

House Extensions

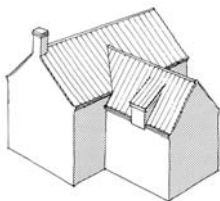
We understand that many people will wish at some stage to improve the domestic space available to them, without having to move house. This chapter is designed to offer initial design advice to those thinking of extending their home.

Building an extension is more than a process of providing more living space. It will inevitably have an impact on the external appearance of the property and have an impact on the nature and quality of space around it. This will include the impact on the wider area (often known as streetscape), the character of the dwelling being extended and potential harm to the neighbours. Therefore the design and potential impacts of your proposals will need to be carefully considered. While this guide outlines the key principles to bear in mind, we would always recommend that you speak to a planning officer at the earliest possible opportunity. Furthermore, the design process can be very difficult for the amateur and we would strongly advise that you hire a professional architect to help you.

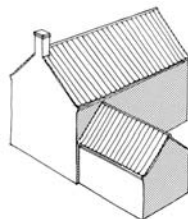
General Principles and Policy

There are a number of key principles that should be observed when planning an extension to an existing dwelling.

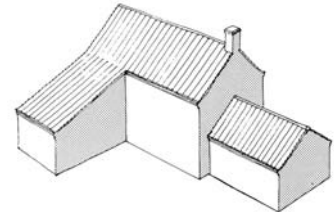
- **SCALE AND MASSING:** avoid large extensions which overwhelm the original dwelling. As a rule they should be subservient, and this may sometimes be best achieved by setting back the extension behind the wall of the main house with a corresponding drop in the roofline. An extension that is too large will not be in balance with the form of the existing dwelling and may destroy the original character. In all circumstances the key principle is that it will still be obvious what part of the building was original, with later extensions being clearly subordinate.



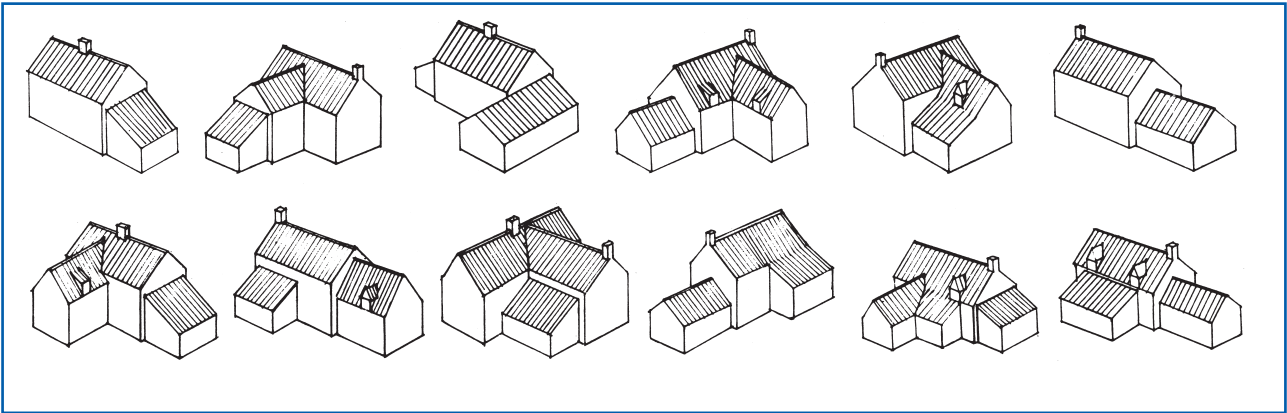
Gabled one and a half storey extension to rear of property.



Gabled extension to main wall.



Catslide and gabled ended extensions.



The above examples all represent traditional ways of extending a property. What they all have in common is that they are subordinate and do not swamp the original dwelling. Could your extension be accommodated in one of the above examples?



This excellent extension is subordinate to the original house, uses high quality materials and fine detailing.

- **STYLE:** extensions should complement the style, proportions, detailing and materials of the original building. It may be traditional or contemporary in design, but whatever style is chosen it must display qualities that do not detract from the original dwelling.



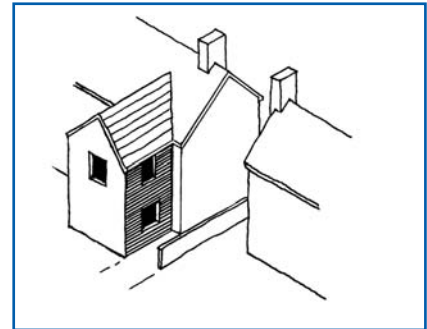
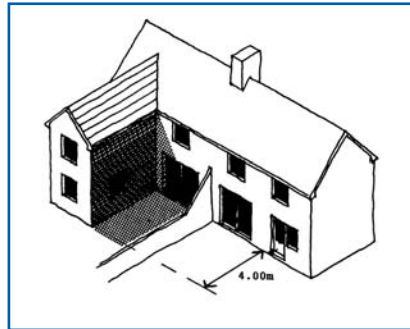
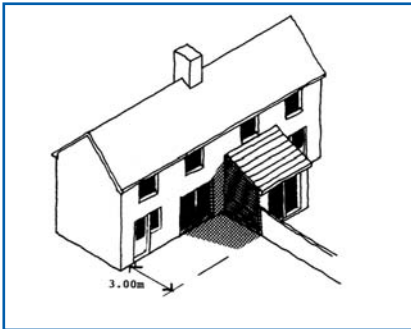
This extension fails to respect the scale and appearance of the original Cottage. It could have been designed in a more sympathetic manner

- **MATERIALS:** It will generally be appropriate for most extensions to be constructed in walling and roofing materials which match, or are sympathetic, to those of the original building. However, there are occasions when a bold modern design can be a very effective way of extending an older property.



Extensions should usually be subordinate to the original dwelling unlike this curious example – which is the original and which is the extension?

- **ROOF-FORM:** Flat roof extensions will not normally be allowed as they represent a crude and harmful addition to most buildings. New roof pitches should match those of the existing dwelling but should be of a narrower span achieved by the use of setbacks and a dropped ridge. Roof spans greater than the original will not be permitted as they add an inappropriate, harmful feature that swamps the identity of the original building.
- **IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS:** Where we live in close proximity to our neighbours, any extension that you may plan has the potential to have an impact on their quality of life. For example it may cast a dark shadow over their back garden or invade their privacy by installing new windows that look directly into their home. Therefore it is always important that when you and/or your architect are designing your extension that the potential impact on the quality of life of others (often referred to as their "amenity") is fully taken into account and minimised. There are a number of key principles that should help you address this issue:
 - We will consult your neighbours' about your proposals and will take account any objections they make when reaching a decision. It is therefore strongly advisable to discuss your proposals with your neighbours at the beginning of your project. This way you can take account of any concerns that they might have in your design and most importantly maintain good neighbourliness.
 - Your neighbour's permission will be required if your foundations or eaves encroach over their property. Similarly you may also require their permission to secure access for the building works and for future maintenance. This is a civil matter though and does not form part of the application.
 - The design of your extension should be conceived to avoid any direct overlooking into your neighbours' gardens or their existing windows.
 - When building close to the boundary of the neighbouring property care must be taken to ensure that the bulk and location of your new extension does not take light from one of their windows or garden. This can seriously harm their amenity and is a common reason for planning applications to be refused.



You must consider your neighbours when planning an extension. Be careful not to overlook them, take their light or introduce a bulky oppressive feature right on the boundary. Ask yourself the question "how would I like it if someone were to do it to me?"

- **DORMER ROOF EXTENSIONS:** Extensions to the roofspace can make the most of a buildings volume. However great care is required if dormers and rooflights are to be sympathetic to the original house. See section 12b on dormers and rooflights.
- **CONSERVATORIES:** As with any other extension, conservatories should be designed to take into account the local context, the character of the existing building, appropriate scale and massing and potential impacts on neighbours. The following are key principles that should be observed when considering adding a conservatory to your home:
 - The materials should match those of the original building, for example if the original building is brick with timber window frames, then the conservatory should have a matching brick plinth with timber glazing bars
 - Bold modern designs, such as the frameless glass cube will be encouraged in the right circumstances as they can add to the character and interest of the original building.
 - Careful consideration should be given to the siting of the conservatory, especially in relation to adjoining properties. Obscure glazing, a solid wall or screen fence may be required to certain sides to protect the privacy of your neighbours
 - Overly ornate, "fussy" pseudo-Victorian conservatories should be avoided on simple cottages and most modern housing as it adds an inappropriate and jarring clash of styles
 - Generally conservatories should be located to the rear, private side of properties. However, on the occasion where they are appropriate to the front or side elevations or where they are on view from the public domain then standard "off the peg" designs will not be acceptable. Well-designed and proportioned conservatories that reflect the character of the wider context in form and use of materials will be required
 - PVCu conservatories and polycarbonate glazing are inappropriate materials for listed buildings and will not be permitted.



This conservatory fails to respect the original dwelling. It is too large, has pseudo-victorian detailing with no historic link to the house and the parallel ridgeline means there is an awkward valley junction with the dwelling.

- **PORCHES:** These have a significant impact on the appearance of any property, as they are invariably the key focal point which holds the design together. ***As recognition of their importance there is a separate section 23 that gives detailed advice on porches.***

Objective 21

Extensions to existing properties will normally be permitted where they demonstrate that:

- The scale, design and character of the existing property has been respected
- The extension is designed to integrate into the wider area
- It does not have a harmful impact on the amenity of neighbours
- The materials are appropriate.