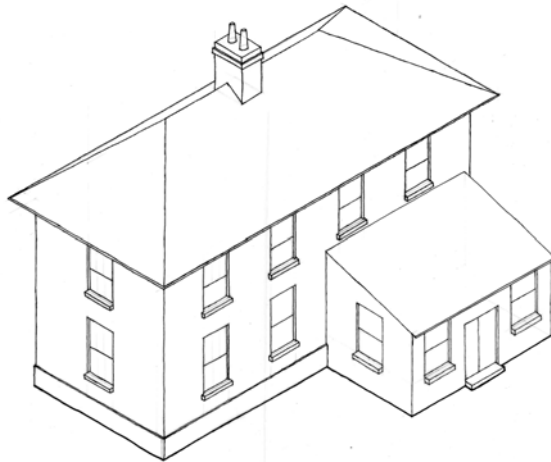




CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL Development Management Service  
Planning Guidance Note 3

**Design Guidelines for Alterations to Dwellings & Extensions  
(Revised September 2009)**



This Guidance Note is intended to provide applicants and professional agents with general advice on acceptable forms of development for domestic premises where planning permission is required. It is hoped that the note will reduce the number of unacceptable planning applications by increasing the level of understanding of the way in which proposals are assessed. The note is for advisory purposes and it can only provide a broad indication as to whether a particular proposal has a reasonable likelihood of success. As the circumstances surrounding each case are always different, each application will be considered on its individual merits.

**Is Planning Permission Required?**

The advice in this guidance note is mainly for developments that require planning permission, so if your proposal does not need planning permission this needs to be confirmed.

The relevant regulations are set out in the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2008 with its various amendments, which details categories of 'permitted development' where planning permission is not required. Most single dwellings have a 'permitted development' allowance, (unless this has been limited by a condition on a planning permission) which can vary according to the nature of the property itself and whether it is located within a Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty/National Park. General guidance on whether planning permission is required is provided on the District Council (CDC) website ([Chichester District Council - Do I Need Planning Permission?](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/cdc/development/permissions/permissions.htm)) and the Planning Portal (interactive house) ([www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/hhg/houseguide.html](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/hhg/houseguide.html)).

For advice on a minor operation such as the erection of a gate, fence or wall, the creation of an access to a highway, the formation of a hard surface or the installation of a satellite dish, please complete a “Do I need planning permission” form (available from the CDC web site: <http://www.chichester.gov.uk/article/25616/Find-out-about-permitted-development>, see the ‘Minor Operations’ PDF) which will help the officer answer your query as accurately and as quickly as possible. For extensions and alterations to dwellings or erection of outbuildings within the garden area, you will need to complete an application for a Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development if you require a written response to your enquiry. This can be downloaded from the CDC website (<http://www.chichester.gov.uk/planningadvice>) and will provide you with a decision on whether planning permission is required in the form of a legal document which will be of use should you come to sell your property.

If your house is a listed building, there are more limitations on extensions and alterations that can be implemented under a ‘permitted development’ allowance. Even if planning permission is not required and your house is a listed building, you may still need Listed Building Consent. In addition you should always check whether your development requires consent under the Building Regulations in addition to planning permission. The advice contained in this note should be helpful in planning your extension whether or not planning permission is required.

### **Domestic Extensions in General**

A badly designed proposal can have a great impact not only upon the occupiers of nearby properties but also upon the character and value of your house and the appearance of the locality. Domestic extensions should therefore be designed to respect the style of the main house and to preserve the privacy and amenities of adjacent premises. The scale, siting and materials of any proposal are therefore key considerations. The following guidelines indicate the issues which the Council will take into account when deciding whether to grant planning permission.

Whether your extension is at the front, rear or side, it should be designed to be:

1. visually integrated with the existing building
2. sympathetic to its surrounding and adjacent properties
3. subservient in mass, bulk and form to the existing property

An extension which significantly alters the shape of a house is not usually advisable, the aim of the design should be to allow the house to maintain its original appearance and predominance over an extension. In other words, the extension should be subordinate to the main house.

### **Rear Extensions**

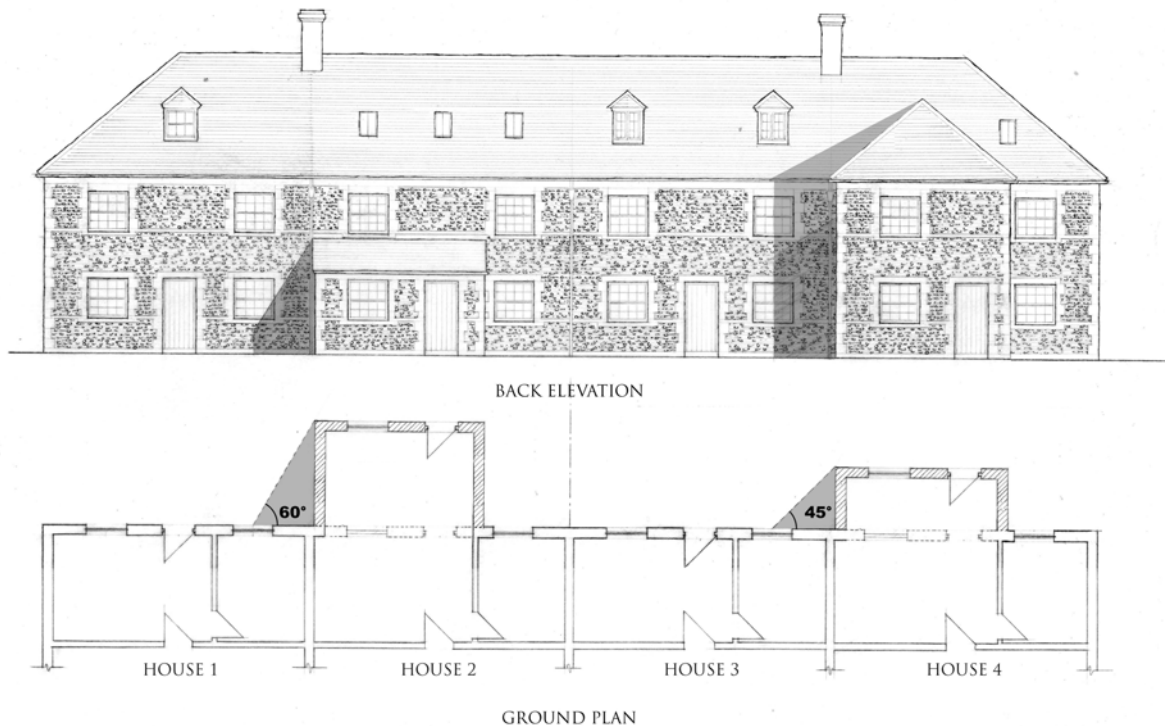
New extensions will be considered in terms of their impact on the privacy, amenity and possible dominance over the neighbouring property and will include an assessment of the proximity to the neighbour, degree of projection and height, affect on existing available light and the location of any windows. For example, extensions due-south of a neighbour’s house will have a much greater effect on available sunlight than those to the north.

A guideline to the likely effect upon available light (sunlight, daylight) to neighbouring properties refers in particular, to the nearest window to a habitable room in the adjacent properties (habitable rooms include breakfast/dining rooms, kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms but exclude bathrooms, halls, landings, toilets and utility/store rooms). The maximum limit to which single storey rear extensions will be favourably considered is

generally determined by a 60° angle taken from the mid point of the nearest ground floor habitable room windows of the adjacent premises.

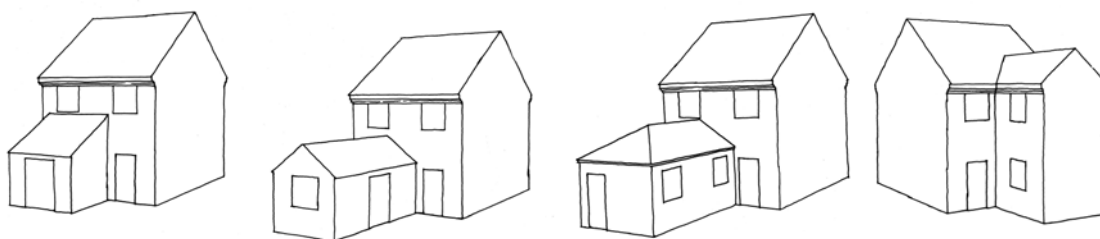
For two storey extensions, which potentially have a greater impact, a 45° angle is used taken from the nearest habitable room windows on the ground floor of neighbouring premises. Where the neighbour already has a ground floor extension, a 60° angle is taken from the nearest first floor window.

In assessing impact, account is taken of whether the extension is flat-roofed or pitched and of its aspect – whether it is proposed for the front, rear or side.



In the event that an adjacent property already has an extension (or conservatory), this will be taken into account but the Council will be mindful of the need to maintain a consistency of development and projections beyond an existing line of extensions may be discouraged. The Council will also need to be satisfied that the design and materials are appropriate to the main building and to its surroundings. The requirement for a Design and Access Statement to accompany applications in Conservation Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty National Parks and those affecting Listed Buildings means that special attention must be paid to these issues. A number of villages have produced Village Design Statements for their locality and Chichester Harbour Conservancy has produced design guidance for their area which is available on the CDC website.

<http://www.chichester.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=7859>.



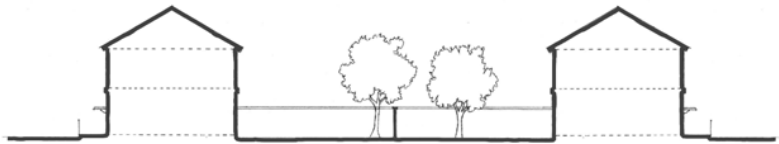
Appropriate forms of rear extension



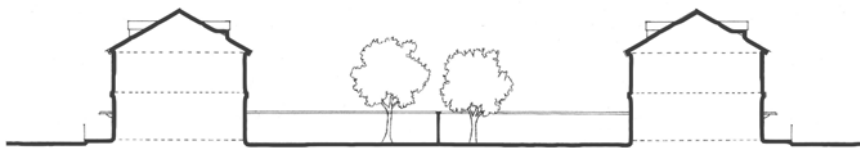
Flat roofed rear extensions require greater justification.

### Privacy and Amenity

It is important that the scale of development is appropriate in terms of its impact on the visual character of an area. Whilst densities of development are increasing it is necessary to ensure that sufficient private amenity space is retained for the property and that privacy is retained to neighbouring properties on each side and also to the rear. To retain space and privacy, a distance of 21 metres minimum is normally required between the first floor habitable rooms of houses in a back to back situation or 30 metres where a full three storey development is proposed. In the case of two storey developments with dormer windows in the roof a distance of 25 metres is recommended.



2 Storeys 21M back to back



2.5 storeys 25M back to back

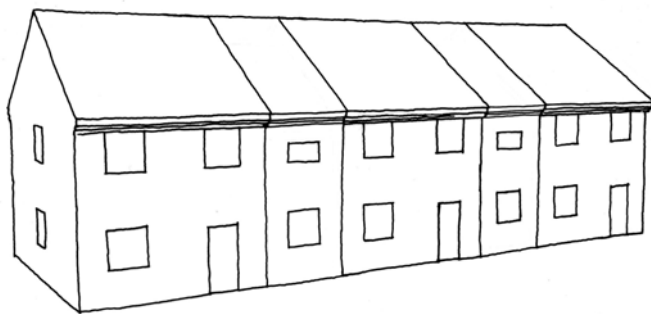


3 storeys 30M back to back

In situations where the proposed rear extension backs onto an existing side elevation, the normal requirement is 10 metres for rear to side elevations in the case of new two storey development and 15 metres for three storey development. To ensure that sufficient garden area is retained for new properties, a minimum distance of 10m from the rear wall of the property to the rear boundary is normally required. In the case of a residential extensions, this would not necessarily prevent a modest ground floor extension from being acceptable which reduces the existing garden area below this figure.

### Side Extensions

In most urban, suburban and village situations two-storey and first floor side extensions are normally required to be set in a minimum of one metre from a communal boundary to ensure visual separation from adjacent dwellings and to prevent the creation of a 'terracing effect' where this would be inappropriate to the surroundings.



A series of side extensions can create a terraced effect

Side extensions should not normally follow the front line of the existing house; rather they should be set back to create a 'visual break' between old and new, and thereby retain the form and dominance of the main house. Where a one metre gap to the boundary cannot be achieved, it may be possible to set the extension further back from the front main wall and this will have to be considered on its individual merits.

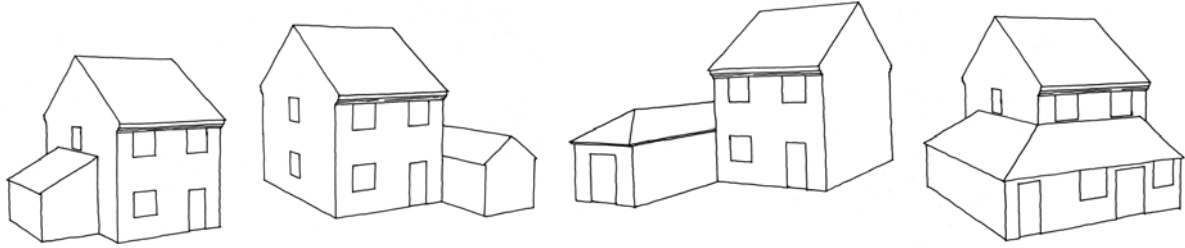


Side extensions should normally create a visual break between old and new,



...although an extension that follows the line of the existing house can sometimes improve its appearance and symmetry

You may need your neighbour's permission if you wish to build right up to the boundary since the eaves or foundations would project onto their land. An extension set back only a few inches from the boundary may make maintenance difficult if your neighbour decides to build a similar extension. You must be aware of the provisions of The Party Wall Act 1996 in these situations.



Appropriate forms of side extensions.

## Front Extensions

Virtually all forms of front extensions require planning permission where they extend beyond a wall which fronts onto a highway and forms either the principal or side elevation of the dwelling. This may exclude small porches and recessed areas.

Their prominent position means that such proposals must fit into the street scene and be assessed critically in relation to their impact upon the character of the locality as well as your own property and neighbouring buildings.

## Roofs

The appropriate design of the roof is vital to any extension and the Planning Authority would normally expect a design which matches that of the main property or which could be successfully integrated without detracting from the overall appearance of the dwelling. Extensions often have shallower pitches than the main roof.  $26.5^\circ$  is usually regarded as a minimum pitch for a slate roof. Pitches of  $42.5^\circ$  should usually be acceptable for peg tiles. Pitches of  $45^\circ$  should be avoided as they lack visual interest.

Flat roofed extensions at first floor level will normally be resisted and only be accepted on single-storey extensions where other options (e.g. pitched, ridge or semi pitched) have been discounted.

Extensions to the roof should usually be set below the original roofline, and should avoid unbalancing the appearance of the building, which may be harmful to the visual quality of the area.

## Windows

Windows are an important ingredient in the design of any new development and should, wherever possible, be of complementary scale, style, materials and proportion to the originals. Lower status extensions to traditional buildings often have windows of smaller scale and more utilitarian design but will share a similar design approach. Replacing traditional windows in a historic building with PVCU double glazing will not normally be acceptable.

Side and rear windows which are close to and overlook neighbouring properties, including private garden areas are normally discouraged because of the loss of privacy. However, in some instances this may be overcome by obscure glazing and high level non-openable windows.

Dormer windows should normally be restricted to the rear elevation of a dwelling house, where they have less visual impact, but they will still need to be in proportion with the

existing windows. They should also not dominate the roof. Large flat roofed dormers will rarely be acceptable.



Dormer windows should be placed symmetrically and kept subordinate to the main roof



Flat roofed dormers or those that dominate the main roof are rarely acceptable

## Materials

Materials should normally match those of the existing building to ensure that the extension is in keeping with the main house. It will seldom be permissible to create a 'contrast' by using materials which do not match the existing building and all "permitted development" extensions must be in matching materials, otherwise planning permission may be required. In most cases where permission is granted it will be a condition that materials match the existing, and in some cases samples of the materials to be used will be required before building work starts.

The approach taken with traditional buildings is often that extensions and service buildings were built of materials which expressed their lower value. For example, in the eighteenth century brick was more expensive than field flints so a house's front might have been of brickwork with its sides, rear and service buildings of flint work with brick details. This approach should be understood in alterations to traditional buildings. There may also be instances where it is desirable and acceptable to communicate status in extensions to more modern buildings, such as the addition of a timber weather boarded rear extension to a brick property. Where different materials are proposed, applications will be assessed on their merits.

## Garages and Car Ports

Wherever possible garages and car ports should be set back behind the front building line to avoid dominating the street scene. Where there is sufficient space between the house and the highway and it would not be out of character with the area, a garage/car port would need to be of an appropriate scale and quality of design and materials. Garages and Car Ports fronting roads and footpaths should be set back at least 6 metres to ensure that a vehicle can stop clear of the highway. Where no vehicular access exists at present or where existing facilities are considered to be inadequate, improvements to the width of access, turning area available and visibility at the point of access should form part of the proposal.

## SPECIAL CASES

### Conservation Areas

In Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty/National Park, special regulations apply and 'permitted development' allowances are reduced. The Council will apply more stringent standards of design in assessing applications for extensions in these areas and this needs to be reflected in the Design and Access Statements to be submitted with the application. Care must be taken to ensure the special interest of listed buildings is

not harmed by development proposals. For further information you are advised to refer to the specialist guidance notes on the web site.

### Rural Areas

Outside the existing built-up areas the Council has designated 'Rural Areas' where extensions will normally be assessed against the size and appearance of the existing house and the character of the surroundings, much as it does within urban areas. However, in the case of "small dwellings" (defined as a building originally constructed of less than 90 square metres gross floor area and a garden area of not more than 450 sq. metres) a limitation of a 50% increase on the external floorspace is normally applied.

### Finally

It is a good idea to discuss your proposals with your neighbours at an early stage so that they are aware of what you want to do. Before you submit your proposal ask yourself 'Would I be happy to live next door to this extension?' If the answer is 'NO' it would not be surprising to find your neighbours objecting to it.

The Council also operates a Preliminary Enquiry system which enables customers to send in details for informal advice on the merits of their proposals, before submitting a planning application. This will take the form of general advice and an informal opinion and the proposal will not usually be assessed on site in advance of a planning application.