

# Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document House Extensions and External Alterations

May 2015

# CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	3
<b>2. ADVICE AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	3
<b>3. IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY</b>	4
<b>4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES</b>	6
<b>5. SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS</b>	6
<b>6. BASEMENTS</b>	10
<b>7. LIGHTWELLS</b>	10
<b>8. ROOF EXTENSIONS</b>	11
<b>9. DETAILED ADVICE</b>	12
<b>10. FURTHER INFORMATION</b>	13

# I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1** This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) aims to provide a clear set of guidelines with appropriate illustrations of how changes such as side and rear extensions, basements, loft conversions and other house alterations and extensions, should be designed. The examples given are only indicative of the Council's approach and are not intended to stifle sensitive and imaginative design.
- 1.1.2** The Council's Local Plan informs the guidance set out in this document and applicants are encouraged to adhere to these principles. The guidance applies to the design of all house extensions and alterations irrespective of whether or not the proposal requires planning permission.
- 1.1.3** Because of the diversity of house styles within the borough, it is neither possible nor desirable to cover every type of addition or eventuality. In conservation areas and with listed buildings and buildings of townscape merit, greater care and attention is required and more restrictive policies may apply. The Council also encourages high standards of energy and water efficiency in existing properties and in conversions and extensions.

## 1.2 LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENTS

- 1.2.1** This document should be read together with the Council's Local Plan, including the Core Strategy (2009), the Development Management Plan (2011), the Twickenham Area Action Plan (2013), the emerging Site Allocations Plan as well as the Council's Good Practice Guide on Basements (2015).
- 1.2.1** Relevant supplementary planning documents include the SPDs on Residential Development Standards, Small and Medium Housing Sites, Buildings of Townscape Merit, Sustainable Construction Checklist, Front Garden & Other Off-Street Parking Standards and the Village Planning Guidance SPDs. For further information, see the Council's website at: [www.richmond.gov.uk/local\\_plan](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/local_plan)

# 2. ADVICE AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

## 2.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS, PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT AND PRIOR APPROVAL

- 2.1.1** Not all extensions and external alterations to buildings require planning permission; some may be permitted development (i.e. development not requiring planning permission). See the Planning Portal ([www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)) for further information
- 2.1.2** Note that Government has changed Permitted Development rights so that householders can build larger extensions, subject to certain criteria and conditions, and firstly gain Prior Approval from the Council before commencing work. This increase is from 3 metres to 6 metres for a terraced or semi-detached property, and 8 metres for a detached property. Further guidance on this can be found on the Council's website: [www.richmond.gov.uk/prior\\_notification\\_class\\_a.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/prior_notification_class_a.htm)

## 2.2 BUILDING REGULATIONS

- 2.2.1** Whether or not an extension requires planning permission, plans must be deposited under the provisions of the Building Regulations.

## 2.3 PLANS AND DRAWINGS

- 2.3.1** To avoid unnecessary delays in dealing with planning applications, it is important to submit scaled drawings (in metric measurements) and other supporting documents (where appropriate), which are clear and accurate in accordance with the Local Validation Checklist, which is available on the Council's website at: [www.richmond.gov.uk/make\\_a\\_planning\\_application.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/make_a_planning_application.htm)
- 2.3.2** Both existing and proposed elevations and floor plans are required. The elevations and outline plans of adjoining properties (and their window / door positions) are also recommended to be shown on drawings, accurately scaled (in metric measurements). The submission of relevant photographs will aid the consideration of the application and may result in a faster decision process.

## 2.4 CONSULTATION

**2.4.1** Homeowners are encouraged to discuss their proposals with their neighbours prior to the submission of the application. The Council normally consults adjoining owners so that if you have previously discussed your scheme with them, and taken into account their views, they may be less likely to object.

## 2.5 LISTED BUILDINGS, BUILDINGS OF TOWNSCAPE MERIT AND CONSERVATION AREAS

**2.5.1** It is particularly important to seek guidance if you live in a listed building or conservation area or an Article 4 Direction area. Please see Supplementary Planning Guidance on Conservation Areas, Historic Buildings, Listed Buildings and the emerging Buildings of Townscape Merit and the list of Article 4 Directions.

## 2.6 STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS AND DEMOLITIONS

**2.6.1** If structural alterations are involved, plans must be deposited under the provisions of the Building Regulations. For basement developments to or adjacent to Listed Buildings, a Structural Impact Assessment is always required. Please refer to the Council's Good Practice Guide on Basement Developments and the Local Validation Checklist. A Structural Report is required for the demolition of a Building of Townscape Merit.

## 2.7 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

**2.7.1** Where a particularly good group of neighbouring dwellings are likely to be damaged if work, exempt from planning permission was carried out (e.g. changing windows, demolition of front boundary walls etc.), the Council may have applied or may apply an Article 4 Direction after consultation with the owners.

**2.7.2** Such directions mean that certain permitted development rights, as specified within the Direction, are removed and owners must apply for permission to carry out the intended work. This does not mean that all development is unacceptable, but that this will be carefully considered in the form of a planning application. See the Council's website for further information: [www.richmond.gov.uk/article\\_4\\_directions](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/article_4_directions)

# 3. IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

## 3.1 VISUAL INTRUSION AND SENSE OF ENCLOSURE

**3.1.1** Extensions that create an unacceptable sense of enclosure or appear overbearing when seen from neighbouring gardens or rooms will not be permitted. This could be due to the height, footprint or proximity of the proposals to the surrounding area.

**3.1.2** The effect of a single storey extension is usually acceptable if the projection is no further than:

- 3m for a terraced property
- 3.5m for a semi-detached house
- 4m for a detached property.

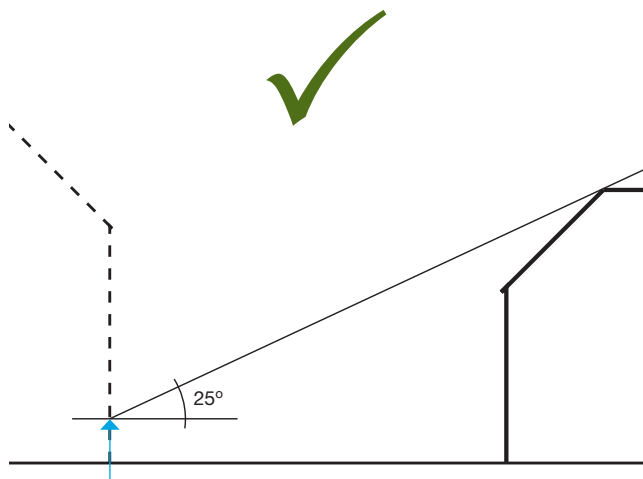
**3.1.3** However, the final test of acceptability will depend on the particular circumstances on the site, which may justify greater rear projection. For example, distances from the boundary and neighbouring properties; height adjacent to the boundary; use of materials and layout of neighbouring sites.

**3.1.4** Infill extensions to Victorian properties are fairly typical around the borough. In such instances, where the depth exceeds that outlined above, the eaves height should be limited to 2.2m to mitigate the sense of enclosure.

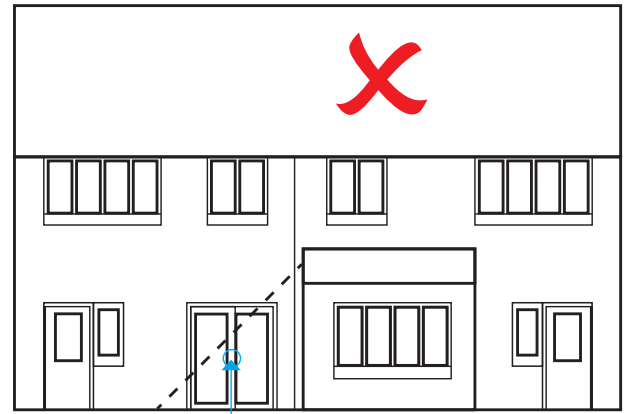
## 3.2 PRIVACY AND SPACE BETWEEN BUILDINGS

**3.2.1** A new extension should not result in any substantial loss of privacy to adjoining dwellings and gardens to prevent overlooking.

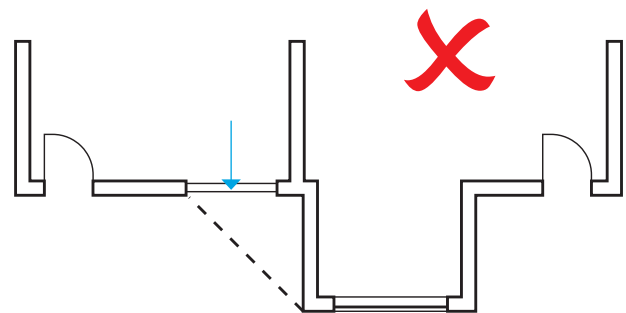
- Windows should either be high level (1.7m above floor level), obscure glazed or omitted from any wall directly facing a neighbouring house or garden.
- Using the roof of an extension as a balcony, will normally be unacceptable.
- Where houses are terraced or have small gardens, the construction of a dormer window in the roof can reduce privacy. Minimise overlooking by restricting the size of windows and setting them back from the eaves.



Mid-point of window or 1.6m above ground if a door  
Neighbour  
New building  
Fig. 1



1.6m above ground level or mid-point if a window  
Fig. 2



### 3.3 SUNLIGHT AND DAYLIGHT

**3.3.1** Residential development should create good living conditions and should not cause any significant loss of daylight or sunlight to habitable rooms or gardens in neighbouring properties. When assessing such, the Council will be guided by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) standards. Extensions should pass the BRE assessments which include the 25 degree and 45 degree tests. In figure 1 the new building passes the 25 degree test. In figure 2 the new extension is too close and too high to pass the 45 degree test.

### 3.4 AMENITY SPACE

**3.4.1** Extensions should not lead to a substantial reduction in existing garden area, and properties with small gardens may need to restrict the size of their extension to ensure a usable open space is retained:

- 2 bedroom properties should maintain 40m<sup>2</sup> of garden space

- 3+ bedroom properties should maintain 70m<sup>2</sup> of garden space

### 3.5 LIGHT POLLUTION

**3.5.1** When designing an extension, home owners should be mindful of potential light pollution that may be caused through excessive use of roof lights and / or glazed roofs. This is of particular relevance when a property is subdivided into flats.

**3.5.2** For more on neighbourliness, sunlight & daylight, sense of enclosure, and privacy and space between buildings, please see the Residential Development Standard SPD and the Small and Medium Housing Sites SPD.

## 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 4.1.1** The external appearance of any extension must be carefully designed in order to avoid the visual confusion that can result when the style and materials of the original house are ignored.



Fig. 3

- **Reflect existing character/detail** – The decoration, proportions and detailing of older buildings are frequently superior to that of new ones. Attempts to improve houses often spoil the original work through gimmickry or cheap solutions (see figure 3). Although it is usually easier and more successful to copy the appearance of the existing house, your architect may suggest a contrasting design using different materials, which remains sympathetic to the overall appearance.
- **Ensure continuity of the whole** – The essence of visual success is to look at the street as a whole, and through an appreciation of the original design and construction, blend repairs and new work into the existing house. A well-designed extension, which sympathetically complements the existing house and is in character with the neighbourhood, is likely to add more value to the property than an inappropriate design.
- **Retain original** – The guiding principle should be to try to retain everything that is original and accept the style and qualities of the property as it is. Don't just change things for the sake of change, but seek real improvements which enhance the quality of the building. The original appearance should always be the reference point when considering any changes.
- **Return house to original** – Where a house has already been unsympathetically modernised and you are considering further changes, the aim should be to return the house to its original appearance rather than repeat previous mistakes.

## 5. SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS

- 5.1.1** There is a variety of ways in which the living accommodation of a house can be extended (see figure 4). The most common are side and rear extensions, either one or two storeys in height.



Fig. 4

### 5.2 FORM, SCALE AND LOCATION

- 5.2.1** The overall shape, size and position of side and rear extensions should not dominate the existing house or its neighbours. They should harmonise with the original appearance, which should be taken as the starting point for any future changes. There are alternative methods of achieving this aim:
- The extension is integrated with the house which can work well with detached houses and sometimes on the end of uniform terraces (see figure 5).



Fig. 5

- Alternatively, the extension is made to appear as an obvious addition which is subordinate to the main structure, so that the original form can still be appreciated (see figure 6). In such circumstances, the ridge of the extension should be set lower to that on the main house.

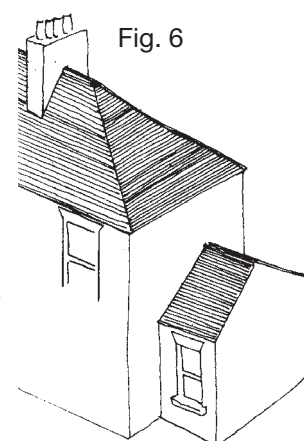
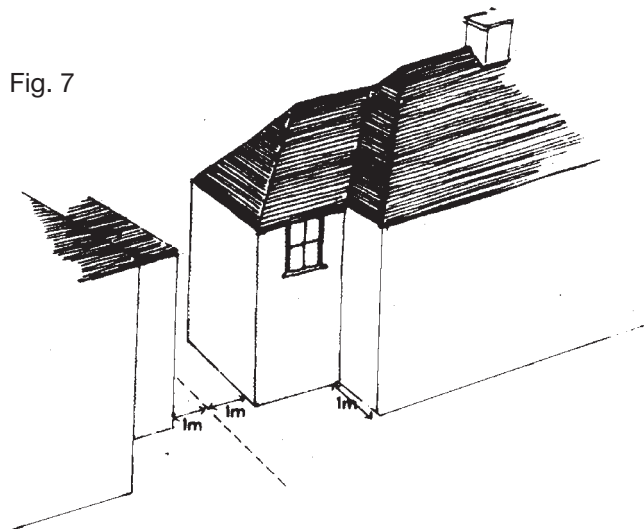


Fig. 6

- Two storey side and rear extensions should not be greater than half the width of the original building, to ensure the extension does not over-dominate the building's original scale and character.



**5.2.2 Avoid side extensions that project beyond the existing front elevation** – Where the extension is to be subordinate to the existing house it is usually desirable to set back the extension by at least 1 metre behind the front elevation (see figure 7).

**5.2.3 Infilling of gaps** – Development, which would result in the significant reduction of an existing important space or gap between neighbouring houses, is not normally acceptable. In conjunction with existing extensions to neighbouring buildings this can have a terracing effect on the street. Consequently, two storey side extensions should be sited 1m from the side boundary (see figure 7).

### 5.3 WALLS

**5.3.1** Walls are the largest and most visually important element in a house, and any change will therefore

dramatically alter the character and appearance of both the individual house and the street as a whole.

- Retain original brickwork** – Bricks are the predominant materials used in the borough and should never be painted or rendered unless absolutely necessary. If outside brickwork is in such poor condition that rendering is the only answer, seek expert advice on the colour and texture. Depending on the location, pebble- dash, spatter dash or Tyrolean finishes are generally inappropriate. Like render, using paint on facing bricks is an irreversible step which will totally alter the appearance and could lead to conflict amongst neighbours who still value the colour of the original brickwork and street character. Avoid highlighting the pointing between bricks.

- Match existing work** – When repair or rebuilding occurs it is important to use bricks, bonding or pointing that matches the existing. Care must be taken to use a mortar that is not too strong (1:1:6 cement, lime and sand), and to lightly brush the pointing to texture it before it sets. Distinctive brick or tile patterns, keystones, mouldings, terracotta details and other applied ornament should be kept. These decorative features are applied in order to draw attention to parts of the building and it is this small-scale detail which gives the house much of its character (see figure 8).

- Retain visual continuity** – The harmony of a terrace or street with a consistent facing material should not be destroyed with an assortment of diverse treatments. There are very few stone or timber buildings within the borough and it is therefore generally inappropriate to use reconstituted stone cladding and plastic or timber boarding (see figure 3).

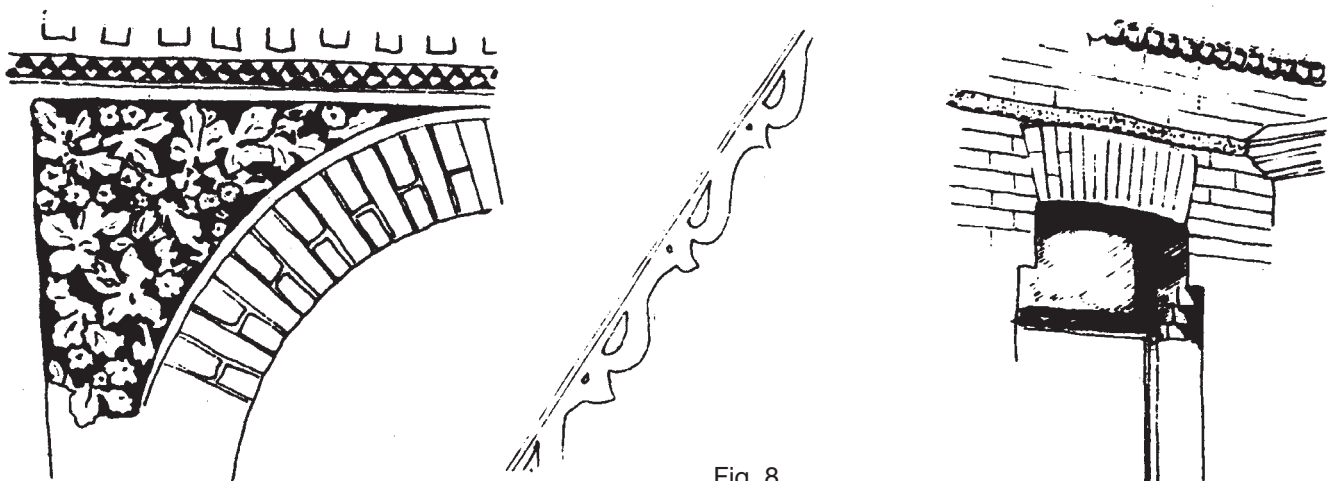


Fig. 8

## 5.4 WINDOWS

**5.4.1** Windows are important features and an inappropriate choice can easily spoil an otherwise satisfactory design. Adding an extension with different windows from those used on the original house may provide for a particular need but will do little to create a well-mannered unified exterior.

- **Maintain consistent detail** – In most cases use the same kind of window throughout, with the proportions and sizes of new window openings generally echoing those of the main house.
- **Line up new detail with existing** – New lintel and cill heights should line up with those around existing openings.
- **Maintain consistent style** – Changing the internal divisions (mullions, transoms and pane shapes and sizes) within the window can completely alter the effect of the overall proportions. Ensure that new windows reflect the style and details of the existing windows.
- **Repair or replace with same/similar** – When an original window requires attention, the best course of action wherever possible is to repair. If however the window is beyond repair, it should be replaced with a window of the same shape, size and design.
- **Avoid mixing styles** – Mixing different types of window on the front elevation should be avoided (see figure 9).
- **Retain character** – By modern living standards some older houses may be considered to be under-lit. A common, but normally unsatisfactory method of increasing day lighting is to insert a bow window, which invariably looks very out of place. With sash and casement windows it is better to add single or double width lights at either side (see figure 10).

- **Historic replacement** – If a bow window is necessary it should be made only after seeking specialist advice on authentic detailing. Late Victorian and Edwardian bays should be retained or replaced in their original form. Removing them spoils the individual house and the street. Be very careful in selecting replacement windows because many products are available which although claiming to represent a particular age (e.g. Georgian) bear little resemblance to authentic examples.
- **Modern replacement** – In recent years there has been considerable growth in window replacement companies selling uPVC windows. Timber lasts longer and is always preferable because uPVC can never fully replicate the original appearance and is unsustainable.
- **Double glazing** – Whilst the insulation benefits of double glazing are acknowledged, the installation of such should be sensitive to the character of the original property and area. Where appropriate (and in particular on historic buildings and in conservation areas) heritage double glazing will be sought, which benefits from very thin glazing units.
- **Shutters** – Avoid fixing outside shutters to windows unless they are purely functional. The effect of these is to adversely alter the balance and proportion of the windows.
- **Bulls eye panes** – Avoid using fake bulls eye panes in any form of window. They are an inappropriate historical detail.

## 5.5 DOORS

- 5.5.1** The **front door** is an integral part of the house, which should be in keeping with its overall style, age and character, and the correct type will therefore vary accordingly.
- **Avoid full-length glass front doors** – Depending on the age and style of the house, full-length glass front doors should generally be avoided.
  - **Avoid using modern pastiches of classical doorway detailing** – Mock Georgian pediments, cornices, pilasters and pillars are nearly always inappropriate. Fanlights are also important period details and should be kept as near as possible to their original form.

Fig. 9

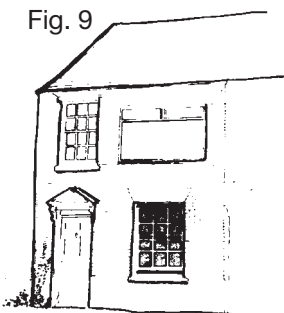
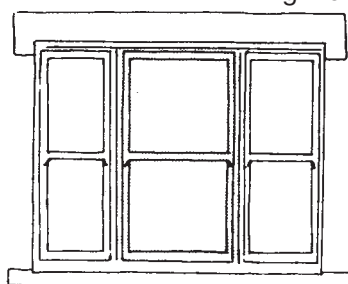


Fig. 10





- **Avoid fussy standard ‘period’ doors that are out of character with the rest of the house** – A pseudo Gothic, Elizabethan, 12 panel, bow or Tudor door inserted in a Victorian cottage or modern town house, will be out of keeping (see figure 11).

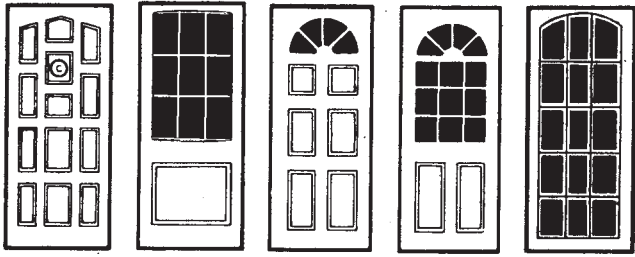


Fig. 11

**5.5.2 Garage doors** – Using cheap poor quality materials is undesirable. Timber lasts longer and is always preferable because uPVC can never fully replicate the original appearance and is unsustainable.

## 5.6 PORCHES

**5.6.1** Adding a porch or canopy is one of the most significant changes a householder can make to the front of a house as it involves altering the shape of the house at its focal point, the entrance.

- **Retain visual continuity** – The risk of creating an eyesore is greatest within a terrace where a single glass, timber or brick box on the front of a house can spoil the look of the whole row, and different porches are almost certain to appear later on. A plain rectangular box with a flat roof is generally an unsatisfactory shape to attach to a traditional building (see figure 12).



- **Match existing work** – If a new porch is desired, it should enhance rather than detract from the original house, with the aim being to make the addition ‘belong’ to the house.
- **Consider neighbouring properties** – Where front doors are paired, a joint scheme with the neighbouring owner should be considered (see figure 12; the one on the left shows two porches of different design and on the right of matching design; the latter is preferable). Try to avoid locating porches so that they touch existing windows.

## 5.7 FRONT GARDEN STORES

**5.7.1** Unsightly and excessive number of bins can have a harmful visual impression on a property and its area. The benefits of bin and cycle storage structures are acknowledged where these are suitably located. When considering the installation of such storage structures, the following factors should be taken into account to ensure these are sited to minimise their visual impression and the impact on adjacent properties:

- These should not be insensitively located in the middle of a front garden. Consider siting these adjacent to a property boundary, whereby they can be seen in context with existing boundary walls, fences and hedges.
- These should be subservient in scale, and not exceed the height of existing boundary treatment.
- Be mindful of neighbouring properties, in particular the proximity to windows to ensure the storage structures does not appear unneighbourly.
- These should ideally be constructed in a natural material, such as timber.
- Where required, these should be finished in a visually recessive colour, where required.



Fig. 12

## 6. BASEMENTS

**6.1.1** The Council will consider the following issues when determining applications for basements or basement extensions:

### 6.2 DESIGN AND HERITAGE

**6.2.1** A key consideration is the design and appearance, as well as the impact on character, appearance, setting and significance of a heritage asset.

- The design should complement and be in keeping with the appearance of the property.
- Any external features should be sensitively designed and sited to minimise their impact on the appearance of the building and character of the area or heritage asset.
- Basements to listed buildings are rarely deemed acceptable in response to the impact on the historic and structural integrity of the building. A Structural Impact Assessment (SIA) is always required (see 6.6 below).

### 6.3 TREES AND RAINWATER

**6.3.1** Issues relating to loss of trees and landscaping:

- Basements should not cause harm to any roots and trees on or adjoining the site, including street trees.
- A sufficient amount of soil should be provided above basements to enable the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and planting of vegetation.

### 6.4 TRAFFIC, PARKING AND LOCAL AMENITY

**6.4.1** To address impacts in relation to traffic, parking and servicing, a Construction Management Statement is required to demonstrate that reasonable consideration has been given to issues such as access, working hours, parking, delivery and removal provisions, dust, noise, vibration and local amenity.

### 6.5 GROUNDWATER AND FLOODING

- In areas of flood risk, self-contained basements and bedrooms at basement level are not allowed.

- All basements, extensions and conversions susceptible to flooding must have internal access to a higher floor and flood resistant and resilient design techniques must be adopted.

- In the functional flood plain (zone 3b), all basements or extensions are unacceptable.

- Basements should have adequate mitigation measures such as non-return valves or pumped sewage devices to prevent back flows from the system causing sewer flooding.

### 6.6 GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE ON BASEMENT DEVELOPMENTS

**6.6.1** Addressing the above issues may require the submission of supplementary information, whereby this will depend on the scale, location and complexity of the scheme. If the building is listed, a SIA and listed building consent are always required.

**6.6.2** Please see the Council's Good Practice Guide on Basement Developments and the Local Validation Checklist for further information on the above issues.

## 7. LIGHTWELLS

**7.1.1** Extending an existing lightwell or the formation of a new lightwell visible within any public views may be acceptable where:

- Such features already form part of the prevailing character of a terrace, other building group or the surrounding townscape.
- Their size is not out of scale or prominent, and their design does not detract from the original character of the front elevation of a building, nor obscure any architectural feature which contributes positively to the character of the building.
- They are sited immediately adjacent to the host building and not remotely located within the garden.
- Horizontal grilles are used, where appropriate, to enclose the area rather than railings and or vertical upstands to minimise their visual impact.
- Sufficient front garden area is retained to allow for planting, bin enclosure and boundary treatment.
- Windows generally reflect the pattern and type of fenestration above.

**7.1.2** Adding new or extending lightwells in conservation areas or to historic buildings may not be appropriate, depending on the visibility and townscape importance of the building and uniformity of the street. New or extended lightwells will not be acceptable if the structural integrity or special fabric of listed buildings is affected.

## 8. ROOF EXTENSIONS

**8.1.1** The Council will consider the following issues when determining applications for roof extensions:

- **Hip to gable extensions** – An extension that results in the conversion of an existing hip roof into a gabled roof is not desirable and will not be encouraged. This is especially so when the roof-scape and space between the buildings are important features of the character of that part of the street; and there is symmetry with the adjoining semi-detached property or within the terrace in which the building is located.
- **Avoid roof extensions in the front of a house** – It is undesirable to add a roof extension (including dormers) to the front of a house, particularly when there is already a gable over a projecting bay, or when these are not a character of the street.
- **Keep roof extensions ‘in-scale’ with the existing structure** – Raising the ridge of the building is normally unacceptable.
- **Dormer windows and other roof extensions must not project above the ridgeline.**
- **Roof extensions should not dominate the original roof.** Normally a significant area of the existing roof should be left beneath a new dormer and on either side of the dormer, thus setting the extension well in from either side of the roof. It may be more successful to incorporate two smaller dormers than one large dormer.
- **Dormer windows should be smaller than that of windows of the floor below.**
- **Keep existing profiles** – Dormer windows should not wrap round two sides of a hip roof and interrupt the roof profile (see figure 13).



Fig. 13

- **Ensure sensitivity to the existing character** – A dormer window with a flat roof may be out of character with the original building. Hipped or gabled dormers are often preferable, or alternatively consider using roof lights. In order to create sufficient internal headroom, it may be acceptable as a compromise to have a small dormer with a flat roof.

- **Match/or use complementary materials** – The sides of dormer windows should be covered in materials that match or complement the main roof.

- **Roof lights** – Excessive use of roof lights and an excessive number of roof lights can appear visually disruptive. It is preferable that roof lights are flush with the existing roof (conservation type) and that they are carefully placed to line up with the windows on the floor below.

## 8.2 ROOFS

**8.2.1** The choice of roof is very important because the type will determine the overall shape of the extension.

- **Maintain existing style** – It is generally desirable to use a pitched roof on all two storey, side or rear extensions and is especially important with those at road junctions or in corner locations. Ideally, a single storey extension to an existing house with a pitched roof should also have a pitched roof because the resulting shape is likely to be more compatible with that of the main building.
- **Avoid using fake-pitched roofs** along the front wall of an extension.
- **Match eaves and pitch** – The eaves of two storey side and rear extensions should line up with those of the existing house, or be lower, and the pitch of the roof should also be similar.
- **Match existing materials** – With pitched roofs the colour and shape of new tiles or slates should match those of the existing roof. This is particularly important when the new roof connects directly into the existing. Where this occurs it will be possible to re-use some tiles from where the roof connection is made. Alternatively, tiles could be removed from the back of the house to use on the front of the new extension and new materials used to replace them. If concrete tiles have to be used they should blend in colour, size and profile with the existing roofing material. Decorative ridge tiles and roof tile patterns should be retained. If gutters or water pipes need replacing, use black rather than grey.

- **Re-use materials** – Many older houses in the Borough have slate roofs that should be retained wherever possible. Usually between 25% and 50% of slates can be reused if care is taken in their removal.

## 8.3 CHIMNEY STACKS AND POTS

- **Try to retain all chimney-stacks and pots** – Where necessary repair them in a style and material, which reflect the original. All chimney pots should ideally be of a similar size and design.

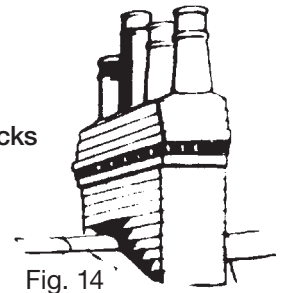


Fig. 14

- **Retain visual continuity** – The regular spacing of chimneys contributes to the rhythm of the street. It is particularly important in terraced streets and those on hills where the roofline is more visible (see figure 16).



Fig. 15

- **Keep corbelled courses of brickwork** and don't use smooth render or an inappropriate pre-cast concrete capping (see figure 14).
- **Ensure neat demolition of a chimney** – If it is absolutely necessary to demolish a chimney take it down below roof level and repair the roof covering. Do not leave an unsightly, stubby rendered base protruding just above the roof (Lowering the height of an active chimney may reduce its effectiveness) (see figure 15).
- **Retain the use of chimneys** – If unused fireplaces are fitted with grilles, and the pots with ventilating top cowls, chimneys can remain useful by providing controllable ventilation.



Fig. 16

## 9. DETAILED ADVICE

### 9.1 MATERIALS

**9.1.1** In general, a standard condition of a planning permission will require that the materials used on the external elevation shall match those of the existing building.

- **Integrate to existing** – External materials should normally match those already found on the house. The aim is to integrate the extension with the original house keeping the number of materials used to a minimum. Avoid unrelated and incompatible materials.
- **Match existing work** – Extensions to recently built houses should be constructed in the same materials as originally used, if they are still available. With older houses the existing materials will have changed colour and texture due to age and weather and it may not be possible to achieve a perfect match. To overcome the problem of bonding old and new brickwork it is advisable to set the extension back behind the face of the existing house. It is important with brick extensions to match the mortar colour, bonding and pointing.
- **Retain visual continuity** – On terraced and semi-detached houses, or in a road of similar houses, avoid refacing the existing house in either paint, render or cladding (so as to match the finish of the extension) because this will be disruptive to the overall appearance of the street.
- **Use quality materials** – Using cheap poor quality materials will not only be less attractive and limit the increase in the value of the house, but in the long term is likely to result in higher maintenance costs.

### 9.2 DETAILS

- Avoid undermining the continuity and harmony that have been obtained by complying with the principles discussed so far.
- Retain any decorative and ornamental architectural details, in stone, cut, rubbed or glazed brick, terracotta, ceramic, stucco and wood, which give your home its own distinct character.
- Maintain authentic detail – Take great care in adding features to give individuality to a house.

Ensure that the details match up to the age, style and quality of the property and try to avoid shoddy, phoney or ‘folksy’ additions.

- The position of rainwater pipes and gutters, and the continuation of plinths, brick string courses, fascias and other details, must not be overlooked if an extension is to be visually successful.

### 9.3 DECORATION

**9.3.1** Understate rather than over state – If a house is stuccoed or rendered and needs a face lift, smooth texture paints are preferable. Avoid bold bright colours and finishes where they look out of place and clash with neighbouring houses. If the house is part of a semidetached pair, try to ensure that both halves are painted the same colour. Where whole facades are stuccoed, the best overall appearance is achieved by agreeing a co-ordinated colour scheme.

- Avoid the use of shuttering (for decorative purposes), unless it is functional and part of the existing character of the house.
- Generally, window frames, glazing bars, fascia beads and window reveals should be painted white.
- Traditionally, exterior pipes and ironwork on balconies and railings are painted black. However, if there are an excessive number of obtrusive external pipes, it may be advisable to choose a colour which merges rather than contrasts with the walls.

## 10. FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Planning website](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/planning): www.richmond.gov.uk/planning
- [Local Plan](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/local_plan): www.richmond.gov.uk/local\_plan
- [Supplementary Planning Documents](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/supplementary_planning_documents_and_guidance):  
www.richmond.gov.uk/supplementary\_planning\_documents\_and\_guidance
- [Good Practice Guide on Basement Developments](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/basement_developments.htm):  
www.richmond.gov.uk/basement\_developments.htm
- [Local Validation Checklist](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/make_a_planning_application): www.richmond.gov.uk/make\_a\_planning\_application
- [Planning Portal](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk): www.planningportal.gov.uk

### CONTACT DETAILS AT THE LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

#### Planning applications and Development Control

Email: [planning@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:planning@richmond.gov.uk)  
Tel: 020 8891 1411

#### Building Control

Email: [buildingcontrol@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@richmond.gov.uk)  
Tel: 020 8891 7117

#### Urban Design and Conservation

Tel: 020 8891 7117

Produced by Planning Policy and Design  
Email: [planningpolicy@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@richmond.gov.uk)

Document first published in January 1983  
First adopted September 2002  
Reformatted July 2005  
Revised & adopted May 2015

If you need this document in Braille, large print, audio tape, or another language, please contact us on 020 88917117 or minicom 020 8831 6001

Civic Centre, 44 York Street  
Twickenham TW1 3BZ  
[www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk)