

Supplementary
Planning Guidance **4**
Note

House
Extensions

Adopted September 1996



Waltham Forest

Planning and Transportation Service

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Chingford Municipal Offices

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INTRODUCTION

House Extensions

1.1 This Guidance Note offers advice to people planning to extend their home. The Note explains the principles of good design but does not try to impose detailed control solutions. Extensions which are poorly designed will usually be harmful to the amenities of occupiers and neighbours. They spoil the appearance of a property, tend to be less successful in resisting crime and have a detrimental affect on resale value. Good design need not be expensive and can be achieved at a relatively favourable cost when allowance is made for the lower maintenance costs associated with it.

1.2 The advice supplements the Council's Unitary Development Plan Policy PSC4 and will be taken into account when the Council determines necessary planning applications. The Council also expects the advice to be applied to proposal not requiring planning consent. If the principles are followed they will help produce a design which protects local amenities, which is sympathetic to the appearance of your home, which is safe and a deterrent to crime and offers value for money. Proposals which accord with this Note are more likely to receive planning consent. Where applications are refused, the Note will be referred to at appeal.

1.3 Further advice on the Note can be obtained from the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SECTION of the Department (see contact address details at the end of the Note). An English language large print version of the note is available. A 'request for translated information' sheet for those seeking guidance in ethnic minority languages is attached. Braille and English voice tape versions can be provided on request.

The DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ADMINISTRATION SECTION can provide you with the necessary planning application forms, and advice on making planning applications.

1.4 The Note applies generally throughout the Borough although detailed advice relating to Conservation Areas and Areas of Special Character, as well as to statutory or locally

listed buildings is the subject of separate Supplementary Planning Guidance. If you are in doubt about whether special controls apply to your home, the ENVIRONMENT/LAND USE SECTION will be pleased to help you.

1.5 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order lists certain types of work which do not require planning permission. These 'permitted development' rights are complex and you are advised to check with the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SECTION whether or not they apply to you. No work should be carried out before you have either confirmed that planning consent is not needed or, if it is, you have received a consent decision notice.

1.6 Whatever the type of proposal, you may require separate building control approval from the Council and application for consent to the work under the Building Regulations should be made before construction begins. Each proposal is unique and as the Regulations are technical it is not possible within the scope of this Note to give full details here but further help is available from the BUILDING CONTROL SECTION of the Department.

1.7 The Council will wish to see proposals include proper provision for those occupiers who are people with disabilities. You can obtain advice on how to do this from the Council's ACCESS OFFICER.

THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2.1 The Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan contains a number of policies designed to protect and enhance the Borough's buildings and open space. The relevant section in the Plan which covers house extensions is Policy PSC4 and supporting paragraphs 9.13 and 9.14 which state:

PSC4

'WHILE EXTENSIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL MERITS, THE COUNCIL WILL NORMALLY EXPECT DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING ALTERATIONS AND/OR EXTENSIONS TO BUILDINGS TO:

(i) RESPECT THE ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER, WINDOW AND DOOR SIZE PATTERN, MATERIALS, DETAILS AND OTHER CONVENTIONS OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING; AND

(ii) RETAIN AND RESTORE EXISTING TRADITIONAL FEATURES AND MATERIALS, WHERE APPROPRIATE.

IN ADDITION, THE OCCUPIERS OF THE EXISTING BUILDING AND PROPERTIES NEARBY SHOULD NOT SUFFER ANY UNREASONABLE LOSS OF PRIVACY, OUTLOOK OR SUNLIGHT/DAYLIGHT AS A RESULT OF THE EXTENSION OR ALTERATION.

WHEN IT IS POSSIBLE TO MAKE USE OF THE ROOF SPACE, THE PROPOSED DORMER WINDOW OR ROOF EXTENSION SHOULD BE PLACED WELL AWAY FROM THE EAVES AND FLANK OR PARTY WALLS. BE SYMPATHETIC IN MATERIALS AND DESIGN. AND SHOULD NOT RAISE THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDGE. NORMALLY SUCH AN EXTENSION/DORMER SHOULD NOT BE LOCATED ON THE FRONT ELEVATION.

EXTENSIONS BEYOND THE FRONT MAIN WALL OF THE HOUSE, OTHER THAN FRONT ENTRANCE PORCHES, ARE NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE. EXTENSIONS TO THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE WILL ONLY BE FAVOURABLY CONSIDERED WHERE THERE IS A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN IN STYLE AND MATERIALS SYMPATHETIC TO THE PROPERTY AND THE AREA.

9.13 'New extensions and alterations can have a significant effect on the existing building and its surrounding area. Their design should not spoil the appearance of the existing building or character of the area.'

9.14 Roof extensions and dormer windows are often the most difficult to integrate with the original building and in some houses it is simply not possible to achieve an acceptable design. In such a case permission would not be granted. Dormer windows should be set within the roof profile and whenever possible, follow the vertical lines of the existing doors and windows below. Roof extensions or dormer windows should also be lower than the ridge line of the existing roof. In many cases, pitched roofs reduce the visual impact of a side extension.'

General Considerations

3.1 The main considerations relevant to the extension of a house are amenity safety and design. To safeguard the amenity of occupiers and neighbours it is important that the proposal in terms of height, depth, mass and location in relation to the existing dwelling and its neighbours avoids overshadowing and loss of sunlight, daylight, outlook and privacy etc.

3.2 It is important also that extensions preserve sight lines in the interest of highway safety and residents' security. Extensions located near road junctions and elsewhere which contribute to poor visibility and compromise road safety and the deterrence of crime will not be acceptable.

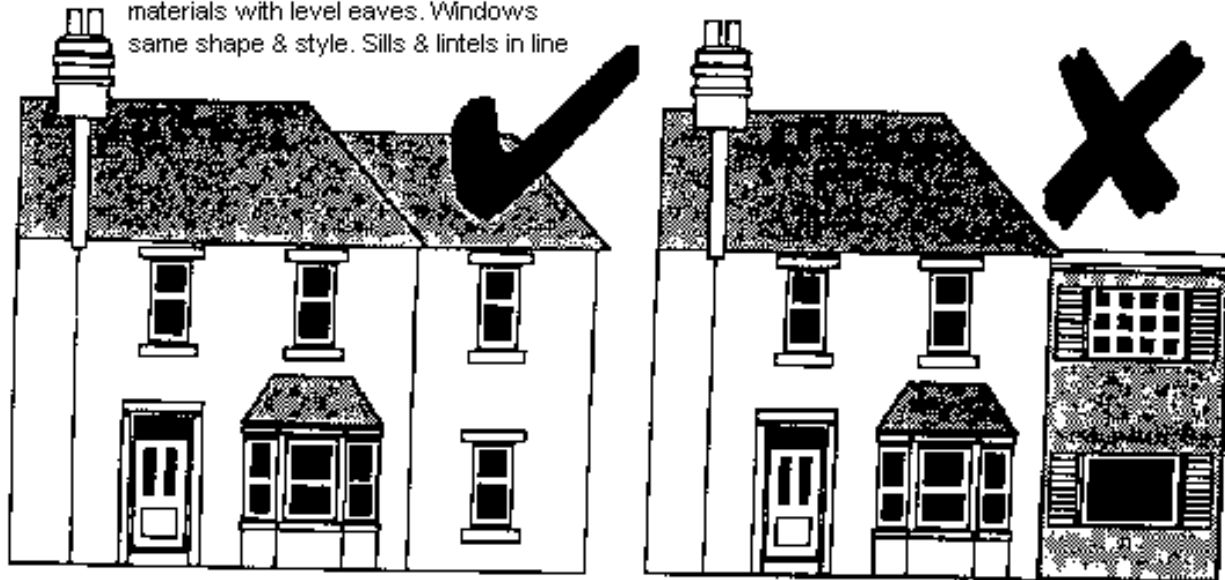
3.3 The design will determine how well the proposal matches the appearance of the original house and the local street scene. The main components which reflect existing character are the size, shape and proportions of the extension, the roof style, the type of doors and windows and their relative positioning, the choice of materials, and architectural character and detailing.

Design Principles

Appearance

3.4 Whatever work is proposed, the guiding principle is that the extension should look almost as if it formed part of the original dwelling. Preferably, similar design, detailing and matching materials should be used and the extension should harmonise with it in scale. An extension should fit in with both the scale and character of your house and those of your neighbours and should not overwhelm them.

Both roofs pitched & in matching materials with level eaves. Windows same shape & style. Sills & lintels in line



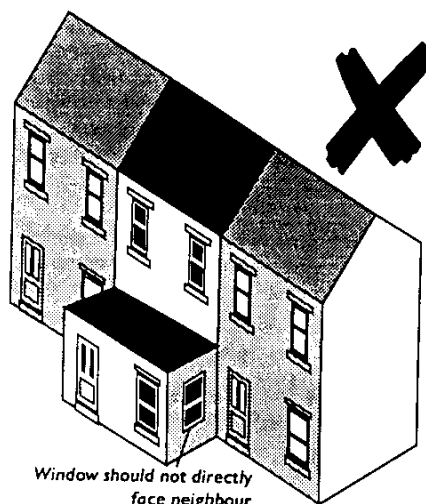
...the extension should look almost as if it formed part of the original dwelling...

3.5 Particular attention should be paid to the architectural proportions of the main house - e.g. the relationship of walls to openings such as windows and doors and to the shape of those openings. The vertical or horizontal emphasis of the house (e.g. through the use of mullions and transoms in windows) should be repeated in the extension. Windows should also be in the same style as the original and new lintels and sills should line up with the existing. Mixing different types of timber and metal-framed windows should be avoided. The original fenestration of most of the Borough's Victorian and Edwardian housing is characterised by sliding sash windows with a vertical emphasis and deep 115mm (4.5 ins) external reveals and these features should be repeated as appropriate.

3.6 The extension roof should normally match the design and appearance of that of the main house. For two storey extensions and above, flat roofs should be avoided where the main house roof is pitched. The eaves level of such extensions should never be higher than that of the existing house. False pitched roofs - where a short section of sloping roof is used to conceal the flat roof behind - should be avoided. At best these give a false impression of the depth of the extension but more often the outer corner is visible and shows that it is merely for decoration. A flat roof will only be considered where it is appropriately designed (for example, provided with a brick on edge parapet) and has acceptable visual impact.

Privacy

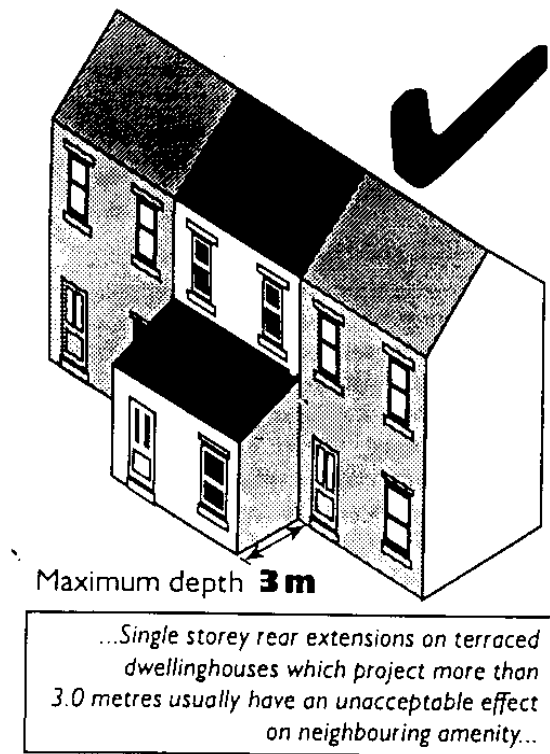
3.7 An extension should not result in any significant loss of privacy to adjoining homes and gardens. Use of the flat roof of an extension as a balcony or roof garden will rarely be acceptable. To prevent overlooking, windows should normally be omitted from any wall directly facing a neighbouring house or garden. Exceptions may be made, dependent on the particular circumstances, for fixed obscured glazing or high-level windows serving bathrooms, W.C.s or landings.



...An extension should not result in any significant loss of privacy to adjoining homes and gardens...

Daylight and Sunlight

3.8 Rear extensions must be carefully planned as they can otherwise easily result in the loss of sunlight and/or daylight to your neighbour's house or garden and have an overbearing impact on the property. Single storey rear extensions on terraced dwellinghouses which project more than 3.0 metres usually have an unacceptable effect on neighbouring amenity and the Council will normally presume against them. The Council will normally look unfavourably on two storey rear extensions on terraced dwellinghouses, including those above ground floor level, unless it is satisfied they would not have an overbearing or overshadowing effect on adjoining occupiers. The Council will take these issues into account when considering proposals for semi-detached and detached houses.

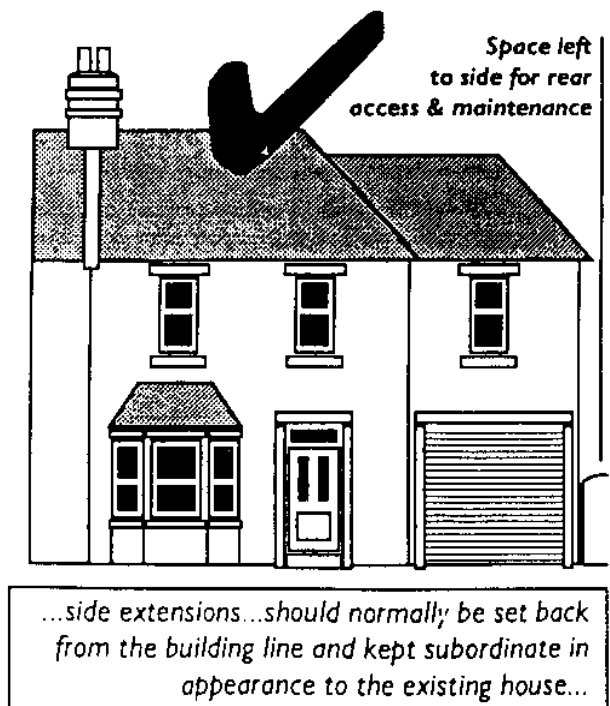


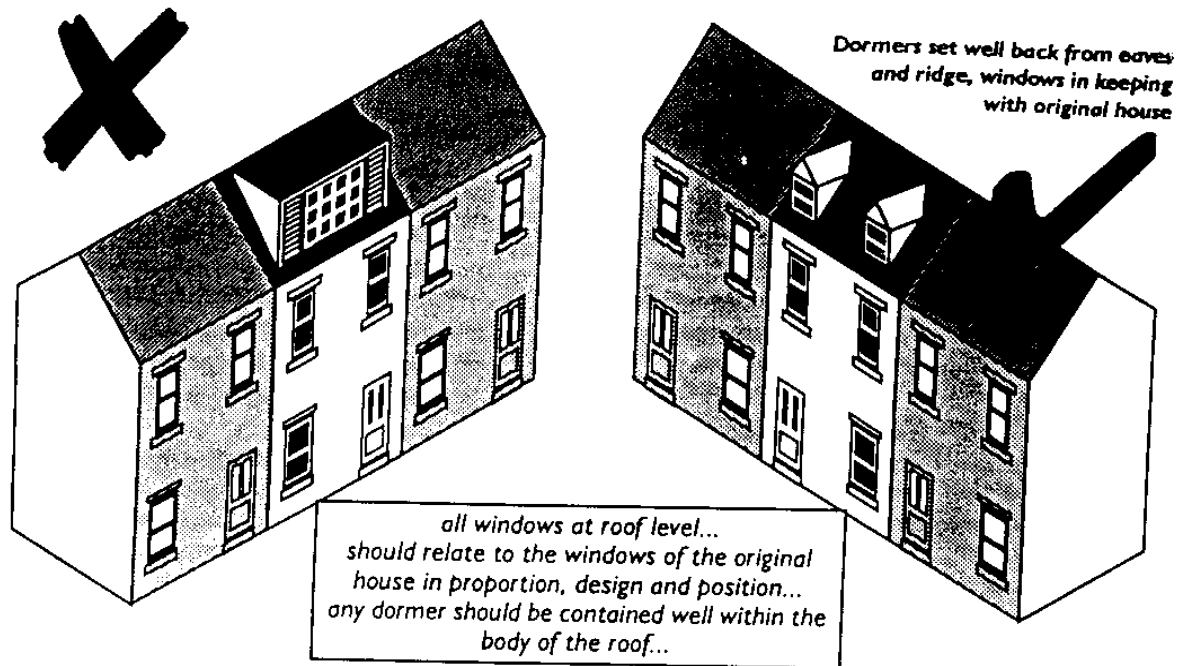
3.9 Developers must consider the effect of the extension on the existing building in relation to natural lighting and ventilation to rooms and kitchen etc. and must avoid creating fully internal rooms which could make the premises unfit for habitation. The Council's Environmental Health Service can offer further advice on this aspect (see contacts section).

Side extensions

3.10 The main design points are:

- side extensions, whether of one or more storeys, should normally be set back from the building line and kept subordinate in appearance to the existing house. This helps to retain the original uniformity, emphasises the secondary role of the extension, avoids any awkward bonding of brickwork and makes less noticeable any difference in materials or colours.
- where the side extension would be indistinguishable from the original house by careful matching of materials and other features, adherence to the existing building line may be acceptable.
- to safeguard the character of the street scene, the terracing of semi-detached and detached houses will not normally be considered favourably. Where an applicant wishes to build up to the side boundary(ies) of the property, in addition to the above, the Council will take into account whether off street parking can be reprovided, whether rear access to refuse storage at the rear can be retained and whether the property can be maintained without encroachment onto neighbouring land.





Loft Conversions and Dormer Windows

3.11 The main design points are:

- velux windows are normally preferable to dormer windows and are acceptable at the front and rear of properties. They are less obtrusive than dormer windows as they do not interfere with the line of the roof slope.
- all windows at roof level, particularly dormer windows, should relate to the windows of the original house in proportion, design and position.
- unless the existing dwelling has a sufficiently large roof to avoid a 'top-heavy' appearance, (for example, on larger North Chingford properties) dormer windows will normally be restricted to the rear elevation.
- any dormer should be contained well within the body of the roof, set well back from the eaves and with flanks set well in from any hips, gables or party walls. It should never extend above the ridge line of the roof and preferably should be well below it. A clearance of at least 1.0ms each side will normally be expected.
- normally dormers on the front elevation should have pitched roofs matching the

pitch of the main roof - unless this would be out of character with the design of the house and neighbouring buildings.

- the width of a dormer on the front elevation should not normally exceed its height (measured vertically between the highest and lowest points at which the dormer intersects with the main roof) and a width no greater than 1.2ms would be preferred. Where a larger window area is required, two smaller dormers should be provided, suitably spaced apart to minimise the apparent bulk of the additions.

Materials

3.12 The facing materials of any extension should be similar to those used for the main house. This is particularly important on pitched roofs, where it may be possible to re-use some tiles or slates where the connection is made. Alternatively, these could be removed from the back of the house for use on the front elevation and all new materials confined to the rear.

Garden space and trees

3.13 The garden space around a dwelling is an integral part of its character and should not be reduced to a point where it is out of scale or fails to meet the occupier's need for adequate usable private amenity open space. The Council normally looks to the provision of 15m² of usable private garden space per habitable room in new-build housing schemes and will take this guideline figure into account when considering the effect of an extension which is to encroach on existing garden space.

3.14 Extension work which is likely to affect a tree should be discussed with the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SECTION to check whether it is protected by a Preservation Order and planning consent is required before the work begins. Similar protection applies to trees located within Conservation Areas.

3.15 Even where trees are not protected, they should be kept wherever possible for their contribution to the natural habitat and the appearance of the built environment. If removal is unavoidable, a suitable replacement should be planted. More detailed advice and guidance on extensions within Conservation Areas and on trees is available, respectively, from the CONSERVATION OFFICER and the NATURE CONSERVATION OFFICER in the ENVIRONMENT/LAND USE SECTION of the Department and on trees generally from the Council's PRINCIPAL ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER.

3.16 Wherever possible, existing hedges and screening plants should be kept as they can help the extension to blend in more readily than new fences or walls. The planting of some hedges and shrub species can be an effective crime prevention barrier to your home. The balance between privacy and crime deterrence must always be considered when planting trees, hedges or shrubs.

Designing out crime

3.17 Advice on security both inside and outside the home is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 1 'Residential Development Design Standards'.

The local POLICE CRIME PREVENTION DESIGN ADVISOR (CPDA) or your local CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER (CPO) should be contacted for detailed advice when undertaking any construction works.

SOME POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN THINKING OF EXTENDING YOUR HOME

- *Accurate plans, prepared by a qualified professional used to this work who knows how to avoid the possible pitfalls that can arise, are advisable with any building project whether or not planning permission is needed.*
- *Don't forget to consult your neighbour(s) at an early stage - that can certainly save time if a planning application is necessary. It could even reduce costs if your neighbour wants to carry out similar work at the same time and is willing to share the costs.*
- *It is advisable to ask for more than one quote for any work you want to have carried out.*
- *Ask to see a tree surgeon's insurance certificate before he carries out work for you. Any concern you have about possible tree root damage to your home or extension can also be dealt with by a tree surgeon.*
- *The Council appreciates that you may fear that by insisting on a good design this will add to the overall cost of an extension. In the Council's view initial costs may indeed be higher where good design and appropriate materials are used, but this is likely to be amply repaid in the form of reduced maintenance costs and increased resale value of your home.*
- *The Council is committed to community safety. Consult the Crime Prevention Officer when planning any house extension.*

WHO TO CONTACT

(a) DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SECTION

This section should normally be your first point of contact. A Duty Planning Officer will provide further help and advice on issues relating to this guidance and also about your planning application. The Duty Planning Officer is available between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday. To contact the Duty Planning Officer please **phone (020) 8496 3000** or call into our reception at Chingford Municipal Offices, 16 The Ridgeway, London E4 6PS. Reception opening times are Monday to Thursday 9am to 5.15pm and Friday 9am to 5pm. The offices are closed on Bank and Public Holidays.

Fax number: (020) 8524 8960.

Email address:
development.control@lbwf.gov.uk

(b) BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Extensions will need to comply with Building Regulations and you should contact the Section at the same address for advice

Telephone 020 8496 3000

(c) ACCESS DESIGN OFFICER

Advice is available from an officer in the Building Consultancy DSO - at the same address - on making proper access provision for people with disabilities.

Telephone 020 8496 6230

Facsimile 020 8496 6023

Minicom 020 8529 6966

(d) COMMUNITY PROTECTION, RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

House extensions will need to comply with the Council's fitness standards for habitation set by the Council and government under housing legislation. Advice on the standards and on health and safety at work aspects can be obtained by contacting:

CONSUMER PROTECTION, RESIDENTIAL SERVICE., Environmental Health Service, Residential Division, 154 Blackhorse Road, Walthamstow, LONDON E17 6NW

Telephone 020 8496 3000

(e) HIGHWAYS AND CLEANSING

Enquiries relating to highway, traffic and parking issues should initially be directed to Development Control at the above address.

Advice on refuse storage and other matters relating to refuse collection can be obtained from
Cleansing Management Services

Telephone 020 8496 6112

(f) CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER

For further help and advice on crime prevention please contact the:

CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER, Metropolitan Police Service, Chingford Police Station, 2, King's Head Hill, London E4 7EA

Telephone 020 8345 3266

Facsimile 020 8345 3290

(g) GREEN SPACES GROUP

Advice on the affect of developments generally on trees and the measures necessary for the safeguarding of trees can be obtained from the Green Spaces Group

Telephone: 020 8496 3000