree covered by a Tree Preservation Order will normally be refused unless there is overwhelming justification for its removal.

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Table 1 - Does an Extension require Planning Permission?



NOTES

- Although you may not have built an extension, a previous owner may have done so. All extensions after 1st July 1948 count against the allowance. Any building belonging to a house (such as a detached garage) which is built within 5m of the house should be included against the allowance.
- Highways include 10ft accessways, communal parking areas and some footpaths. If a distance of over 20m exists between the rear edge of the highway and the proposed extension, then planning permission is not required subject to the other factors discussed above.
- This allowance is not in addition to, but must be deducted from, the allowance set out above.

