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House Extensions Advice Note

Wychavon District Council's Planning (Policy) Committee on the 4th November 1999, resolved (Minute 336 refers) to make the draft House Extensions Advice Note available to the public for a six week consultation period.

The consultation comprised the following:

- Advertisement in the local press (Droitwich Spa Advertiser and the Evesham Journal);
- Copies made available at the Wychavon Shops (Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore) as well as in the local libraries;
- A copy was sent to West Mercia Police's Architectural Liaison Officer.

Subsequently, a meeting was held with a well respected local architect which resulted in some minor changes.

Under delegated powers, the Planning (Policy) Committee, on 10th February, 2000, resolved (Minute 503 refers) to adopt the revised draft Housing Extensions Advice Note as Supplementary Planning Guidance, subject to any final changes agreed by the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning (Policy) Committee. The House Extensions Advice Note is available at all Wychavon Community Contact Centres.

This Advice Note was subject to a technical update in March 2007. The update simply corrects a few typing errors and provides customers with up to date advice on information to be submitted and on who to contact for help.



Gill Collin
Head of Planning

INTRODUCTION

This Advice Note has been adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the Wychavon District Local Plan (adopted 23 June 2006) in particular Policy SURI 'Built Design'. This SPG will be taken into account as a material consideration when determining planning applications. The Advice Note has been produced to help applicants produce high quality house extension designs which balance their needs with the wider public interest.

You should contact the Council to determine whether your building is "listed", because of its architectural quality, or that it lies within a Conservation Area and if so you should discuss your proposal with the Council's Conservation Officer prior to submitting a planning application. Please also note that for barn conversions and extensions to barn conversions you should refer to the Local Plan policies RES7 and RES8 (available to view at www.wychavon.gov.uk). Each planning application for a house extension will be considered on its own merits. Applications for extensions in the Green Belt and in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be closely scrutinised particularly in terms of their likely impact on the landscape (Local Plan Policy ENVI) and you may find it useful to obtain professional advice from an architect.

In some cases dwellings may be extended without the need for planning permission. Your rights are contained in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GDPO). You should contact a Customer Services Officer to ask whether planning permission is required. Please obtain written confirmation of this advice before taking any further action. If planning permission is not required, the Council would still advise you to adopt the principles of this Advice Note in designing your extension particularly with regard to its likely impact on neighbouring dwellings. Reading the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Planning a "Guide for Householders" and "The Party Wall Act 1996" as well as the Council's Planning Information Handbook (all available at the Civic Centre and the Droitwich Spa and Evesham Wychavon Shops) could also be helpful. Applicants should also contact the Council's Building Consultancy to ask whether Building Regulations Consent is required for the proposed extension.

GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following design points should help you design your extension in a manner which does not adversely affect both the character of a street/area and the original dwelling and which does not compromise the privacy of neighbouring households. An extension which is poorly designed could devalue your property as well as neighbouring properties. You are advised to consider the following when designing your extension.

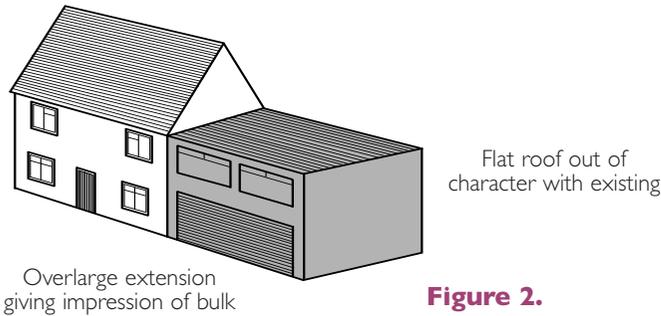
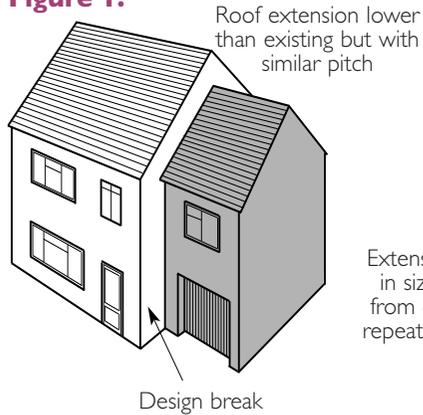
- The type of housing in the locality
- The positioning of the dwelling within the locality
- Ground levels eg normally greater impact if ground level higher than neighbouring properties
- The design of the proposed extension in relation to the dwelling and neighbouring dwellings
- The plot's existing landscape features eg important trees
- The proposed extension's impact on parking provision
- Look at the proposed extension from the viewpoint of your neighbour(s) ie would you object if a similar extension was built next to your property?

Proposals which do not fully reflect these design points are unlikely to be acceptable. How you arrived at your design proposal should be clearly set out in your Design and Access Statement.

The **size and style** of an extension are important design points as they determine whether the extension fits in with neighbouring dwellings and whether the privacy of neighbouring dwellings is significantly reduced.

The extension should be visually subordinate to, and not dominate, the original dwelling, and have similar or complimentary design elements. Design breaks eg stepping back (**Figure 1**) can sometimes prevent an extension appearing as a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling. Merely incorporating design breaks, however, may not resolve fundamental difficulties and there will be situations where it is not possible to design an extension which would satisfy the Council's design standards.

Figure 1.



Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate that size alone may not determine an extension's environmental impact as the following design elements need to be considered:

- Roof height - normally should be lower than original
- Roof pitch - normally should be the same as the original
- Eaves details - same as existing wherever possible
- Windows - should compliment the original and be of similar proportions
- Materials - should in general match the existing
- Car parking - extensions should not reduce on site car parking capacity particularly where an increase is on street parking would compromise highway safety

Any extension should normally reflect, in its design and materials, the character and style of the original dwelling as shown in **Figure 3**. Unsympathetic additions can often spoil the proportion and balance of the original dwelling and, consequently, have a visually detrimental impact. Roof extensions and dormer windows are two common areas where poor design can easily have a visually unsatisfactory result. For example, large horizontally proportioned dormer windows as shown in **Figure 4** are likely to ruin the character of the dwelling and will look out of place.

Window of similar/sympathetic design and size to original



Dormer window set into roof slope below ridge level

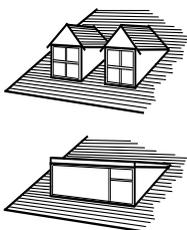
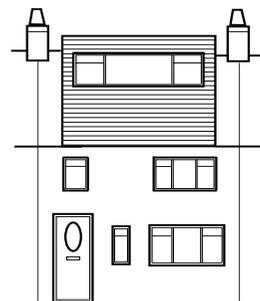


Figure 3.

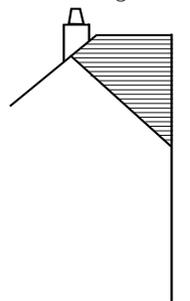
Two dormer windows are preferred to a single horizontally proportioned addition

Figure 4.

Large horizontally proportioned box dormer gives a top heavy appearance



Dormer roof height greater than original height



Prominent dormer usually detracts from the overall appearance and character

FRONT AND SIDE EXTENSIONS

Front extensions can be prominent and therefore require a particularly sensitive design. They should have a positive impact on the street and not look out of place to make them acceptable.

It may be easier to incorporate a front extension where there is no obvious building line. Front porches may require planning permission (please check with a Customer Service Officer) and the general design principles, on page 2, should be followed.

Extensions to the side of detached and semi-detached buildings can produce a "terraced" effect, as shown in **Figure 5**, because of the loss of the visual gap between adjacent dwellings.

Figure 5.



To protect the character and amenity of detached and semi-detached dwellings the Council will normally require that side extensions close to a common boundary should be set back at least 1.5 metres from the front of the property at first floor level as shown in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6.



Also important here is the relationship of the proposed extension to the boundary and the adjoining property. Building on or close to your boundary/common wall could make future maintenance access difficult and also have legal implications. You should therefore refer to the leaflet on The Party Wall Act 1996.

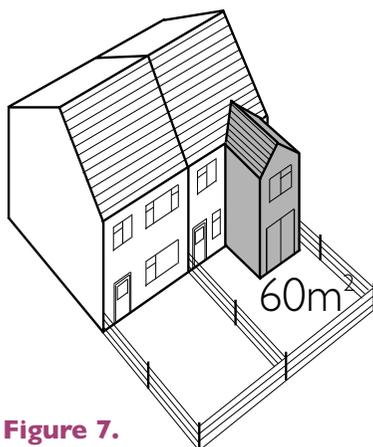


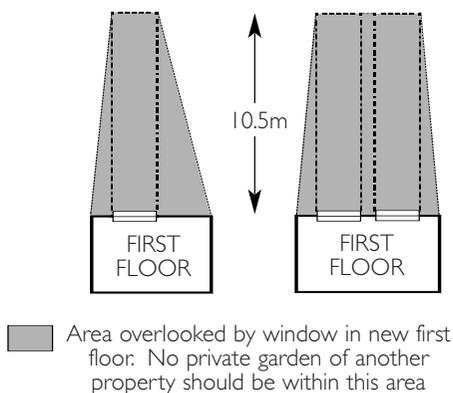
Figure 7.

Private garden space (normally to the rear of a property) is a positive part of a dwelling's amenity and generally should be sufficient to meet the likely needs of the occupiers (current and future). Therefore, for example, for extensions to 3 bedroom dwellings there should be at least 60 square metres of private garden area remaining following construction as shown in **Figure 7**.

The privacy of neighbouring properties is important and therefore any extension incorporating rooms (other than toilets/bathrooms) with a window should respect this privacy by maintaining a minimum distance of 10.5 metres between the window and an adjoining private rear boundary. This distance may be reduced where there is the opportunity for effective and appropriate screening under the applicant's control. The Council may require this screening to be maintained to an appropriate height through a planning condition. (You should seek professional advice regarding choice of hedging planted as some, notably Leylandii, rapidly become too large and can cause structural damage). Although screening can safeguard privacy, daylight and sunlight reaching your extension could be reduced.

Extensions which overlook a neighbouring private garden as shown in **Figure 8** are likely to be refused. Non-opening obscure glazed windows could make an extension acceptable.

Figure 8. Overlooking of Private Gardens



A distance of approximately 13 metres should be maintained to a blank gable wall for rear extensions.

The distance required on flat sites between a window at first floor level and neighbouring direct facing windows should normally be at least 23 metres. The actual separation distance required will depend on several factors notably the differences in ground levels, the relationship between the buildings eg a reduced distance may be acceptable if the facing windows are offset.

DAYLIGHT AND SUNLIGHT

Extensions can significantly reduce the amount of daylight and sunlight received by your property and neighbouring properties. Daylight and sunlight are valuable in improving a dwelling's amenity as they help provide a satisfactory living environment. In assessing extension proposals, the Council will use the Building Research Establishment's report "Site Layout - Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, a Guide to Good Practice".

The 45° code shown in **Figure 9** will be used to help assess the impact of proposed extensions on adjacent dwellings. The code is designed to protect the amenities of dwellings from over-shadowing or obstruction of outlook which can be caused by extensions on or close to a boundary. The amount of overshadowing will depend on the length and height of the extension, its orientation, and any difference in ground levels.

For single storey extensions, the code works by drawing an imaginary line at an angle of 45 degrees from the mid point of the nearest habitable ie normally excludes bathrooms, halls, landings and garages, room window which would be affected by the proposed extension.

If the nearest window is a bay or bow window the measurement is taken from the mid point at the back of the window in line with the main wall. The proposed extension should not cross the 45° line for a distance of 12 metres as shown in **Figure 9**.

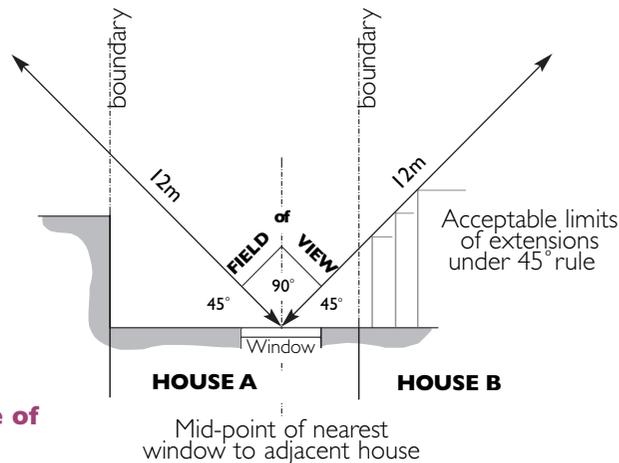


Figure 9.
Basic Principle of
the 45° Code

For two storey extensions the line is drawn at an angle of 45° from the closest quarter point from the nearest room window as shown in **Figure 10**. The impact of a two storey extension is normally greater than of a single storey, particularly on narrow fronted properties, so even though a proposal satisfies the 45° rule it could still be unacceptable because of its impact on the adjoining property. **Figure 11**

Figure 10.

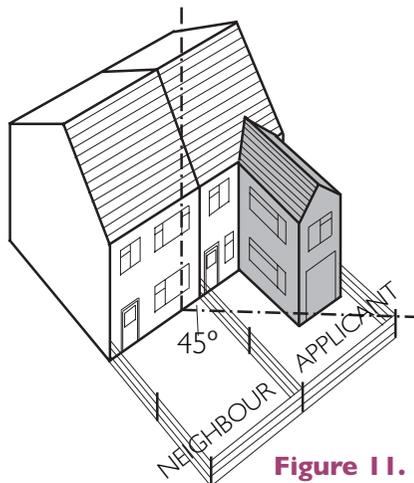
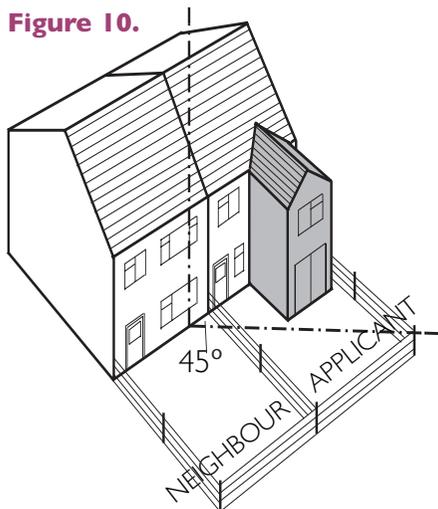


Figure 11.

For side extensions the 45° Code is applied if the extension protrudes beyond the front or back of the neighbour's house.

Conservatories are subject to the 45° rule. The amount of 'see through' materials in the proposal will influence the extension's impact on neighbouring properties.

Please note that satisfying the 45° Code does not necessarily make a proposal acceptable as it must satisfy the other design principles in this Advice Note.

We will also use the 25° Code, as shown in **Figure 12**, in order to assess applications to see if they would cause a significant reduction in daylight and/or privacy to/of adjoining properties.

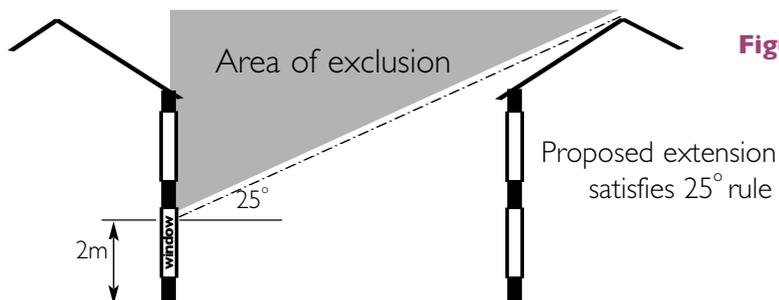


Figure 12.

Before submitting a planning application you are encouraged to:-

- Consult with your neighbour(s) as potential problems could be addressed before we contact them.
- Seek some guidance in the form of pre-application advice from a Planning Officer. You can do this by sending us either an e-mail or letter. This should be accompanied by plans or sketches showing your proposal, including details of sizes size and design. This can help identify any problems at an early stage and avoid delays later on.
- Discuss your proposal with a Building Consultancy Officer, as they can provide advice which will help avoid delays at a later stage. If the application relates to a Listed Building or Conservation Area you should also discuss your proposal with the Conservation Officer. The relevant telephone numbers are on page 11.

If a planning application is required you will need to submit the following:-

- Four location plans showing your property in relation to neighbouring properties and its position in the street. The plan should be 1:2500 or 1:1250 scale clearly outlining the boundary of the property in red with any other land in your ownership outlined in blue.
- Four plans and elevations of the house as existing at 1:50 - 1:100, or 1:200 scale.

- Four plans and elevations showing the extension at 1:50 or 1:100 scale.
- Four Block plans, at 1:500 or 1:200 scale showing the distances from the extension to your plot boundaries. These plans should include features such as outbuildings and trees and should clearly identify the following:-
- relationship of the extension to neighbouring windows
- means of access and parking arrangements
- proposed levels if the extension is on a sloping site.

Finally, applications must be accompanied by:

- the appropriate fee
- four completed planning application forms including a certificate of ownership. A Design and Access Statement is required if the proposal affects a Listed Building, Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or a site of Special Scientific Interest.

Please note that you can now submit and pay for your planning application online at www.planning.portal.gov.uk which is also a 'one stop shop' for planning information and services.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information and advice please contact us. You may contact us in the following ways:-

- By visiting the Civic Centre in Pershore and speaking to one of our Customer Service Officer.
- By visiting one of our other Community Contact Centres at Droitwich (High Street) or Evesham (Abbey Road).
- By telephoning us on: 01386 565565
- By faxing us on: 01386 561092
- By writing to us at:- **Wychavon District Council, Planning Department, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, Worcs. WR10 IPT**
- By e-mailing us at: planning@wychavon.gov.uk
- By visiting our Web Site at: www.wychavon.gov.uk

USEFUL CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Conservation Officer	01386 565327
Development Control (Customer Services) <i>(Please ask for a Development Control Customer Services Officer)</i>	01386 565565
Customer Services	01386 565456
Building Control <i>(Please ask for a Building Control Customer Services Officer)</i>	01386 565384
Landscaping	01386 565309

