

BOROUGH OF SPELTHORNE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

ON

**THE DESIGN OF NEW RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSIONS**

April 1999

(Revised January 2009)



THE DESIGN OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSIONS

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document sets out detailed guidance on what the Council would wish to see in the design of new residential extensions.
- 1.2. It is a revision of the April 1999 version. The original document referred to the then Proposed to be Adopted Local Plan and included policy number cross referencing to the Deposit Draft Plan. The text has now been ‘revised’ to refer to the Adopted Plan by name and delete reference to the Proposed to be Adopted version and Deposit Draft Policy numbers. There are no material changes to the policy guidance itself, agreed in April 1999.
- 1.3. It supplements the guidance set out in the Adopted Local Plan April 2001 in particular policies BE1, BE5 and BE6. The relevant parts of the Local Plan on the design of development are reproduced in Appendix 1. The Council’s leaflet “Design Guidance for Residential Extensions”, published in October 1996, gives further information and illustration of the Council’s requirements. That leaflet is reproduced in Appendix 2.
- 1.4. The production of this Supplementary Guidance arises from the recommendation of the Inspector who conducted the Inquiry in 1997/98 into the Council’s emerging Replacement Local Plan. He recommended that certain detail in the design both of new residential development and extensions should not be included in the Plan itself but set out as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 1.5. Supplementary Guidance is given particular weight both by the Inspectors when dealing with appeals and by Secretary of State, where it has been subject to public consultation. This guidance has only been subject to extensive consultation through the Local Plan process but has not been considered by an Inspector and is now published as a result of his express recommendation.
- 1.6. The publication of this guidance was formally agreed by the Council on 22nd April 1999 and will be kept under review in the light of the emerging national and strategic advice.
- 1.7. If you would like further information on the design of new residential development and extensions before formalising a specific proposal, please contact the Duty Planning Officer on (01784) 451499, or by E-mail, planning.development.control@spelthorne.gov.uk.

2. The Design Guidance Policies

2.1. The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance is to amplify the advice given in Policy BE1 (to the extent that it relates to residential development), and Policies BE5 and BE6 of the Council's Adopted Local Plan. The Supplementary Planning Guidance is presented in the form of four 'guidance policies' dealing with the following issues:-

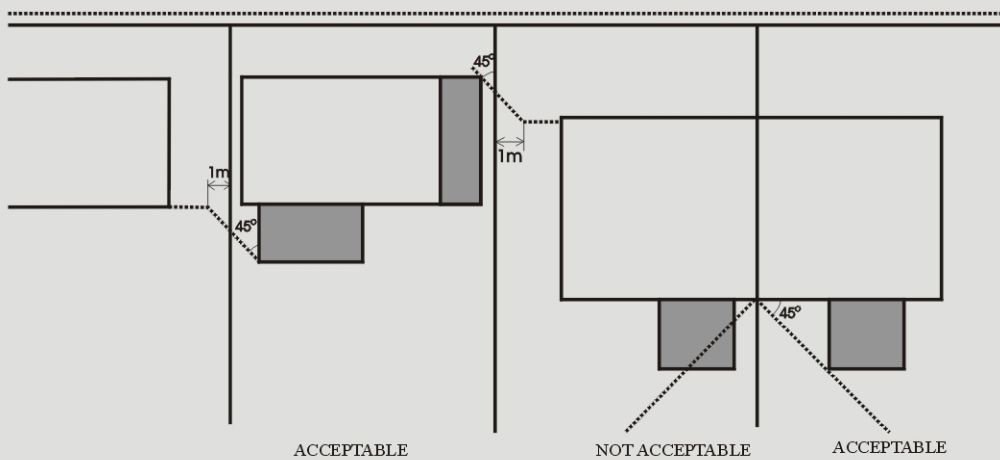
- a) Siting of Two Storey Development
- b) Size of Single Storey Extensions
- c) Separation Distances
- d) Garden Area/Amenity Space

2.2. Each 'guidance policy' is set out in the shaded boxes on the following pages.

**RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDANCE POLICY (A) -
SITING OF TWO STOREY DEVELOPMENT**

New two storey development, including extensions, should avoid any unreasonable loss of natural light, sunlight and outlook to adjoining residential properties. Development which meets the criteria below, as illustrated in the following diagram, will normally be acceptable in terms of natural light, sunlight and outlook¹:-

Development which does not break the vertical plane of a line drawn at 45° to the line of any original front or rear wall of any adjoining dwelling from a point 1 metre inside the boundary of an adjoining separate property or from the common boundary of an attached property.



¹ The policy will not be applied to development situated beyond 6 metres from the flank boundary (beyond this distance two storey development will generally not break the plane of a 45° angle taken from ground level).

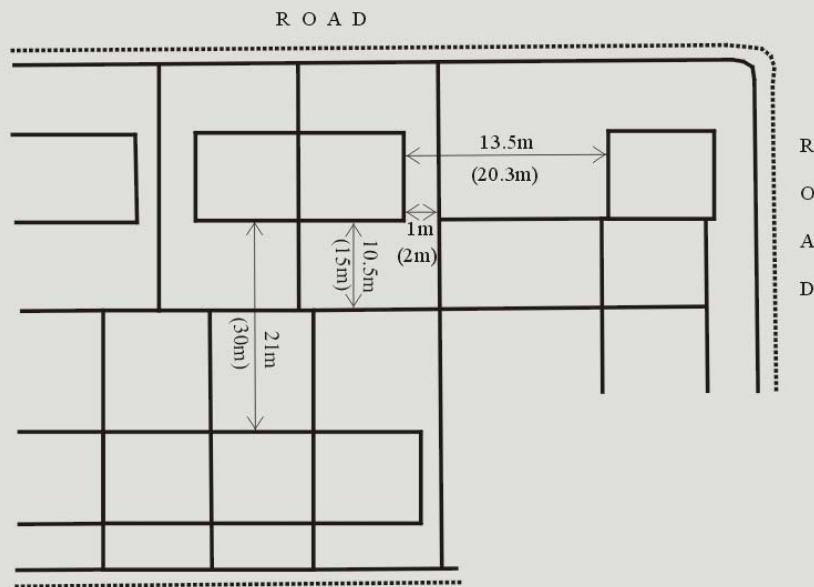
**RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDANCE POLICY (B) –
SIZE OF SINGLE STOREY EXTENSIONS**

Large single storey extensions can also cause problems of loss of light, outlook, overshadowing and adversely affect the design of the property. Normally, in the case of terraced properties, small extensions of up to 3 metres in depth from the original rear wall will be acceptable and up to 4 metres in the case of semi-detached properties. The lesser distance of 3metres is still used for end terrace properties because of the scope to 'box-in' non-extended dwellings by development on both sides. Extensions to detached properties will be considered in their merit.

**RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDANCE POLICY (C) –
SEPERATION DISTANCES**

When determining applications for both new residential development and extensions to existing dwellings the following minimum separation distances will be applied:-

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| a) for two storey development:- | back to back | 21 metres |
| | back to boundary | 10.5 metres |
| | back to flank | 13.5 metres |
| | side to boundary | 1 metre |
| b) for three storey development:- | back to back | 30 metres |
| | back to boundary | 15 metres |
| | back to flank | 20.3 metres |
| | side to boundary | 2 metres |



* Figures in brackets are for 3-storey development

**RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDANCE POLICY (D)-
GARDEN AREAS/AMENITY SPACE**

In the case of new development, dwelling should normally be provided with a rear garden area/amenity area, excluding garage or parking space, in accordance with the following minimum standards:-

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) 3 or more bedroom semi-detached or detached dwellings (new or extended) | 70 sq.m. per unit |
| b) Terraced or 2 bedroom semi-detached dwellings (new or extended) | 60 sq.m. per unit |
| c) Flats (new or by conversion) or 1 bedroomed dwellings or sheltered housing schemes | 35 sq.m per unit. Where amenity space is shared the requirement will be relaxed to 35 sq.m per unit for the first 5 units, 10 sq.m for the next 5 and 5 sq.m for each unit thereafter. |

EXTRACT FROM THE ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN

1. Paragraphs 4.7 to 4.12 of the Adopted Local Plan (April 2001) deal with new development in general and Paragraphs 4.17 to 4.33 relate to residential development. These are reproduced below.

DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT

NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 4.7 *This section of the Plan sets out design principles against which all types of development proposals will be assessed, including residential, commercial and industrial development. Supplementary Planning Guidance 'The Design of New Residential Development and Extensions' gives more detailed advice on issues associated with residential development.*
- 4.8 *The careful design of new buildings, alterations and extensions to existing buildings is important to the quality of the built environment. The impact of any new development depends on its size, the details of its design and materials, location, its prominence and its relationship with the surrounding environment including open space. Compatibility with existing nearby development and ensuring a positive contribution to the character of an area will be important factors in the Council's requirement of high standards of design and materials for new development. Where extensions are proposed, attention to such details as the matching of window styles and fenestration generally will be important. Small extensions and alterations do not always require planning permission, however, the Council will still seek to encourage high standards of design. The Council's Annual Design Awards scheme is a means of promoting good design and layout in all forms of development and environmental enhancement.*
- 4.9 *Any mature trees of amenity value and other significant landscape features should normally be retained and incorporated into the design of new development. Detailed tree surveys and protection proposals will be required where appropriate to accompany planning applications. In many locations it will be vital to secure appropriate boundary treatment and both hard and soft landscaping to ensure that new building can be satisfactorily accommodated. The Council requires all landscaping schemes to be maintained and any plants, which die in the first five years after planting to be replaced. The issue of tree cover is addressed in point (b) of Policy BE1 below and also in Policy RU1(a) and RU18 and paragraph 3.54 in the Rural Environmental Chapter.*
- 4.10 *It is particularly important that, wherever possible, existing attractive views and vistas are not removed or harmed by new development. This will include not only the immediate surroundings of a proposal, but sometimes areas at some distance, particularly in the case of larger developments close to or on the edge of the urban area. In some circumstances, it will be desirable to incorporate views of adjoining features such as the River Thames, an open space or building of architectural merit in a development proposal. Policies RU5, RU6 and RU7 within the Rural Environment chapter provide further detail of the requirements to protect the views, character and setting of the River Thames and its tributaries, also identified in part in Policy BE1 (d). Through both the design of new buildings and associated landscaping works, the Council will expect new development proposals to contribute to an improvement of the surrounding townscape environment. Proposals should also take account of the needs of disabled people and facilitate the creation of convenient pedestrian routes, where appropriate. The needs of those with disabilities, referred to in Policy BE1(f) are considered in more detail in Chapter 10 - Social and Community Facilities, at paragraphs 10.20-10.24 and in Policy SC3. Specific reference to crime prevention considerations in the design of new development is made in paragraph 4.76 and Policy BE28 later in this chapter.*

- 4.11 *It is also important for new development to promote energy efficiency and conservation. As encouraged by Government guidance contained in 'This Common Inheritance', the Council will use its influence to this end particularly through its building control and planning functions. Planning controls can encourage efficiency by suitable building orientation, layout and window size. The Council also supports energy efficiency by direct promotion and campaigns locally. The promotion of water conservation in the context of development proposals is also important. Paragraphs 4.91 to 4.93 of this chapter and Policy BE38 deal specifically with the subject of renewable energy.*
- 4.12 *The following Policy BE1 is a general development control policy setting out the Council's overall approach to development proposals. Other Policies in both this Chapter and other chapters of the Plan and the Supplementary Planning Guidance provide more detailed guidance on the issues identified.*

POLICY BE1

The Borough Council will expect new development to be of a high standard in terms of design and materials and to:-

- (a) respect the scale, height, proportions, building lines, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land**
- (b) retain any mature trees and other significant landscape features that are of merit**
- (c) provide and maintain suitable boundary treatment and landscaping**
- (d) protect the quality of important views and/or create attractive new views and vistas, taking account of nearby features of interest or open land in particular of listed buildings and other buildings of local interest and the River Thames**
- (e) contribute to an improvement to the townscape and/or environment**
- (f) take account of the needs of disabled people**
- (g) enable the creation of convenient pedestrian and cycle routes, where appropriate**
- (h) promote energy efficiency and conservation, including through suitable building orientation, layout and window size, and water conservation.**

Particular care must be taken where any form of commercial development is proposed in or adjoining residential areas. Further guidance on this is given in Chapter 6 (Adopted Local Plan April 2001) – Employment paragraph 6.22 and Policy EM3.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.17 *This section of the Plan sets out design principles against which various types of residential development proposals will be assessed, including new dwellings, extensions and conversions. These are in addition to the general principles set out in the preceding sections. Whilst not all extensions and alterations require specific planning permission because of 'permitted development' rights, the principles against which any development proposal which does require consent, will be assessed are set out below. The aspirations of property owners and developers need to be assessed in the context of the importance of protecting the environment in the wider public interest. The text and policies which follow represent minimum criteria, which the Borough Council will expect developers to follow in development proposals, and amplify Policy BE1. Experience has shown that where layouts have been designed to merely comply with these minimum standards, an unsatisfactory result will occur. It is important to create a high quality environment with character and interest, and to do so will often require higher standards than the minimum. In addition, where new development adjoins existing properties it will be appropriate to exceed the Plan's minimum standards, in order for the new development to sit satisfactorily alongside the existing dwellings. Occasionally, in order to secure the suitable development of a site, it may be appropriate for the standards to be applied with a degree of flexibility to allow for*

appropriate individual design solutions, for example in conservation areas. Where appropriate this section contains cross references to other relevant sections of the Plan and to supplementary planning guidance.

- 4.18 Nearly all new residential development in Spelthorne will be in the form of infilling in existing urban areas. The general approach of seeking to make the best use of urban land for housing development is set out in Chapter 5 on Housing, together with reference to size and type of dwellings. There is growing recognition by developers of the importance of individuality, interest and variety in housing design, which is encouraged by the Council.

Privacy, Outlook, Natural Light and Separation of Dwelling

- 4.19 The provision of appropriate privacy, outlook, natural light and garden space in new residential development and extensions is important in ensuring the amenity of these in both existing and new housing is protected. Two storey development by its nature has the potential to cause more problems than single storey development.
- 4.20 Where properties have smaller gardens and buildings are therefore closer together the distance between buildings and their orientation to each other, and the effect of subsequent extensions is more critical given the greater scope for overshadowing or loss of privacy. The aspect, design, layout and fenestration of new and existing properties will all affect the extent of these potential problems.
- 4.21 In assessing proposals the Council will consider whether or not the proposed development will significantly affect the prevailing conditions and the outlook in habitable rooms, including kitchens, of adjoining dwellings. The outlook from windows of adjoining dwellings can be seriously affected by single storey development close to the boundary and by any adjoining development of two or more storeys. Problems of overshadowing and loss of outlook are reduced where new buildings and extensions are set back from the boundary.
- 4.22 The provision of appropriate obscured glazing can assist in overcoming potential problems of loss of privacy and when appropriate, planning applications may be approved subject to conditions requiring such glazing. Alterations at roof level including the provision of accommodation with dormer windows or roof lights can lead to particular problems of overlooking. Generally roof terraces or balconies are not acceptable where these would enable direct overlooking of neighbouring habitable rooms or gardens.
- 4.23 Sunlight and daylight is required not only inside buildings but also in gardens, especially the area close to the house. It will also be necessary to assess the degree of overshadowing of adjoining outdoor areas. Guidance on the appropriate minimum distances between dwellings and size of rear gardens in residential development is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. Such provision will be part of the adequate space about and between buildings required by Policy BE6 and the general requirement for high standards of development required in Policy BE1.
- 4.24 In addition to the potential impact on amenity, side extensions can, by closing the gap between dwellings, create a terracing effect which may be harmful to the character of an area, by virtue of a dominating and detrimental effect on the street scene, particularly in the case of semi-detached and higher density housing. In such cases development will not be permitted.
- 4.25 Although there is often physical scope for single storey residential development to extend up to the side boundary with an adjoining property, without detriment to amenity, in order to avoid legal problems caused by foundations encroaching on adjoining land and overhanging eaves and gutters, it should be set back so that it would be wholly within the boundary. In order to allow for a possible later first floor extension without creating an unacceptable terracing effect, single storey side extensions should be set back 1 metre from the boundary, except where this would prevent the provision of an integral garage, though any subsequent first floor extension would still need to be set back 1 metre from the boundary and 2 metres for three storey development.
- 4.26 The following policies will be applied when determining proposals for residential development. Both will require careful on site assessment as there will be a wide variety in the juxtaposition of buildings. Further guidance on the application of Policies BE5 and

BE6 is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance "The Design of New Residential Development and Extensions".

POLICY BE5

Development will not be permitted which would result in a significant loss of privacy, outlook, daylight or sunlight to a habitable room or garden of an adjoining dwelling. Single or two storey extensions which incorporate a balcony or terrace at first floor level or above may be acceptable where there is no overlooking of neighbouring properties or gardens.

POLICY BE6

Proposals for residential development will be expected to provide adequate space about and between buildings to protect the amenity of existing dwellings, and to avoid development out of character with the existing locality. Where development faces the back of existing development, particular care is required in layouts, to avoid any adverse impact of the access, parking and manoeuvring areas.

Roofs

- 4.27 It is important that both residential infill development and extensions are integrated satisfactorily with existing property, including in their roof profile and detailing and that adverse impact on visual amenity is avoided. Pitched roofs which follow adjoining roof profiles will be required for all residential development which will be clearly visible to the public. The provision of habitable rooms in the roofspace where subject to planning control will be acceptable, provided there is no significant adverse impact on the street scene, character of the area or public views. In this respect, dormer windows should not dominate the roof by extending beyond the existing roof profile or along the whole width of a house, and in the case of existing two storey development, dormers for third floors should not front a highway. The conversion of hipped to gable ended semi-detached or end of terrace properties can create an unbalanced, disharmonious appearance, and for this reason applications to convert hipped to gable ended roofs in these circumstances will be resisted. Applications to alter both of a pair of semi-detached or end of terrace properties in this way will be considered on their merits.

POLICY BE7

On two-storey extensions which will be clearly visible from a public highway or other public open land, or single storey extensions which are particularly prominent, a full pitched roof will be required.

POLICY BE8

The creation of additional habitable rooms in the roofspace and roof extensions will be acceptable provided:-

- (a) no dormer windows are constructed in the elevation of the roof which fronts highway where there would be a detrimental impact on the street scene**
- (b) that any dormer window is constructed within the existing roof profile**
- (c) that any dormer does not take up the whole width or height of the roof and is not a dominant feature of the roof**
- (d) that it does not give rise to undue problems of overlooking adjoining residential dwellings.**
- (e) That it does not result in an unbalanced appearance of the roof design of a pair of semi-detached or end of terrace properties.**

Restriction of Permitted Development Rights

- 4.28 Considerable care and skill is required in designing schemes in the Green Belt and higher density residential developments on restricted sites. Subsequent extensions or alterations to such buildings can have a serious and potentially damaging visual impact or result in unacceptably small gardens, overlooking or overshadowing of adjoining properties. The General Permitted Development Order permits a range of minor development particularly domestic extensions to be carried out without the need to obtain planning permission. It is the practice of this Council to restrict these 'permitted development rights' by the use of conditions where the exercise of such rights would have an adverse effect.

POLICY BE9

Where it is considered necessary for stricter control on future development in the interests of maintaining the Green Belt, residential amenities or the environmental quality of a scheme itself, planning permission for new residential development will have conditions imposed to restrict permitted development rights.

Vehicular Access and Design Considerations

- 4.29 Most infill sites are usually bounded by an existing highway on at least one frontage. The character, function and use of that highway will determine whether or not frontage development, including direct access to individual dwellings, would be appropriate and will dictate the layout and spacing criteria to be applied to any side road junctions. The DETR (The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) will be consulted and require traffic impact assessments for development proposals affecting a trunk road. Reference should be made to Department of Transport Circular 6/91 on necessary highway improvements. Once the principle of access to the highway network has been agreed the design of the internal layout can be considered. The main objective of any residential road is to create a safe and convenient means of access to residential areas whilst retaining an attractive environment in the vicinity of the dwellings. Criteria for the design of new residential estate roads are set out in the Surrey County Council Design Guide on Roads and Footpaths.
- 4.30 In view of the impact on existing street scenes, new dwelling frontages should wherever possible face onto adjoining existing highways. In the case where development fronts onto a classified road direct vehicular access onto the road may not be possible and appropriate rear access to the properties will need to be designed. In these circumstances all elevations facing a public highway must be attractively designed. A suitable means of enclosure should also be provided at the sides of rear gardens adjoining roads, paths or open spaces; brick walls and planting will be preferred to 2 metre high fences, as they are more durable and attractive.
- 4.31 Existing dwellings with large rear gardens but insufficient space to allow frontage infill development may occasionally provide the opportunity for 'backland' development. Care is needed with the layout and design of such backland development, to ensure that access to other potential development land is not precluded, and that a satisfactory access to current highway standards is provided.

POLICY BE10

Development precluding access to a potential development site or unreasonably prejudicing the amenities enjoyed by existing properties will not normally be permitted. A separate access meeting currently adopted highway standards should be provided for any development site not having a main highway frontage.

Parking Provision¹

- 4.32 Car parking must be provided in accordance with the Council's currently adopted standards for the various forms of residential development, including new dwellings, extensions, flat conversions and development on sub divided plots. The latest parking

¹ The Council reviewed its Parking Standards in 2001 which are published in a separate document. This section should be read in conjunction with the revised standards which are published as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

standards are set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. It is important that existing available or potential garage or on site parking spaces on a site are not reduced below this parking standard level as a result of any extensions to a property, as this may increase problems of on-street car parking or affect highway safety. Where a property has no on-site parking and the front garden area is converted to provide a parking space it is important that a balance is maintained between the hard- surfacing required for the vehicle and the area set aside for planting. The character of a street may be destroyed by the insensitive design of on-site parking spaces and the loss of boundary walls and hedges. No more than 50% of the front garden area should be used as hardstanding nor more than half of the available width of the garden. (The standard size of a parking space is 4.8 metres by 2.4 metres).

- 4.33 A satisfactory relationship between off-site parking spaces and carriageways and the dwellings which they serve must also be provided in new development proposals, to avoid harm to residential amenity. Two metres minimum separation will be required between the footway or shared carriageway surface, and any elevation of a dwelling with a habitable room. This minimum separation distance, as required in BE11(b), should include a landscaped area. Parking spaces should be located at the front or side of houses, and only at the rear if the criteria set out in Policy BE11(c) below are met. They must be within 15 metres of the main entrances of dwellings served, in order to avoid under-usage problems of spaces provided further away from houses and consequent obstructive parking on the carriageway or footway closer to the desired destination. However, no unassigned parking space should be provided within 5 metres of a window to a habitable room of any dwelling.

POLICY BE11

Any residential development including extensions which would result in available or potential garage or on-site car parking spaces below the parking standards currently adopted by the Borough Council, will not be acceptable. In addition the following criteria concerning the relationship of parking spaces and carriageways to dwellings should be met:-

- (a) a development should require no more than half the width or area of a front garden to be used for parking**
- (b) a minimum separation distance of 2 metres, which includes some landscaping, will be required between the front building line of any dwelling or other elevation with a window to a habitable room, and the footway or shared carriageway surface**
- (c) parking spaces should be located at the front or side of dwellings and will only be accepted at the rear of new or existing dwellings if.**
 - (i) a satisfactory buffer of garden and/or landscaping is provided between any parking space or garage, including the associated access, and the adjoining residential property**
 - (ii) a garden area in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Guidance is maintained**
 - (iii) there is no adverse impact in terms of visual intrusion, loss of privacy or through high activity levels**
- (d) parking spaces must normally be within 15 metres of the main entrance doors of the dwellings which they serve (exceptions will only be considered to the extent necessary to secure appropriate amenity space for flat developments)**
- (e) no unassigned parking space should be provided within 5 metres of a window to a habitable room of any dwelling.**

Special Accommodation Annexes

- 4.34 Occasionally extensions are sought to provide additional accommodation for use by elderly or other relatives. Some allow the occupants to live largely independently from the family, but completely self-contained 'flats' will not be acceptable unless they comply with all other relevant Council policies. Extensions to provide such accommodation as an annex to the existing dwelling will be assessed against the criteria applied to all residential development

and will only be acceptable where the accommodation can eventually form an integral part of the original house without further adaptation. It is particularly important that special accommodation annexes should be easily accessible for elderly and disabled people. Unless garden areas and parking provision can be provided in accordance with the Council's standards, special accommodation annexes cannot be considered as appropriate for occupation as separate dwellings once their original use is no longer required. In order to avoid the possible creation of substandard dwellings, the future use of this type of extension which provides self-contained accommodation, will be controlled by the use of planning conditions or where necessary, by legal agreement. Extensions to provide self-contained annexes to large detached houses will be considered on their merits but would still be required to form part of the main dwelling when no longer required for their original purpose.

POLICY BE12

An extension to provide annexe accommodation for relatives should be capable of being included as part of the main dwelling house and should not be completely self-contained.

Flat Conversions

- 4.35 In areas characterised mainly by family housing, flat conversions may have an adverse effect on the character of the area, either individually or cumulatively in conjunction with other conversion or redevelopment schemes for flats. The character of an area will need to be carefully assessed to consider whether a proposed conversion scheme can be successfully accommodated without harming its overall quality. In all cases the additional criteria referred to in this section will have to be satisfied.
- 4.36 In order for a flat conversion scheme to be acceptable, there should be no material adverse impact on neighbouring properties. Flats should be laid out to ensure no overlooking from living room windows at first floor level and above and with staircases away from party walls. Any extensions should be acceptable in terms of design, scale and impact on neighbours. Adequate sound insulation should be provided both to party walls with other dwellings and between flats within the converted dwelling. Sufficient off-street parking should be provided for the new units created by conversion proposals to comply with the Borough Council's currently adopted parking standards. The provision and use of garages and parking spaces to the side of properties will provide the most appropriate location for parking. Use of rear gardens for parking will only be acceptable where the parking can be provided without an adverse effect on neighbours and sufficient amenity space can be retained.

POLICY BE13

The conversion of a single dwelling into two or more self-contained units of accommodation will only be permitted where:-

- (a) there will be no detrimental impact on the character of the area**
- (b) there will be no adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring properties by reason or noise, disturbance or overlooking**
- (c) the Borough Council's parking and rear garden area standards are met.**

BOROUGH OF SPELTHORNE

DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS



This leaflet is one of a series providing design guidance on various aspects of new development. Its purpose is to provide helpful advice to anyone considering extending their property.

The Council is committed to promoting high standards of development throughout the Borough and encouraging proposals which make a positive contribution to the character of the area.



Introduction

Building an extension is often the greatest expenditure made by householders except for purchasing the house itself.

Good design is important not only because as an owner you will have to live with the results but it will also help avoid any adverse impact on your neighbours and therefore assist in obtaining planning permission from the Council.

Whilst a well designed extension may, in the first instance, appear to cost more, it is more likely to enhance the value of the property and may require less maintenance in the longer term.

This guidance sets out examples which illustrate the principles of good design.

Planning an Extension

A planning application is required for all but very small extensions and alterations, which if within certain criteria can be built under what is known as 'permitted development rights'. However any structural alterations will need approval under the Building Regulations. You are advised to always check with the Council the need for any planning permission or Building Regulation approval.



Every planning application for an extension must be judged on its merits after careful assessment on site. Therefore compliance with the requirements set out in this leaflet will assist, but cannot guarantee the grant of planning permission. In some areas, such as Green Belt or Conservation Areas, additional restrictions apply. This leaflet cannot cover every situation and further advice can be obtained from the Planning Division. This will include works to listed buildings.

When contemplating an extension or alteration it is very important to consider the siting, design and appearance from the outset. The scale, size, massing and use of materials are all elements of design which will determine how the extension will look, and how it will affect neighbouring properties and the appearance and character of the street scene.

Before starting detailed design work you should consider the effect any extension may have on your neighbour's property and ideally discuss your proposals with them. This may avoid

problems at a later stage. It is Council policy to notify neighbours immediately affected by planning applications and to take account of their views.

General Materials and Detailing

Whatever the form or size of an extension, the appearance will be improved if the materials compliment those of the original dwelling. On older houses, matching second-hand materials often provide the most satisfactory result. In the creation of a new roof it may be preferable to reuse the existing roof tiles at the front, with new tiles on a less visible elevation.

The use of alternative materials to produce a clear contrast may also be acceptable, provided the overall effect is sympathetic to the character of the existing building. Setting the extension back from the existing front elevation can be a useful device in lessening its impact, especially where differing materials are used.

The scale and proportions of the existing house should be reflected in the extension (Fig. 2). It is important to maintain the same relationship of door and window openings, and to use the same design and style. Installation of inappropriate designs of double glazing or replacement windows can upset the proportions and appearance of a building. The cumulative effects of unsympathetic alterations can significantly alter the character of the street.

Outlook, Daylight and Privacy

Any extension, whether single or two storey, should not cause problems by overshadowing adjoining dwellings or blocking daylight and sunlight.

Remember to consider the levels of daylight and sunlight in any rooms which are to be extended.

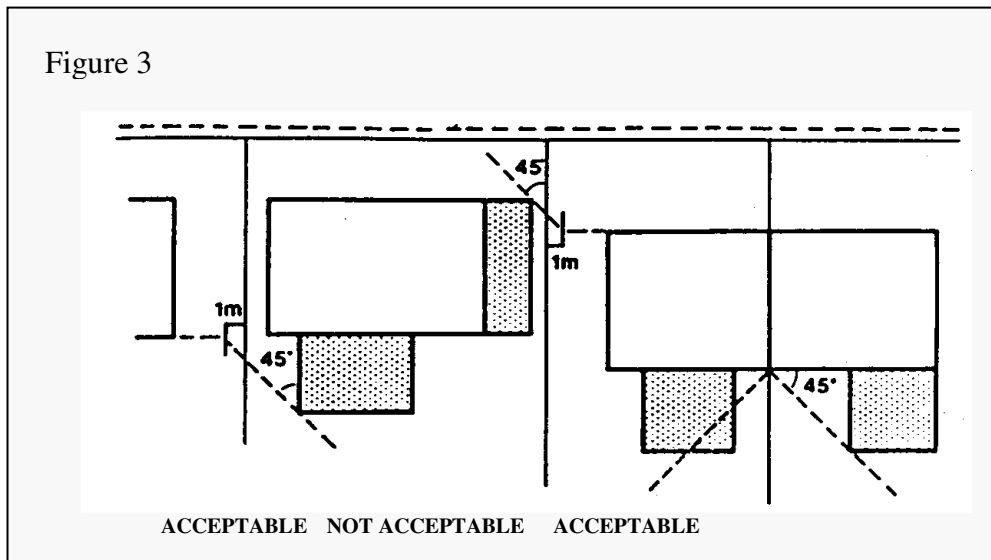
Single storey extensions which project no more than 3 metres from the main rear wall of a terrace dwelling and 4 metres for a semi-detached property will not, in most cases, cause a problem for neighbouring properties. However orientation and proximity to adjoining windows will be significant factors.

Windows should be positioned so as not to cause problems of overlooking and undue loss of privacy for adjoining dwellings. Proposals which significantly reduce levels of daylight and sunlight in adjoining properties will similarly not be acceptable.

Position of Extensions

Loss of light and overlooking of adjoining properties can be minimised if the extension is set back from the boundary. In the case of two storey extensions a reasonable outlook will normally be maintained if the first floor is set back behind a line drawn at 45 degrees to the rear of the property (Fig 3). It should also not encroach on the outlook of habitable room windows of adjoining properties. All proposals will require careful on-site assessment. Proposals which do not comply with the above requirements will not normally be acceptable.

Figure 3



Two storey side extensions can have a significant impact on the street scene. To avoid the loss of spaces between dwellings and the creation of a terracing effect, side extensions should be set in by at least 1 metre from the boundary (2 metres for three storey properties).

If an adjoining property already has a single storey extension this may reduce the impact the proposed new development will have on it. Regard will be had to the position of first floor windows in an adjoining property and to the type of rooms that serve. Obscure glazing (with an obscuration level of 3 or more) will often be required for windows in flank elevations.

For extensions of two storeys or more, it is important to maintain an adequate minimum separation distance between the rear of the extended property and the adjoining property to the rear. This should be 21 metres back to back for 2 storey dwellings and 30 metres where one property is 3 storeys. Particular care is also required to avoid problems of overlooking from rear and side facing dormer extensions.

Roofs and Dormers

A traditional pitched roof which matches the style of the existing property will significantly improve the appearance of an extension and require little maintenance compared to flat roofs. A pitched roof will be required on all extensions which are visible from the public highway.

A dummy or false pitched roof on the front elevation, which seeks to merely disguise a flat roof, is rarely satisfactory (Fig 4).

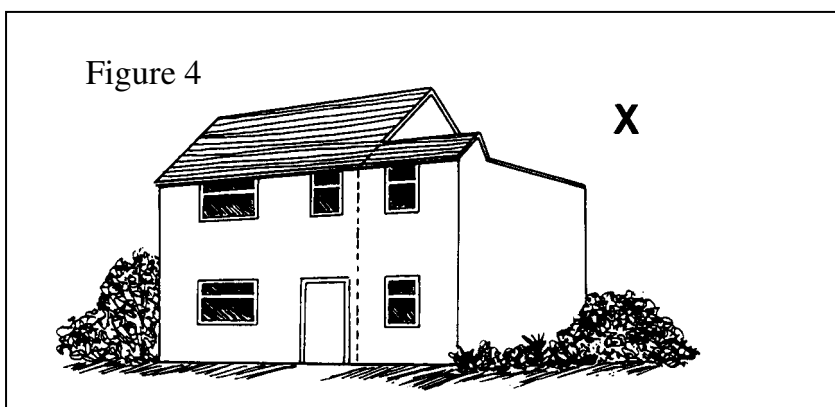
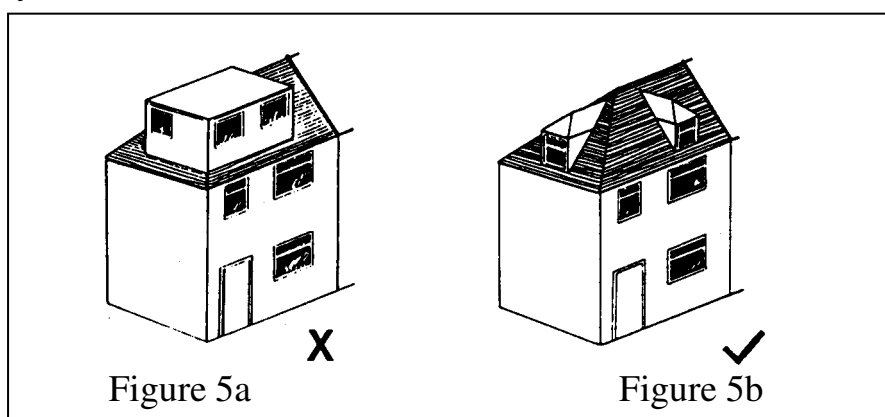


Figure 4

The construction of dormer windows and other roof extensions can provide useful additional accommodation but unless carefully designed can dominate the roof and be a very prominent feature in the street scene (Fig 5a).

Dormer extensions should not be a dominant feature of the roof and should allow the existing roof profile to be maintained. Such extensions should be set well back from the eaves and sides of the roof. They should normally only be constructed on the rear elevation so the impact of the dwelling on the street scene is minimised and also not cause problems of overlooking and undue loss of privacy.

Although a flat roof may be acceptable on a small dormer extension, it is preferable to reflect the style and character of the main roof by having hipped or gable ended dormers (Fig 5b). In some cases the use of roof lights may provide a more satisfactory solution.



Garaging and Parking Spaces

Extensions must not result in the loss of existing parking spaces and garages, which would lead to provision below the Council's standards and cause a potential increase in on-street parking. Enough space for a garage should be retained, even if this does not form part of the proposal. New garages, as with other forms of extension, should reflect the style and materials of the existing house. In most cases, garages should be set back from the front wall of the house, although it may be appropriate to integrate with another feature of the house, such as a porch. A minimum distance of 6 metres should be maintained between the garage and the boundary of the property to allow a car to stand clear of the highway.

Where there is no space on a site to provide a garage, the front garden may be used to provide parking space, but it is important to maintain a balance between hard surfacing and planting. Where space permits, not more than 50% of the front garden, or half the width of the garden, should be used as hardstanding.

Summary –General Principles

- Consider the appearance of the extension from the outset.
- Consider the effect of your proposal on neighbouring properties and discuss your ideas with your neighbours at an early stage
- If possible, employ an architect or competent designer and discuss your proposal with the Council's Planning staff.
- Do not allow the extension to dominate the original dwelling.

- Match materials used on the existing dwelling and continue existing details.
- Continue the vertical and horizontal emphasis of the property and match existing roof lines and styles.

Further Advice

The advice set out in this leaflet is based on policies set out in the Council's Local Plan. For further information on this or advice generally on a proposed extension or alteration please contact the Planning Services Development Control Section.

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