

EXTENSION TO HOUSES



SUPPLEMENTARY
PLANNING
GUIDANCE

No.4

Contents

Section	Subject	Page
1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	1
3.0	BASIC PRINCIPLES	2
3.1	Discuss with Neighbours	2
3.2	Avoid Trespass including Overhang	2
3.3	Good Design Advice	2
3.4	Landscaping and Trees	2
3.5	Appearance and Street Scene	2-3
3.6	Possibility of Extending	4
3.7	Amenity Space	4
3.8	Parking Provision and Your Amenities	5
3.9	Neighbours Amenity	6
	(a) Overlooking	6
	(b) Sunlight/Daylight	6
	(c) Visual Impact	6
3.10	Access	6
3.11	Levels	6
3.12	Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings	6
4.0	TYPES OF EXTENSIONS AND DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS	7
4.1	Canopies	7
4.2	Porches	8
4.3	Side Extensions	9-11
4.4	Rear Extensions	11-14
4.5	Roof Extensions/Alterations	14

Approved by Wolverhampton Planning
and Environment Committee on
4th April 1996, following Public Consultation

Introduction

This Planning Guidance Note is intended to complement the policies and proposals contained in the Council's Unitary Development Plan. It was adopted by the Council's Planning and Environment Committee on 4 April 1996.

Not all extensions require planning permission. A booklet issued by the Department of the Environment "Planning, a Householder's Guide", is available from the Council's Regeneration & Transportation Service and contains specific guidance on the need or otherwise for planning permission. Extensions which do not need planning permission may require approval under the Building Regulations. It is therefore advisable to contact the Council's Building Consultancy Group on telephone number 555595. A booklet issued by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, called 'Planning, A Guide for Householders' is also available.

The advice in this document represents the Council's views as to best practice in the design of residential extensions, whether or not permission is required. Where permission is required, the main criteria used to assess whether permission should be granted are set out in this document. Non-compliance with the provisions of the guide would not in itself justify the refusal of planning permission.

If further advice on any particular proposal is required, please contact the Development Control Help Desk on (01902) 555645.

Background

The guidelines in this booklet supplement policies contained in the Council's Unitary Development Plan, particularly Policies H18 - Planning Considerations and ENV2 - Design Standards of the Plan. They should also be read in conjunction with other approved Development Control Policies and current advice from the Secretary of State for the Environment.

2.1 Consultation

The consultation exercise was designed to publicise the document, stimulate interest, distribute copies and encourage written and verbal responses. 51 agents who regularly submit applications for domestic extensions were forwarded a copy of the draft document and asked to comment. The House Builders Federation were also consulted.

It is suggested that the basic principles set out below should be followed.

3.1 Discuss With Neighbours

It is sensible to discuss proposals with neighbours and to obtain their agreement where this is obviously necessary. The proposals may affect their property, for instance by loss of amenities or through practical difficulties, such as drainage, maintenance or support. Access to their land may be required to build the extension or maintain it. Planning permission does not give owners, their agents or builders the right to enter neighbours' land to construct or maintain any extension. Permission of the landowner would normally be required. If you are in doubt as to your legal rights in relationship to property ownership, examination of the Deeds to the Property may help you, or you may need to consult a solicitor.

3.2

Avoid Trespass, including Overhang

You should keep all constructional elements of your extension within your property's boundary. Foundations, roofs and guttering in particular should not overhang neighbouring land.

3.3 Good Design Advice

Unless you have the skill and experience it is advisable to employ a good designer who is used to drawing plans for planning applications. Check the drawings to make sure they are clear and are what you want. Try to get advice from friends who have used an architect or other qualified designer.

3.4 Landscaping and Trees

Care should be taken to retain existing trees and hedges if possible and, where lost, their replacement with suitable new planting is advised. Many trees within the Borough are legally protected from felling by individual Tree Preservation Orders or by being within Conservation Areas. If in doubt, contact the Council's Tree Officer on 555640 to confirm whether trees on your property are protected.

3.5 Appearance and Street Scene

Extensions should respect the design of the existing house and those in the surrounding area and, ideally, not stand out as obviously an extension. This can be achieved by attention to the following points:

- (a) Extensions should be of similar architectural character, style, in scale and detailing as the existing house and sympathetic to the character of the area.
- (b) Building materials should match in terms of colour, form, texture and weathering qualities those of the original house as should doors and windows in terms of style and size.
In some instances a contrast in materials can be acceptable where an exact match in materials is not possible.
The way that materials are used i.e. craftsmanship can be imperative to achieve a good quality overall finish.
- (c) The extension should not normally be higher than the existing house.

- (d) The roof shape of an extension should ideally be the same as the existing. If the existing roof is hipped, then an extension should have a hipped roof; if gabled; then a gable roof should be

incorporated. Eaves and gutter lines should usually "follow through". Illustrations 1 and 2 detail good and bad extensions and illustrate the above issues.



Illustration 1
- Acceptable design, using materials to match existing dwelling



Illustration 2
- Unacceptable design and alien materials.

3.6 Possibility of Extending

In some instances, it may not be possible or desirable to extend a dwelling, for example,

by virtue of unique conditions such as a very specific house design, site constraints or craftsmanship.

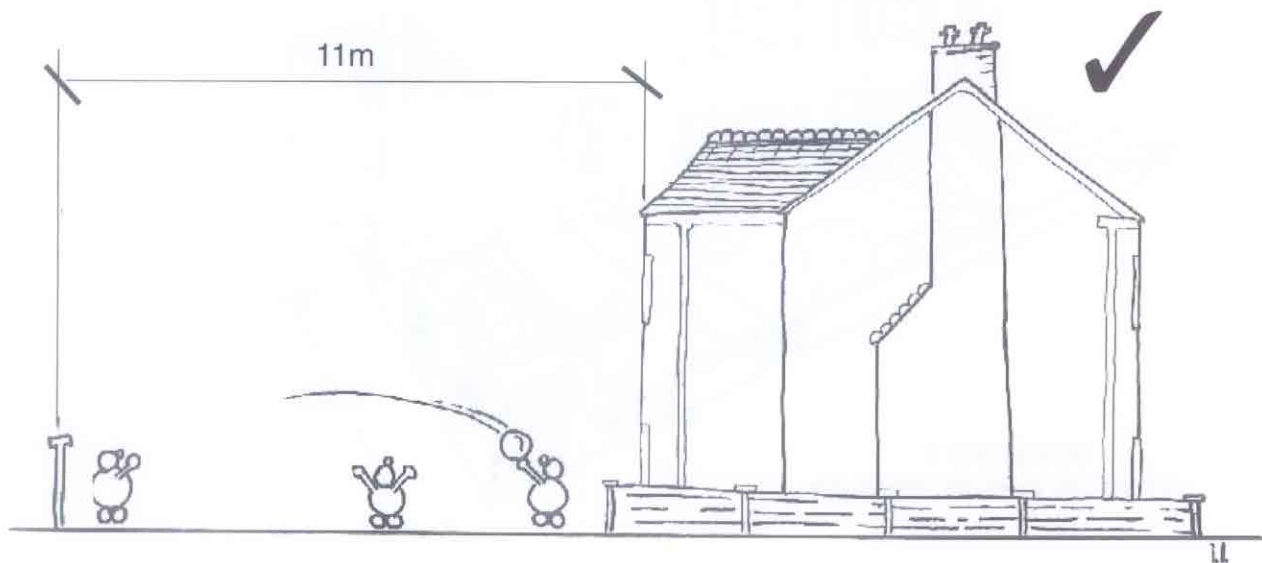


Illustration 3
- Acceptable rear garden amenity area.

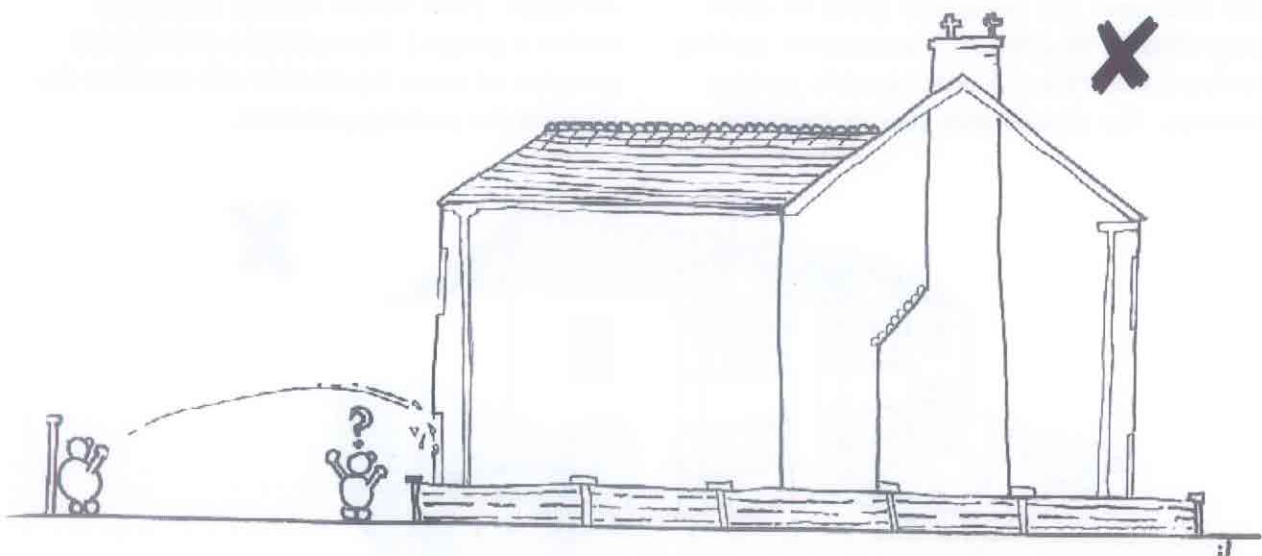


Illustration 4
- Unacceptable rear garden amenity area.

3.7 Amenity Space

Any extensions should not substantially reduce a rear garden amenity area. This should be maintained at a standard to support the scale of the dwelling, for

example, a dwelling having up to 3 bedrooms should normally have a rear amenity space of approximately 11 metres in length, 4 bedrooms or more should be at least 15 metres in length. (Illustrations 3 and 4)

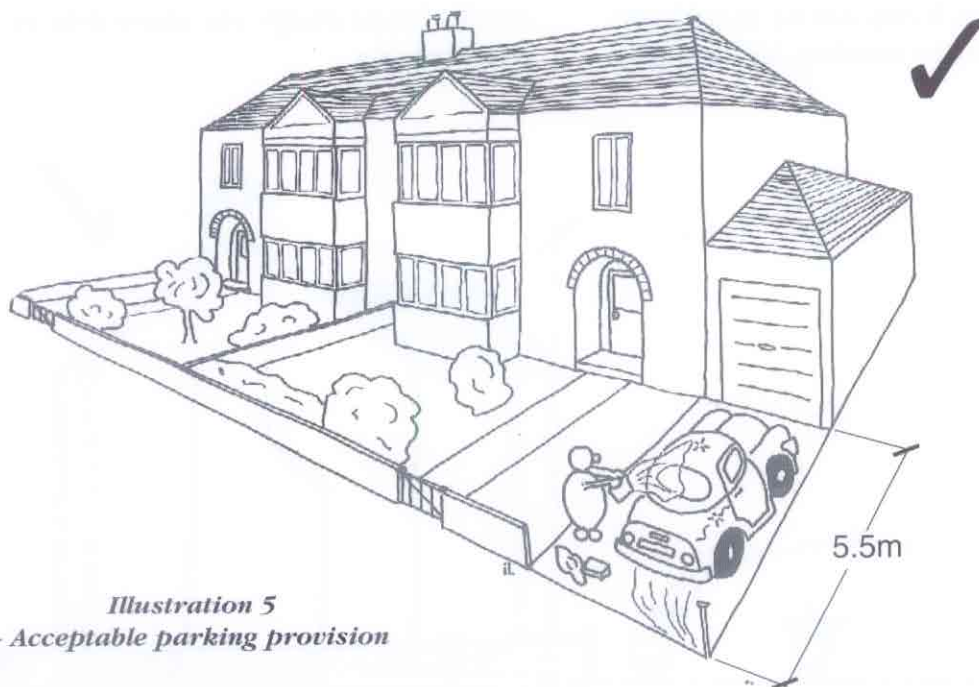


Illustration 5
- Acceptable parking provision

3.8 Parking Provision and Your Amenities

Any extension should not result in the loss of your parking/garage space. Your drive should be at least 5.5 metres in length clear of the highway (back edge of pavement) to enable a car to be parked, unloaded, washed or worked upon and leave any necessary space to open garage doors. Illustration 5, acceptable parking provision, Illustration 6 unacceptable parking provision. You should also bear in mind the

number of parking spaces you will require. Extensions which reduce the amount of parking or manoeuvring space available may not be acceptable. For example, a typical 3 bedroom house should normally have space for the parking of two vehicles within the curtilage. (This would include any space within a garage.) Extensions involving the erection of more bedrooms will increase the demand for parking provision.

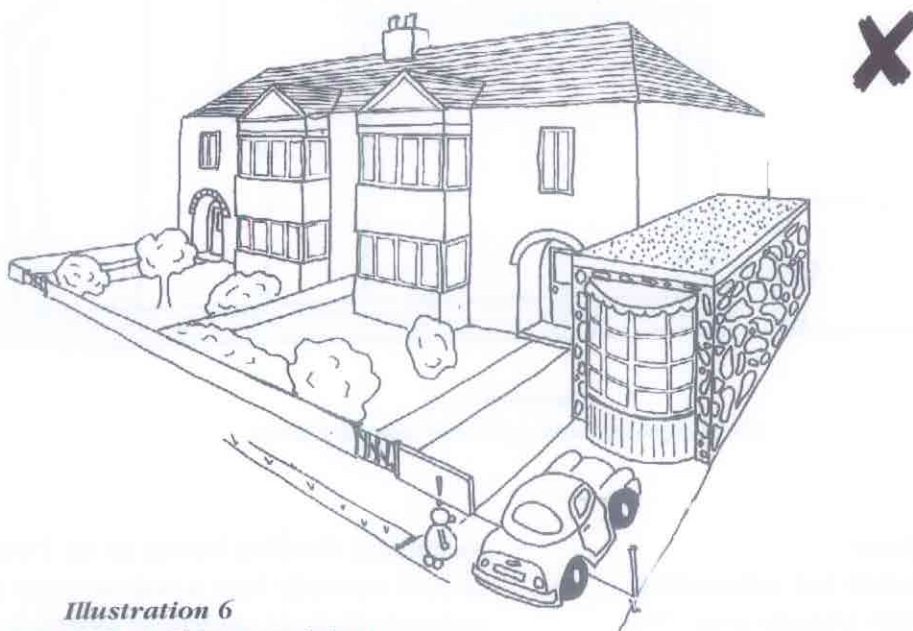


Illustration 6
- Unacceptable parking provision
and poor design.

3.9 Neighbours' Amenity

Extensions should not prejudice the amenities which occupiers of adjoining and nearby properties can reasonably expect to continue to enjoy and the design of any extension should respect the following:-

(a) **Overlooking**

Direct overlooking of habitable rooms or very close overlooking of private gardens should be avoided. Normally it will be acceptable that a distance of at least 22 metres is maintained between windows to habitable rooms at the front and rear of your house and neighbouring houses. Where your home is next to the side of the neighbouring house, and this side wall has no windows to habitable rooms, this distance should be at least 12 metres.

(b) **Sunlight/Daylight**

The extension should not significantly reduce the sunlight or daylight enjoyed by any habitable room of adjoining properties.

(c) **Visual Impact**

Any extension through its siting, height or mass should not have an overbearing impact and adversely affect neighbouring amenities such as outlook and enjoyment or garden space.

3.10 Access

Any extension should not make access to the dwelling more difficult for people who may have a disability, for example by the creation of new steps.

3.11 Levels

The level at which a dwelling is sited in relation to a neighbouring dwelling can be important when considering an extension. Extensions which may otherwise be permissible, could prove to be unacceptable by having an overbearing impact on its neighbour where the land is substantially higher.

3.12 Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

Greater importance will be attached to proposals to extend dwellings which are either listed, or are within designated Conservation Areas. A higher standard of design and detail will be expected than in a other situations. Listed Building Consent is always required for an extension or alteration to Listed Buildings. You are advised to contact Conservation/ Urban Design Section (555617 or 555625) if these circumstances apply.

Types of Extensions & Detailed Considerations

4.1 Canopies

Canopies will not normally be permitted if the forward projection exceeds 0.75m, or if they significantly reduce light to or outlook from windows or adjacent properties or if they form a dominant or obtrusive element in the street scene. On large detached properties, canopies larger than 0.75m

could be considered appropriate depending on acceptable proportions. All canopies should ideally follow the same pitch as the main roof and be finished in matching materials. (See Illustration 7 which details an unacceptably large canopy and Illustration 8 an acceptable canopy.)



Illustration 7 - Unacceptable large canopy



Illustration 8 - Acceptable large canopy

4.2 Porches

A porch should be carefully related to the existing elevation so as to complement the building. Matching materials are particularly important, otherwise a disruptive element may

be introduced. (See Illustrations 9 and 10 illustrating examples of unacceptable and acceptable forms of porches respectively.)

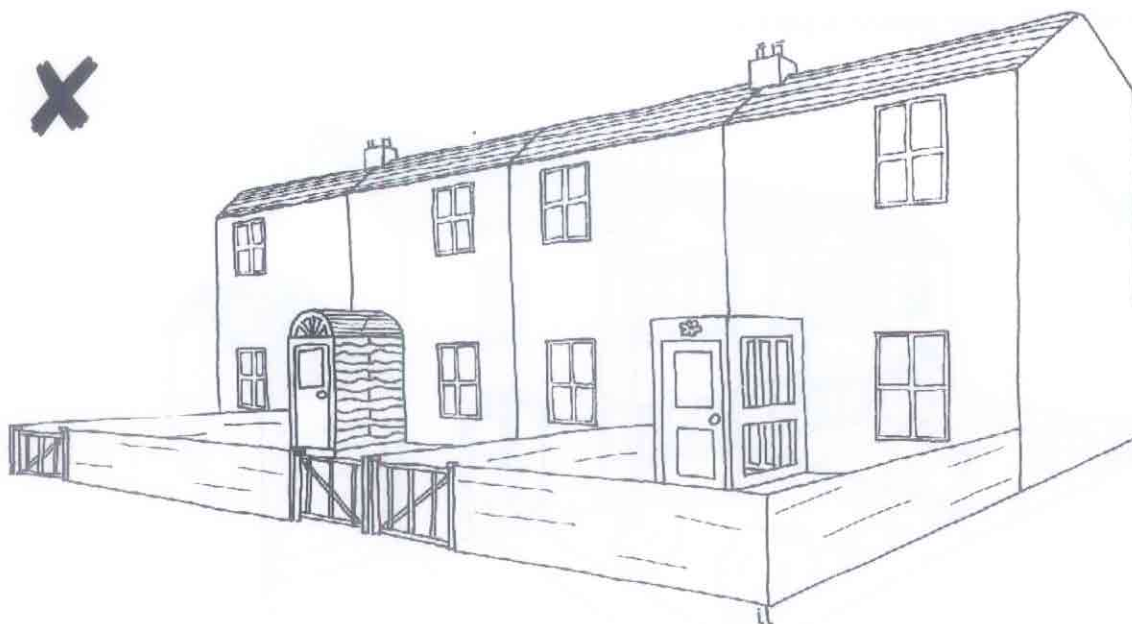


Illustration 9
- Unacceptable porch designs

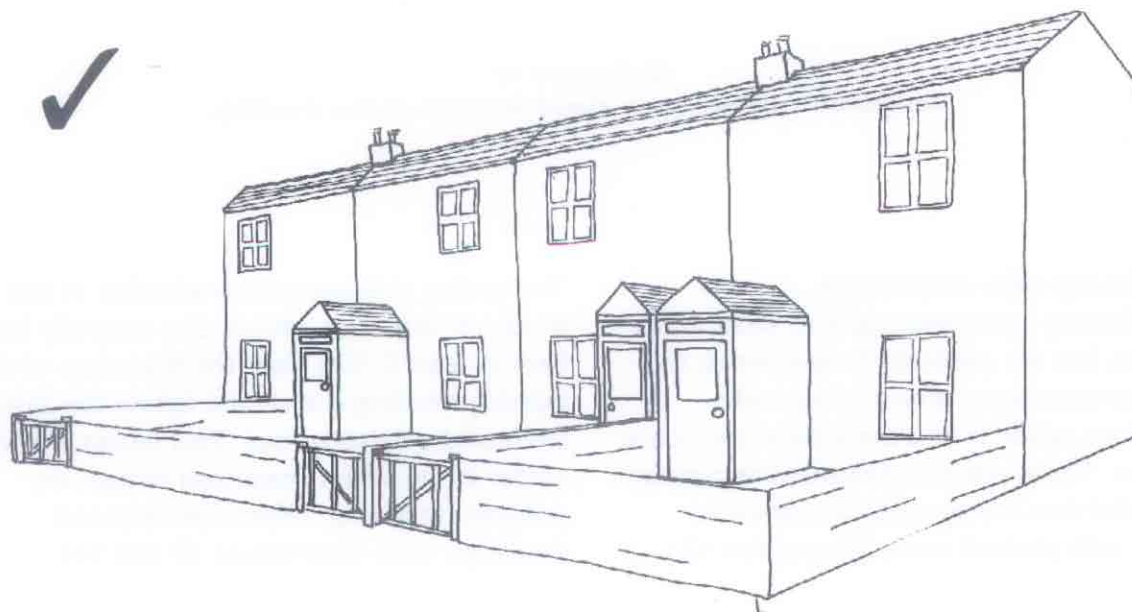


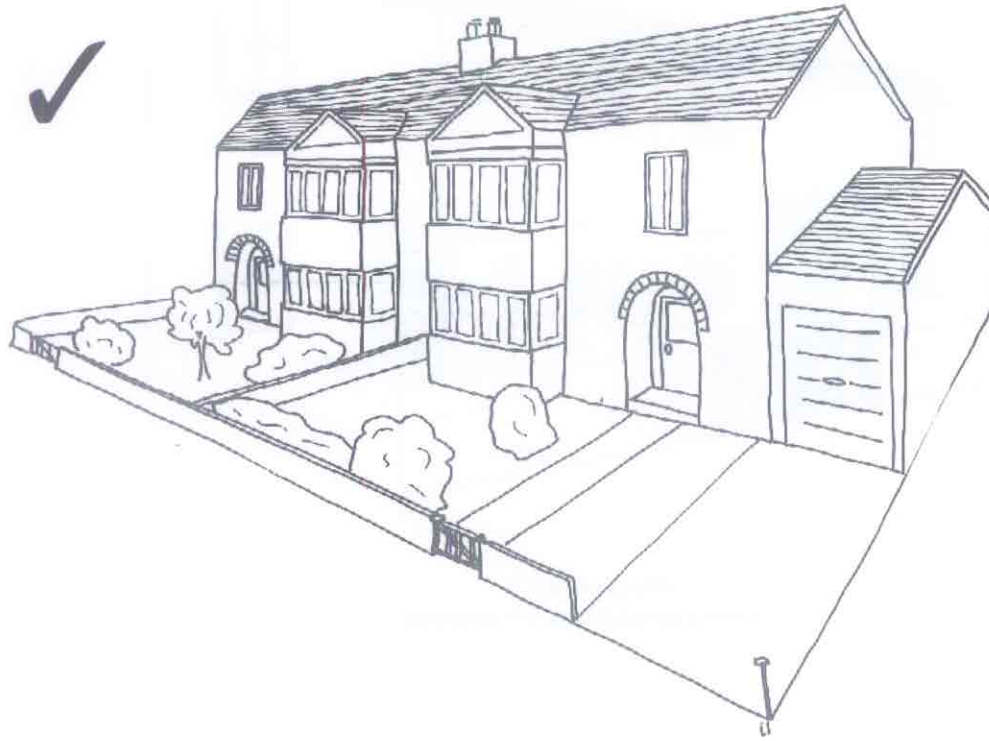
Illustration 10
- Acceptable porch design

4.3 Side Extensions

Single Storey side extensions

It is preferable both visually and in respect of maintenance, to erect a pitched roof over single-storey side extensions. However on extensions built between other houses, where close together, it may be acceptable to provide a flat roof at the rear behind a pitched roof

element at the front. On corner plots and on all bungalows, single storey side extensions should normally match the roof design of the existing dwelling. (See Illustration 11 detailing acceptable roof design.) It may be acceptable to provide flat roof with parapet detailing where it is appropriate to the style and age of the dwelling.



*Illustration 11
- Acceptable roof design to match that of existing dwelling.*

Two Storey side extensions

The following comments apply to most types of house, but are particularly relevant to the most common type of two storey side extensions, which is to a semi-detached house in a row. There will be a presumption against flat roofed two storey side extensions to houses with pitched roofs. (Illustration 12.)

Two storey side extensions whether in line or in corner locations, should also normally be set back at least 0.75m from the front face of the existing dwelling and should follow the angle of pitch of the existing roof. This design will look better in the street scene and reduce any possible "terracing" effect, with adjacent dwellings. (See Illustrations 13 and 14.)



Illustration 12
- Unacceptable roof and design.

It also makes it less likely that the extension will be unduly obtrusive, if a perfect match of materials cannot be made. The "terracing" effect is created where the gap between semi-detached and sometimes detached houses is

eroded by two storey side extensions built flush with the existing and adjacent dwellings. This effect detracts from the basic design and quality of the dwellings and from the street scene as a whole.

Unacceptable terracing effect



Illustration 13

Unacceptable terracing effect



Illustration 14

In some instances, it may be acceptable for the ground floor element of a two-storey side extension to project forward of the existing dwelling where there would be no detrimental

impact to the amenity of a neighbouring dwelling or would be visually unobtrusive in the street scene.

4.4 Rear Extensions

Single Storey rear extensions

Single storey rear extensions will be considered on the basis of their proposed length, height, bulk, proximity of boundary, adjoining windows, orientation, width of plot

and the relationship to adjoining properties. A single storey rear extension to a semi-detached house will normally be acceptable where the length of the extension is not more than 2.5m on the boundary with the adjoining houses. (See Illustration 15.)

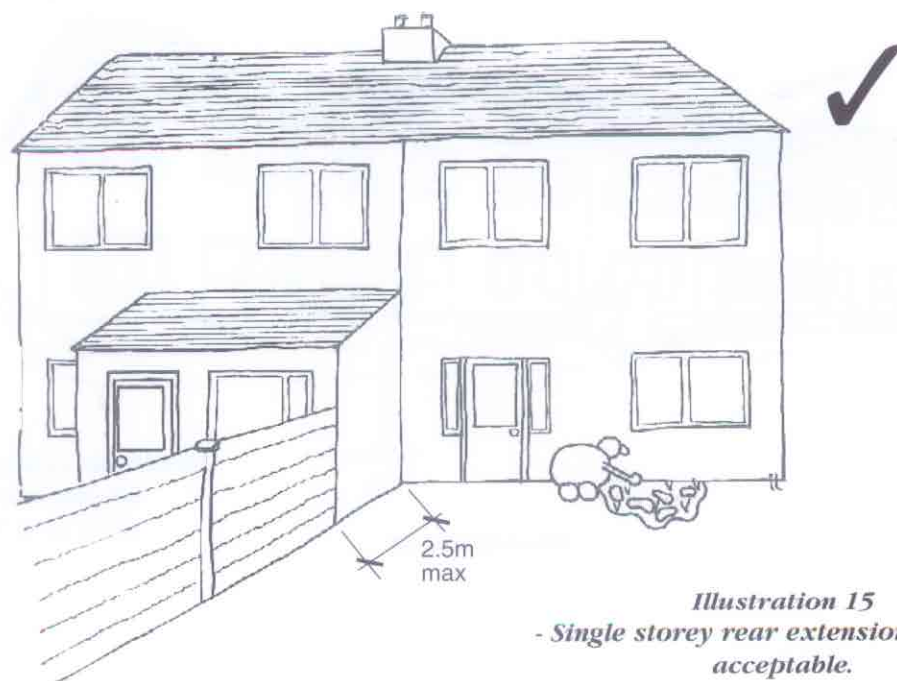


Illustration 15
- Single storey rear extension normally acceptable.

However, there may be sites where an extension of this length or less is unacceptable. An example is where a "tunnelling" effect would be created by the extension to the windows of an adjacent

house, because of an existing projecting element to that house. On terraced properties, single storey extensions in the well between properties will not normally be permitted. (Illustration 16.)

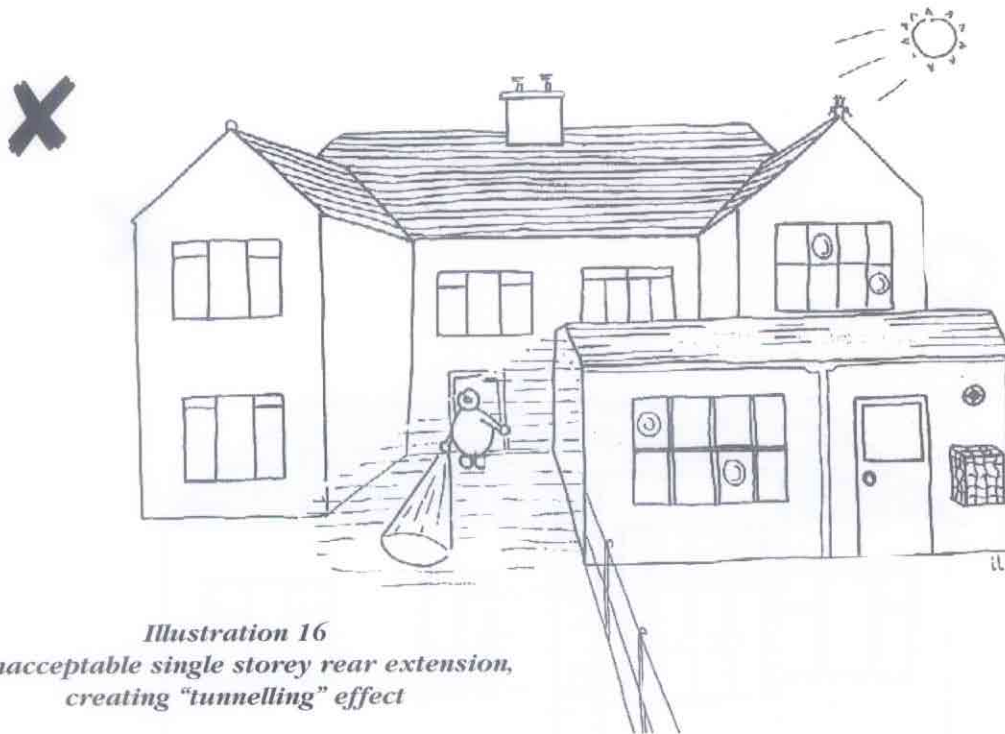


Illustration 16
- Unacceptable single storey rear extension, creating "tunnelling" effect

There will be a presumption against the creation of balconies on the roofs of extensions which may allow overlooking or

perceived overlooking of neighbouring properties or gardens. (Illustration 17.)

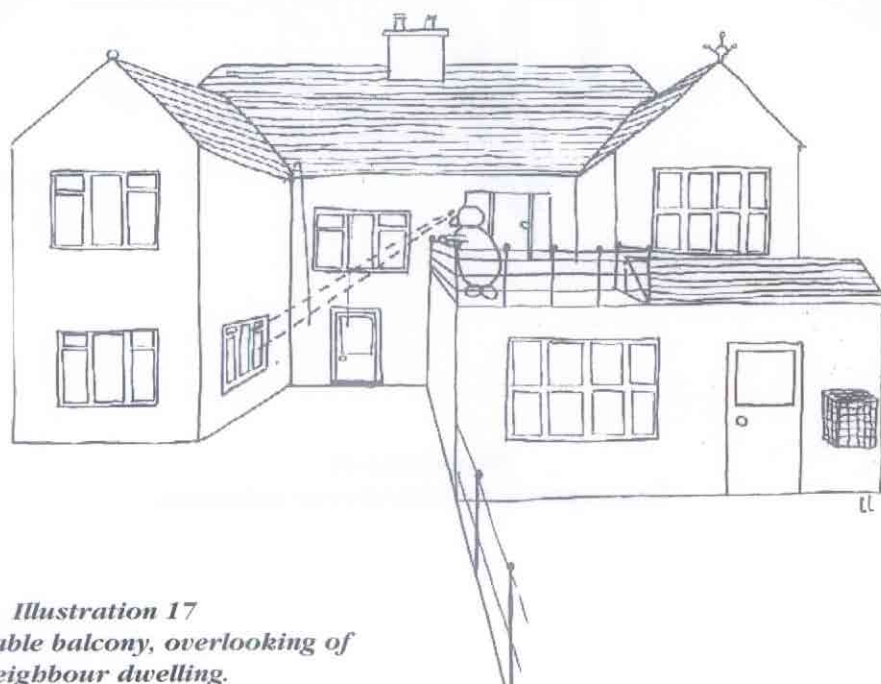


Illustration 17
- Unacceptable balcony, overlooking of neighbour dwelling.

Two Storey rear extensions

Two-storey rear extensions on semi-detached houses where the extension abuts the boundary with the adjoining property will not normally be acceptable. These can be

overbearing and over-shadow the neighbouring property. (Illustration 18.)

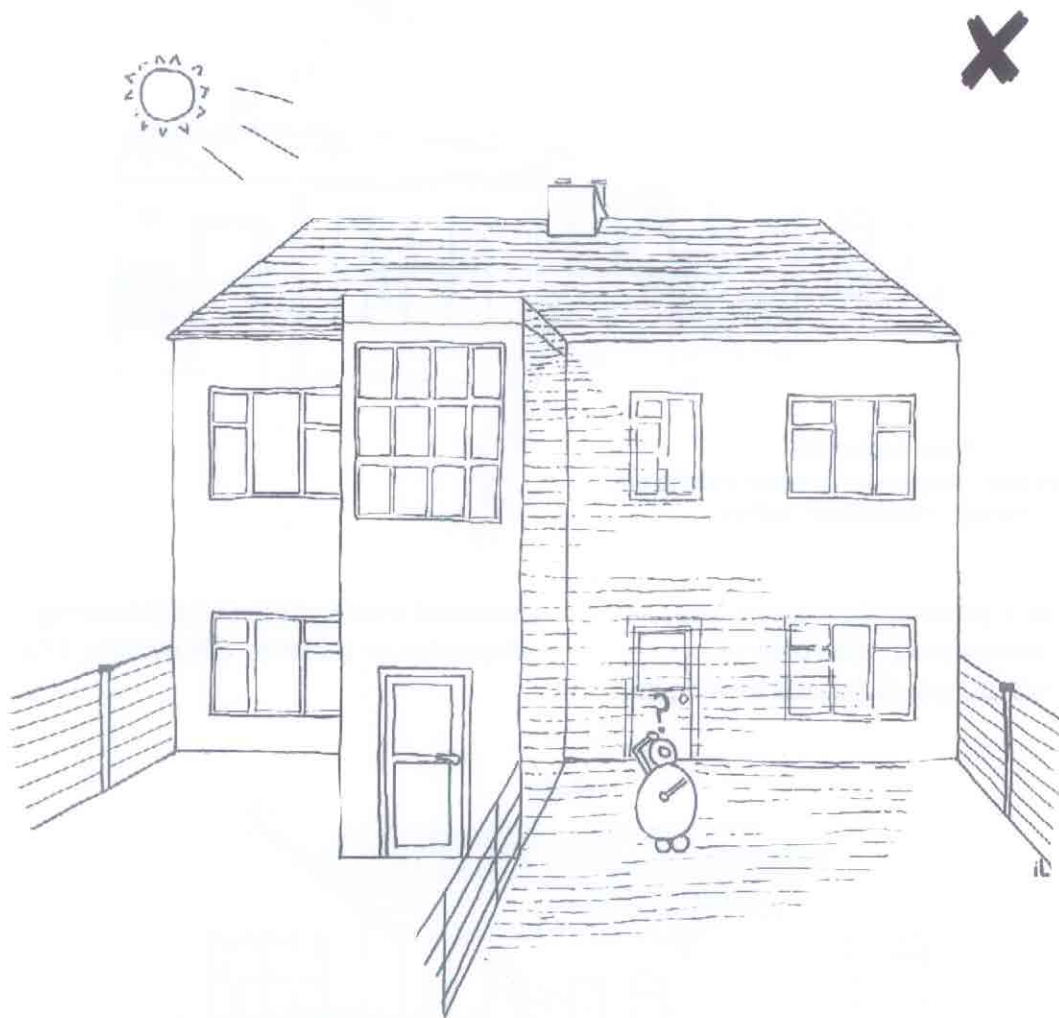


Illustration 18
- Unacceptable two storey rear extension.

In circumstances where two-storey rear extensions are proposed not immediately on the boundary, these will be judged against issues such as the impact upon sunlight, daylight, overbearing nature and undue

overlooking on adjacent properties. The roof of such an extension should match the roof of the existing dwelling in style and design. (See Illustration 19.)

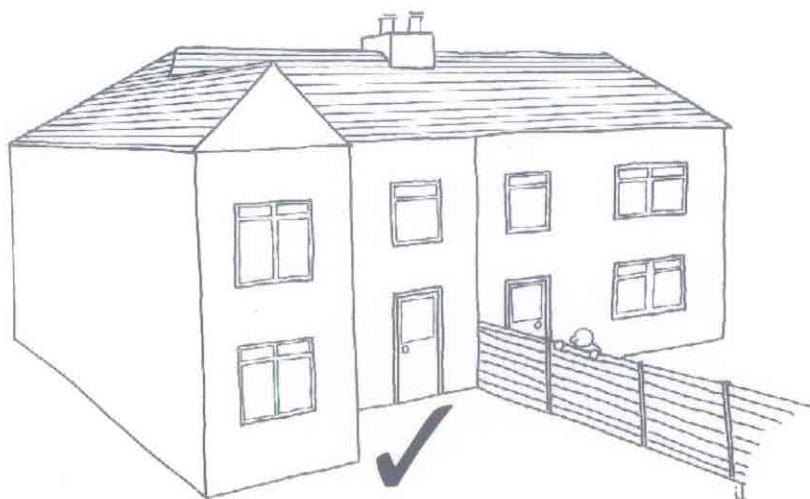


Illustration 19
- Acceptable two storey rear extension.

4.5 Roof Extensions/Alterations

Dormer extensions should not be designed so as to be detrimental to the character of the dwelling or its surrounds by reason of design or massing. Dormers should not rise above the ridge of the roof of the dwelling but should be subordinate to it. Roof lights should follow the vertical alignment of the existing doors and

windows, and roof materials should match those of the existing roof. In the majority of cases, the provision of rooflights will be preferable to the erection of dormer extensions as these will have a less obtrusive impact on the appearance of the property, particularly if these can be fitted flush with the surface of the roof tiles. (Illustration 20.)

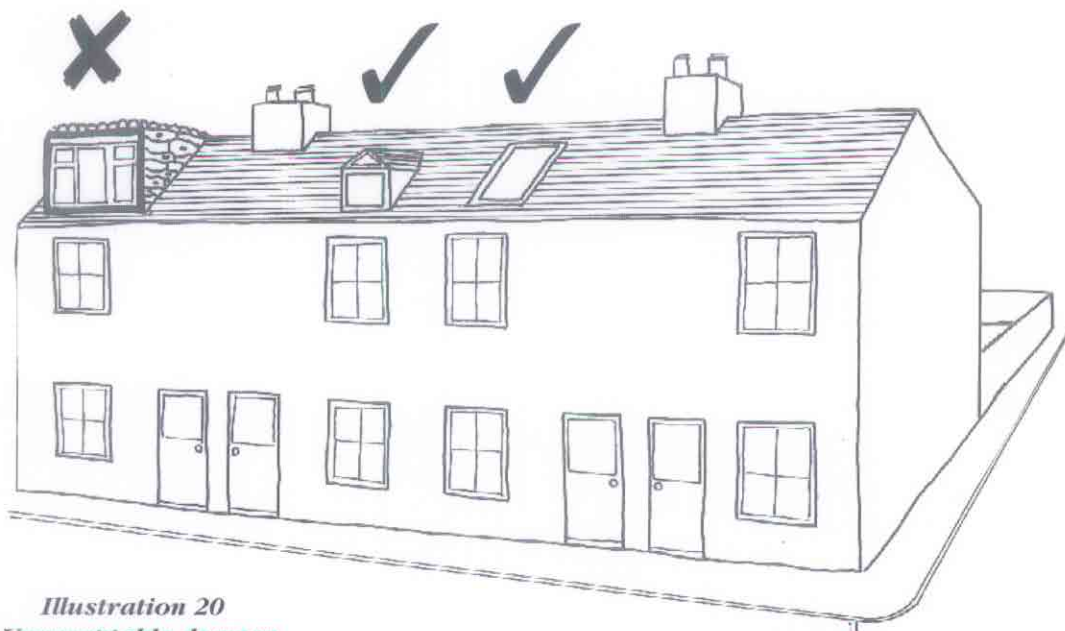


Illustration 20
- Unacceptable dormer.

- Acceptable dormer and roof light

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