London Borough of Lambeth
Unitary Development Plan

Supplementary Planning Document

Residential Alterations and Extensions

April 2008

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides guidance for applicants in the preparation of schemes and assists Lambeth planning officers in making decisions on planning applications. It explains and provides further guidance on the interpretation and application of Lambeth UDP policies and relevant Government policies. It is a material consideration in the determination of applications involving extensions and alterations to residential dwellings.

It also provides design advice for household alterations which do not require planning permission.

This document has been subject to public consultation in accordance with the Lambeth Statement of Community Involvement and as required by PPS12. The comments received have been taken into account in finalising the guidance and advice contained within it.

Introduction 1

Planning Policy

1.1 The Council requires planning proposals for the alteration or extension of houses and flats to be of good quality, to be well designed and built to a high standard. The Government is clear that design which is inappropriate to its context or which fails to improve the character or quality of an area should not be accepted (PPS1, paragraph 34 and PPS3, paragraph 13).

1.2 In relation to design, proposals for extensions or alterations should comply with the requirements of UDP Policy 36 Residential Extensions and Alterations, and also may need to take account of other polices, such as: -

Policy 32 Community Safety/Designing Out Crime,
Policy 33 Building Scale and Design,
Policy 35 Sustainable Design and Construction,
Policy 38 Design in Existing Residential / Mixed Use Areas,
Policy 39 Streetscape, Landscape and Public Realm
Policy 46 Buildings of Local Merit; and
Policy 47 Conservation Areas

Application – Using this document

1.3 This guidance applies to the design of extensions, loft conversions, lightwells and other associated alterations to residential dwellings. It will be used by the Council when determining planning proposals.

In addition, where planning permission is not required, it is intended that this guidance should be used as best practice to promote high quality extensions and alterations.

In designing extensions or proposing alterations fullest consideration of energy conservation issues is encouraged from the outset.

1.4 The advice is applicable throughout the borough, including conservation areas where there is a statutory duty to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of such areas. This document is not intended to provide specialist advice on statutory listed buildings but may be relevant in many cases. Alterations or extensions to listed buildings require separate consent for internal and external works; applicants proposing internal or external works to statutory listed buildings should consult Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 ‘Planning and the Historic Environment’ (PPG15) and the Council’s Conservation & Urban Design team.

Guidance

1.5 Alterations to houses and flats that are well considered and complement the existing appearance of a property can increase their value and contribute to the quality and character of the local area. Extensions and alterations to existing buildings also make effective use of urban land. Good design is particularly important in order to avoid harm to the amenity of neighbours through increased noise, disturbance and activity caused by an intensification of use.

1.6 When assessing a planning application for a residential extension or alteration the Council will therefore consider:

- the quality of the design of the proposal;
- the scale of the proposal in relation to the main dwelling;
- how much of the overall garden or yard area will be covered;
- the effect on the character and pattern of the area;
- parking levels and the layout of front gardens;
- the effect on amenity of neighbouring property;
- safety and security issues; and
- sustainability and environmental issues.

1.7 Appendix 1 provides an overview of the various residential building types in Lambeth which is useful for anyone considering building alterations.

Permissions Explained

Planning Permission

1.8 Planning permission is required for most external alterations to flats irrespective of whether they are purpose built or in converted houses / buildings. Permission is also required for some changes and extensions to single family dwelling houses.

Some works to houses do not require planning permission; this is known as 'permitted development'. In such cases the use of this document is encouraged in order to achieve high quality design.

Regardless of any need to gain formal approval from the Council it is good practice to consult and inform neighbours who might be affected by the proposals.

1.9 In conservation areas the planning permission controls are greater and there is a presumption in favour of retaining buildings and features that positively contribute to the special character or appearance of the area. However, single family dwelling houses still have some permitted

development rights. In some conservation areas, in order to manage incremental change better, the Council has removed permitted development rights by using an Article 4 Direction to control certain external changes to dwelling houses. In some instances tailored guidance is available on a number of Lambeth's conservation areas in the form of 'Conservation Area Statements' which are available on the 'Conservation Area Profiles' section of the Planning pages of the Council's web site – www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning

1.10 For formal confirmation that works are permitted development a Certificate of Lawful Development can be sought from the Planning Division.

Conservation Area Consent

1.11 Conservation Area Consent is only required for total or substantial demolition of structures in conservation areas, including some boundary enclosures depending on their height and location. It is not required for alteration or extension works.

Listed Building Consent

1.12 Listed building consent is only required for alteration, extension or demolition (internal and external) of statutory listed buildings.

Further Information

Planning

1.13 To check what permissions are required please refer to the 'Planning: a Guide for Householders' which can be found on www.planningportal.gov.uk or the Council's website www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning.

For more detailed advice please contact the Lambeth Town Planning Advice Centre on 020 7926 1180 or by e-mail at tpac@lambeth.gov.uk.

Built Heritage

1.14 Information on conservation areas, Article 4 Directions and statutory listed buildings and buildings of local merit is available from Conservation & Urban Design by e-mail at planningconservation@lambeth.gov.uk .

Building Control & Energy Conservation

1.15 Structural works and some other alterations such as window replacements normally require separate Building Regulations approval from Lambeth Building Control which can be contacted on 020 7926 7000 or by e-mail at buildingcontrol@lambeth.gov.uk. Building Regulations set out requirements for energy conservation. The Council's SPD on Sustainable Design & Construction and House owners guide to renewables provide further advice and guidance as well as references to information on good practice.

Extensions 2

Design Principles

2.1 Extensions should:

- Be subordinate to the main building and in keeping with it;
- Be located on the least important elevation and not obscure important architectural features;
- Not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of neighbouring property;
- Use matching or complimentary materials;
- Reinstate lost or damaged detailing where possible;
- Have a roof form in keeping with the main building; and
- Locate any required plant and services discretely.

2.2 These principles relate to UDP Policy 36 parts (A-D) and parts (H-J2), and consideration should also be given to the Council's SPD 'Guidance and Standards for Housing Development and House Conversions' with particular reference to daylight, sunlight and privacy.

Design Advice

Front Extensions

2.3 Extensions beyond the front building line will not usually be appropriate if there would be an adverse impact on the main building and its contribution to the street scene.

2.4 Where considered appropriate, front porches and canopies should be of a height, design and footprint that is proportionate to the size of the dwelling and the front garden. In conservation areas porches or canopies may not be acceptable in principle if they would be out of character with the building or area.

New Rear Extensions

2.5 Single storey rear extensions are normally the maximum that will be acceptable on small 2-storey terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings. On buildings of 3 or more storeys (basement included), a higher rear extension may be acceptable so long as it is at least one storey below the existing roof eaves level.

2.6 In conservation areas extensions over 1 storey will normally only be appropriate if they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Depth and Width of New Rear Extensions

2.7 A maximum extension depth of 3 metres for a terraced house and 4 metres for a semi-detached or detached house will usually be acceptable subject to the size of the garden and the impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Anything greater than this is likely to be out of keeping, fail to integrate with the main building and have an adverse impact on neighbouring property. Exceptions will need to be supported by an adequate justification and respond to their immediate context.

2.8 Full width rear extensions should be avoided on buildings with a rear return or with a rear elevation of particular architectural character. Full width extensions should be:

- Single storey;
- Of appropriate proportions and scale;
- Roofed with a roof form in keeping with the main building;
- Set back slightly from the sides of the main building; and
- Designed to relate to the pattern of adjoining development.

2.9 In conservation areas rear elevations can be particularly important in reflecting the aspiration of the original design, the style of the period and historic pattern of development. In such instances rear extensions will also need to:

- Be compatible with the character and appearance of the main building / conservation area;
- Respect original features and details; and
- Conform to the prevailing rear building line.

2.10 In some conservation areas there may be cases where any extension would harm the character or appearance of the area.

Closet Additions

2.11 Many terraced buildings have historic ‘closet additions’ on their rear elevation. It may be acceptable to extend these upward if they do not damage the architectural unity of the group and if the resulting extension would still be one storey below the eaves / roofline of the main roof.

Existing Rear Returns

2.12 Many buildings have an original rear return with a passage / space to one side. Alterations to the general form of the rear return, especially if part of a group, are likely to be resisted. Infilling this remaining space with a single storey extension is usually acceptable when:

- The new work has a mostly glazed or visually lightweight form;

- The roof is designed to minimise adverse impact on neighbouring properties;
- It does not project beyond the end of, or wrap-around, the original return. Ideally it should be set back slightly to give the original return visual superiority; and
- It does not have an adverse impact on the appearance of an end of terrace property when viewed from the street.

Conservatories

2.13 In addition to the advice above, glazed extensions such as conservatories should always be single storey and located at ground or garden level, to the rear of the buildings, without obscuring original architectural detailing.

2.14 In conservation areas the detailed design of conservatories requires particular attention to ensure it is in keeping with the main building.

Side Extensions

2.15 Infilling a gap to the side of a building with an extension can have a significant visual impact as it can change the character of buildings in the street scene. Schemes for end of terrace buildings and those with unusually shaped side plots will be considered on their merits in relation to their context. The effect of all extensions on the amenity of neighbouring properties should always be considered.

2.16 A side extension should normally:

- Be subsidiary to the main dwelling in scale, height and position;
- Be set back from the front building line;
- Maintain a 1m gap between the completed structure and the side boundary to avoid visual terracing and maintain side space between properties; and
- Designed so that the roof design is compatible with that of the main building or adhere to an established design in the surrounding area. N.B Dummy roof slopes (those concealing a flat roof) should have a sufficient size and pitch to give them design integrity.

2.17 In conservation areas gaps and spaces between buildings are often important to the character and appearance of the street and contribute to the special interest of the area. Infilling with a side extension will be inappropriate where:

- the gap contributes to a development pattern of interest, including any views and spaces of importance to the character of the area;
- the architectural symmetry of a building or group of buildings would be impaired; or
- an important feature would be obscured.

Roof Extensions and Alterations 3

Design Principles

3.1 Roof extensions and alterations should create good roofscapes and integrate well with the main building and the surroundings without causing harm to amenity.

3.2 These principles relate to UDP Policy 33 parts (D-H) and Policy 36 (C and F) and proposals will also need to take into account guidance in the SPD on Sustainable Design and Construction.

Design Advice

Rooflights

3.3 Rooflights are the most sympathetic way of providing daylight to a habitable attic space as they follow the line of the roof. In most instances proposed rooflights should:

- Be subordinate features on the roof; and
- Align with, or reflect the window pattern of the building below.

3.4 However, rooflights are not a traditional feature of Lambeth's residential areas and uncluttered / unaltered roofs can be especially important to the character and appearance in conservation areas. Front or other prominent roof pitches should be avoided and less sensitive alternative locations considered. Rooflights should also be avoided on the steep slopes of traditional mansard roofs as they can look out of place. It is difficult to accommodate rooflights on roofs with complex asymmetrical forms such as gables, hips and turrets as they usually would be over dominant and visually out of place and should be avoided.

3.5 Rooflights should be set flush with the roof plane and as small as possible. On traditional buildings a cast iron rooflight with a vertical glazing bar, often known as a 'conservation rooflight' should be used.

3.6 Sometimes rooflights are necessary on front roof pitches at low level to provide means of escape. Other less visually intrusive methods of escape should also be considered if possible, for example the upgrading of internal staircases to provide a suitable escape route through the building.

Other Forms of Roof Glazing

3.7 Lantern lights, glazed domes and other roof additions will only be appropriate where they do not harm the architectural integrity of the

main building or its wider context. The installation on prominent roof pitches should be avoided.

Dormer Windows

3.8 With the exception of mansard roofs, dormers were not a feature of residential development in Lambeth before the late 19th Century. Their introduction requires a careful approach to ensure compatibility with the main building and their wider context and for that reason dormers are best located on rear roof pitches and features such as chimneys and parapet walls should not be removed or obscured by the dormers.

3.9 Irrespective of the location the following design advice normally applies:

- Dormers should normally align with, be no wider than, and be subordinate in height to the windows on the elevation below;
- The window cill should rest on the roof slope and should be around 1 metre from the attic floor level (or eaves level of the roof if the floor has been lowered) and the roof slope;
- The window type should be in keeping with those on the main building;
- The materials, construction detailing and form should all be carefully considered. Bulky construction detailing should be avoided; and
- The dormer should sit well within the roof slope and its roof should be lower than the roof ridge.

3.10 The linking of small individual dormers together to make one wide dormer is unlikely to be acceptable unless it is part of the established building form in the area. Blank dormers (those without windows) are not considered acceptable.

3.11 Dormers that are formed by cutting into the roof slope (inset dormers) generally provide restricted outlook and reduced daylight. The inset, if large enough, can provide amenity space. For further advice see Section 4 ‘Roof Terraces and Balconies’.

3.12 In conservation areas, where dormers are deemed appropriate, the dormer style, size and materials should be based on traditional local precedents, be characteristic of the area and be appropriate to the period of the building. Detailed design advice and historic examples can be found in English Heritage’s Listed Building Guidance Leaflet *‘Dormer Windows’*.

Hipped End to Gabled End Roof Enlargements

3.13 Proposals to alter existing roof profiles from a hipped end to a gabled will normally need to comply with the following: -

- Not harm the design integrity of the main building;

- Not undermine proportions, balance or character of the building or group; and
- Not result in the loss of a roof of historic interest; particularly on a building in a conservation area.

Mansard Additions

3.14 A mansard addition is unlikely to be acceptable where mansards are not part of the established character of the street or where it would harm the appearance of the building. Mansard roofs that compromise the architectural integrity of the main building and neighbouring buildings by virtue of their bulk, design or treatment should be avoided.

3.15 The following guidance should normally be followed for mansards on traditional buildings:

- A mansard roof addition should have steep front and rear pitches and shallow top pitches meeting at a central ridge. This should follow a basic semi-circular section (taken front to rear);
- The exact angles and pitch will vary according to the depth of the building and the established patterns in the street;
- Dormers should be used on a traditional mansard addition.

3.16 In conservation areas mansards may not be appropriate if they would result in the loss of contributory roof forms or cause harm to the main building / wider character and appearance.

Additional Storeys

3.17 Additional storeys require a considered approach to ensure they are well integrated with the main building. Building straight up off the existing front and rear elevations (or flanks if exposed) is unlikely to be successful. Subservient additions with reasonable set-backs to reduce bulk are advisable.

3.18 Contemporary design approaches may be acceptable on ‘stand alone’ buildings and modern buildings or in locations where there is no unifying built form or building height. In these circumstances the design and detailing will be expected to be of an appropriately high quality and responsive to its context.

Other Roof Alterations

3.19 Proposed alterations that introduce alien roof configurations (cut-outs and add-ons) or which propose to raise the roof ridge in a manner that would adversely affect the appearance of the building or its contribution to the wider street scene are unlikely to be considered appropriate.

Living Roofs

3.20 Green/brown roofs can be very efficient in reducing rainwater run-off, providing new habitats for wildlife in urban areas, helping to reduce heat loss and reduction in energy use and can be visually attractive. Careful consideration will need to be given to ensure that green/brown

roofs integrate with the parent building and the wider context.
Green/brown roofs should not be considered an adequate mitigation for the loss of rear gardens; each has its own unique ecological character.

Roof Terraces and Balconies 4

Design Principles

4.1 Due to the high residential density in most of Lambeth terrace and balcony additions to existing buildings are often unacceptable because of their harm on the amenity of neighbouring property. Terraces and balconies will only be supported where there is no adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining property and no harm caused to the appearance of the building.

4.2 These principles relate to UDP Policy 33 parts (D) and Policy 36 (A, C and F).

Design Advice

4.3 Any balcony or terrace addition must be well designed to ensure it integrates with the main building. Balconies and roof terraces are not considered appropriate for buildings within conservation areas if the proposal would harm the integrity of the building or the character and appearance of the locality.

Amenity

4.4 Unacceptable levels of overlooking, loss of privacy, noise disturbance and/or enclosure should be avoided. In order to avoid harm to the amenity of neighbouring property it may not be possible to use the entire area of a flat roof as a terrace. In these instances handrails or other enclosures should be carefully located to minimise adverse impact. Screening or planting appropriate to the building should be used to prevent overlooking of habitable rooms or nearby gardens, without resulting in visual clutter or loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook for neighbouring property.

Terraces on Shop Roofs

4.5 Terraces created on the flat roofs above traditional shopfronts are not considered acceptable due to the visual intrusion they cause to the street scene.

Satellite Dishes, Aerials and Plant 5

Design Principles

5.1 A range of equipment installations can be required for the functioning of residential buildings. Though this can be perceived to be of little importance these features can have a detrimental affect if installed in an ill-considered manner. They key to successful installation is appropriate siting and appearance. Policy 36 (E) is relevant here.

Design Advice

Satellite Dishes

5.2 Satellite dishes (and associated equipment) should not be visually prominent, especially within conservation areas. Alternatives such as cable TV may be considered preferable. Where this is not possible equipment should be as small as possible, of material, colour and location which minimises visual impact.

Other Equipment

5.3 The installation of plant and other equipment is likely to require planning permission on buildings containing flats and may require permission on houses; depending on what is proposed and where it is located. Irrespective of the type of property or the requirement for permission the following should always be sought:

- Discrete positioning, such as concealed roof slopes, between parapet walls, on rear elevations, or behind chimney stacks;
- Use of the smallest practical size and an unobtrusive colour;
- The sharing of equipment between flats to reduce clutter; and
- Using effective screening to minimise visual impact.

Services and pipes

5.4 The consideration of the location of minor elements such as downpipes, extractors and boiler flues, is advisable at an early stage of a design proposal, particularly in conservation areas. Locating these elements on the front of buildings should be avoided as they add visual clutter and often detract from the appearance of a building. Downpipes should be run vertically – awkward bends and diagonal runs should be avoided.

Meter Boxes

5.5 The positioning of meter boxes in prominent positions next to the main entrance doors can be visually intrusive and have a harmful effect on the appearance of properties. An inconspicuous location to the side of a property should be sought or the meters set flush into the ground. Where there is no alternative but a highly visible location the box should be painted out to match the wall colour or screened by planting.

Renewable Energy Systems

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Design Principles

6.1 The Council supports efforts to reduce energy consumption and generate energy from sustainable sources where appropriate. This is particularly relevant in the case of residential extensions or alterations.

6.2 It is advisable to carry out an energy audit as a first step to identify the most energy efficient options for the building. These might include measures to reduce energy consumption such as the installation of a condensing boiler, additional insulation and the upgrading windows to minimise draughts and cut carbon emissions.

6.3 Policy 36 of the UDP is relevant here in relation to its advice on plant and other building services equipment as well as Policy 35 on sustainable design and construction and the accompanying SPD.

Design Advice

Photovoltaic (PV) Cells and Solar Thermal Equipment

6.4 For highest efficiency of photovoltaic (PV) cells and panelling for solar water heating systems, an unshaded south facing aspect is best although an unshaded southeast and southwest aspect can still be viable. The cells or panels should preferably be integrated into the existing roof tiling systems or laid to the same angle as the roof pitch.

Wind Turbines

6.5 Wind turbines are not very efficient in urban areas and other options for generating renewable energies can be more effective. They are normally also visually prominent and vibration can make integration into existing buildings difficult. When considering a wind turbine there is also a need to assess issues such as siting, structural loading, vibration, noise generation, height, prevalent wind direction and average speed, proximity to trees and other buildings or structures. Noise and visual ‘strobe’ effect may be an amenity issue.

Conservation Areas

6.6 Planning legislation states that within conservation areas particular consideration must be given to the impact of installations, fixed to buildings or stand alone, on the character and appearance of the area. Proposals will normally be appropriate where their form and appearance preserve the special character or appearance of the building / area or where they are not visible from a highway.

6.7 Further guidance on the forms of renewable energy systems such as heat source pumps is contained in the SPD on Sustainable Design and Construction.

Gardens, Boundaries, Paving and Refuse 7

Design Principles

7.1 This guidance relates to UDP Policy 17(c)(d(v)), Policy 32, UDP Policy 39 parts (B-F), UDP Policy 36 part (J) and UDP Policy 47 parts (E-F) and takes account of the guidance in Chapter 7 of 'By Design: A Better Place to Live' a Government publication referenced by national policy in PPS1 and PPS3.

Design Advice

Gardens

7.2 Gardens are important for amenity, habitats and natural drainage; their importance in Lambeth is highlighted in the Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan (Lambeth BAP). Any new development should respect amenity, habitats and natural drainage wherever possible. The value of rear gardens is increased where they collectively make up a large tract of green space. Front gardens and forecourts are particularly important as they provide a landscaped setting for the building and mediate between public and private space. The loss of soft landscaping should therefore be avoided wherever possible.

Trees

7.3 Trees have important amenity value and habitat significance and should be retained for those reasons. Before undertaking works to a tree it is advisable to check whether it is protected. Tree Preservation Orders are in place to protect the best examples. Nearly all trees in conservation areas are protected automatically; full details are available on the Planning pages of the Council's web site www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning

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Boundaries

7.4 Existing boundary treatments such as walls, fences and hedges / shrub planting should be retained where they are appropriate to the character of the area. If walls, fences or railings are rebuilt care should be taken to reflect the established boundaries on the street in terms of height, design and materials. Where there is no consistent boundary pattern to follow, simple enclosures consisting of iron railings and/or brick are usually preferred. Most historic residential railings are about 1m in height. In residential locations, new front boundaries should not exceed 1 metre in height unless it is consistent with the boundary treatments of the immediate locality or there are special circumstances. Ideally boundaries between front gardens should not exceed the height of the front boundary and where a change of height is required

between houses the boundary should increase gradually at a point back from the street frontage.

7.5 Boundaries are a very important to the character and appearance of conservation areas. Original boundary treatments especially those shared by a group of houses should not be altered or demolished. Every effort should be made to authentically reinstate missing boundaries in these instances.

7.6 Between most rear gardens boundaries should not exceed 2 metres in height. Anything higher (including trellis additions) will require planning permission. Where garden rear boundaries front a street, care should be taken to ensure the materials and details are appropriate. Brick walls are relatively common in urban areas and vertical close-boarded fencing with a dark stained finish is common in suburban areas.

7.7 Where possible gardens should be retained without sub-division.

Refuse Storage

7.8 In many subdivided properties, dustbins and recycling boxes crowd the front garden causing clutter and visual intrusion. These should be given a dedicated storage place, preferably out of sight behind the building line. Where this is not possible, an enclosure of adequate size should be integrated into the front or side garden and carefully screened with soft planting so that its visual impact is minimised. These bin store enclosures should be flexible enough to cope with any future increases in recycling needs.

For more information please see the Council publication *'Waste Recycling Storage and Collection Requirements; Guidance for Architects and Developers'*.

Cycle Storage

7.9 Bicycles should preferably be stored at the rear of the property or inside as cycle storage in front gardens can be a harmful visual intrusion as well as being easily accessible to criminals. Cycle storage sheds in front gardens require planning permission. The acceptability of proposals will depend on their impact. Factors determining this are:

- The size of the shed, the building and the garden where it is to be located;
- Its location;
- Level of screening; and
- The nature of the materials used.

Garden Paving, Driveways and Vehicle Hard-Standings

7.10 When forming a new driveway or vehicle hard standing it is essential that there is sufficient space to allow a car to be parked without compromising highway safety.

7.11 To improve the appearance and performance of new paving / hardstanding consideration should always be given to the following:

- Securing natural drainage by using permeable paving and soakaways. Impermeable surfaces increase run off and contribute to local flooding problems;
- Maintaining a sense of enclosure through the use of appropriate boundaries, gates, or planting. Open expanses of hard standing are generally unattractive and should be avoided;
- The provision of a separate entrance path to the front door; and
- Avoiding car parking spaces immediately adjacent to the windows of habitable rooms, to prevent visual intrusion, noise disturbance and fumes.

7.12 The use of appropriate traditional surfaces such as natural stone or granite setts is strongly encouraged especially in conservation areas; along with suitable soak-aways. The texture and colour of any new materials should be sympathetic to the setting of the building and wider street scene.

Structures in Gardens

7.13 Garden structures such as garages, summer houses and swimming pool enclosures can affect neighbouring gardens and the character of an area. Therefore the following advice should be followed regardless of whether planning permission is required:

- Coverage of no more than 25% of the current garden area will maintain a generous proportion of open space;
- Setting back by at least 1m from all boundaries and preferably 5m from the rear building line of the main house will minimise the visual impact on adjoining properties and the general surroundings;
- Buildings should not unacceptably overshadow neighbouring properties or gardens. A maximum height no greater than 4m for a pitched roof structure or 3m for a flat roof structure, when the boundary between neighbours is greater than 1.7m in height will generally achieve this; and
- Retaining mature trees and planting additional vegetation will help soften any adverse visual impact.

Access to Rear Gardens

7.14 Direct access from the upper floor to the rear garden via an external staircase is often desirable to residents but can have an adverse impact on the amenity and security of neighbouring property. External staircases should:

- Be of an appropriate form, design and scale for the building,
- Avoid excessive rearward projection; and
- Be positioned to avoid / minimise overlooking into neighbouring properties and gardens.

Basements, Basement Areas and Lightwells 8

Design Principles

8.1 Alterations to existing basement 'areas' and lightwells and new examples should respect the character of the main building and its context.

8.2 Policy 17(c) and Policy 39(e) are applicable here.

Design Advice

New Basement Accommodation

8.3 The outward appearance of new basement accommodation is very important and should relate sensitively to the main building, its architectural form, windows and other detailing. The enclosure of basement areas and lightwells with railings or balustrades may be required on health and safety grounds and require good design solutions.

Existing Lightwells and Basement Areas

8.4 The infilling of existing light wells and basement areas should normally be avoided on design grounds.

8.5 Generally, roofing over or enclosure of existing basement areas and lightwells harm the appearance of buildings and should be avoided.

8.6 Front garden levels are often designed to screen the basement to provide privacy and give the rest of the building visual prominence. The re-grading of front gardens to slope to a basement or their excavation of a new basement area can improve daylight to basement accommodation. However, this should be done carefully to ensure that the overall appearance of the building is not harmed. If excavation works affect protected trees the Council's consent may be required.

Proposed Lightwells and Basement Areas

8.7 New excavations in front gardens may be acceptable where:

- Basement areas/ lightwells are part of the established character of the street.
- A significant portion of the garden space in a small garden is retained at ground level to allow for adequate screen planting and boundary enclosures.

- The design details complement the appearance of the dwelling in terms of window design and proportion.
- The lightwell is suitably protected to comply with Building Regulations. In places where railing enclosures are deemed unacceptable pavement grilles or structural glass paving may present an alternative.

8.8 Where houses have very small front gardens it may not be possible to accommodate basement areas and light wells satisfactorily. Where schemes excavations are acceptable the enclosure should be well screened with shrub planting etc.

Shop Conversions 9

Design Principles

9.1 Redundant shop premises, where appropriate, may be suitable for conversion to residential use. Many conversions undertaken in the past have been poorly executed and have resulted in development which harms the main building and the wider locality and fails to provide decent residential accommodation. Poor examples should not be used to inform the design of new schemes. The key is to ensure that the design is sympathetic to the main building and provides for refuse and cycle storage in an appropriate manner. Policies 27, 36 and 37 of the UDP apply here.

Design Advice

De-Conversion

9.2 In cases where the property was originally residential and the shopfront is a later addition it may be possible to return the façade to its original appearance. This approach will be welcomed where adjoining properties provide a clear indication of how the restoration should be undertaken. Of particular importance is securing the right proportions – shopfronts are normally tall and therefore need tall windows with low cills.

Retention of Characterful shopfronts

9.3 It is Council policy to seek the retention of shopfronts (including pub fronts, bank fronts etc) of architectural and historic interest. This is particularly important on buildings in conservation areas where the shopfront contributes to their special interest. Careful design stage ingenuity should allow for the retention of such frontages when conversion is proposed.

Surviving Architectural Details

9.4 Often when the original shopfront is long gone the structural elements that frame it survive in-situ – the pilasters console, fascia and cornice. The quality and contribution of these elements to the main building, and their contribution to general character of the street scene should determine whether or not they are retained. On de-conversion removal may be desirable. Piecemeal retention of fragments rarely results in successful schemes.

Design of the Shopfront Infill

9.5 The following issues need to be considered when designing the infill / conversion: -

- Appearance of the main building;
- Refuse Storage;
- Cycle Storage;
- Meter Boxes;
- Communal entrances;
- Provision of daylight to basements; and
- Forecourt treatment.

9.6 The provision of a brick infill with a door and a window will rarely address all of these matters. Similarly recessing the infill to provide a small forecourt is rarely visually successful or practical. In some cases it may be worth considering a replacement that looks like shopfront. For example traditional shopfronts often have a separate door leading to the upstairs accommodation – thus two doors on a shop frontage are not unusual. Similarly the ground floor residential accommodation is often quite deep (having been a former shop) and would benefit from a large window.

Refuse Storage

9.7 The on-street storage of refuse and recycling is unacceptable – it results in footway obstructions and is generally unsightly. Where a forecourt area exists a discrete refuse store may be possible for one or two units but large refuse enclosures are unacceptable. In these instances consideration should be given to the provision of refuse storage within the envelope of the building and preferably accessed from the front through a separate vented door.

Cycle Storage

9.8 Bicycle storage should be provided in a dedicated space within the envelope of the building. Forecourt storage may not be acceptable if there is an adverse impact on visual amenity.

Meter Boxes

9.9 Discrete installations which cause no visual intrusion should be sought on shop conversions. In sensitive locations a meter cupboard can be incorporated into a shopfront stallriser or the meters can be sunk into the ground. Meter boxes surface mounted on the front elevation will not be accepted.

Communal Entrances

9.10 These should be well designed and spacious – providing for access with bicycles and refuse where necessary.

Lighting Basement Accommodation

9.11 Basement areas and lightwells will not be accepted where they look incongruous on the shopfront or infilled frontage. A glazed stallriser or pavement lights are the traditional way to light a shop basement and this approach should be considered for residential conversions.

Forecourt treatment

9.12 Where a property is being de-converted the front garden should be reinstated and enclosed to match adjoining residential properties. Enclosure of the forecourt may not be deemed appropriate if the enclosed space would too small to be practical or the resulting enclosure would look out of place in the street scene.

Windows 10

Design Principles

10.1 Windows are an important feature of a dwelling. It is good practice to:

- Restore, repair and maintain existing original windows in the first instance;
- Carefully consider window details and materials where alterations or additional windows are proposed; and
- Ensure that new windows complement the appearance and character of an existing building / terrace, closely matching original details and materials where possible.

10.2 These principles relate to UDP Policy 33, UDP Policy 36 parts (D) and (G) and UDP Policy 47 part (D).

Advice

10.3 The replacement of windows requires separate consents under the Building Regulations.

Retention and Maintenance

10.4 Many old windows are finely detailed and well constructed using good quality timber; their retention generally adds to value of period properties. Repairing and upgrading original windows is more environmentally sustainable and often more economical than fitting new ones, and this should always be the first option. Where repair or upgrading is not possible replacements should match the style and materials of the original windows as closely as possible.

10.5 In conservation areas historic windows are part of the special interest and should be retained and repaired rather than replaced. Historic windows should not be removed if they are capable of repair / refurbishment.

Energy Saving for Existing Windows

10.6 Traditional single glazed windows can be upgraded though:

- Draught proofing, which is simple, cheap and effective;
- Using internal shutters; and
- Internal secondary glazing, which is removable and comes in different styles. This type of glazing does not generally require permission.

Replacement Windows

10.7 New and replacement windows have to comply with thermal insulation standards as set out in the Building Regulations and to meet these standards new windows will usually need to be double glazed.

10.8 Many of Lambeth's buildings are part of formal terraces or groups which share common window detailing. Similarly the windows of individual flats are often identical within the whole block. Any replacement window should accurately replicate the detailing and form of the originals; powder coated aluminium or plastic (PVCu) replacements therefore may not be acceptable, especially in conservation areas where accurate like-for-like replacements will normally be required in order to preserve the character and appearance of the area.

10.9 Buildings in conservation areas may be exempted from the Building Regulation requirement for double glazing where double glazing would harm the special interest of the building or the area. Replacements in these cases should pay great attention to details including the thickness of glazing bars and the reuse of original glass. Visible trickle vents should be avoided.

10.10 New or replacement windows should:

- Complement the existing rhythm and pattern of openings in terms of window positioning, size and orientation
- Follow the existing style of opening - such as sliding sash or a side or top opening casement,
- Reproduce the pattern and size of glazing bar where appropriate. "Stick on" or non-integral glazing bars are a poor substitute for authentic glazing bars and should be avoided (they can drop-off),
- Have locks and fittings that meet 'secured by design' minimum standards.
- Be set within the established reveal depth and relate/fit in with the brickwork arches above windows.

Appearance and Detailing 11

Design Principles

11.1 Minor alterations and extensions will be more successful if the construction detailing is carefully considered to ensure the highest quality of design.

11.2 New work should replicate original details, where possible. It is important to look at the separate elements of the existing building including windows, doors, roof and materials, and understand how they are executed.

11.3 A contemporary design should still take its cue from the main building, and complement its appearance in terms of proportion and materials.

11.4 These principles and the advice below relate to UDP Policy 33 parts (A) and (C), UDP Policy 35, UDP Policy 36 , UDP Policy 38, and UDP Policy 47 part (D), regarding the use of high quality, well detailed sustainable materials in extensions, alterations and repairs to dwellings. It is offered as good practice. Advice should also be sought from the Council's 'SPD on Sustainable Design and Construction' and 'Householder Guidance for Renewables'.

Planning / Design Advice

Materials and finishes

11.5 The predominant traditional materials in Lambeth are brick (yellow stocks with dressings often in red brick or stone), natural slates, clay tiles, painted joinery and smooth render. When considering facing materials the colour, texture and size should be taken into account to ensure a high quality design led approach that is appropriate for both the original building and wider area.

11.6 For brickwork, the mortar, pointing technique, brick bond, and whether the bricks are hand or machine made can make a significant difference to the final appearance of the masonry. Existing unpainted brickwork should not be painted or rendered as it can cause damage to the material and is very to difficult to remove and in most cases is irreversible. It also detracts from the architectural integrity and aesthetic quality of a building. The rendering, cladding or painting of exterior surfaces require continual maintenance as it can often weather badly.

11.7 For roofs, slates and clay tiles can often be reused. When replacing them the shape, texture, colour and size are important considerations.

11.8 For dormers, materials should blend with the main roof. Slate, clay tile, zinc, lead or copper should be used with fascia boards in stained or painted timber if appropriate.

11.9 The re-use of existing materials is encouraged. This is more sustainable, cheaper and the weathered appearance will usually be more attractive. And where possible, timber should be from sustainable sources such as those accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council, see www.fsc-uk or contact Lambeth's Sustainability Team.

11.10 In conservation areas appropriate materials should be used to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. This does not preclude a contemporary approach however, all materials must be of a high quality and sensitive to the character or appearance of the area and the wider context. Consideration should always be given to reinstating previously lost original materials and details.

11.11 For information on repairs refer to English Heritage (Section 7), www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk and "*Stitch in Time: Maintaining Your Property Makes Good Sense and Saves Money"* available from www.ihbc.org.uk

Glossary

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Article 4 (Direction)		A form of town planning control where Permitted Development Rights are removed so that the Council can better control change. Normally only use din Conservation Areas.
Basement Area		An excavated area at basement level of a property. It is normally larger than a lightwell.
Building of Local Merit		A building on Lambeth's list of buildings of local architectural or historic interest. Sometimes known as the 'Local List'.
Building Control		The Lambeth department responsible for ensuring construction work and development accord with the Building Regulations.
Building Regulations		National construction standards.
Closet Addition		A small historic addition to the rear of a house; typically accessed from the stairwell half-landings.
Conservation Area		An area designated for its special architectural or historic interest. The Council has a statutory obligation to seek the preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance.
Conservation Area Consent		Formal approval for demolition in a conservation area from Lambeth. These applications carry no fee
Consoles		The decorative brackets which terminate either end of a traditional shop fascia sign and support / terminate the cornice.
Contemporary style		The architectural / building style which prevails at the time of writing.
Cornice		The architectural moulding, often in timber or stone, which projects out above a shop sign to protect it from the weather.
Dorma		An incorrect term for dormer (see below)
Dormer		A structure placed on a roof to accommodate a vertical window.
Fascia		The area immediately over a shopfront for the presentation of signage
Forecourt		A paved area to the front of a building

Georgian		A general term used to define architectural style from the 18th Century through to the early – mid 19th Century.
Half-landing		The landings on a stairwell which are placed halfway between the principal floor levels.
Half-landing window		A window serving a stairwell half-landing.
Hardstanding		An external hard surface.
Hipped End		Where the end of a roof finishes in a roof slope rather than a gable end.
Juliet Balcony		A balcony which is flush with the face of a building rather than projecting from it.
Lightwell		An small excavated area to provide light to a basement window.
Listed Building		A building on the government's statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.
Listed Building Consent		Formal approval from Lambeth for demolition, alteration or extension of a statutory listed building
Local List		Another name for the Lambeth's List of Buildings of Local Merit.
Permitted Development Rights		Works of alteration or extension to a single family dwellinghouse that do not require planning permission.
Pilaster		A pillar which is partly attached to a wall – often frames either side of a shopfront and supports the console.
Planning Permission		Formal approval for development from Lambeth. This requires the submission of an application which carries a fee.
Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)		A national planning guidance document. A range of these provide detailed guidance on particular issues. These are gradually being replaced by new PPS documents.
Planning Policy Statement (PPS)		A national planning guidance document. A range of these provide detailed guidance on particular issues.
Planning Portal		A national web resource for planning.
Return		A rear wing of a building that normally dates from when the building was built.
Rooflight		A window in a roof which follows the slope of the pitch.
Semi-basement		Basement accommodation which is

		partially above ground level.
Single Family Dwellinghouse		A single family home which is not subdivided into flats or units.
Stallriser		The area of wall immediately beneath a shop window.
Standard Plan		Most common plan form for a terraced house with stairs immediately ahead on entry though the front door. Stairwell lit by half-landing windows on the rear elevation.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)		A document produced by Lambeth Council to provide interpretation and guidance on its UDP policies.
Unitary Development Plan		Lambeth's own strategic planning document outlining the Council's planning policies.
Vehicular Cross-over		The route across the pavement a vehicle must take to enter a property.
Victorian		A general term used to describe architecture from the mid 19th Century until the First World War.
Velux		A product name for a type of rooflight. This term should only be used when that particular product is proposed.

Contacts and Further Information 13

Council Contacts

For advice on making planning applications and all planning related enquiries:

Town Planning Advice Centre
tpac@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 1180

Lambeth Planning
First floor Phoenix House
10 Wandsworth Road
London SW8 2LL

Council website: www.lambeth.gov.uk

For design advice, advice on buildings of local merit (locally listed buildings), statutory listed buildings and conservation areas:

Conservation & Urban Design (within Lambeth Planning)
planningconservation@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 1180

For advice on works to trees within conservation areas, contact:

Planning Arboricultural Officer (within Conservation & Urban Design)
planningconservation@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 1191

For advice on crossover works and highways approval:

Lambeth Transport and Highways
transportandhighways@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 9000

3rd Floor Blue Star House
234-244 Stockwell Road
Brixton SW9 9SP

For advice on energy efficiency and Building Regulations approval:

Lambeth Building Control
buildingcontrol@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 9000

For advice on renewable energy:

Sustainability & Regeneration
planningpolicy@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 1180

Other Contacts

The government's online service for planning:

Planning Portal
www.planningportal.gov.uk.

For advice on finding an architect:

Royal Institute of British Architects
www.architecture.com
090 6302 0440

The government's advisors on the historic built environment:

English Heritage
www.english-heritage.org.uk
0870 333 1189

For advice on repairs to traditional buildings:

Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings
www.spab.org.uk
020 7247 5296

For advice on renewable energy technologies:

Department of Trade and Industry
dti.enquiries@dti.gsi.gov.uk
020 7215 5000

Creative Energy Network
enquiries@cen.org.uk
020 8683 6600

Energy Saving Trust
bestpractice@est.org.uk
0845 120 7799

For advice on reducing crime through good design: -

Lambeth's Crime Prevention Design Advisers
RHarrison2@lambeth.gov.uk

Secured by Design
http://www.securedbydesign.com/index.aspx

Amenity societies:

The Georgian Group (advice on Georgian buildings)
www.georgiangroup.org.uk
0871 750 2936

The Victorian Society (advice on Victorian buildings)

www.victorian-society.org.uk
020 8994 1019

The Twentieth Century Society (advice on modern buildings)
www.c20society.org.uk
020 7250 3857

Other sources of information

A Householders Planning Guidance for the Installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes (November 2005)
Department for Communities and Local Government
Available from Planning Portal: www.planningportal.gov.uk

Better Places to Live: by design (September 2001)
Department for Transport Local Government and the Regions
A guide to thinking creatively about the design and layout of new housing development.

House owners guide to renewables
LB Lambeth
www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/HousingPlanning/BuildingControl

Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document
LB Lambeth
www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning

How to reduce the environmental impact of existing buildings
www.parityprojects.com

London Plan (2008)
Greater London Authority
www.london.gov.uk

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)
Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2005)
Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)
All statutory planning documents such as planning policy statements and national guidance can be viewed at www.communities.gov.uk.

Town & Country (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
www.communities.gov.uk.

Lambeth Unitary Development Plan
LB of Lambeth
www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning

Appendix 1

Character of Lambeth's Existing Development

1.1 Lambeth's residential building stock is generally a product of the 19th Century when London expanded rapidly. Generally the housing stock is at its oldest in the North of the borough as this area urbanised first; however, surviving historic settlements / groups of building such as Clapham are exceptions to this general development.

Irrespective of the date some characteristics are common such as front and rear gardens, developments sharing a unified architectural appearance front and rear. However, there are subtle changes which have developed with time: -

Early – Mid 19th Century (Georgian)

1.2 In the early 19th Century grand terraces houses and suburban villas developed in areas of Stockwell and Kennington. Stock brick and stucco predominate. Terraces from this period typically have semi-basements, flat front and rear elevations and London (butterfly) roofs. Mansards and dormers are common but not prolific. Internally the 'Standard' plan form (a room to front and rear on each floor with entrance and staircase to one side). It is not uncommon for 'closet additions' to have been added at the rear. These are small extensions which were built with off the half-landings on the staircase; they can be one, two or even three storey but nearly always stop half a storey below the eaves of the house. Small single storey outhouses were often attached to these at ground floor.

1.3 Semi-detached and detached houses are common from this period. These often have flat front and rear elevations without closet additions. However, modest single storey rear returns often serve as the kitchen.

1.4 The majority of buildings pre-dating 1840 are protected by statutory listing and are likely to also be situated in conservation areas.

Mid – Late 19th Century / Early 20th Century (Victorian)

1.5 Building forms changed gradually and from the mid decades of 19th Century basements were no longer incorporated into new terraced houses became more ornate and generally, as the decades progressed, the houses get smaller. There is also a general shift from stock brick and stucco to red brick, terracotta and tile. The Standard plan form continued in use and it is not unusual to have a two storey rear return which is subservient to the main bulk of the house and under a lower roof. On modest terraced houses this often leaves only space for a small garden passage down the side.

20th Century

1.6 In the inter-war years suburban development in the form of short terraces and symmetrical semidetached pairs can be found in the southern parts of Lambeth. These properties are typically two storeys high. There is normally amenity space to the side of end terrace and semi-detached properties. Purpose built blocks of flats also became common at this time.

Post war housing provision varies greatly. Infill on bomb-damaged sites is common throughout Lambeth. So too are large housing estates with a mix of flats and houses in parkland settings.

Recent Residential Development (Contemporary)

1.7 Small infill developments of terraces and 'mews' style houses have been common in the central and northern parts of the borough in recent decades; these tend to be in limited sites often with very small areas of garden / amenity space. High density building in recent years has resulted in more flats than houses being constructed but the redevelopment of some post-war estates has led to a return to traditional terraced housing with front and rear gardens.

1.8 See Table 9 of the UDP for explanation of Lambeth's character.

For further information contact:
Lambeth Council Planning Division

Phoenix House
10 Wandsworth Road
London
SW8 2LL

Telephone: 020 7926 1180
Email : PlanningPolicy@lambeth.gov.uk
Web : www.lambeth.gov.uk/Planning