

Extending Your Home

A Design Guide Series



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Amendments to the Householder Design Guides

The Newcastle City Council Householder Design Guides were originally approved by Development Control Committee on 21 December 2001.

In 2008 the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 was amended. This resulted in a significant change to the way permitted development for extensions and alterations to dwelling houses is determined. As a result, these design guides have been amended to remove information which is now out of date.

The guides represent informal guidance only and are currently under review.

Further Information

Further information can be found on the City Council website www.newcastle.gov.uk, including a link to the Planning Portal which can assist in determining whether proposed works require planning permission.

Alternatively please contact Development Management on (0191) 277 7289 or 277 7290 or email planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk .





EXTENDING YOUR HOME – A DESIGN GUIDE SERIES

1. INTRODUCTION

Issues to Consider

Deciding to extend your home is an important decision and one which will involve a large financial investment. Therefore, you need to consider carefully the type and size of extension which best meets your own requirements. For instance:-

- It may be better to move house rather than build a large costly extension in the wrong location.
- A poorly designed extension can spoil the appearance and character of a house, especially if it takes up too much of the existing garden, or adversely affects neighbouring houses or the street scene.

If you decide to extend your home you may need both planning permission and building regulation approval. Some development can be carried out as 'permitted development' without the need for a planning application. Any external alterations to flats including Tyneside flats will require planning permission. It is strongly recommended that you contact us to confirm in writing if you believe you do not need planning permission for your proposal.

Submitting a Planning Application

If an application is needed this requires a set of drawings and completed forms. These forms and accompanying guidance notes can be obtained from the Council website www.newcastle.gov.uk, by writing to Development Management, Strategic Housing, Planning & Transportation, Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8PH or by telephoning (0191) 277 7289 or 277 7290 or by emailing planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk. The drawings showing your proposals should be drawn by a suitably qualified person – preferably by a registered Architect, although this is not an essential requirement.

Most planning applications are approved and it is normal practice to try and negotiate to achieve a satisfactory design, providing that the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Neighbours are notified by letter of your application, so it is often a sensible idea to discuss your proposals with your neighbours before submitting them.



“A well designed extension”



“A poorly designed extension”

Planning Issues

Planning Officers will be looking at how your proposal affects your neighbour's privacy, outlook sunlight and daylight and its impact on the general streetscene.

A proposal which is poorly designed in relation to the original property or which uses materials or windows which are out of character can make it unpleasant to look at. Details such as string courses on the original building should be replicated across the extensions if appropriate. If ornamental lintels and cills are used on the main houses this should be repeated on the extension. If windows and doors are recessed on your property, this should be replicated on the extension.

If you would like some informal advice before sending in your planning application, either telephone Development Management on (0191) 277 7289 or 277 7290 and ask to speak to the Planning Officer for your area or call in person at the Customer Service Centre at the ground floor of the Civic Centre.

Building Regulation Approval

In most situations Building Regulation approval is also necessary. The regulations are designed to ensure the health and safety of people in or about buildings and include such matters as structural stability and fire safety. Minor building works are exempt from the requirements and can include for example the erection of a porch or conservatory with limited floor area. Applicants are advised to contact the Building Control Section for advice as to whether an application will be necessary by telephoning (0191) 211 6181 or again call in person at the Customer Service Centre.

The requirements are somewhat technical and early talks with the Building Control Section will help to ensure approval as quickly as possible.

Other Consents

Other consents may also be required from the Council. If your property is listed or within a conservation area you should contact the Planning Control Section before you carry out any work to your property.

Many trees in the City are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Area legislation or other planning controls. Trees contribute a great deal to the quality and character of streets. Every effort should be made to avoid damage to trees during building works, including damaging roots. Officers are available to advise about protecting trees close to building works. If the loss of a tree is unavoidable, a replacement should be planted in another location.

Further leaflets are available from the Council about developing close to trees and works to trees.

It is also worth remembering that some protected species share your home, in particular roof spaces should be checked for bat roosts and breeding birds. It is an offence to disturb these creatures. The Council's Ecology Officers are available to advise.



You should also check your deeds to ensure there are no restrictive covenants on your property. Any development adjacent to the boundary of the site must also comply with the requirements of the Party Wall Act. (An explanatory leaflet is available from the Customer Service Centre.)

The Design Guide

The Design Guides' series contains notes dealing with various kinds of home extensions. Please ask for the note which deals with the particular proposal you have in mind. The other notes in the 'Extending Your Home – Design Guide Series' are:-

2. Rear Extensions
3. Side Extensions
4. Front Extensions
5. Roof extensions/Loft Conversions

These notes are intended as a general guide as to best practice in terms of design and construction. They are not intended to inhibit imaginative design solutions. Even if the advice here is not followed, all applications are considered on their individual merits in relation to the circumstances of each case. No general guidance of this type can hope to cover every situation, but these leaflets intend to set out and show acceptable solutions to several common problems, and what type of proposals are generally unacceptable. In considering applications the Council will take into account the guidance in these leaflets, together with any particular special circumstances specific to yourself.

The Design Guides were approved by Development Control Committee on 21 December 2001.

EXTENDING YOUR HOME – A DESIGN GUIDE SERIES

2. REAR EXTENSIONS

Rear extensions are usually the simplest way of extending the size and number of rooms in your home. Although generally such extensions do not affect the street-scene, there may be concern about the appearance of the extension and possible loss of privacy, outlook, sunlight or daylight for the adjoining neighbours.

Single Storey Rear Extensions

Single storey rear extensions often do not require planning permission, particularly if there have been no previous extensions on the property.

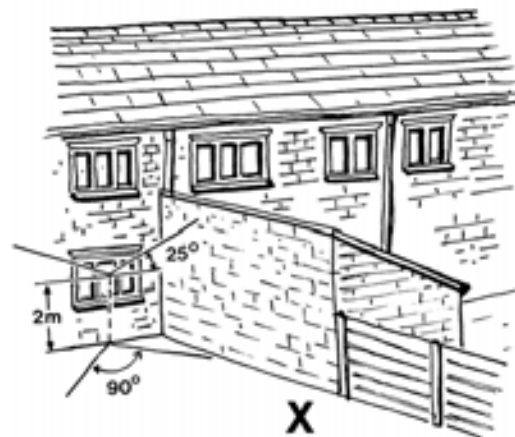
Where planning permission is required such extensions are usually acceptable subject to:

- The extension not crossing a horizontal line drawn at 45 degrees from the centre of your neighbours nearest habitable room window and crossing a line drawn at 25 degrees above the horizontal when measured 2 metres above original ground level. In most cases this will result in extensions not exceeding 3 metres from the existing house (however each application is judged on its own circumstances).
- Applicants are encouraged to locate such extensions off the boundary as this reduces the potential impact on neighbours and allows for maintenance.
- External surfaces such as bricks and tiles should match the existing house.
- A pitched roof will usually be required and should be of a lean to, hipped or gable design to match the main house.

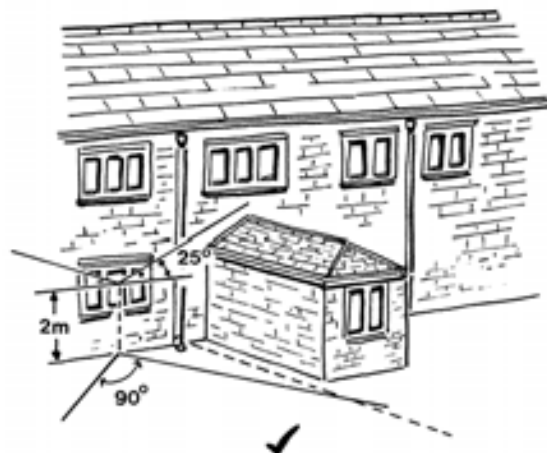
Conservatories

Conservatories are a particularly popular type of extension.

- Conservatories where possible should be located off the boundary to allow the windows to be cleaned from the applicants land. Where a conservatory is to be located close to the boundary with a neighbouring property, the council will usually require opaque glazing on the boundary elevation, to protect the privacy of both the applicant and their neighbours.
- As with other single storey rear extensions they should not normally cross a horizontal line drawn at 45 degrees from the centre of your neighbours window or cross a line drawn at 25 degrees above the horizontal when measured 2 metres above ground level.



“A mono-pitch roof with a high wall close to a side boundary will not normally be acceptable”



“An appropriately sized extension (or conservatory)”

Two storey rear extensions

Two storey rear extensions will normally require planning permission. These type of extensions can seriously affect the outlook and light to adjoining properties. There is likely to be more scope for 2 storey rear extensions on detached dwellings on wider plots, rather than on terraced or semi detached houses. In many instances 2 storey rear extensions are likely to be problematical.

Balconies

The formation of balconies often requires planning permission. Balconies can cause a loss of privacy to neighbouring residents through overlooking into their gardens. The addition of a projecting balcony onto a house can also appear alien. For these reasons balconies are often problematic.

Planning Application Fee

A fee is payable when the application is submitted. Please refer to the separate fees sheet, available from Development Management, for the correct fee due. The fee is not returnable if the application is refused. However, there is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State against a refusal, and a "follow-up" application to the Council is free if it is submitted within one year of the refusal of the first application.

No fee is payable where the extension is to improve the access to, and convenience of, a property for a registered disabled person.

Is Building Regulations approval Needed?

Approval is generally needed for any extension to the living accommodation of the house.

Further advice may be obtained from the Building Control Section on (0191) 211 6181.

Other Consents

In addition to planning permission and Building Regulations approval, you may also need listed building consent, conservation area consent and permission from the City Council's Property Division Section if the dwelling was a former Council Property.



“Two storey rear extensions are likely to seriously affect the outlook of adjoining properties”

EXTENDING YOUR HOME – A DESIGN GUIDE

3. SIDE EXTENSIONS

Side extensions are a popular way of providing additional ground floor garage space and first floor bedrooms. The form of extension should be designed to appear subordinate to the original dwellinghouse and to be in keeping with the general streetscene. The original dwelling should still be distinguishable even after the extension has been built. The impact of the extension upon neighbouring residents' outlook and privacy should also be considered. Any extension which causes a significant loss of sunlight, daylight or outlook to a neighbouring property will not normally be allowed.

1. Extending up to the Side Boundary

In many cases there is a space at the side of houses which provides access between front and rear gardens. The gap provides easy access to the rear garden for storage of wheelie bins and prevents the terracing of detached houses. For these reasons existing gaps along the side boundary between houses should normally be retained.

2. Two Storey Side Extensions including Bedrooms over Garages

Two storey side extensions including bedrooms over garages can have a significant impact upon the streetscene. The reduction in width or total loss of gap between properties can often create the impression of a continuous building frontage called "the terracing effect". This effect can be out of character with the appearance of the area, where the dwellings were originally laid out as semi detached or detached properties. It can be avoided if two storey side extensions are set back at first floor level. An extension which is set back from the main house front also avoids bonding and brick matching problems. The degree of set back will depend upon the potential for terracing, the size and design of the dwelling and any stagger in the building line.

3. Roof Shape

Two storey flat roofed extensions will not normally be allowed.



“The terracing effect”



“Setting the first floor back, dropping the ridgeline and reflecting the shape of the original house avoids the terracing effect.”

Two storey side extensions should normally be designed to match the proportion and balance of the original house and where appropriate to appear visually subordinate to the main dwelling. This can be achieved by lowering the ridge height of the extended roof below that of the main dwelling. The pitch and shape of the extended roof should also normally reflect that of the original dwelling by use of a pitched or hipped roof design where appropriate. Materials should be used to match those used on the existing dwelling. All eaves, soffits, gutters and barge boarding should be designed to avoid overhanging or having foundations over/under your neighbour's house or garden. If this does occur, you must obtain consent from your neighbour and complete a form to notify your neighbour under Section 65 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).



“A well designed extension with roof to reflect the existing building”

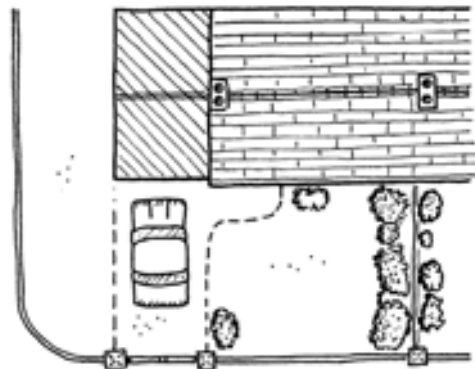
4. Windows

Windows serving habitable rooms including bedrooms will not normally be permitted on the first floor side elevation of an extension. Small windows to non habitable rooms (eg bathroom, hall or landings), if fitted with obscure glazing may be appropriate depending upon individual circumstances. However, you must bear in mind that your neighbour might wish to build close to your boundary at a later date.

The design and materials for windows and their lintels and sills should reflect those of the original dwelling. Window heads and sills should line through with those in the original dwelling.

5. Corner Plots

Corner plots require careful consideration. Many corner plots provide an important space between adjoining streets adding to the spaciousness and open character of the area. Developing over the whole of a corner plot can harm the valuable open character of the area. Each application will be considered on its individual merits. However, in general where space exists at the side to extend the property, the extension shall be in proportion to the original house and have regard to existing building lines. A pitched roof will be required to match the original dwelling and the front elevation should be set back.



“Side extensions on corner plots should retain a significant open area and be in proportion to the original house”

6. Single Storey Side Extensions

Single storey side extensions should be designed to retain a gap between neighbouring properties where it currently exists. The extension should normally be provided with a pitched roof to match the roof of the main dwelling in design, pitch and materials. If a flat roof is to be provided, a pitched upstand at the front may improve the appearance. The extension should not normally project forward of the existing front building line.

Where new access or widened access is proposed a dropped kerb will be required. Please contact Development Management for details of which roads are classified. All dropped kerbs will be provided by the City Council at the householders expense.

Planning Application Fee

A fee is payable when the application is submitted. Please refer to the separate fees sheet, available from Development Management, for the correct fee. The fee is not returnable if the application is refused. However, there is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State against a refusal, and a "follow-up" application to the Council is free if it is submitted within one year of the refusal of the first application.

No fee is payable where the extension is to improve the access to, and convenience of, a property for a registered disabled person.

8. Is Building Regulations approval Needed?

Approval is generally needed for any extension to the living accommodation of the house.

Further advice may be obtained from the Building Control Section on (0191) 211 6181.

Other Consents

In addition to Planning Permission and Building Regulation Approval, you may also need conservation area consent, listed building consent and permission from the City Council's Property Services Division if the dwelling was a former Council house.

EXTENDING YOUR HOME – A DESIGN GUIDE

4. FRONT EXTENSIONS

Front extensions will alter the main elevation of the house and form a significant element in the street scene. In designing any front extension, the following points should be taken into consideration:

- Front extensions should be modest in scale, reflect the design, detailing, proportions and materials of the existing dwelling and be in keeping with the wider street scene.
- A substantial area of garden should be retained.
- The size, siting and design of front extensions should take into account the outlook from neighbouring properties.
- Front extensions should not reduce the length of the driveway to less than is necessary to provide an off-street parking space.



“A well designed porch”

Porches

The most common and generally acceptable form of front extension is a porch. It should be possible to design a porch in such a way so that planning permission is not required. Porches do not require permission if they have a ground area (measured externally) of less than 3 square metres, are no more than 3 metres in height and there is at least 2 metres between the front of the porch and the public footpath or road. Porches that do not meet all these criteria will require planning permission. Porches requiring planning permission should normally extend no more than 1.5 metres from the main front wall of the house, and should be designed to complement the existing property. A pitched roof is desirable. In some cases a porch can be linked with a square or canted bay window and/or the front of a garage. It is not appropriate to link a porch with a curved bay window. In all cases extended porches of this type should not occupy the entire width of the dwelling but should be set in from side boundaries.

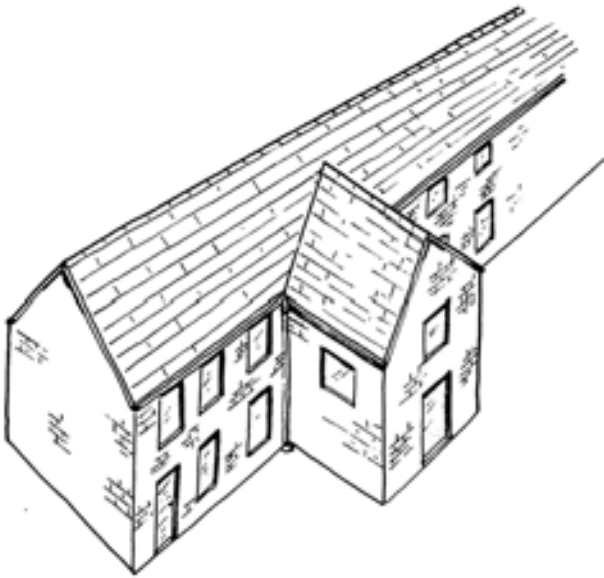
Two storey front extensions

Two storey front extensions can seriously affect outlook and light to adjoining properties, and are likely to be visually obtrusive and have a significant impact upon the street scene. Therefore, unless the circumstances of the site are such that a two storey front extension would not affect the neighbouring property or the appearance of the street, two storey front extensions will not be acceptable.

Planning Application Fee

A fee is payable when the application is submitted.

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“Two storey front extension are likely to affect the outlook of adjoining properties and affect the appearance of the street.”

No fee is payable where the extension is to improve the access to, and convenience of, a property for a registered disabled person.

Is Building Regulations Approval Needed?

Approval is generally needed for any extension to the living accommodation of the house.

Further advice may be obtained from the Building Control Section on (0191) 211 6181.

Other Consents

In addition to planning permission and Building Regulations approval, you may also need conservation area consent, listed building consent and permission from the City Council's Property Services Division if the dwelling was a former Council houses.

EXTENDING YOUR HOME – A DESIGN GUIDE

5. ADDING ROOMS IN THE ROOF SPACE

Adding rooms in the roof space

Loft conversions and rooms in the roof space are often considered a relatively simple way of providing additional living space. However, adding dormer windows or sloping roof lights to provide additional accommodation can significantly alter the appearance of a property and can result in a loss of privacy for occupants of neighbouring properties.

Due to their visual impact the Council generally discourages the introduction of dormer windows on the front elevation and on any elevation where there are no other examples within the street scene. However in cases where the installation of a dormer window is considered acceptable there are a number of general principles that should be applied, so as to minimise the affect on the neighbours amenity and the appearance of the property.

As a general rule sloping roof lights are cheaper to install and easier to maintain than dormer windows. They are also less visually obtrusive and reduce possible overlooking problems.

Dormers on the front elevation

Where a dormer is to be built on the front elevation it should be built in proportion to the overall roof size and designed to reflect the traditional style and architectural character of the house. Flat roof dormers will not normally be acceptable.

Dormers on the rear and side elevations

There is a tendency to design a very large flat roofed dormer for the rear or side of a property to provide as much additional space and internal headroom as possible. However, in most instances it is only appropriate to install a pitched roof dormer on the rear elevation to reflect the character of the property.

Any dormer on the rear elevation should be designed in proportion to the overall size of the roof slope so as to reduce the visual impact and the potential for overlooking neighbouring properties. The dormer window should also be set back into the roof slope (from eaves level) and the ridge height should be dropped below the ridge of the original roof so that it appears subservient.



“Roof lights are cheap and have less impact on the appearance of the house”



“Pitched roofed dormers are preferable”

The conversion of an existing hipped roof into a gable to provide extra space for a loft conversion can make a property appear unbalanced, especially in the case of a semi detached or terraced property. Therefore alterations of this scale are not normally acceptable.

Where a dormer window is proposed on the side elevation of a hipped roof, the width of the window should be limited and should be dropped below the ridge line of the original roof where possible. In cases where the property is located on a corner or end plot the installation of a dormer window is likely to have a significant impact upon the streetscene. Dormer extension on the side elevation of a hipped roof extension are not likely to be considered acceptable.

Planning Application Fees

A fee is payable when the application is submitted. Please refer to the separate fees sheet, available from the Planning & Transportation Division, for the correct fee. The fee is not returnable if the application is refused. However, there is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State against a refusal, and a "follow-up" application to the Council is free if it is submitted within one year of the refusal of the first application.

No fee is payable where the extension is to improve the access to, and convenience of, a property for a disabled person

BUILDING CONTROL

Is Building Regulations approval needed?

Approval is generally required for the conversion of a roof-space to living accommodation.

You should therefore telephone (0191) 211 6181 for information.

Other Consents

Whether or not you need planning permission and Building Regulations approval you may also need conservation area consent, listed building consent permission or consent from the City Council's Property Services Division if the dwelling was a former council house.