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# **HOUSEHOLDER GUIDE**

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

**home extensions . roof extensions / dormer windows . outbuildings . walls and fences**

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**July 2003**



# **Householders Guide**

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

### **Consultation Draft**

This guide gives advice on:-

**home extensions**

**roof extensions / dormer windows**

**outbuildings**

**walls and fences**

The guidance in this document will be used by the Council to help decide whether planning permission should be granted. Details of the status of this guidance and relevant Local Plan policies are given at the end of this document.

#### **➡ Extensions**

##### **Designing the Extension**

There are three main aspects to consider when thinking about extending your home these are:

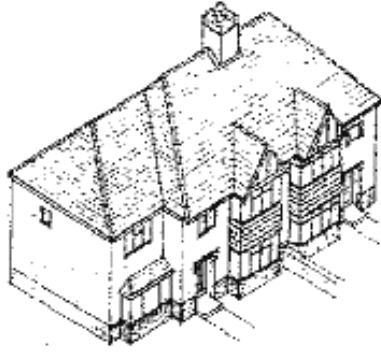
- **the relationship of the extension to the existing house**
- **the effect on the appearance of the road**
- **the effect on the amenity of nearby residents**

(amenity includes privacy, outlook, overlooking, daylight, overshadowing and the visual dominance of the proposed development)

These are the usual considerations, there may be others depending on the nature and location of the proposal.

##### **Extensions should not dominate the original building.**

- they should be smaller and lower than the original building in order to respect its scale and form



*A well designed extension which does not dominate the original house yet retains its style and proportions.*

**Extensions should not significantly harm the privacy or outlook of neighbouring properties through overlooking or being over-dominant.**

- they should not cause unacceptable over-shadowing of adjoining properties' windows or gardens (the orientation of the extension in relation to any affected properties will be relevant)
- they should not have windows, terraces or balconies that overlook neighbouring windows or gardens to an extent that causes loss of privacy.
- as a guide two-storey rear extensions should not extend beyond a 45 degree line from centre of the nearest adjoining neighbour's window
- ground floor extensions, as a guide, are acceptable where they do not extend more than 3 metres from the rear of the property or a 60 degree line from the centre of the nearest adjoining neighbour's window
- they should retain adequate amenity space for the size of the property
- the angles and dimensions above are given as a guide to assist applicants and individual cases will be considered on their own merits



**Extensions should respect the materials and architectural style of the original building**

- materials should, in most cases, match those of the original building and in all cases should harmonise with them

- architectural detailing should generally reflect that of the original building and over-elaborate or inappropriate details should be avoided



- tile-hanging or render can be an attractive material for prominent features such as window bays or gables where brickwork can be visually too heavy
- the roof pitch of the extension should match that of the original house

### **Side extensions should be set back from the front wall**

- a setback of at least 300mm should be provided to make a visually acceptable break between old and new materials and to preserve the integrity of the original building
- two-storey and first floor side extensions should, in most cases, be designed to leave a gap of at least 1 metre between the extension and any boundary. While this may not be necessary in order to obtain planning permission it does prevent legal problems with rights over party walls, overhanging guttering, maintenance and construction of foundations. It also avoids adjacent properties taking on the appearance of a terrace where this would be harmful to the character of the area.

### **Front extensions require special attention**

- front extensions are generally the most visible form of extension and can have a significant impact on the character of an area.
- if they are too large, too close to a boundary or extend significantly beyond the general line of the fronts of houses in a road they are unlikely to be acceptable

### **➡ Altering the Roof**

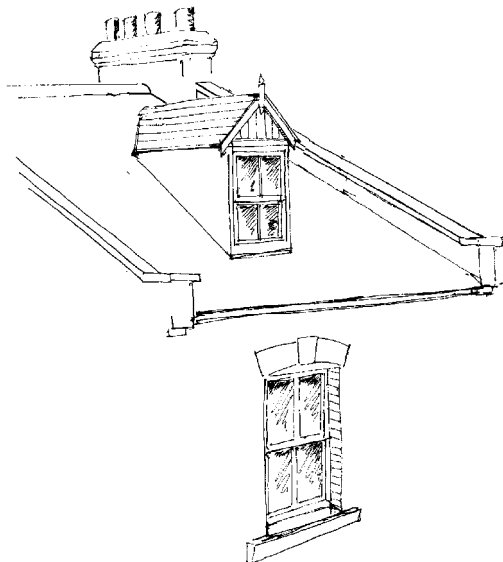
#### **roof extensions must be carefully designed to avoid them being dominant features and harming the street scene.**

- bulky dormer or roof extensions can have a very harmful effect on the appearance of a property and the street generally.



**dormer windows should be designed to match the style, alignment and proportions of existing windows.**

- they should harmonise with the character, materials and style of the roof
- appropriately designed and located dormer windows can be attractive features



**loft conversions should use rooflights where possible to maintain the pitch of the roof and avoid overlooking**

- loft conversions may not require planning permission but are likely to require approval under the Building Regulations

➡ Outbuildings

## **outbuildings should not dominate the street scene**

- outbuildings should be designed and located in such a way that the character and appearance of the area are not harmed
- outbuildings should be significantly smaller in scale than the existing dwelling
- outbuildings, including garages, in front gardens in particular should be of an appropriate height and sensitively designed, carefully located and landscaped to be unobtrusive
- a six metre driveway should be provided between garages or car ports and the property boundary where this abuts a public highway (including the pavement) to prevent vehicles blocking or overhanging the highway or footpath.

## **outbuildings should not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of neighbouring properties**

- outbuildings, like extensions, should not unacceptably affect the privacy outlook, amenity, sunlight or daylight of nearby properties.

## **➡ Walls and Fences**

### **Use an appropriate design for the location and the property.**

- the boundaries of a property, especially those facing a highway, can have a strong influence on the character and appearance of an area. Some areas for example have an attractive semi-rural character created partly by having hedges rather than fences or walls to the front boundaries. Some urban residential areas have a consistent front boundary treatment this should be replicated in new front boundaries to preserve and enhance the area's character.
- the construction of some walls and fences does not require planning permission. In general terms where they are adjacent to a highway (for this purpose highway includes a public footpath), walls or fences up to 1 metre high do not require permission and in other locations those up to 2 metres do not require consent. There are exceptions to this, for example where they are part of the boundary to a listed building.

### **Avoid high walls and fences to front boundaries**

- the construction of high walls or fences next to a pavement creates an unpleasant environment for pedestrians and can also provide cover for criminals.
- high front boundary treatments will not be acceptable where they cause highway safety problems

## **➡ Nature Conservation**

### **Works to your property could affect wildlife habitats.**

## **Birds**

- It is illegal to disturb nesting birds.
- Work should be timed to avoid the breeding season
- if an active nest is discovered, work should cease until the nesting has been completed.

## **Bats**

- All species of bats are protected and it is illegal to disturb their roosts
- a survey should be undertaken to ensure there are no bats present before any work commences.

## **Designing for Wildlife**

- Modern buildings offer few opportunities for nesting birds and other wildlife. This is a major factor in the decline of house sparrows.
- You should consider the option of providing nest boxes to benefit house sparrows and other species.

## **➡ Pre-Application Advice**

### **Planning Permission**

- Many extensions, outbuildings, walls and fences may require planning permission. Whether your proposal requires permission or not depends on a number of things including the size, position and height of the extension or other structure. If the house has already been extended or if there are legal restrictions affecting the property these may mean that a new extension or other works require planning permission. You should check whether your proposal needs planning permission by writing to:

Director of Technical Services, Runnymede Borough Council, Civic Offices, Station Road,  
Addlestone, KT15 2AH

***You should clearly indicate the location of the property and the size, height and location of your proposed development.***

**If you do need planning permission your requirements for applications are included in the guidance notes accompanying the householder application forms**

**The Council encourages you to seek planning advice before you submit your planning application**

- Council officers can give informal advice on planning proposals before an application is made. This will be based on their experience of similar developments and their knowledge of the area and relevant planning policies and standards. It is a useful guide but will not be binding on the Council.
- Where pre-application advice is required it is important that you provide Council staff with a clear indication of the type, size and location of the proposal and of any properties likely to be affected by it.
- It is also strongly recommended that you discuss your proposals with your neighbours before making a planning application. This can help you produce an acceptable design and reduce the likelihood of them objecting to your proposal.
- Works to your property may require approval under the Building Regulations. For information on the requirements please contact the Building Control Section of the Technical Services Department.

### ➡ **Status of this Guide**

- This guide is supplementary guidance supporting policies HO9 (New Housing Development) and BE2 (Townscape Character). These are set out below. The guidance was adopted by the Borough Council on 17 July 2003 following consultation with the public and relevant organisations. A document setting out the consultation process, the comments received and the Council's response is available on request from the Technical Services Department. Separate guidance is available for extensions and replacement dwellings in the green belt which are covered by Local Plan Policy GB6.



## Local Plan Policies – Runnymede Borough Local Plan (Second Alteration) April 2001

### **(HO9) NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

- (1) In considering planning applications for new housing development (including conversions and extensions to existing dwellings) the Council will require sensitively designed proposals that:**
  - (a) do not damage the character and amenity of established residential areas, and**
  - (b) allow for retention of appropriate trees and shrubs and provide landscaping of a high standard of design, and**
  - (c) provide generous garden areas with a minimum depth of 10.6 m and/or make provision for open space to accord with *Policy R3*, and**
  - (d) provide appropriate space between existing and proposed residential units, and**
  - (e) provide adequate daylight and sunlight to all habitable rooms, and**
  - (f) provide adequate privacy for existing and proposed properties.**
- (2) the Council will:-**
  - (a) only permit infilling or re development of an existing road frontage, within the existing depth of development, and**
  - (b) resist the provision of parking spaces within rear gardens and seek to ensure that new parking areas are effectively landscaped.**

Consideration will also need to be given to the guidance on townscape character contained in Policy BE2 and the objectives of Policy TC1 regarding residential development in town centres.

### **(BE2) TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER**

Within the urban area proposals will be expected to respect townscape character of recognised high quality by reference to the following issues:

- (1) existing buildings;**
- (2) street pattern;**
- (3) plot sizes and ratios;**
- (4) building lines and topography;**
- (5) street scene;**
- (6) building height and roof treatment;**
- (7) boundary treatment;**
- (8) recreational and amenity open space (including trees and landscaping).**

Schemes that are of visual interest and include appropriate materials and sympathetic landscaping, will be encouraged. Guidance on residential development is also contained in Policy HO9.

**Applications for shopfront security measures will be expected to have regard to the guidance contained in the Council's Shop Security leaflet which is attached at Appendix 1.**