Draft SPD 5 – Altering and Extending Your Home

1. Introduction

1.1 Permitted Development & Planning Permission

If you live in a house, that has not been converted into flats, then you may be able to carry out minor changes and extensions to your property without the need for planning permission. This type of work is often referred to as 'permitted development'. The criteria for those projects that can be carried out as permitted development are set out in the Town & Country (General Permitted Development) Order which was most recently amended on the 1st October 2008. If you live in a flat, or a house converted into flats, then you will normally require planning permission for most external changes.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a project will require planning permission then you should contact the Planning Service for further advice. Formal confirmation of whether planning permission is required can only be obtained from the Planning Service through the submission of an application for a Certificate of Lawful Development.

1.2 Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings

Some areas of the Borough have been designated as Conservation Areas due to their architectural quality and historic significance and some individual buildings have been deemed so important that they have been Statutorily Listed. It is recommended that you always check whether your property is located within a Conservation Area or whether it is a Listed Building before you start planning any changes. This is particularly important as each Conservation Area or Listed Building will have special planning controls that apply. The advice contained in this guide is not intended for properties in Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings although you may find that some of the principles being applied are useful for developments within a Conservation Area. The Planning Service will be able to confirm whether your property is located in a Conservation Area, or whether it has been Listed and provide you with specialist planning advice.

1.3 Areas of Distinctive Residential Character (ARDC)

Some areas of the Borough, whilst not quite meeting the criteria for designation as a Conservation Area, have been recognised for their distinctive residential character. Whilst these areas are not subject to additional statutory planning controls they have been recognised as part of the Council's development plan policies. Whilst much of the guidance in this document will apply to properties located in ARDC's there may be some additional design requirements that apply. To find out if your property is located in an ARDC or to check what additional requirements apply to properties in an ARDC you should contact a member of your local area Planning Team (see 'Contact Us').

1.4 Building Regulations

All building work is required to comply with current Building Regulations, regardless of whether planning permission is required or not. For more information on Building Regulations and how to make a Building regulations application please contact the Council's Building Control Consultancy Service (see 'Contact Us').

2. General Guidance for Extensions

The following guidance sets out some basic principles that often apply if you are proposing to build an extension or make an alteration to your home.

2.1 Side Windows

Locating windows on the side wall of a property or extension can harm the privacy of both you and your neighbour. Side windows may also become obstructed if your neighbour also wishes to

extend in the future. However, side windows that contain obscured glazing may be permitted. If openings are to be provided in side windows then these will normally need to be located at least 1.7m above the internal floor level of the room in which the window is installed. Where the side of a property faces the street, additional windows to habitable rooms will normally be encouraged.

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Side Window Position and opening pattern

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2.2 Corner Properties

If you live in a property located on the corner of a road junction then you will need to take extra care when designing any extension as it is more likely to be visible from the street. If there is a gap of 5m or more between the side wall of the original property and the boundary with the street you must ensure that any side extension projecting from the side wall of your property is set in from the boundary with the street by at least 2m. This will help preserve the open character of the junction. If the gap between the side wall of your property and the boundary with the street is less than 5m a reduced minimum set in from the boundary of at least 1m will normally be required. Further guidance on side extensions is provided in the sections on ‘Single-Storey Extensions’ and 'Two-Storey Extensions'.

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Diagrams of corner property will single-storey side extension indicating relationship to the street.

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2.3 Angled Boundaries and Splays

In general, most residential properties are built on rectangular plots either in parallel with, or perpendicular too, the neighbouring properties. However, in some cases houses have been built at an angle to one another creating splayed plots. If your property is located on, or adjacent to a splayed plot then you will need to take extra care to ensure that your proposed extension will not harm the daylight and outlook of your neighbours. In general, there are two main types of splays that occur which each result in different issues that need to be considered when planning any extension.

External Splays

External splays generally occur where a property located on a corner site has been angled to face the corner of the road junction. The angled relationship between the properties can cause problems when rear and/or side extensions are proposed, especially if these have two or more storeys. You may be required to set your extension back further than normal from the angled boundary to ensure that it does not unreasonably infringe on the daylight and outlook of your neighbours.

If you are proposing to build a side extension to an angled property the front wall of this extension will often project towards the street. You will normally be required to maintain a minimum gap of at least 2m between the extension and the boundary with the street although in some cases this gap may need to be increased in order to respect the existing building line of the adjacent properties.

(Insert diagram of external splay relationship)

Internal Splays

Internal splays are often found around properties located at the end of a cul-de-sac where the width of the plot increases the further you move away from the street. This sometimes means that side and rear extensions may have a reduced impact on the daylight and outlook of your neighbour if their property is detached from yours. However, extensions should remain subsiduary to the main property and maximum depth and width dimensions may still apply.

(Insert diagram of internal splay relationship)

2.4 Maintaining Garden Space

Before deciding to build an extension you should consider the impact that this will have on your garden space. If your garden is very small then building an extension may not be appropriate. Extensions that would fail to preserve an appropriate garden area, relative to the size and type of accommodation to which it is attached, will normally be resisted. Further guidance on appropriate garden areas is set out in the Planning Service's design guide for new development.

3. Single Storey Extensions

If you live in a flat, or a house converted into flats, you will need planning permission to build a single-storey extension. However, if you live in a house you may not need planning permission but it is always advisable to check with the Planning Service before you start work. This section aims provide guidance on designing your single-storey extension in a way that will preserve the amenity of your neighbours whilst complementing the original design of your home.

3.1 Width

Single storey side extensions should not normally be wider than 50% of the width of the original property. This may mean that you can build right up to the joint boundary with your neighbour, unless your property is located on a corner (see '2.2 Corner Properties'). If you can, this will ensure that if your neighbour also decides to extend there will not be an awkward narrow gap between the two extensions which cannot be maintained. Remember, you will need your neighbour's permission if you wish to enter their land when constructing or maintaining your extension. You should ensure that all parts of your extension, including roofing, guttering and foundations, are located within the boundaries of your property.

Single-storey rear extensions should not normally project beyond the main side walls of your property unless combined with a side extension. A combined side and rear extension will normally be permitted unless this would harm the daylight and outlook of your neighbours, particularly if they have original side facing windows that provide the sole means of light to a habitable room.

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Diagram of semi-detached house with single-storey combined rear and side extension. Indicate 50% width and new 3m depth.

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3.2 Height/Roof Detail

The maximum height of your single-storey extension should be determined by the proximity of the extension to the neighbouring properties, including those above, and the type of roof you are proposing.

Flat Roof

If you are proposing to construct a single-storey extension with a flat roof a maximum height of 3m will usually be permitted. However, If your extension is set away from all boundaries by a distance of at least 2m and the roof of the extension would be at least 1m below the window sill of any neighbouring habitable room windows above then a height of up to 4m may be permitted.

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Single-storey rear extension with flat roof 1m below window sill.

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Pitched Roof

If you are proposing to construct a single-storey extension with a pitched roof then the eaves of the roof should normally be no higher than 3m with the ridge of the roof being no higher than 4m. If your extension is located within 2m your neighbour's back garden rear boundary then you may be required to reduce the average height of your pitched roof to 3m.

Ground Level Differences

Ground level differences often occur both within and between rear gardens. Where these differences are particularly severe they can seriously alter the impact of your extension on neighbouring properties and cause confusion over the

reference point for measurements. A raised patio or decking can be used to maintain a constant floor level between you home and your garden. However, this should be carefully designed to minimise any overlooking of your neighbours.

- If your garden is set at a higher level than your neighbours' then this will increase the impact of your extension on the daylight and outlook of your neighbour. In cases where the level difference between properties is particularly significant you may be required to either:-

  a)Reduce the maximum height of your extension by the same amount as the level difference
  b) Set in your extension from the boundary by the same distance as the level difference.

- If your garden slopes either towards or away from the main rear wall of your property then height measurements should be taken adjacent to the main rear wall of your property.
- Where there is a difference between internal and external ground levels a raised patio or decking may be permitted. If this raises the existing external ground level by more than 300mm then this could harm the privacy of your neighbours.

(Insert diagrams to demonstrate approach to levels differences, measurement points and raised decking)

3.3 Depth

The depth of your single-storey extension should be carefully considered to ensure that your extension respects the daylight and outlook of your neighbours. Single-storey side extensions can often run the full depth of the original house without causing unreasonable harm to the daylight and outlook of your neighbours.

However, single-storey extensions that project beyond the main front wall of the property will not normally be permitted, unless they comply with the guidance contained in the section 3.6 on 'Porches' .

The maximum permitted depth of a single-storey rear extension is usually determined by the type of property you live in. If your property is attached to another property (including terraced, mid-terrace, end-of-terrace or semi detached) then a maximum depth of up to 3m will normally be permitted. If your property is detached on both sides then a maximum depth of 4m will normally be permitted.

Where the original rear wall of your property is staggered or has a different projection to the neighbouring properties then this may need to be reflected in the depth of your extension to ensure that the relationship between the properties would not have a harmful impact on daylight or outlook.

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Diagram of single-storey rear extension to properties with staggered rear building lines.

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3.4 Conservatories

The guidance for single-storey extensions also applies to conservatories. If your neighbour has habitable room windows above your conservatory then you will be required to obscure the glazing in the roof of your conservatory in order to avoid issues of overlooking and light pollution. The guidance on side windows (section 2.1) will also apply to the flank walls of any conservatory

3.5 Single-Storey Infill Extensions

In Brent there are a number of terraced Victorian houses that have an original two or three storey rear projection. These projections, sometimes referred to as 'outriggers', are usually set in from the boundary on one side which creates a narrow passage to the main rear wall of the property, often known as the 'side-return'. Unless extreme care is taken with the design, infilling the side return with an extension will often cause a problem for neighbours who already suffer from restricted daylight and outlook. The constraints of designing an infill extension mean that the guidance on single-storey extensions given in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 will not normally apply..

The Planning Service suggests three approaches to designing an acceptable infill extension although not all may be appropriate in every case. If you are considering the 'Standard' or 'Courtyard' approach to your infill extension then it is important that careful consideration be given to the height and design of the roof of the extension in order to minimise the impact of extension on your neighbour. Infill extensions with flat roofs are often overbearing and you should consider a pitched, 'lean-too', design with the eaves set at level that respects the fact that permitted development would allow for the construction of a 2m high wall or fence along the boundary with your neighbour. It is also better to use materials that are soft or light weight in appearance, such as timber or glazing, in order to reduce the visual impact of any infill extension.

Approach 1 – The Standard Approach

If you proposed to infill the side return from the rear wall of the main body of the house then the maximum permitted depth of the extension will be 3m. This may not be sufficient to infill the entire side return but it will ensure that the impact of your extension on the outlook of your neighbour is reasonable. If the rear facing window on the ground floor of the neighbouring property is the sole window to a habitable room, such as a back bedroom or living room, then this approach could be problematic.

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Diagram of 3m standard approach infill extension

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Approach 2 – The Courtyard Approach

In order to reduce the impact of your proposed infill extension on your neighbour then you may decide to leave a courtyard, or light well, adjacent to the main body of your property. This approach will also allow you to keep the original window position to the rear of your property. The Planning Service considers that In order for a courtyard to be effective it must have a minimum depth of 4m. If a courtyard 4m in depth can be maintained then infilling the remaining area of the side return will normally be permitted, subject to a sympathetic design. You should also check that a suitable means of fire escape can provided in compliance with

current Building Regulations. Where appropriate, planning permission for the construction of this type of infill extension will normally be subject to a condition restricting permitted development rights that could be used to infill the protected courtyard area in the future.

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Diagram of Courtyard approach infill extension

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Approach 3 – The Joint Approach

If you and your neighbour decide that you would both like to build an infill extension then you may consider submitting a joint application to construct both infill extensions at the same time. If both neighbours construct infill extensions at the same time this removes the impact of the extensions on each neighbour. Where a joint proposal is submitted the Planning Service would expect the design of the extensions to mirror one another to maintain the character of the properties. If planning permission is granted for a joint infill development this will normally be subject to a condition that both extensions are constructed and completed at the same time. Be warned, if your neighbour fails to complete their side of the infill extension then this could invalidate your planning permission and any work carried out by you could be subject to enforcement procedures.

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Diagram of a joint approach infill extension to two terraced properties

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3.6 Porches

Building a porch is a good way of reducing the amount of heat lost around an existing external door. However, as they are normally situated at the front of the property they can have a negative effect on the character of your street if not carefully designed.

Porches should normally be modest in size, designed to enclose an existing doorway rather than a means of extending your property. The appropriate size of your porch will often be determined by the design of your home. Porches should not normally project beyond or connect to bay windows but, where the design respects existing building lines and the character of the street, they may link to a side garage.

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Diagrams of acceptable porch designs

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4. Two-Storey Extensions

Two-storey extensions can significantly increase the size of your home but they can also dominate the appearance of your house if poorly designed. The size and scale of two-storey extensions also make it more likely that your extension will interfere with the daylight and outlook of your neighbours. Be aware, building a two-storey extension can sometimes prevent you obtaining planning permission in the future for further extensions to the roof.

4.1 Width

The width of a two-storey extension to your house should generally be no wider than 50% of the width of the house. This means when planning a side extension it may be possible to build the extension right up to the joint boundary unless your property is located on a corner (see section 2.2 'Corner Properties'). Where this is possible the first floor of the proposed extension should normally be set back from the main front wall of the house by a minimum of 2.5m. This set back will prevent excessive infilling which can harm the character of your street and, in some cases, a set back in excess of 2.5m may be required to maintain the character of the street. However, If all parts of your proposed two-storey extension are set in by at least 1m from the joint boundary with your neighbour then the minimum depth of the required set back may be reduced to 1.5m.

If you are planning a two-storey rear, or combined side and rear, extension then you should also take care that the width of your extension does not exceed 50% of the width of the house. Extensions that are excessively wide can harm the character of your property.

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Diagrams of acceptable two-storey side extension designs demonstrating both 2.5 and 1.5m set backs.

Diagram of two-storey combined side and rear extension

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4.2 Height/Roof Detail

To ensure that your two-storey extension does not dominate the appearance of your existing house all ridge lines on the extension should be set down from the ridge of the existing roof. The roof of your two-storey extension should match the style, pitch angle, eaves and materials used on the main roof of your house. A modest crown roof may be permitted, subject to its visibility, in order to facilitate a two-storey side extension. However, flat roofs

or false-pitched roof are generally unacceptable on two-storey extensions. You will normally be expected to maintain the roof form of your two-storey extension and further extensions, including dormer windows, will not normally be permitted, even if required to provide access to your loft.

You should consider and provide details of how your new roof will provide adequate drainage for rain water, particularly when extending to the site boundary. An over-hanging eaves is preferred but a modest box gutter may also be considered providing that this does not incorporate a parapet wall.

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Diagram of acceptable box gutter design

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4.3 Depth

The depth of your two-storey extension should be carefully considered to ensure that your extension respects both the character of your house and garden and the daylight and outlook of your neighbours. Two-storey extensions to the side of your house can normally meet the main rear wall of the original house, at first floor level, without causing unreasonable harm to the appearance of your property and the daylight and outlook of your neighbours providing that the following conditions are met.

The required set back at first floor level is provided (see section 4.1'Width')

Your neighbour has no side facing windows which provide the sole source of light and outlook to a habitable room.

The original main rear wall of your house, at first floor level, does not project beyond that of your neighbours.

If you are proposing a two-storey extension that would fall within 2m of the joint boundary and project beyond the rear of a neighbouring property then you should carry out the following assessment, before submitting a planning application, to ensure that your extension will not unreasonably restrict the daylight and outlook of your neighbours.

The depth that your two-storey extension projects beyond the neighbouring properties should not exceed half the distance measured from the side wall of your extension to the centre point of the nearest neighbouring habitable room window on the ground floor, on either side. In the case of extensions with more than two storeys windows on upper levels may also be taken into consideration. If your neighbour has a bay window then the centre point should be taken as the point at the centre of the bay in line with the main rear wall of the property. The application of this rule means that it is rarely possible to get planning permission for a two-storey rear extension to a narrow terraced property.

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Diagram explaining 1:2 rule

Diagram indicating measurement point for bay windows

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Despite the above test, even if it can be demonstrated that your proposed two-storey extension would not harm the daylight and outlook of your neighbours the maximum projection from the main rear wall of the original house will usually be limited to 3m to ensure that the extension does not dominate the original character of your property.In addition to this, your two storey extension should be located at least 7m away from the rear boundary of your garden.

5. Roof Extensions & Alterations

If you are considering converting your loft in order to provide extra living space then you may need to build a roof extension to provide the necessary space and headroom. If you live in a flat, or a house converted into flats, you will need planning permission to build a roof extension. However, if you live in a house you may not need planning permission but it is always advisable to check with the Planning Service before you start work.

In the past, where planning permission was required, previous planning guidance meant that you would be unlikely to get planning permission for a roof extension of a comparable size and design to those constructed under permitted development on surrounding houses. The following guidance on roof extensions (sections 5.1 and 5.2) has been designed to allow those living in flats in converted houses to design their loft conversion to be more in keeping with those of the neighbouring properties. Where the neighbouring properties have not enjoyed permitted development rights, such as in the case of purpose built flats or flats above shops, greater care will be required in the design of any roof extension.

5.1 Rear Roof Extensions

Houses Converted into Flats

Rear dormer windows that span the full width of the roof slope will normally be permitted up to a maximum width of 6.5m. Rear dormer windows should be set below the ridge line of the original house and should be set up sufficiently to provide an eaves and guttering detail. The materials used to clad your rear dormer should complement the original roof.

Some Victorian terraced properties have an original two or three storey projection from the main body of the property. Where planning permission is required, extensions to the roof of these projections will not normally be permitted as these can interfere with the daylight and outlook of neighbouring occupiers below.

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Diagram indicating roof extensions to house-to-flat conversions

Diagram indicating roof extensions to purpose built flats

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Flats Above Shops and Purpose-Built Flats

If you live in a flat above a commercial parade or you live in a purpose built block of flats then greater care will be required when designing any rear roof extension. It is not always possible to extend the roof of this type of property as the overall design of the building or parade can be significantly harmed. Where the principle of building a rear dormer window to this type of property

is acceptable, then the total width of the rear dormer(s) should not exceed half the width of the original roof slope. Any rear dormer(s) should be set up from the eaves line by at least 0.5m and be set down from the ridge line by 0.3m when measured along the plane of the roof slope. The front face of your dormer should be mainly glazed with windows that match the proportions and materials of the original windows on the property.

5.2 Side Roof Extensions

Houses Converted into Flats

If you have a hipped roof you may find that you need to build a side roof extension to provide room for the staircase leading into your loft conversion. There are two main types of side roof extension, a side dormer window or a gable-end extension, which can be built to provide the required space. The size and character of your property should determine which of these extensions is most appropriate.

If the roof to be extended is less than 9m in depth, measured at eaves level, then a gable-end extension will often be the most appropriate form of side roof extension unless your property is located on a corner plot. The design and materials of the new 'gable' should normally indicate the internal floor level by some change or differentiation in the external materials. If your property has a gable-end extension then it is unlikely that you will be able to obtain planning permission for a two-storey side extension.

If you property is located on a corner plot or the roof to be extended has a depth in excess of 9m at eaves level then a well designed side dormer window may be more appropriate as the bulk of a gable-end extension could harm the character of your property and the street. Side dormer windows will be expected to complement the roof of your property both in terms of design and materials.

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Diagram of hip-gable extension

Diagram of side dormer

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Flats Above Shops and Purpose-Built Flats

Hipped to gable extensions will not normally be permitted on flats above shops or purpose built flats and they can unbalance appearance of the property and harm the character of the street. Proposals for modest side dormer windows will be considered on their individual merits.

5.3 Front Roof Extensions

Extensions to the front roof slope will not normally be permitted. Exceptions may be made in some areas of the Borough where front dormer windows are an original feature of the streetscene. In such circumstances, the design of the proposed front dormer should replicate the original design and materials.

5.4 Roof lights

In the case of flats above shops or purpose built flats no more than two roof lights will normally be permitted on roof slopes that are visible from public areas.

5.5 Roof Terraces & Balconies

Roof terraces and balconies are a good way of providing valuable outside space, particularly in dense urban areas where valuable garden space can be scarce. However, if poorly designed roof terraces and balconies can unreasonably affect the privacy and amenity of your neighbours due to their prominent and sensitive location. The sensitive nature of roof terraces and balconies means that planning permission is usually required.

Terraces are normally more appropriately located at the same level as the main roof, above a two, or more, storey rear projection. It is also important that the rooms immediately below your roof terrace form part of your home to avoid disturbing your neighbours. First floor roof terraces are often unacceptable because they can result in more direct forms of overlooking into your neighbours garden and bedroom windows. In some cases overlooking can be overcome by providing screening but excessive screening can in turn harm the daylight and outlook of your neighbours.

When locating your terrace on the roof of an existing projection it is normally required that you set the terrace in from the edge of the existing roof by at least 1.5m on all exposed sides using an obscured means of enclosure with a height of 1.5m. This will help reduce the overall impact of your terrace on your neighbours. Planning permission may also be conditional on you providing and maintaining planters around the enclosure to restrict access to the edges of your terrace. Any decking should not significantly raise the level of the existing roof. If the original roof is pitched then you should normally set your terrace within the existing pitch.

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Roof Terrace Diagrams

Internal Balcony example diagrams

Balconies are best designed internally, either cut into the existing roof or inside a rear dormer window. Projecting balconies are more problematic and where proposed they should be screened to avoid sideways views. If you share, or do not own, the rear garden of your property a balcony may not be permitted due to overlooking.. Any screening provided should be assessed in a similar way to a two-storey extension to ensure that it does not harm the light and outlook of your neighbours (see section 2.3).

6. Basements

Building a basement is becoming an increasingly popular way of extending homes in the Borough, particularly in areas where the form of the buildings and plot sizes limit the scope for other types of extension. Some properties will already have original basements or cellars which may be modified to provide living space. The advice contained in this section only relates to basement extensions that are required to provide additional living

space for your home. Basement extensions that are to be used to provide separate accommodation will be subject to wider assessment.

6.1 Basement Extensions

The internal footprint of your basement extension should normally be confined within the footprint of your home and should be set over one level. Where possible you should arrange the layout of your basement extension to allow natural light and ventilation to any habitable rooms by providing a light-well. If your basement extension is exposed, by a light-well (see section 6.2), on an elevation that faces the street then any exterior materials or windows should normally match those of the existing house.

6.2 Light-wells

In order to provide natural light and ventilation to your basement extension you may wish to excavate a light-well. In the first instance, light-wells should be located towards the rear, or side, of your property so that they are not visible from the street. Light-wells that are not visible from the street should be set away from the site boundary by at least 1m and will normally be permitted to project 2m from the existing house and have a maximum of excavation of 3m.

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Diagram of basement extension with rear light-well

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If you also require an additional light-well to the front of your property, or the side of your property on a corner plot, then this should be carefully designed, particularly in areas where light-wells are not characteristic of the surrounding properties.

Light-wells that are visible from the street should be set at least 2m away from the boundary with the street and/or any other light-well within the site. Such light-wells will normally be permitted to project a maximum of 1m from the existing house with a maximum width and excavation of 3m. If the front of your property has an existing bay window then your light-well will be expected to follow the footprint of this bay window. Where planning permission is granted for a light-well within a garden that is visible from the street, you will normally be required to provide a suitable landscaping scheme (see section 8 'Front Gardens') for the remaining garden area.

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Diagram of Basement Extension with front light-well.

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An enclosure, such as a handrail or a grille, will often be required to protect people, and particularly children, from falling into your light-well. Where the light-well would not be visible from the street then an enclosure of 1.1m in height will be considered. If your light-well would be visible from the street then you would normally be expected to install an enclosure that is flush with the ground

level such as a horizontal grille or glazed blocks. This will minimise the visual impact of the light-well on the appearance of your property and the street.

6.3 Flooding

If your property is located in an area where there is a higher than normal risk of flooding a basement extension may not be a suitable way to extend your home. Where there is a medium or high risk of flooding then you will be expected to provide a "Flood Risk Assessment" and details of suitable flood proofing measures. In areas in where there is a high risk of flooding you should not locate bedrooms in the basement.

7. Outbuildings

Building an outbuilding or shed is a good way of creating extra storage space or providing a place to carry out a hobby or pastime. The guidance contained in this chapter is only intended for outbuildings that will be used for this type of activity. If you intend to use your outbuilding as place of work or to provide sleeping accommodation, either casually for friends and relatives or as a self-contained flat, then you should seek advice from the Planning Service.

Providing you live in a house you may not need planning permission for an outbuilding used incidentally to the main property but it is always advisable to check with the Planning Service before starting work. If you live in a flat, or a house converted into flats, you will need planning permission to build any outbuilding or garage.

Where planning permission is required, only one outbuilding will normally be permitted in your garden. The maximum size of your outbuilding will usually be determined by its location and the size of your garden. The width of your outbuilding should not exceed 50% of the original garden width, measured across the proposed location of your outbuilding. The depth of outbuildings will normally be restricted to 4m and they should be entirely located within the final fifth of your garden. If you cannot locate a particular outbuilding in the final fifth of your garden then you should consider reducing its depth.

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Diagram to indicate acceptable location and footprint of an outbuilding.

Diagrams of different types of acceptable outbuilding design

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Outbuildings will normally be restricted to a single-storey so that they do not overbear the neighbouring gardens. The maximum permitted height will normally be determined by the proximity of your outbuilding to the neighbouring boundaries, on both sides and to the rear. If any part of your outbuilding would lie within a distance of 2m of the boundary with neighbours' garden then the maximum height permitted would be 2.5m. If you are able to maintain a gap of at least 2m from all neighbouring boundaries an increased maximum height of 3m may be permitted.

In certain circumstances, when a dual-pitched roof is proposed and the outbuilding would be at least 2m for all neighbouring boundaries, then a ridge height of 4m may be considered acceptable. The eaves of an outbuilding with any type of pitched roof should not exceed 2.5m in height.

Where planning permission granted for a new outbuilding or shed this may be conditional on the introduction of a suitable landscaping scheme around the proposed structure. Including landscaping proposals with a planning application for an outbuilding or shed is advisable as this can save time.

8. Front Gardens

Front gardens play an important role in creating the character of your street. The Planning Service will seek improvements to front gardens as part of planning applications that involve:-

- Extensions that result in a loss of an area capable of providing off-street parking
- The change of use or loss of an existing garage
- The formation of a vehicular crossover or off-street parking
- The conversion of a property into flats
- Extensions that significantly increase the number of bedrooms in a property.
- The excavation of a light well within the front garden.

It is advisable for detailed landscaping plans to be submitted as part of these types of planning application. The type of detail that is normally required as part of a landscaping plan for a front garden may include the following.

- At least 50% of the original garden area to be planted with soft landscaping features of an appropriate species and density.
- Details of materials to be used to form areas of hard landscaping. You are encouraged to use porous or permeable materials.
- Parking spaces, at least 2.4m in width and 4.8m in depth, to be located at 90° to the road, towards one side of the front garden with convenient access to the property entrance.
- A vehicular access no more than 3m in width. An access of 3.5m will be considered where this is shared with the adjacent property.
- The retention or reinstatement of a suitable boundary wall or hedge. Boundary walls above 1.5m will not normally be accepted. The visibility of motorists should not be obscured by boundary walls.
- Details for the storage of refuse and recycling

(Insert Image of acceptable front garden layout)

1. Glossary

2. Contact Us