

Draft Supplementary Guidance 12

Residential Alterations and Extensions





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House Extensions

The purpose of this guidance is to help in submitting your application for Planning Permission. The Council wishes to encourage imaginative, sensitive and innovative design, and whilst this leaflet gives design guidance, it is not intended to be a design 'rule book'. It explains the criteria used by the Council when assessing a Planning Application for a house extension and/or alterations and describes the basic principles which are considered important in achieving a good design.

An important part of good design is to ensure that your development does not have a material impact on the amenity of your neighbours, particularly as regards their privacy, and the level of daylight/sunlight received into their property. Guidance is therefore also given as to how the impact on neighbours can be minimised, and to how we will assess proposals in this regard.

Design Advice

At the outset, we strongly recommend that you seek professional advice from someone trained and experienced in designing buildings - a well designed extension can enhance your property. The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland can give you a list of Architects.

Policy

This guidance note augments and supports Policy 16 of the Local Development Plan.

Permissions

Planning Permission

You may need **Planning Permission** to extend your house, and this will require a formal application and plans showing your proposals. So if you are considering an extension, arrange to have an informal discussion with a Planning Officer to establish whether you need permission and what you need to do - our advice at an early stage may save you time and money in the long run.

Listed Building Consent

Houses which are listed as being of 'Special Architectural or Historic Interest', or any houses within a **Conservation Area** are usually subject to more stringent planning control. This means that you will normally require Planning Permission for all external alterations to buildings in a **Conservation Area**, and **Listed Building Consent** for internal and external alterations to any Listed Building. Applications for work on some listed buildings will also require the consent of the Secretary of State - allow extra time for this application.



Building Warrant

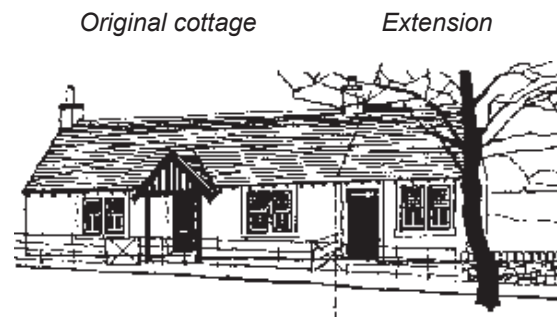
In most cases, you will need a **Building Warrant** for your alterations. This ensures that your extension is structurally sound and complies with the Building Regulations. You should contact **Building Standards** to discuss your proposals at an early stage.

Other Consents

There may be limitations on development in your title deeds, for example by a Feu Superior or a public utility 'Wayleave'. Your solicitor should be able to advise you on this. See the back page of this leaflet for addresses and telephone numbers.

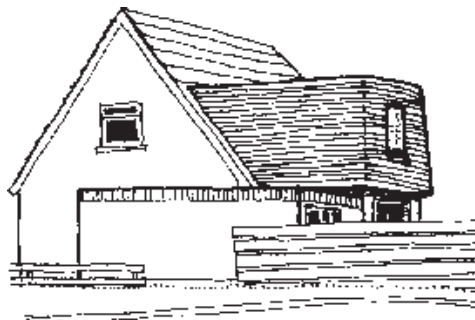
General Design Principles

An extension to a house should be sympathetic in terms of scale, positioning and detail to the original building. Normally an extension will be considerably smaller than the original house, and should be designed to look like as if it is an integral part. The planning authority will be particularly concerned to ensure that extensions to dwellings created by conversion of vernacular-style buildings will not result in the loss of the character of the original building.



Small extension reflecting style and scale of original cottage.

A badly designed extension can spoil the appearance of the existing house and its surroundings.



Unsympathetic flat roofed extension which conflicts with the original form of the building.



Size Relative to Plot Size

Generally, the ground area of the original house (including garage and outhouses) plus your proposed extension should not be greater than 30% of the total plot area. Proposals taking up more of the plot than this are likely to be considered as an over-development of the site. Within a town centre, it may be acceptable for the house and proposed extension to take up a greater proportion of the total site area. Discuss this possibility with a Planning Officer at an early stage.

Daylight and Sunlight

It is important that your proposed extension does not significantly affect the daylight and sunlight received by your neighbour's house and garden.

This could happen, for example, if you plan to build your extension on or close to the boundary with your neighbour - or wish to build higher than the original roof ridge.

The Building Research Establishment's (BRE) guide "Site Layout Planning" sets out empirical guidelines and methods for assessing natural light. Although built development is of particular concern throughout this DAN, the potential for existing and proposed trees to obstruct daylight and sunlight should also be considered.

The methods of assessment set out in the BRE guide vary in complexity: some or all of these methods may be used, depending upon the specific circumstances of the development criteria. The approaches suggested are for guidance only and should not be used to dictate the form and layout of development. In determining planning applications, a balance has to be sought between the reasonable expectations of homeowners to extend their property and the effect of that development on the locality.

The two approaches detailed below will therefore be applied with flexibility and at the discretion of the Council. The requirements of this guidance relate primarily to the main inhabited rooms such as living rooms, dining rooms, kitchen diners, and bedrooms and not to areas such as utility rooms, stairs, kitchens, toilets or to gardens with seating areas.

What is the difference between sunlight and daylight?

Daylight is the volume of natural light that enters a building to provide satisfactory illumination of internal accommodation between dawn and dusk. Daylight from an overcast sky is generally the same no matter how the building is orientated. Sunlight on the other hand refers to direct sunshine and is very much brighter than ambient daylight.

- The council will generally discourage extensions that would result in the loss of sunlight leading to overshadowing for the majority of the day.
- All buildings will be required to have adequate levels of daylight and this should be a priority for new developments. However some sunlight is also desirable but will not be a determining factor of new developments.



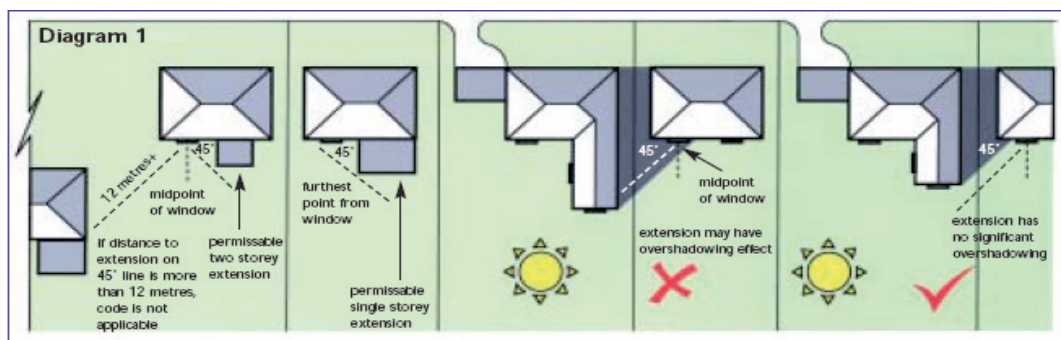
A few helpful pointers to remember:

- The sun rises in the East and sets in the West.
- The sun reaches its maximum height around Noon and will be due South at this time.
- The sun is a lot higher in the Summer than the Winter and days are longer.
- In Scotland, the sun elevation in mid-Winter does not generally rise above 10 degrees and therefore casts long shadows.

Protecting existing daylight - house extensions & new buildings

- New buildings or extensions should be designed to minimise the overshadowing of neighbouring properties.
- It will be expected that the greater part of any overshadowing caused by a new building should be confined to the applicant's own land. The major factors that will affect the amount of overshadowing are height, distance to boundary, size of plot, orientation and topography.

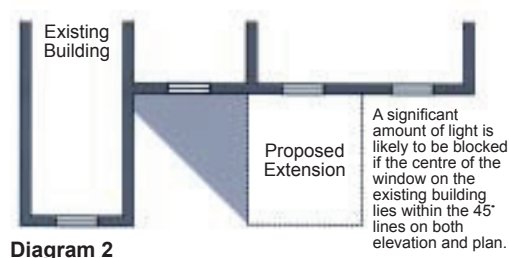
The following BRE guidelines should be followed:



45 degree approach

A useful guideline to measure the likely impact of an extension or new building on your neighbour is the “**45 degree**” approach. The purpose of this is to make sure that a development does not take away too much daylight. It is based upon the notion that it is reasonable to expect a certain level of light and unobstructed view from a habitable room window. To comply with the approach, no part of a **two-storey** development should cross the line drawn at a 45 degree angle from the centre of the closest ground floor habitable room window of neighbouring properties. (See diagrams 1 and 2.)

This guide is more relaxed in relation to **single** storey development where the 45 degree line is drawn from the furthest point away from the closest ground floor habitable room window of neighbouring properties. In both these cases, where the length of the line would exceed **12 metres** before reaching any part of the proposed development, the 45 degree approach need not apply.

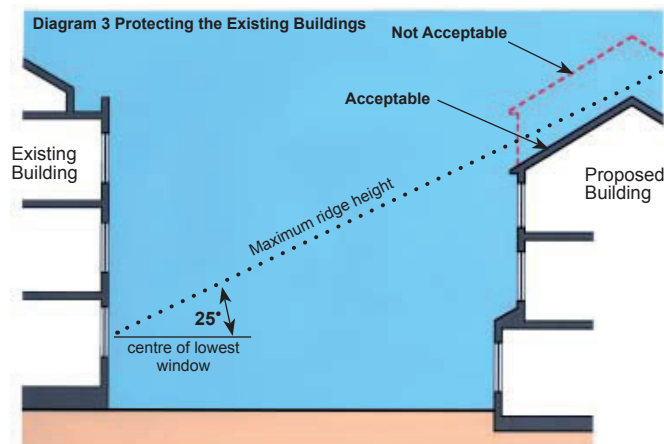




25 degree approach

This approach should be utilised when the new development directly **faces** the affected window. Suitable daylight for habitable rooms is achieved when a 25 degree vertical angle taken from the centre of the lowest window is kept unobstructed (see diagram 3). The recommended distance between the buildings is dependent on the opposing property ridge height. If the building opposite has a high ridge, the loss of daylight will be more notable than if the building has a lower ridge height.

If the proposed development fails the test, further investigation and evidence may be required in order to assess whether an unacceptable loss of sunlight/daylight will occur.



Sunlight for new development

- Where possible, and consistent with other policies and guidelines, new buildings including new flats and housing, should be constructed to take advantage of sunlight to provide a pleasant living environment and to maximise solar gain.
- Although it would be unreasonable to require that all dwellings have sunlit rooms, single aspect dwellings which are sited so that every habitable room is facing due north and have amenity areas which are usually in shade, may not be acceptable.

Privacy and Overlooking for Residential Developments

In general, a minimum 18 metre distance for privacy should be established between windows of habitable rooms that are parallel to each other. The guiding principle is that housing should be suitably orientated and spaced, and the window suitably placed to prevent any direct overlooking of habitable rooms and areas from neighbouring dwellings. (See diagram 4.)



diagram 4: Inappropriate window openings along boundary can lead to an unacceptable loss of privacy



In the case of single storey extensions, conservatories and decking, overlooking and/or loss of privacy may be influenced by local conditions such as topography and existing planting or screening. The erection of timber decking or other structure 'incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house' may require planning permission if it is around 3 metres in height. To clarify whether planning consent will be required early contact should be made with Stirling Council Planning Authority.

In planning such developments, careful consideration must be given to issues of privacy and overlooking (in relation to neighbouring windows) particularly if the structure is detached from the main building and/or elevated. Its appearance and design must be appropriate to the character of surrounding properties and gardens. Sloping sites can cause particular problems. (See diagram 5.)



Diagram 5: Raised decking can cause overlooking and an unacceptable loss of privacy

Loss of privacy and overlooking can be minimised by:

- considering the position of windows and their possible removal or relocation;
- keeping the need for any additional new openings to a minimum and using opaque glazing or high level windows as appropriate;
- giving careful thought to internal room arrangements and how the room will be used;
- siting external staircases, terraces or balconies with care;
- improving boundary treatment/screening and landscaping while also considering their impact on daylight and sunlight; and
- siting vehicular access roads and parking areas with care.

Roof Form

In Scotland, most roof pitches are at an angle of between 30 and 45. Steeply pitched roofs tend to be more effective against wind and rain than flat or low pitched roofs.

Extensions should generally have pitched roofs at the same pitch as the original and of a minimum slope of 30 (unless the original is shallower). The new roof ridge should not normally exceed the height of the original roof.



***A lost opportunity to
visually integrate an extension.***

Flat roofed extensions are not generally acceptable, although they may be considered in certain instances - for example, where a pitched roof cannot be accommodated.

Materials

Materials must be chosen with care to avoid destroying the integrity of the original building. Generally either the same or compatible materials should be used - materials which will harmonise and be sympathetic to the character of the original and neighbouring buildings.

Whilst contrasting materials can be successful if carefully detailed, the introduction of new materials not used in your building or its neighbours is generally discouraged - they may make your extension look like an 'add-on' rather than an integral part of the original.

In **Conservation Areas** and in the case of **Listed Buildings**, materials must be chosen with particular care to ensure that the appearance and character of your house and the neighbouring area is preserved and enhanced.

Detailed Design

Having established the general form of your extension, careful consideration must also be given to its detailed design.

It can prove difficult to join old and new successfully: in older buildings, recreating and echoing traditional details such as decorative stonework, metalwork and barge-boards can help to relate it to the original. An experienced architect can advise you on these specialised aspects of design.

Windows and Doors

In the past the size of openings in buildings was influenced by climate and construction materials - windows were generally set back from the face of building for protection against driving rain, and the width of an opening was governed by the span of a stone lintel. With modern building techniques these constraints are not so severe.



The following guidelines will help you in most instances:

- The proportion and size of windows and doors in your extension should complement the design and proportions of the original building.
- If your house is a traditional building of vernacular style, windows should be kept fairly small and of a vertical proportion. Respect the local character by siting large areas of glazing, such as patio doors, on the private side of the house where they are not visible to the public. It may be appropriate to give a vertical emphasis to large wide windows by using mullions evenly spaced at traditional window width intervals.



Window mullions echo verticality of existing windows and doors.

Is there a mixture of styles in the existing doors and windows in your house? If so, consider whether replacement of some of these as part of your proposals would enhance the character of your building.

Dormer Windows

If you are planning to extend your roof space with dormer windows, the preferred form is likely to be influenced by any traditional dormers in the locality.

The following guidelines should be taken into account:

- The size and scale of the dormer should not dominate the original roof;
- Dormers should be set well below the original roof ridge;
- Generally, dormers should not be built off the wallhead unless of a traditional design in a traditional building;
- Flat roof dormers are not generally acceptable



Overlarge and dominating dormer built off wall head.



- Dormers should be set a significant distance in from the gable end;
- In Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings, alterations to the roofs to accommodate dormers or roof lights will be considered in relation to their impact on the character of the building or area. Where acceptable, dormers should be small and designed in traditional manner.



Wide 'box' dormers are likely to be out of scale and may have an adverse effect on the visual appearance of your house. Two smaller dormers may greatly improve the overall visual effect.



'Out of scale' box dormer built off gable end of cottage.

Size and scale of traditional Dormers in keeping with original cottage.

You may wish to consider the alternative of a proprietary roof light instead of a dormer. On traditional properties rooflights should have a vertical emphasis, not be too large, and be fitted flush with the roof plane.

Rooflights may be less visually intrusive, particularly on street frontages.



Garages

Garages should be designed to respect the shape of your house. They should preferably be set back from the frontage and use materials which relate to the house. They should not obscure the original building or be over dominant.

Vehicular Access

Your extension should not restrict or affect your existing access, turning area or parking space to the detriment of highway safety. Generally, cars should be able to leave your site without the need to reverse into the road.

Landscaping and Trees

Your application for an extension will be looked at in relation to the surrounding planting, surface treatment and wall and fence details. Consider how your extension will affect the rest of your plot - small 'left over' spaces are not desirable and are frequently difficult to look after.

Trees are legally protected against removal or damage in a Conservation Area, and elsewhere may be protected by a Tree Preservation Order. If there are any trees which may be affected by your proposals, this should be discussed with the Council's Tree Officer within Environmental Services at an early stage.

Satellite Dishes for Houses and Flats

Technological advances in communication and television have made satellite dishes a common sight throughout our neighbourhoods.

However, it is important to site satellite dishes appropriately so that they are not visually detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.

Advice is given below on the most suitable location for satellite dishes.



Checklist

Before you embark on installing a satellite dish the following checklist provides a clear, step-bystep guide of the main points you should consider for the most suitable installation:

- Determine whether you need Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent. If so, apply through Stirling Council.
- Follow the siting guidance set out in this leaflet.
- In coming to a decision on the siting of your satellite dish you should consider the neighbours, the public and the environment.



- Select the smallest or most suitable dish required for good reception so to reduce its visual impact eg a mesh dish may be less damaging than a solid dish, or perhaps a white dish may be more appropriate against a lighter background.
- If the dish is not supplied by the service provider, use a reputable, authorised supplier and installer.
- Remember that good dish siting (out of public view or to the rear of the property) will preserve the appearance of your home.
- Take particular care with siting in National Scenic Areas, Conservation Areas and on listed buildings.
- Remember that inappropriate siting may result in the need for the satellite dish to be removed and re-sited at your own expense.
- If in doubt, check with the Council's Planning and Regulation team.

So where should they go? siting guidance

On the ground

A rear garden location is preferred above any other location. Where a rear garden is open to public view, appropriate screening may be required. *A front garden location will be discouraged unless adequately screened.*

On house walls

Siting on a rear wall is preferred unless it is visually obtrusive. Positioning on a gable wall visible to public view may be acceptable where the dish is adequately screened or set back. *Satellite dishes should not be sited on a frontage wall. With all wall locations the dish should not project from the corner of the wall itself or above eaves height.*



Avoid siting dishes on house frontages.

Conservation Areas/Listed Buildings

Subject to any necessary consent being granted satellite dishes should be sited in the most discrete position possible, preferably completely out of public view. *Dishes should not be situated on any public elevation.*



On outbuildings

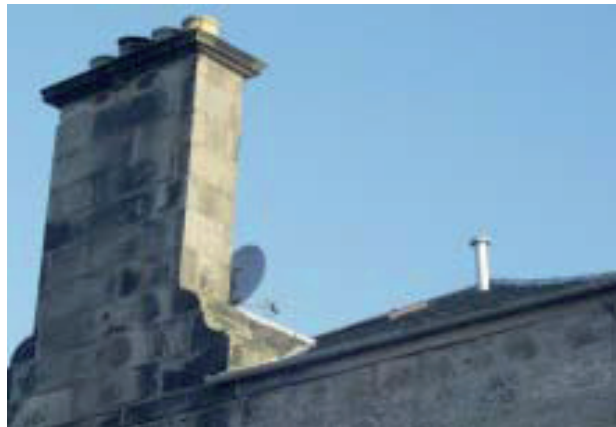
Garages, extensions or other outbuildings to the rear of the property are suitable locations. Where visible to the public, dishes will generally be allowed if set well back from the frontage of the building or if partially screened.



Good example of dish on building.

On roof

Where other options have been exhausted a dish may be discretely sited on the roof, preferably within a roof valley, at a base of a chimneystack or on the rear slope of a pitched roof. *However, it should not project above the highest ridgeline of the roof or forward of any wall.*



*Roof tops in Conservation Area
– well hidden dishes.*

Are there any alternatives to standard satellite dishes?

Most satellite providers issue their own standard dishes. However, where possible, efforts should be made to use the least visually intrusive satellite dish in terms of size or colour. For residents of flatted properties there is the option of installing a communal satellite dish system. For general advice or specific details of the viability and cost of such a system, please contact an authorised satellite provider. If a suitable site cannot be found upon your property, or planning permission is refused, then consideration should be given to packages through a cable network. Contact cable operators to check if this is available within your area.



Is a Building Warrant required for installation?

You will only need Building Warrant if the installation of the satellite dish requires major building works or has any structural implications detrimental to the building's stability. If a warrant is required contact:

Checklist

Before submitting your planning application please check your proposal against the following points: Have you discussed your application with us? - this may save you valuable time and abortive design costs.

Will your proposed extension:

- Generally conform with the guidelines set down in this advice note?
- Adversely affect neighbouring property?
- Look in character with your house and the surrounding buildings?
- Affect any trees?
- Leave enough garden ground and room for car access, turning and parking?
- Is your house a listed building? You can check this with Stirling Council Planning Services.



Contacts

Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent

Planning Services
Planning Regulation and Waste,
Stirling Council,
Viewforth,
Stirling,
FK8 2ET
Telephone: 01786 442515
Fax: 01786 443003

Building Regulations

Building Standards,
Planning Regulation and Waste,
Stirling Council,
Viewforth,
Stirling,
FK8 2ET
Telephone: 01786 442828
Fax: 01786 443003

Security and Crime Prevention

Architectural Liaison Officer,
Community Safety Department,
Police Headquarters,
Randolphfield,
Stirling,
FK8 2HD
Tel: 01786 456213

References and Useful Reading

- Building Research Establishment Site Layout Planning for daylight and sunlight: a good practice guide, 1991



Further Information

Please contact:

Economy, Planning and Regulation
Planning Services
Stirling Council
Viewforth
Stirling
FK8 2ET

Telephone: 01786 442515

E-mail: planning@stirling.gov.uk

If you need help or this information
supplied in an alternative format
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