

Residential Extensions

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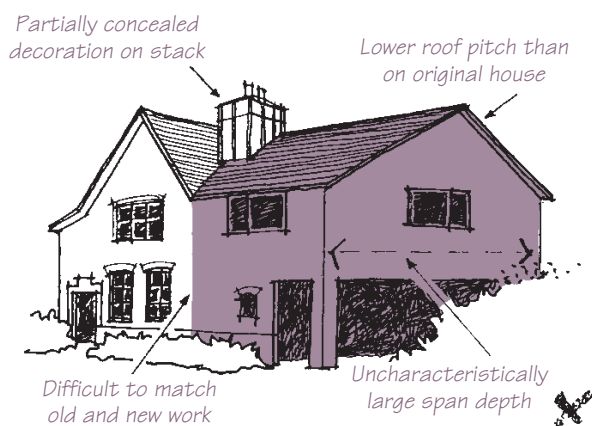
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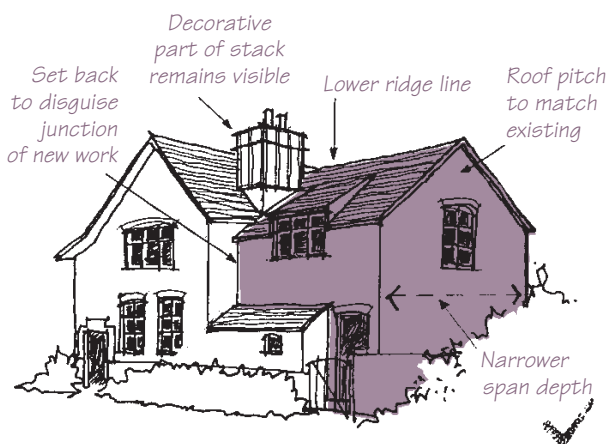
Design Checklist Inside back cover



AS EXISTING



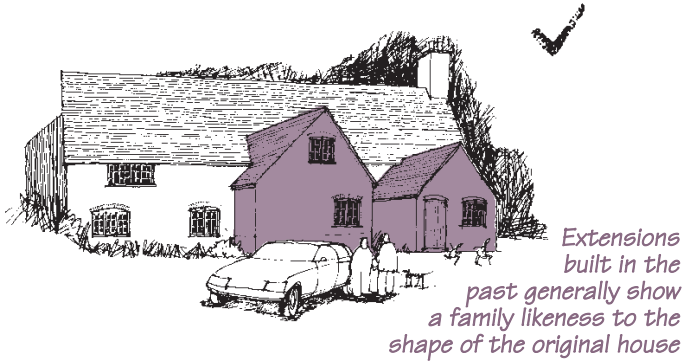
UNACCEPTABLE PROPOSAL



ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE

INTRODUCTION

Building an extension is not only a matter of enclosing additional floorspace; external appearance and the effect on neighbours also have to be considered. Designing extensions to respect the character and appearance of existing buildings is not only architectural good manners, it also widens the spectrum of prospective buyers if and when you put your home on the market.



ADVICE

It is wise to use a person who is trained and/or well experienced in designing residential extensions; whoever is employed, ask to see previous examples of work on paper and on site. A list of architects is available from the Environment and Planning Department or the Citizens Advice Bureau. Discussions with a planner at an early date, prior to application, can save time once initial drawings have been prepared.

NEIGHBOURLINESS

Since the Council will take account of any objections from neighbours when assessing a planning application it is advisable to first discuss your proposal with any neighbour who may be affected.

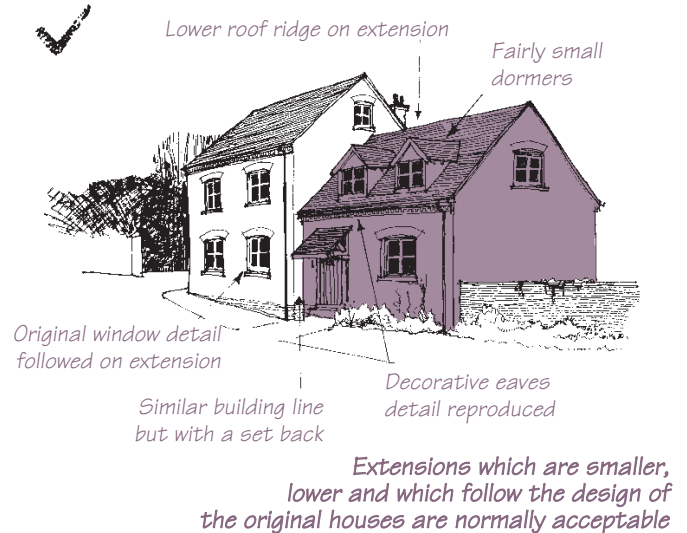
A neighbour's permission is required if foundations will encroach, or if an extension will overhang or attach to their property (a Deed may have to be drawn up to adequately cover these issues). In addition, a neighbour's consent will be needed if access to their property is necessary during construction.

CONSERVATION AREAS

These are areas of special character where tighter controls apply over development in order to protect the recognised importance of the existing buildings within or immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area. These areas may include the historic core of a settlement, a group of buildings around a space or a street of particular townscape merit. Residential extensions which might be permitted elsewhere can be unacceptable in Conservation Areas.

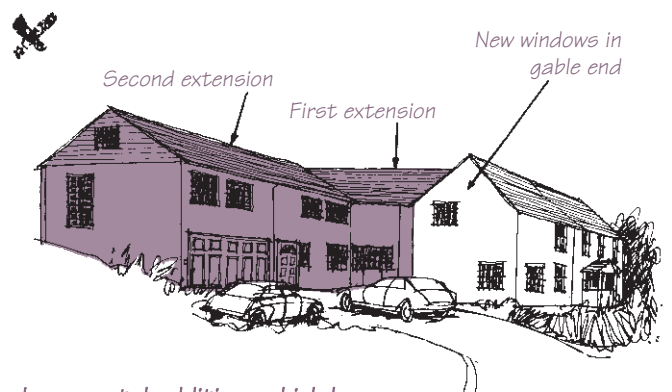
LISTED BUILDINGS

These are buildings of special architectural or historic interest, where alterations, external or internal, will require special consent. There are cases where any extension is undesirable, but generally, particular weight is placed on retaining the identity, appearance, character and special interest of Listed Buildings.



GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This is an advisory leaflet, each application for planning permission will be assessed on its own merits. The guide is not intended to limit imaginative and innovative design. It is, however, concerned to dissuade would be home extenders from particularly large, unsuitable or overly cost-conscious additions which will destroy the composition of existing buildings.



Incremental additions which have distorted the original composition of a relatively small house

An extension to a house can be conceived to either appear as an integral part of the original concept or, alternatively, it may be of a contemporary design. Both approaches require particular skill and both need to follow the advice set out in this leaflet. In the former case, an extension might go unnoticed. In the second case the extension would be different yet compatible or complementary.

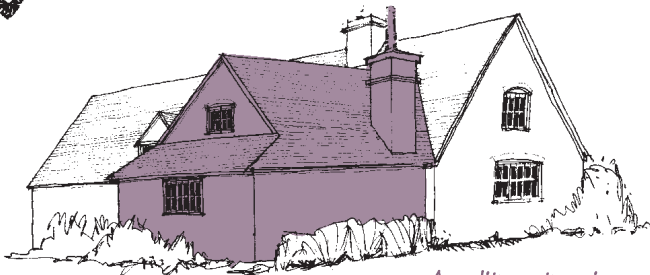
It is not often appreciated that the best extensions are architecturally attractive in their own right.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES continued



Bulky, box like extensions should be avoided in favour of smaller additions which respect the form of the original building

A porch extension built too close to the principal ground floor window



A polite extension which maintains the character of the existing house



A porch design which does not relate well to the shape or design of the building



Porches of similar form and materials to the house are generally acceptable

SET BACKS

In order to provide a design break between old and new work a set back will normally be advisable. This will also subordinate the extension and help retain the integrity of the original building.



Past porch designs often picked up the architectural characteristics of the house



A lower, set back extension which repeats the overall shape and design of the house

Setting extensions in from existing building lines also helps disguise different brick course heights, avoids damage to bonding with an existing face and maintains the separation of eaves details.



Difficulty in keying new brick work

Extensions can adversely change the shape of buildings...



Set back

Unless steps are taken to avoid this

SHAPE



Despite the set back this prominent extension does not respect the design of the original building



The use of architectural good manners provides a less discordant scheme

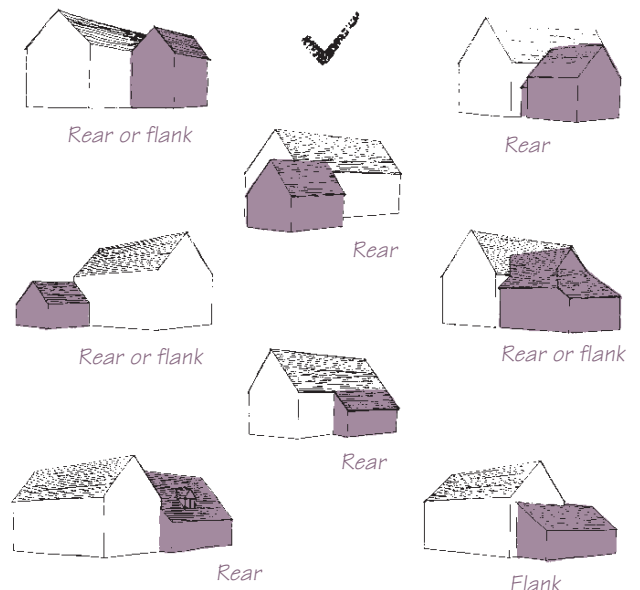
An extension which recognises the shape of the existing building is more likely to be successful than one which ignores the design of the original. Similarly, extensions which distort the shape of the existing house are less acceptable than those which respect the roof pitch and span depth of the original. This does not, however, rule out a contemporary approach which contrasts with, yet enhances, the original building by being distinct.

OVERLOOKING

Extensions can intrude, to a greater or lesser extent, on the privacy of neighbours. The more closely spaced dwellings are, the more important it is to consider overlooking. Privacy will be infringed by the construction of an extension which allows views into a neighbouring property or a hitherto secluded garden. The Council will wish to avoid situations which diminish the privacy of neighbour's property and will, for this reason, resist balconies, roof gardens, first floor conservatories and flank windows which would permit views into adjacent or nearby properties.



New openings on flank elevations can lead to problems of overlooking



Extensions of similar form but of subordinate size are generally acceptable, subject to all other criteria set out in this booklet

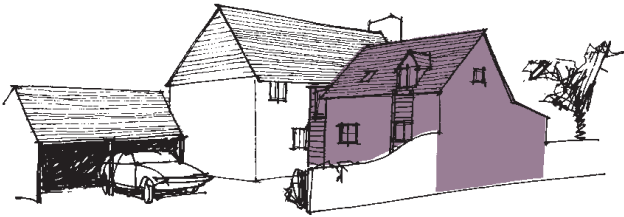
SCALE



Extensions which are larger than the parent building can harm the appearance of the original house

It is almost always necessary not to over-whelm existing buildings bearing in mind that some buildings have more presence than others. Once an extension begins to match or exceed the size of the original building then the architectural integrity of the original structure tends to become lost.

A link extension of reduced scale to that of the original building



Extensions which are unduly eye-catching or which detract from the composition of the original are normally unacceptable. Large extensions call for particular ingenuity and imagination in order to reduce the apparent bulk of the additional floorspace.

ROOFS

All two storey extensions should generally have full pitched roofs clad in suitable materials. It may be that a better quality roof material than those on the original could be used (i.e. the original building could have been inappropriately retiled). Natural slate or plain clay roof tiles are preferred on older properties.

New roof ridges should not normally exceed the height of the original. A new ridge line which is set lower than that of the original will generally be preferred. Any set back used on the front elevation should preferably be carried through to roof level as this can help accommodate an extension without harming the appearance of houses. Single storey extensions which are visible from a public area should generally have pitched roofs, pitched roofs are also preferred on single storey rear extensions.

ROOF EXTENSIONS



Small, vertically proportioned dormers designed to respect the character of the house are normally acceptable

Dormers should generally have pitched roofs, be physically small and set into the roof slope so that they are not a strident feature in the roof as a whole. Rear roof slopes, which are less visible, may be able to accept larger additions but these need to be carefully designed as over-dominant or box-like roof extensions can be particularly incongruous. Alterations to the roof, as a whole, should not destroy the original roof form and the materials selected should be compatible with the existing roof material. Rooflights should be small and preferably positioned on less prominent roof slopes.



Box-like roof additions diminish architectural integrity and impoverish the street scene

Bulky dormers of unsympathetic appearance detract from the elevation below



REAR EXTENSIONS

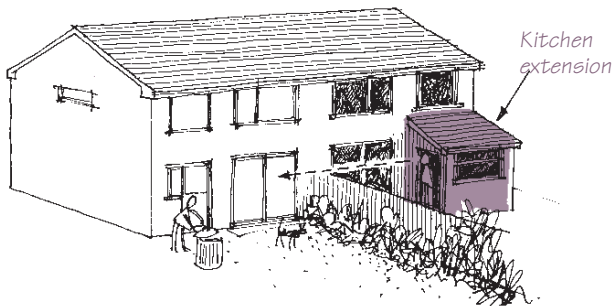
In the interest of amenity the distance back from the original main rear elevation is restricted. This distance is normally no more than 3 metres in the case of a terraced house and 4 metres for a semi-detached house.



Sunlight should be considered even where extensions comply with the 45° guideline

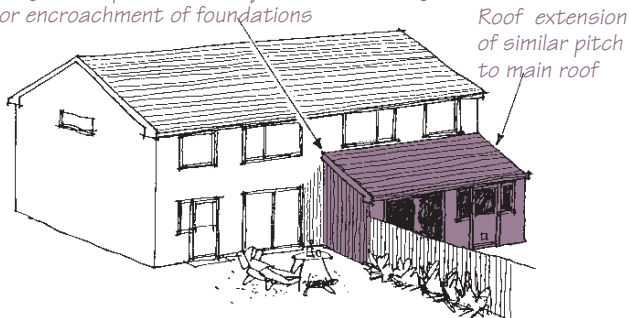
The Council will not normally grant permission for a rear extension of more than single storey height if any part of that extension protrudes beyond a 45 degree line (drawn in the horizontal plane) from the centre of the nearest window to a habitable room of a neighbouring dwelling, on the same elevation as the rear of the extended property.

The 45 degree line is intended to prevent undue loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring properties, to avoid excessive shadowing of gardens, to protect residential amenity and preserve a reasonable standard of outlook.



Flank doorways can lead to overlooking

Neighbours permission required for overhang or encroachment of foundations



Extensions across the back of buildings will make the existing rooms darker inside than before



Over-large extensions can give rise to an oppressive environment

SIDE EXTENSIONS



The infilling of gaps between buildings is often detrimental to visual amenity

The infilling of gaps between residential buildings can harm the character of the street. The Council will not normally grant permission for a two storey side extension which is within 1 metre of a shared boundary. This minimum standard applies to urban areas; a higher standard may be required on the edge of towns or in rural areas. A greater space between buildings may need to be maintained in order to preserve the open character of an area.



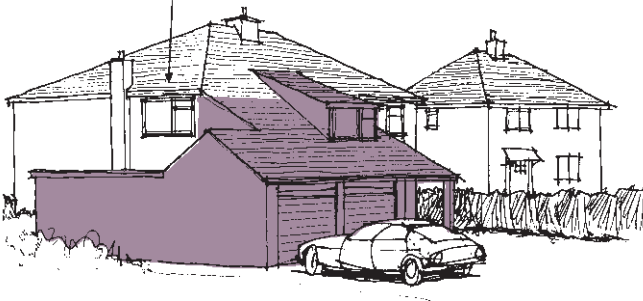
Side extensions should be set back from the main building line

FRONT EXTENSIONS

The front elevation of a house is the most vulnerable to unsympathetic alteration. Only small additions which will not harm the quality or character of the building are generally permissible. Porches are usually acceptable provided that they are not over-dominant and that they relate to the character of the original building. Pitched roofs, to suit the pitch on the main building, are preferred with materials to match those on the main structure.

The Council will not normally grant permission for a front extension (either at single or two storeys) which protrudes beyond a 45 degree line (drawn in the horizontal plane) from the nearest part of the nearest window in a neighbouring house or flat. Windows to a hall, bathroom, utility room, cloakroom or pantry are discounted.

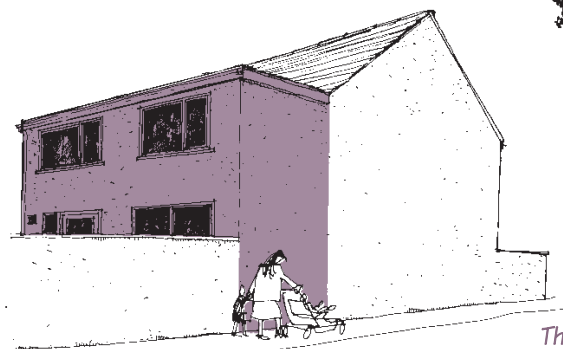
Flank window inserted as a result of extension



Large extensions forward of buildings will generally be resisted in favour of rear or side extensions

MATERIALS

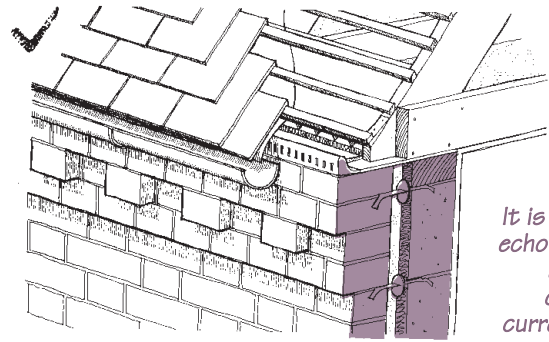
The choice of appropriate materials is crucial. The original materials on house elevations are frequently obscured by paint or render (usually to hide defects) but this does not necessarily have to mean that an extension is constructed in blockwork and similarly rendered. Reintroducing the original materials will often add quality and character to an extension. Natural materials are generally regarded as essential in Conservation Areas in order to maintain the character and the quality of the Area.



The use of cement and grit render gives a harsh uncompromising finish which does not weather well

DETAILS

Details are often the key to the successful integration of designs for extensions. Extensions to older properties may benefit from a similar brick bonding, lime can be added to mortar and earlier brick types can usually be found after a little research. Decorative brickwork was often used to project eaves outward on older buildings in order to help throw rainwater away from the walls below. Similarly, features like interesting bargeboards, cast iron rain goods or chimneys can be beneficially followed on extensions.



It is possible to echo traditional details and comply with current building regulations

OPENINGS

Consider whether the existing doors and windows are original and whether any replacement contributes to the character of the building: it may be better to reinstate earlier designs of doors and windows on an extension. On older buildings, flat soldier arches should generally be avoided; instead rough brick or gauged arches (available as pre-cut sets) are often more suitable.



Following original designs and proportions will help relate extensions to the main building

Windows can be specially made up to match an earlier design and if the main building has a deep sill in wood or stone then it may be appropriate to copy it. Consider the shape, size, design and alignment of openings in an extension and try to respect the fenestration pattern of the original.

CAR PARKING



Extensions can cause housing areas to appear cramped

Garages, parking and space for the manoeuvring of vehicles is an unattractive prospect unless frontages are sufficiently large to accept and screen them. The demand for on-street car parking is usually increased by extensions. The loss of a turning space from within the curtilage of the property will result in vehicles reversing into or out of properties and increases the risk of accidents.

The loss of off-street car parking, access, the appearance and location of car parking are issues which are relevant to the acceptability or otherwise of an extension.

Successive extensions

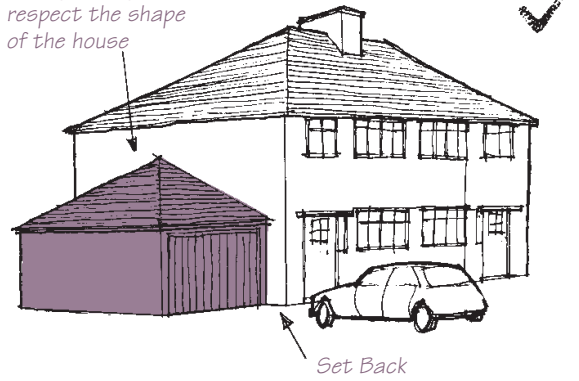


Loss of enclosure to front curtilage

Gradually increasing the size of a house inevitably leads to greater demands for off-street parking, often to the detriment of visual amenity

GARAGES

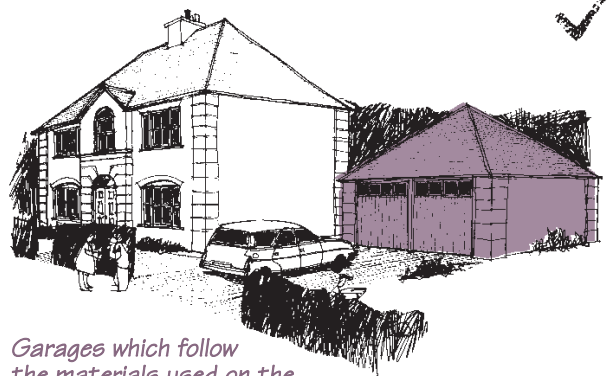
Garage designed to respect the shape of the house



Set Back

Garage design which appears to belong to the existing house

Garages do not belong in prominent locations: They are utility structures which should not obscure or dominate houses. Even when incorporated into the design of a house, garages can be over-emphasised. Freestanding garages which are designed to relate to the house, built of similar materials and with a similar, or steeper roof pitch are preferred.



Garages which follow the materials used on the house, set back in a subordinate position and with planting are generally acceptable



The use of parapets is not encouraged. A preferred arrangement for pitched roofs is similar form to the main roof

Garages which are forward of the main building line and of dissimilar shape are unlikely to receive permission



PLANTING

An attractive landscape setting promotes amenity, privacy and a balance between buildings and vegetation. Extensions mean that less land is available for amenity. The consideration of a planning application for an extension will therefore include the environmental consequences of the extension, including planting, surface treatment, screening and the retention of existing boundaries (particularly hedgerows).

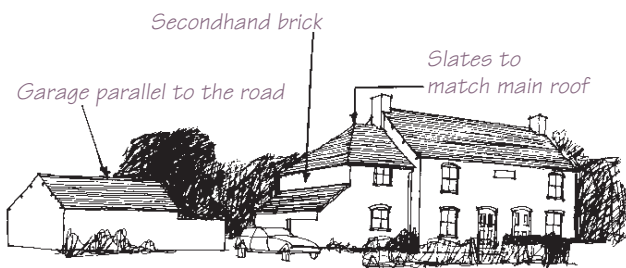
New planting can be used to assimilate a new extension. Climbing plants can similarly be used to good effect in order to visually tie the new to the old. Indigenous species are generally preferable for hedging and trees.

TREES

Trees are legally protected against removal or damage in Conservation Areas and some trees elsewhere are safeguarded by Preservation Orders. (6 weeks notice for tree work is required in a Conservation Area.) Significant trees should not be felled or endangered to make way for an extension.

DESIGN CHECKLIST

1. Pitched roofs to suit that of the existing house
2. Materials which relate to the original finish of the house
3. Form, shape and detailing similar to the main building
4. Set-backs in walls and roofs to form a visual break
5. No first floor extensions closer than one metre to a shared boundary
6. 3-3.6 metre limitation for rear extensions
7. Application of 45 degree guideline
8. Small roof lights and dormers only
9. No overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbours
10. Screening, boundaries, planting and surface treatments



A contemporary extension which is physically subservient to the original

For advice on planning applications :

call 01296 585679

**General information is available
on the council's website:**

www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Adopted by the Council on 6 May 1991

Following public consultation

Amended following the adoption by the Council
of the Aylesbury Vale District Council
Householder Extensions Local Development
Order on 1 Nov 2013



Planning Department

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