



**Planning Committee**  
14 October 2015

**Report from the Strategic Director of  
Regeneration & Growth**

**Wards affected: Northwick Park**

**Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide  
Update – Consultation Responses and Proposed  
Amendments**

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report considers the comments received from residents on the draft Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide following public consultation.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 That Planning Committee consider the consultation responses, officer responses and proposed revisions to the Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide as set out in Appendices 1-4

2.2 That Planning Committee endorse the Sudbury Court Design Guide in Appendix 5 for consideration and adoption by Cabinet.

**3.0 Discussion**

3.1 The existing Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide dates from 1993. It does not provide clear guidance for existing residents and those proposing to move into the area about all types of works that are generally accepted. In the revised document issued for consultation the general approach to development remained unchanged. However, the updated document is intended to be more 'user friendly'. It provides clearer advice on the interpretation of guidance given current legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.2 The following are the key changes to the Design Guide:

- More detailed text, illustrations, diagrams and examples. It should therefore be a far more useful document than the existing design guide which was very limited.

- Further clarification on replacement windows including examples of the plans and level of detail required as part of a planning application to assist applicants and ensure acceptable replacement windows are provided.
- Details on how to infill and extend porches in a way that is sensitive to the architecture of the host building.

#### *First round of consultation*

- 3.3 Letters were addressed to owner/occupiers in the Sudbury Court Conservation Area on 19th June 2014. These gave 28 days to comment on the draft Design Guide. A 'drop-in session' for residents was held at Vale Farm Sports Centre on 4th July 2014. This gave an opportunity to discuss the proposals with Officers.
- 3.4 A total of 12 comments were received from residents. In addition there were two petitions (one with 34 signatures and one with 27 signatures) supporting the enclosure of porches. Consideration has been given to these individual responses, with discussion and recommendations set out in the table in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Recessed entrance porches and canopies contribute towards the special character of the Conservation Area. The infilling of recessed entrances and loss of canopies which are a significant architectural feature will harm the appearance of the host building and the conservation area. It is also considered that there are alternatives, for example internal alterations, that could improve energy conservation and security.
- 3.6 However, a survey undertaken by officers revealed that around 64% of existing properties within the Conservation Area have enclosed porches of varying degree of quality in terms of their design. These are spread out throughout the conservation area. Generally they were constructed prior to an Article 4 Direction covering the conservation area coming into force in November 1993.
- 3.7 The need for energy conservation and security must be balanced against conservation objectives, which suggests that there should be substantial public benefits that outweigh the overall harm to the Conservation Area.

#### *Second round of consultation*

- 3.8 Letters were addressed to owner/occupiers in the Sudbury Court Conservation Area on 14th November 2014 together with a questionnaire. 28 days was given to complete the questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to focus on particular aspects raised as part of the first round of consultation. It focussed on infilling recessed/open porches and replacement front doors and roof extensions. A 'drop-in session' for residents was held at Vale Farm Sports Centre on 27th November 2014 providing an opportunity to discuss the proposals with Officers.
- 3.9 A total of 138 completed questionnaires were received from residents. Consideration has been given to the individual responses, with discussion and recommendations set out in the table in Appendix 2. There are also charts indicating percentages of resident responses in Appendix 3.

- 3.10 In terms of infilling and creating porches, it has already been acknowledged that the recessed entrance porches and canopies contribute towards the special character of the Conservation Area. However, it is also evident that a large number of these features (around 64%) have been unsympathetically altered in the past. The results of the questionnaire indicate that a large proportion of the respondents supported the infilling of recessed entrances as well as the construction of new wooden porches beneath an existing canopy. In both cases it is important that the original front door should be retained or a sympathetically designed replacement installed to match the architecture of the house.
- 3.11 In terms of replacement front doors, a survey of existing properties within the conservation area indicates that of the properties that do not have porches, around 11% have replacement front doors in alternative materials including PVCu and composite. It is considered that even the more modern doors in composite do not faithfully replicate the design and detailing of the original style of timber doors. This has an adverse impact and harms the character of the conservation area.
- 3.12 A number of residents were in support of hip to gable roof extensions, side dormers and front rooflights. The uniformity of the roofscape and gaps between properties forms part of the special character of the Sudbury Court Conservation Area. At present, only around 4% of properties have been extended with side dormer windows or hip to gable roof extensions. Allowing hip to gable roof extensions or side dormer windows will have a significant impact on the appearance of the houses. It will alter the original roof form and reduce the gaps between the properties. Many are semi-detached and symmetrical. Such roofs extensions will harm the original proportions, design and character of the houses and therefore the streetscape to no public benefit.

#### *Third round consultation*

- 3.13 Letters were addressed to owner/occupiers in the Sudbury Court Conservation Area on 24th August 2015 giving 6 weeks to comment on the final draft Design Guide. The document was made available to view at the local libraries or it could be downloaded from Brent's website. Comments could be made by either completing an online response form, by email or in writing. Consideration has been given to the individual responses, with discussion and recommendations set out in the table in Appendix 4.
- 3.14 A total of 5 responses were received. Three residents commented that infilling porches should be permitted to improve energy conservation, prevent heat loss and for shelter from the weather. It was also necessary to improve security as well as for storage. Two residents commented that there were so many already and it should have been permitted before now.
- 3.15 One resident did not support replacement front doors in alternative materials to timber. The resident also considered that infilling porches is changing the character of a building's front more than the mere replacement of the door with a non-timber material. Furthermore, the resident considered that many modern door materials were capable of replicating timber.

- 3.16 Another resident specifically pointed out that the guide was deficient in terms of the amount of information provided on what would be an acceptable design. The resident suggested that there would be a requirement for multiple design options relevant to the property style, for examples, fully glazed or leaded/stained and moving the original front door forward. Also, if there should be one central door or two doors resembling a set of French doors and the material.

#### Conclusion

- 3.17 It is clear that there is general support for the infilling and the construction of porches beneath an existing canopy. It is recognised that the recessed entrance porches and canopies contribute towards the special character of the Conservation Area. However, it is also evident that a large number of these features (around 64%) have been unsympathetically altered in the past.
- 3.18 There are clear advantages and benefits for residents relating to the improvement of energy conservation, the prevention of heat loss and for shelter from the weather. There are also advantages to the improvement for security as well as for storage.
- 3.19 The Sudbury Court Design Guide has therefore been revised to include the construction of porches within certain parameters. These include allowing PVCu construction and double-glazed French doors, using clear glass and retaining the original front door behind or a suitable timber replacement. The porch must be constructed in sections reflecting the style of the architecture of the main house. The frame sections should be no more than 10cm by 10cm.
- 3.20 Consideration has been given to the comments made as set out in the appendices and minor amendments made to the guide. It is requested that Committee consider the consultation responses, officer responses and endorse alterations to the guide. Planning Committee is also requested to endorse the final revised document as set out in Appendix 5 to be presented to Cabinet for formal adoption.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The guides are intended to provide more detailed guidance for residents, giving a greater level of certainty as to whether works are likely to be acceptable. This may help reduce the expense for residents of submitting applications that are unlikely to get approval, or multiple applications in order to gain an approval. It will also reduce time spent by officers in determining applications.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 If formally adopted by the Cabinet it will replace the existing Design Guide. Its consistency with national and local policy, the level of consultation undertaken, the consideration of responses and amendment of the document should mean that it will carry significant weight when determining planning applications.

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 It is not the intention to prevent people carrying out improvement works to their homes but to ensure that the works are appropriate in the context of the conservation area designation.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

7.1 None.

## **8.0 Environmental Implications**

8.1 The aim of these documents is to ensure development preserves and where possible enhances the character of the area.

## **9.0 Background Documents**

Draft Sudbury Court Design Guide June 2014

Draft Sudbury Court Design Guide August 2015

## **Contact Officers**

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## Appendix 1: First consultation - Individual responses, discussion and recommendations

Consultation Responses	Discussion	Recommendation
<b>Front doors, Porches and Canopies</b>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p>Infilling should be permitted to improve energy conservation and security; (x9)</p> <p>Petition – <i>'by residents to be able to have closed in porches to help with heating costs, security and the help the environment with the emissions'</i>; (x34) signatures from residents within the designated conservation area</p> <p>Petition – <i>'for enclosed porches'</i>; (x27) signatures from residents within the designated conservation area.</p> <p>It is a mixed area as some have already been infilled prior to conservation area designation; (x 3)</p> <p>Note: a number of name/addresses appear on both petitions.</p>	<p>The recessed entrance porches and canopies contribute towards the special character of the Conservation Area. The infilling of recessed entrances and loss of canopies which are a significant architectural feature will harm the appearance of the host building and the conservation area. It would not accord with conservation area guidance.</p> <p>It is also considered that there are alternatives, for example internal alterations, that could improve energy conservation and security.</p> <p>However, the need for energy conservation and security must be balanced against conservation objectives, which suggests that there should be substantial public benefits that outweigh the overall harm to the Conservation Area.</p> <p>A survey has been undertaken by officers, which reveals that around 64% of existing properties within the Conservation Area have enclosed porches of varying degree of quality in terms of their design. These are spread out throughout the conservation area and were mostly constructed prior to the Article 4 Direction coming into force in November 1993.</p>	<p>In light of the above survey, and the number of residents supporting porches and infilled entrances, an appropriate response was to carry out a further consultation exercise. This included residents, ward councillors and the Sudbury Court Residents Association (SCRA) and focus on this aspect.</p>
<b>Rear extensions (including conservatories)</b>		
<p><u>Resident's comments</u></p> <p>Rear extensions should be allowed to be full width of the existing dwelling; (x1)</p>	<p>Noted as this is current practice within the Sudbury Court Conservation Area for single storey rear extensions, and will continue to be supported.</p>	<p>Revise the design guide to be consistent with current practice.</p>

## Side extensions

### Resident's comments

Allow side extensions right up to party wall/boundary perimeter, as allowing a gap of 1m would not make sufficient floor space area for an extension. When the dwellings were originally built, some garages were built up to the boundary; (x1)

2.5m is too large a setback from the front elevation above 1<sup>st</sup> floor/garage is odd and out of character a 1m setback would be sufficient and blend better with the character of the area; (x1)

Where the side boundary of the application property adjoins the rear boundary of the neighbouring site, the draft guide advises that a 1m set in from the side boundary is still required to ensure a development does not appear cramped in its plot and create a bulky unsymmetrical addition.

It is noted that the current design guide allows a garage to be retained or replicated on the site boundary but for the first floor element to be set in 1m from the boundary. It is also noted that the current design guide allows a 1.5m set back from the front of the house.

Revise guidance to follow current approach within the Conservation Area including:

1. existing garages to be retained/replicated at ground floor level;
2. 1m set in at ground floor level if no garage existing
3. in all cases 1m set in at first floor level to be provided.
4. 250mm set back at ground floor level and 1.5m set back at first floor level
5. Special attention to be paid to corner plots to maintain the open character and to prevent bulky, unbalanced additions.

## Dormers, Roof Lights and Alterations to roofs

### Resident's comments

Permission to allow the full conversion of roofs from hip/gable to allow for loft conversions; (x2)

More flexibility loft conversions to ease housing requirements/overcrowding; (x1)

The uniformity of the roofscape and gaps between properties forms part of the special character of the Sudbury Court Conservation Area. Allowing hip to gable roof extensions will have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the properties and harm the streetscene. It will also reduce the gaps between the properties.

As part of the response to additional consultation to be undertaken in association with porches as set out above, with residents, ward councillors and the Sudbury Court Residents Association (SCRA) related to extensions was considered appropriate.

## Window repair and replacement

### Resident's comments

PVCu windows should be

Permitted development rights have been removed to those

The design guide has been updated to confirm

<p>allowed due to high cost of replacing wooden/original look windows and sills. Would allow a higher standard of energy preservation for residents and reduce costs of energy consumption, as the current wooden windows (on some dwellings) lose heat during variant weather conditions; (x1)</p>	<p>properties identified by an Article 4 Direction. As such, the guide seeks to provide clear guidance to residents on the type of window replacement that would be acceptable. This includes double glazing and PVCu.</p> <p>Externally mounted glazing bars, leaded detailing and drip rails are required to reflect the design of the original windows.</p>	<p>that replacements in alternative materials such as PVCu will be supported subject to complying with the requirements of the guide.</p>
<b>Solar panels and environmental installations</b>		
<p><u>Resident's comments</u></p> <p>Solar panels are not allowed on the highway facing roof slopes. The highway roof slopes receives the most sunlight, therefore the only roof slope that would make economical sense; (x1)</p> <p>Rear facing solar panels should be permitted; (x1)</p>	<p>The installation of solar panels is permitted development to the side and rear roof slopes where they do not face the highway. The guide already has information to assist householders when installing such equipment.</p> <p>Installing panels on the front roof slope or side that faces a highway would harm the appearance of the conservation area. It is not considered appropriate to amend the guide.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<b>Gardens</b>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p>Provide 50% soft landscaping in front/highway facing gardens; (x1)</p> <p>The continued funding for tree planting on the road/public greeneries should be continued; (x1)</p>	<p>The guidance on front gardens does seek to provide 50% soft landscaping within front gardens.</p> <p>Funding for tree planting on public highway/greeneries is outside the control of the guide.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<b>Other Issues</b>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p>Enforcement of such strict design guide with more support/residents association given more support and</p>	<p>The guidance is intended to make it simpler for resident to understand what works can be carried out without needing planning permission. Where planning permission is required,</p>	<p>The updated design guide to be amended to include guidance on first floor rear extensions, basements and raised patios/terraces.</p>



<p>consultation.</p> <p>More enforcement is seen to be taking place by the Local Authority; otherwise the guide is null and pointless.</p> <p><u>Other comments</u></p> <p>Further guidance is required on other matters not already picked up within the revised updated design guide.</p>	<p>there is clear guidance on the type of proposals that are likely to be supported.</p> <p>The updated design guide does not include references to first floor rear extensions, basements and raised patios/terraces, which can be found in parts of the conservation area. Some of the area features changes in level between the house and rear garden. Advice on how to approach these alterations would be helpful.</p>	
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**Appendix 2: Second consultation - Individual responses, discussion and recommendations**

Consultation Responses	Discussion	Recommendation
<b>Porches and Canopies</b>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p><i>Reasons why support and design suggestions:</i></p> <p>Infilling should be permitted to improve energy conservation; (x9)</p> <p>Infilling should be permitted to improve security; (x8)</p> <p>Exterior door to match the original style of front door within the porch; (x14)</p> <p>To be predominantly glazed to allow timber frontage doors to be retained; (x11)</p> <p>Porches to be wooden; (x4)</p> <p>Materials and colour to match existing house; (x1)</p> <p><i>Reasons why not support.</i></p> <p>Adversely impact on appearance; (x1)</p> <p>Should not be justified for energy efficiency reasons; (x1)</p> <p>Too many people get away with unauthorised works; (x1)</p>	<p>It is recognised that the recessed entrance porches and canopies contribute towards the special character of the Conservation Area. However, it is also evident that a large number of these features (around 64%) have been unsympathetically altered in the past.</p> <p>The results of the questionnaire also indicate that a large proportion of the respondents supported the infilling of recessed entrances as well as the construction of new wooden porches beneath an existing canopy.</p> <p>In both cases the original door should be retained or a sympathetically designed replacement installed to match the architecture of the house.</p>	<p>It is recommended that the Sudbury Court Design Guide is revised to include a section that allows the infilling of recessed entrances and porches.</p> <p>This is subject to it being of an appropriate design solution. For example, this includes the need for it to be predominantly glazed to allow views through to original features (such as the timber entrance doors and frame) behind.</p> <p>Where lost, there should also be a requirement to reinstate the original front door design to enhance the character of the building as a public benefit.</p> <p>The above approach to be applied to properties that already have a porch and are seeking to replace it.</p> <p>This is to allow uniformity in the design of porches and sustain and enhance the character of the conservation area.</p>
<b>Replacement Front Doors</b>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p><i>Reasons why support and design suggestions.</i></p> <p>Energy Conservation; (x5)</p>	<p>A survey of existing properties within the conservation area indicates that of the properties that do not have porches, around 11% have replacement front doors in alternative materials</p>	<p>No changes recommended.</p>

<p>Security; (x4)</p> <p>Less maintenance; (x1)</p> <p>Replica design of the original style of door in modern material; (x14)</p> <p><i>Reasons why not support and design suggestions.</i></p> <p>Timber door more secure; (x1)</p> <p>Timber door more durable if maintained; (x1)</p> <p>Modern materials out of keeping with character of conservation area; (x1)</p> <p>Original front door to be retained if porch provided; (x1)</p> <p>Replace with timber door to match original style; (x2)</p> <p>Enforcement of such strict design guide with more support/residents association given more support and consultation.</p> <p>More enforcement is seen to be taking place by the Local Authority; otherwise the guide is null and pointless.</p>	<p>including PVCu and composite.</p> <p>It is considered that even the more modern doors in composite do not faithfully replicate the design and detailing of the original style of timber doors. This has an adverse impact and harms the character of the conservation area.</p>	
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**Hip to gable roof extensions, Side Dormers, and Front Roof Lights**

<p><u>Resident's comments</u></p> <p><i>Specific comments on type of roof extensions supported/not supported</i></p> <p>Support hip to gables generally; (x17)</p> <p>Support hip to gables with front roof lights; (x5)</p> <p>Supports hip to gables with no</p>	<p>The uniformity of the roofscape and gaps between properties forms part of the special character of the Sudbury Court Conservation Area.</p> <p>At present, only around 4% of properties have been extended with side dormer windows or hip to gable roof extensions.</p> <p>Allowing hip to gable roof extensions or side dormer</p>	<p>No changes recommended.</p> <p>If Committee are minded not to agree with this recommendation - by allowing such roof extensions - it would erode and harm the significance of the Sudbury Court Conservation Area to such an extent that it would not</p>
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<p>front roof lights; (x7)</p> <p>Supports hip to gables on shared driveway properties; (x1)</p> <p>Supports side dormers; (x17)</p> <p>Does not support hip to gables; (x4)</p> <p>Does not support side dormers; (x7)</p> <p><i>Reasons why roof extensions supported</i></p> <p>Increasing house prices and extended family; (x4)</p> <p>Hip to gable will allow uniform roof design if applied throughout the estate; (x1)</p> <p><i>Reasons why roof extensions not supported</i></p> <p>Out of character; (x2)</p> <p>First floor side and rear extensions should only be allowed; (x6)</p> <p>Rear dormers only; (x6)</p>	<p>windows will have a significant impact on the appearance of the houses, altering the original roof form and reducing the gaps between the properties. Many are semi-detached and symmetrical. Such roofs extensions will harm the original proportions, design and character of the houses and therefore the streetscape - to no public benefit.</p>	<p>be worth pursuing its protection as a conservation area.</p> <p>In such instance, it will be recommended that the Sudbury Court Conservation Area is de-designated.</p>
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### Appendix 3 – Charts

Chart A shows the response from properties within the Sudbury Court Conservation Area on the proposal for **infilling recessed entrances and porches** (nb numbers provided are actual numbers and not percentages)

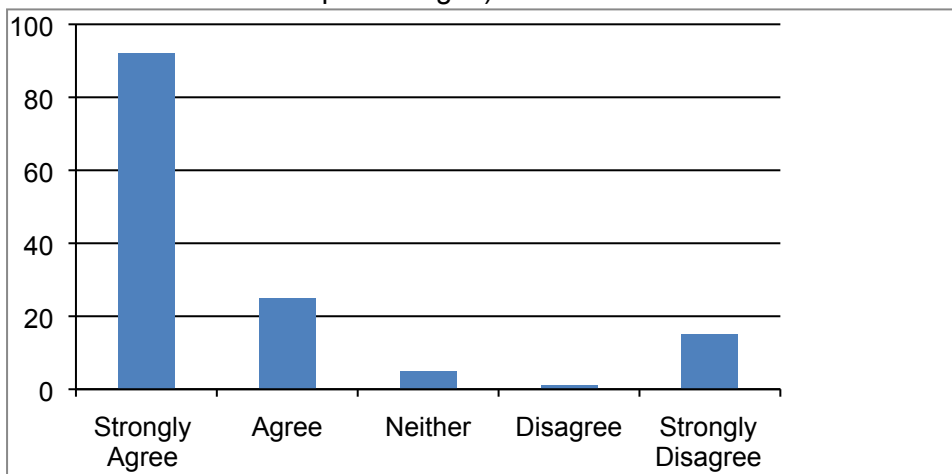


Chart B shows the response from properties within the Sudbury Court Conservation Area on the proposal for **replacement front doors in alternative materials to timber** (nb numbers provided are actual numbers and not percentages)

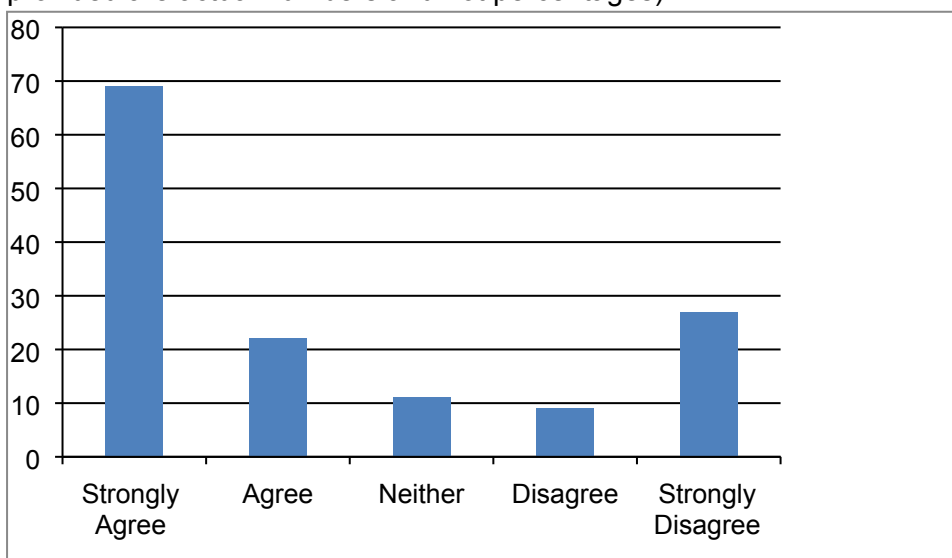
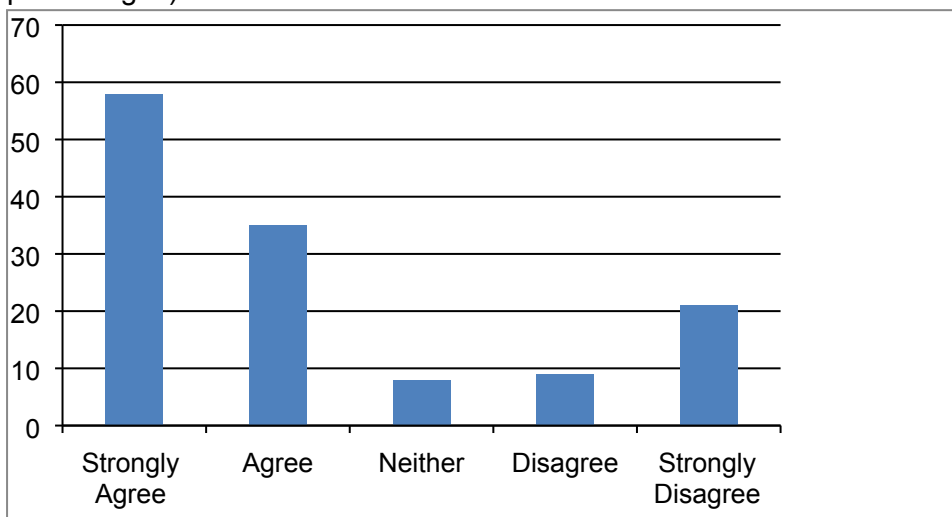


Chart showing the response from properties within the Sudbury Court Conservation Area on the **proposal for roof extensions** (nb numbers provided are actual numbers and not percentages)



## Appendix 4: Third consultation - Individual responses, discussion and recommendations

Consultation Responses	Discussion	Recommendation
<b>Porches and Canopies</b>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p><i>Reasons why support and design suggestions:</i></p> <p>Infilling should be permitted to improve energy conservation, prevent heat loss and shelter from weather; (x2)</p> <p>Infilling should be permitted to improve security; (x2)</p> <p>Infilling should be permitted to improve storage ; (x2)</p> <p>Infilling should be permitted because there are so many already; (x3)</p> <p>To be predominantly glazed with double doors to allow timber frontage doors to be retained; (x2)</p> <p>Porches to be wooden; (x1)</p> <p>Porches to match the style of architecture to match the existing house; (x1)</p> <p>Materials and colour to match existing house; (x1)</p> <p>Exterior door to match the original style of front door within the porch or original moved to front; (x1)</p> <p>Replacement original front door should be allowed in a composite material, replicating the wood grain effect; (x1)</p> <p>More clarity over design; (x1)</p>	<p>It is recognised that the recessed entrance porches and canopies contribute towards the special character of the Conservation Area. However, it is also evident that a large number of these features (around 64%) have been unsympathetically altered in the past.</p> <p>The results of the consultation also indicate that a large proportion of the respondents supported the infilling of recessed entrances as well as the construction of new porches beneath an existing canopy.</p> <p>The results confirm that the new porch should have double-glazed French doors. In both cases the original door should be retained or a sympathetically designed replacement installed to match the architecture of the house.</p> <p>The results also confirm that the porch should match the style of the existing house.</p> <p>Exterior doors need to be fully glazed to allow the original to be appreciated behind. It allows the original appearance of the building to be maintained. The original front door should not be moved forward as it would look unconventional in its new position.</p> <p>A composite material could be allowed if it can be proven to match the design of the original.</p>	<p>The Sudbury Court Design Guide has been revised to include a section that allows the infilling of recessed entrances and new porches.</p> <p>This is subject to it being of an appropriate design solution.</p> <p>For example, this includes the need for it to be predominantly glazed to allow views through to original features (such as the timber entrance doors and frame) behind.</p> <p>Where lost, there is a requirement to reinstate the original front door design to enhance the character of the building as a public benefit.</p> <p>New porches and double French doors are recommended in timber construction but PVCu double-glazed units/construction will be supported where there is a sympathetic design approach.</p> <p>The above approach to be applied to properties that already have a porch and are seeking to replace it.</p> <p>This is to allow uniformity in the design of porches and sustain and enhance the character of the conservation area.</p>

<p><b><i>Reasons why not supported.</i></b></p> <p>The design guide is far too prohibitive and onerous and the Conservation Area status and rules for this locality should be repealed; (x1)</p>	<p>The Conservation Area and Design Guide is supported by the Sudbury Court Residents' Association and the residents.</p>	<p>No change proposed.</p>
<p><b>Front garden area</b></p>		
<p><u>Resident's Comments</u></p> <p><i>Reasons why support and design suggestions.</i></p> <p>Support the idea that no more than 50% can be hard standing. It would be nice to have some design ideas on what is acceptable for the hard standing and pathways; (x1)</p> <p>Allow appropriately designed side dormers to give staircase access for a roof addition; (x1)</p>	<p>It is important that there are guidelines on what is acceptable. Clearly robust materials and those in keeping with the style of Sudbury Court would be preferred.</p> <p>In terms of side dormers, only around 4% of properties have been extended with side dormer windows or hip to gable roof extensions. Allowing side dormer windows will have a significant impact on the appearance of the houses, altering the original roof form and reducing the gaps between the properties. Many are semi-detached and symmetrical. Such roofs extensions will harm the original proportions, design and character of the houses and therefore the streetscape - to no public benefit.</p>	<p>With reference to hardstandings, the guide will be updated for clarity to ensure it is clear about materials and layout. For example, the use of flagstones and the careful laying and setting out of materials.</p> <p>No changes recommended for side dormers.</p> <p>If Committee are minded not to agree with this recommendation - by allowing such roof extensions - it would erode and harm the significance of the Sudbury Court Conservation Area to such an extent that it would not be worth pursuing its protection as a conservation area.</p>