

House Extensions and Garages

Planning Guidance Note

Introduction

This Guidance Note is issued to inform and guide those concerned in the planning, design and construction of house extensions and domestic garages. Matters dealt with include aspects of design and amenity control.

Buildings in Conservation Areas and buildings Listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest will be subject to tighter controls on design and materials in order to maintain their particular character.

Any proposal submitted for planning permission is required to be assessed on its own merits, although the Council will seek at all times to uphold the high standards promoted in this Guidance Note.

Format of Guidance

All planning guidance notes are material considerations in the assessment of planning applications and shall be afforded significant weight in the decision making process. Failure to comply with Guidance Notes may be a reason for refusal of planning consent.

Where appropriate, this Guidance should be read in conjunction with the Guidance Note on Daylight and the Inter-Visibility of Windows and the Guidance Note on the Historic Environment.

Legislative Framework

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 came into force on the 6 February 2012 and increased householders' opportunities to make changes to their dwellinghouse as permitted development. Permitted development refers to types of development where planning permission is not required. Development of the nature described in this Guidance Note is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development. This Guidance Note also provides advice on development which is not permitted development and requires planning permission. Government guidance on Householder Permitted Development Rights should be considered in planning any development to a dwellinghouse and can be found at:

- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/02/9140>

Planning Framework

East Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2, Policy DQ1 Assessing Proposed Uses, states that "*developments should enhance and certainly not reduce the amenity and character of the surrounding area*". Furthermore, Policy DQ2B states that house extensions will generally be supported where they cause no significant detriment to neighbours.

Policy Guidance

General Guidance on Principles of Design and Amenity

- An extension should generally reflect the design concept and detailing of the existing house, e.g. Victorian villa, interwar bungalow, modern detached house, and should not detract from its appearance.
- An extension should be of a scale which does not dominate the existing house and/or neighbouring properties.
- An extension should take a form which does not adversely affect the visual amenity of the local street scene, or that of the surrounding area.
- The general design and materials used for external finishes should generally be identical to, or closely match, those of the existing house. In Conservation Areas and Townscape Protection Areas, materials should reflect those originally used and those which give the building its traditional appearance.
- Deprivation of daylight to adjacent windows, and excessive overshadowing of neighbouring gardens should be avoided. (See Guidance Note on Daylight and Inter-Visibility of Windows).
- No extension other than a small porch should project forward of the front wall of the existing house or the line of buildings in a street.
- A meaningful area of useable private (i.e. rear) garden ground should be retained in all house plots commensurate with the scale and amenity needs of the dwelling house, normally 30sqm per bedroom, or potential bedroom, of the house after the construction of any house extensions or domestic garages. In determining proposals which fall below the normal standard set out above, consideration will be given to the existing pattern, size and allocation per bedroom (or potential bedroom) of garden grounds in the immediate vicinity.
- No extension should be built which precludes the possibility of on-site parking to the Council's approved standards, and providing that such provision does not detract from the amenity and character of the house, gardens and street scene.
- Pitched roofs should be used wherever possible and flat roofs should be avoided.
- Windows and door openings should be aligned vertically and horizontally with existing door openings and windows.
- Side extensions should be set back a meaningful distance from plot boundaries (i.e. a minimum of 900mm) in order to prevent the possibility of the creation of an undesirable terraced appearance in residential areas where this is not the norm.
- A species survey may be required where structural changes are proposed.

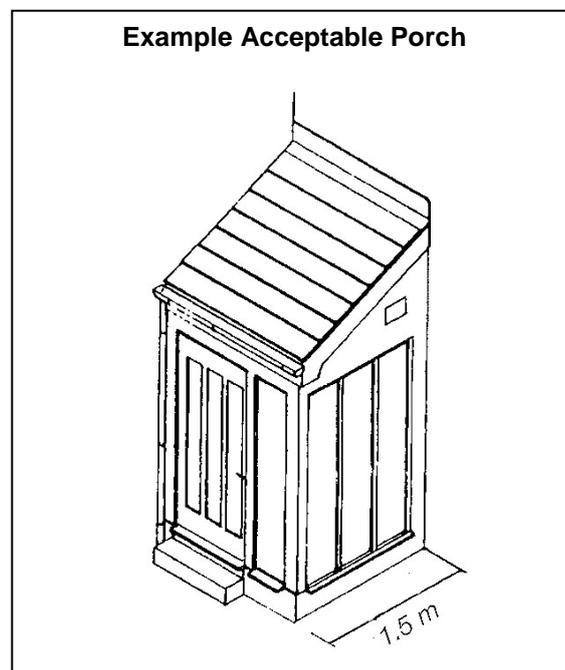
The following guidance illustrates some practical examples of the ways in which the above principles are operated in relation to specific types of development and must be read in conjunction with the above principles. It is emphasised that the following is illustrative and that each application is judged on its merits in the light of the

policies, principles and guidance contained in the Local Plan and this Guidance. Please note that conservatories are considered in the same way as any other house extension.

Front Extensions

Front extensions¹ should:

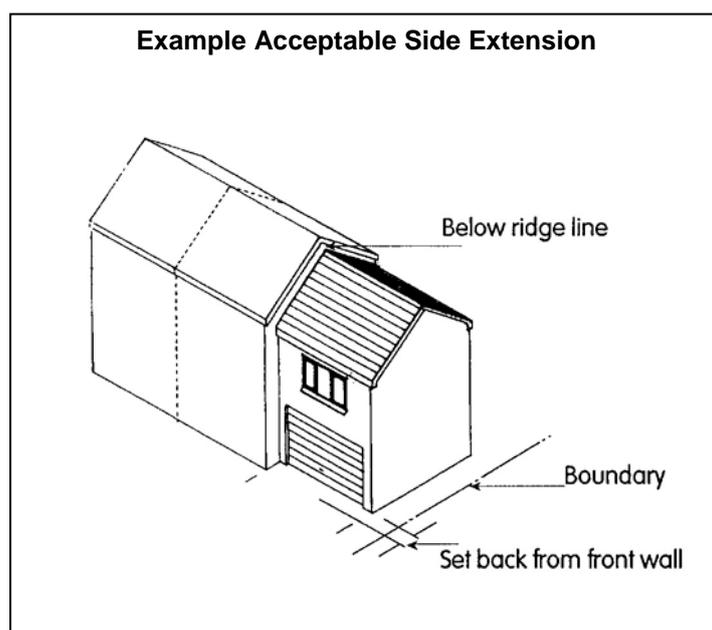
- generally not breach well defined building lines along a street. Porches will be considered as an exception to this requirement and may project up to 1.5 metres from the main wall of the existing house (i.e. excluding the depth of bay windows, etc.). If the proposed porch includes a toilet, it may be permitted up to 2.15m deep as measured externally. All front extensions shall be required to respect the amenity and character of the house and street scene;
- where appropriate, be designed and positioned to be compatible with other extensions and porches on a semi-detached or terraced block;
- be designed in keeping with existing dwellinghouse;
- be aligned vertically and horizontally with existing door and window openings;
- where a porch, include a significant area of glazing – normally not less than 33%; and,
- meet the Council's parking standards.



¹ Development of a porch is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development.

Side Extensions

Side extensions² should not create (or potentially create) a terraced effect on a street scene. A two-storey extension onto a two-storey house, or a single storey extension onto a single storey house which approaches the property boundary is likely to risk this effect where there is potential for a neighbouring house to extend sideways to abut the joint boundary. In these circumstances there should normally be a gap of at least 900mm between the extension and the boundary to provide for this visual break in the building.



A terraced effect may also be avoided, for example:

- where houses are stepped back a significant distance from one another;
- on a corner plot; and,
- where the remaining gap between the property boundary and neighbouring house is between 900mm and 2000mm (i.e. more than the minimum gap, but also sufficiently small as being unlikely to be developed for an extension).

All Extensions

Any extensions³ should:

- have a pitched (and hipped where appropriate) roof in the same style and materials as the existing building, particularly where the extension is visible to the public. Flat roofs on extensions are generally not acceptable;

² Development of a side extension is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development.

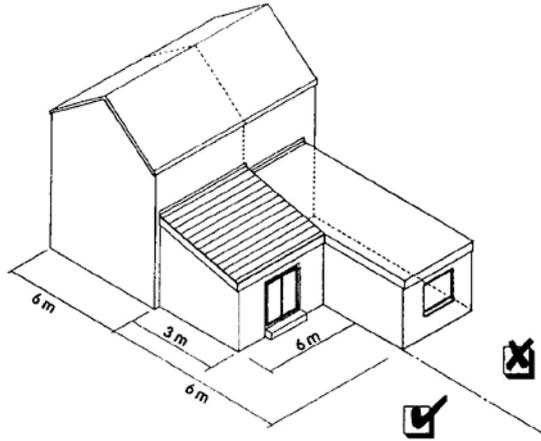
³ Development of an extension is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development.

- where appropriate, be set back a minimum of 250mm from the front wall of the existing house (other than front extensions – see above) and below the main ridge line;
- where an extension is positioned on the rear elevation and cannot be seen from a road frontage, extensions need not be set below the main ridgeline but should take cognisance of the character of the area; and,
- have a fully enclosed lower storey where two storeys in height and not incorporate pillars.

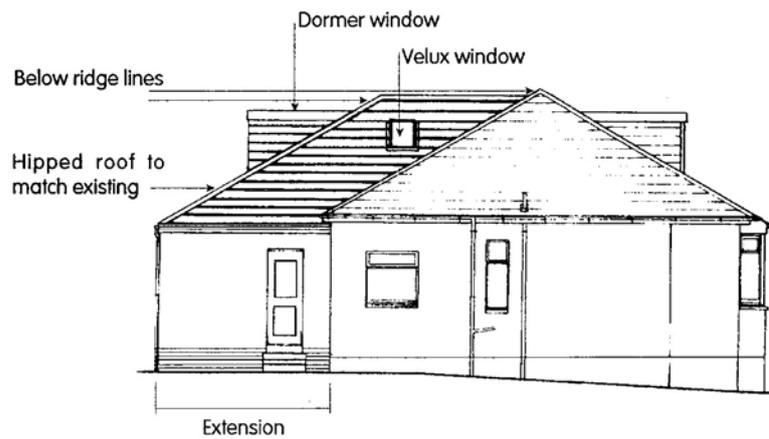
Any extensions should not:

- unbalance the appearance of a semi-detached block by its scale or form, although unbalancing issues can arise with detached properties an increased level of flexibility can however be applied in order to achieve a harmonious design;
- extend more than 4 metres down a shared boundary to the rear of the house. The visual and amenity impact of the extension on the neighbouring property should be considered. Where proposals are set significantly off the common boundary (i.e. by more than one metre) extensions beyond 4 metres may be considered, subject to compliance with other policies and guidance;
- generally exceed the original ground floor area of the house by more than 50% (whether individually or in combination with previous extensions or decks to the original house). Where the plot size is large, e.g. larger detached properties or those on corner plots, or where extensions are ‘wrap-around’ (i.e. consist of side and rear extensions), areas greater than 50% will be considered on their merits, providing that the amenity and character of the house, the neighbouring properties and the surrounding area are not adversely affected;
- cover more than 33% of the original private rear garden of the property (i.e. generally land behind the rear building line of the house);
- where it is a two storey extension, generally be built to the rear of the house at a common or property boundary; or,
- raise the height of the roof, unless the proposal makes a positive contribution to an existing varied streetscene. Where the raising of the ridge height would be anomalous within a street of similar properties, it will be resisted.

Example Acceptable and Unacceptable Rear Extensions



Example Acceptable Extension to Rear of Detached Bungalow



Daylight

All proposals for house extensions should accord with the Daylight and Inter-Visibility of Windows Planning Guidance Note. Extensions should not result in a significant loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring properties and, in particular, the main apartment windows of neighbouring houses (i.e. excluding rooms in which people do not normally sit, such as galley kitchens, bathrooms, halls, landings and small utility rooms).

Rear Access and Bin Storage

Any extension should retain servicing access to the rear of the house, a minimum of 900mm in width, either:

- around one side of the building;
- by another convenient route, for instance, a rear service lane; or,
- through a garage/utility room, but not through a habitable room or kitchen.

Where servicing access to the rear of the house cannot be achieved, provision should normally be made within the design of the extension for the enclosed storage of wheelie bins, of sufficient size to accommodate at least two wheelie bins e.g. approximately 1.5m wide, 0.9m deep and 1.3m high.

Where a garage is available, the first option should be to include the bin storage area within a dedicated area of the garage.

Where a separate store is provided at the front or side of a dwelling, it should:

- be of the approximate dimensions stated above;
- be positioned so as not to restrict vehicle access to a garage or parking area;
- be designed to screen the bins from public views;
- where the bin store is prominently located, be attached to the house or a garage and be constructed/finished in material to match the house, or other appropriate robust materials; and,
- not detract from the appearance of the house or street scene.

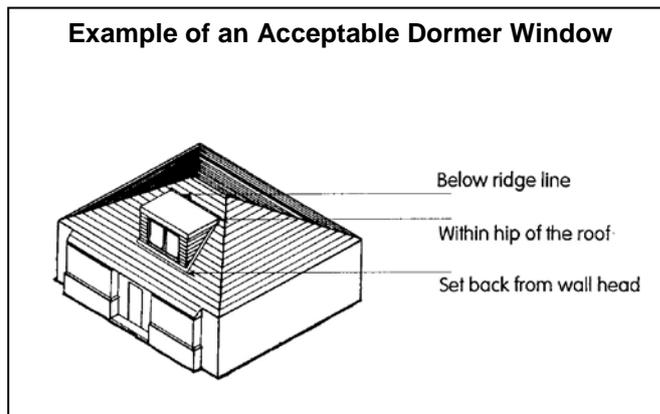
Dormer Windows

Dormer windows⁴ should:

- be positioned significantly:
 - below the ridge line;
 - within the hip of the roof; and,
 - set back significantly from the wall head;
- incorporate not less than 33% of glass on the face of the construction;
- have windows aligned with openings in the lower storey; and,

⁴ Development of an enlargement of a dwellinghouse by way of an addition or alteration to its roof is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development.

- have vertical faces finished in a material to match the existing roof.



Dormer windows should not:

- be on a side elevation, as this has a greater impact on the appearance of the building, and can impact more significantly on the privacy of neighbours (see below). Development of both front and side dormers should particularly be avoided, as this can give the appearance of the building being flat roofed. As an alternative, the use of roof windows, i.e. flush with the roof slope, would be encouraged;
- dominate the existing roof by reason of its scale or the number of dormers;
- be built on a two-storey building, unless dormer features are traditional to the original house style; or,
- be accommodated by raising the height of the main roof unless the proposal makes a positive contribution to an existing varied street scene. Increases of more than 500mm in ridge heights will, even in these circumstances, be unlikely to be supported. Where the raising of the ridge height would be anomalous within a street of similar properties, it will be resisted.

Privacy

All proposals for house extensions should accord with the Daylight and Inter-Visibility of Windows Guidance Note. All extensions to houses should ensure that a reasonable standard of privacy is maintained in and around the property. It is the responsibility of the Council to consider the protection of privacy of all in processing applications for planning permission. The Council cannot guarantee complete privacy for households and garden areas, but will seek to provide a balanced approach to privacy. Consideration will be given to the impact on privacy to and from external seating areas.

Windows directly facing each other should be at least 18m apart. Exceptions to this rule may be:

- for bathrooms (using obscure glazing), halls, landings, utility rooms; or,
- where effective and acceptable screening is employed, e.g. by fences or walls. (Note that this is only likely to be effective for ground floor windows and not on second storeys, and the requirement for screening should not generally require it to be more than 2m in height).

Provision and maintenance of screening may be required through a Section 75 Agreement.

Balconies, conservatories and raised decking/patios also raise the same privacy issues, and the above privacy criteria will also apply in these cases.

Raised Decking/Patios

Planning permission will be required for raised decking/patios⁵ within gardens, where the surface is raised more than 500mm from the original ground level. Decking/patios proposals will be assessed in terms of:

- loss of privacy (in neighbouring houses and gardens),
- dominance, and
- loss of character or amenity of the area.

The adverse impact of decking/patios can, depending on individual circumstances, be minimised by providing effective and acceptable screening, e.g. fences or walls, which should not normally exceed 2.5 metres in height from the existing ground level. The scale of the fencing can itself have an adverse impact on the amenity of adjacent property by creating shading to windows or gardens, or dominating a garden, and this factor may justify refusing planning applications for raised decking/patios.

Garages and Carports

Garages and carports⁶ should:

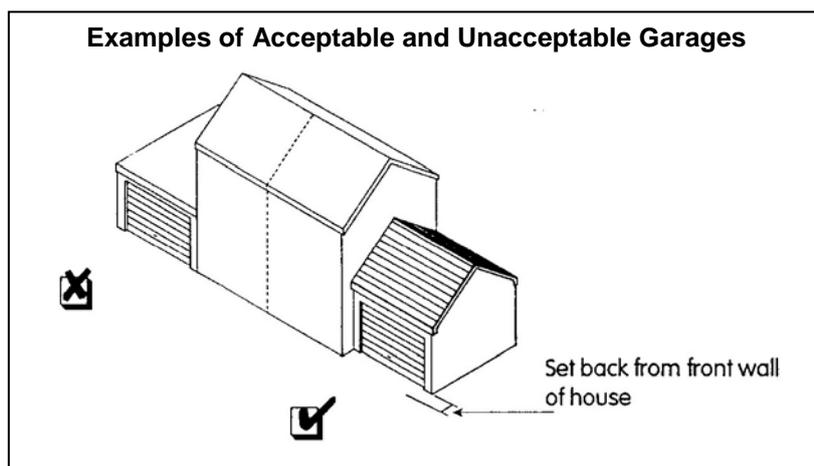
- be built in a position that can be accessed safely;
- preferably have a pitched roof when visible from the road;
- be faced and roofed in materials to match the existing house or regularly maintained where built of timber;
- generally be set back from the front wall of the existing house. In some cases, attached garages may be permitted in line with the front of a porch where this is not to the detriment of the street scene; and,
- generally have a minimum internal width of 2.9 metres in order to allow its effective use for the garaging of a standard family car.

Garages and carports should not:

- be used in connection with any business or commercial purpose; and,
- exceed 4 metres in height.

⁵ Development of a deck or other raised platform is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development.

⁶ Development of a garage or carport is permitted development in some circumstances; however this Guidance Note provides good practice guidance on aspects of design and amenity relating to permitted development.



Conversions of integral garages to living accommodation will be permitted where:

- the design of the alteration is in character with the original house;
- parking arrangements are satisfactory, to the Council's standards, at the appropriate rate for the house as so enlarged; and,
- the provision of any additional parking does not detract from the character of the house, garden or street scene (see below).

Parking Provision

Extending a house where additional bedrooms are created is likely to result in the house being capable of accommodating more people. This has an impact on the level (or potential level) of car ownership within the property. Additionally, where side extensions are built (or garages converted), existing parking areas may be lost from use. In assessing any application, the Council will assess the adequacy and amenity of car parking provision taking into account the Parking Standards set out in the Guidance Note on Road Layout and Design and Parking Standards (with no requirement for visitor spaces, and with levels of required parking provision to be rounded up to the nearest whole number). In order to be assessed as a parking space, the minimum size dimensions for parking spaces and garages set out in the Guidance Note on Road Layout and Design and Parking Standards must be met.

In addition:

- parking should preferably be accommodated within an established driveway;
- parking may be provided within a front garden, but only where it does not detract from the amenity of the area. As a guide:
 - the parking should take up no more than 66% of the front garden area; and,
 - the front garden should be designed and landscaped to an acceptable amenity standard (including avoiding the loss of important trees, etc.). Note that particularly high standards will be applied in Conservation Areas, etc., which could mean that front garden parking (other than single driveways) may be unacceptable;

- the driveway/parking area should be no more than 10% gradient and the first 2 metres should be paved; and,
- road safety implications of creating additional driveways will be assessed.