

## House Extensions

### Supplementary Planning Document

May 2023

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a guide for homeowners, applicants and their agents, neighbours and other members of the public as to how we will deal with planning applications for house extensions and related household development.
- 1.2 Sefton has numerous residential districts with a large variety of characteristics, layouts and features. This guidance cannot cover every possible scenario. It explains what we will consider when judging whether an application is acceptable. In some instances, there may be reasons that allow for a departure from this guidance, for example where an innovative design solution is put forward.
- 1.3 This guidance provides further detail to the policies in the Local Plan for Sefton. It does not have Development Plan status as the Local Plan does, but it will be given weight as a “material planning consideration” when we determine planning applications.
- 1.4 Applications for extensions to dwellings will be assessed against this guidance, the Sefton Local Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant Neighbourhood Plans. In particular, Local Plan policy HC4 “House extensions, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Flats” will be used alongside this guidance in the determination of household applications.
- 1.5 It is important that you do not read each section of this document in isolation as the guidance will be applied as a whole.
- 1.6 While the document relates mostly to extensions to residential properties, the principles will still apply to development of non-residential properties located within residential areas.
- 1.7 If any application fails to meet our guidance, it is important that this is explained as part of the application.

### Speaking to your Neighbours

- 1.8 We encourage you to discuss your proposal your neighbours before you make an application. Not only will your neighbours feel that you have made an effort to keep them informed, it will also avoid them being surprised when they receive a letter from us about your planning application. It will also give you an opportunity to consider changes to address their concerns before you submit your planning application.
- 1.9 Should any part of your extension, including footings, gutterings, overhanging roof or openable windows encroach onto your neighbour’s land, you will be required to let them know. If you don’t do this correctly it is likely to result in delays to your application being determined. If you are encroaching on their property you will be required to sign a certificate to say you do not own all the land.

- 1.10 While not a material planning consideration, extensions and walls that are built right up to the property boundary can often cause problems. In many cases you will need the consent of your neighbours. If you intend to carry out work on, or close to, your neighbour's boundary or party walls, you will need to consider the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996. This is designed to resolve disputes which may arise between neighbours when building work is carried out. You can find more information and guidance by visiting the GOV.UK website and searching 'Party Walls' or visit the Planning Portal.

<https://www.gov.uk/party-walls-building-works>

### **Making a Planning Application**

- 1.11 Information on how to apply for planning permission is available at the following webpages:

- <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/apply-for-permission/how-to-make-a-planning-application>
- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/making-an-application/>

### **Planning Enforcement**

- 1.12 If you don't apply for planning permission when this is required we may take enforcement action. We will act where it is practical, reasonable, and necessary to do so in the wider public interest.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

- 1.13 Formby and Little Altcar, Maghull and Lydiate have adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans are statutory development plans for their relevant area. We encourage you to check any Neighbourhood Plan covering your area before you make an application as:

- a) It may contain additional policies your development will have to adhere to.
- b) It may provide a character appraisal for your area.

- 1.14 Information on Neighbourhood Plans adopted within Sefton can be found at: <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning>

### **Pre-Application Service**

- 1.15 We encourage you to use our pre-application service to obtain advice from our planning officers on your proposed extension. By discussing your project with us before you apply for planning permission, we can help you put together a successful application that meets Sefton Council requirements and avoids delays.

- 1.16 There are significant benefits in using our pre-application service before you make your application:

- We will let you know whether planning permission is required.
- We will tell you whether we think your scheme is likely to get permission.
- We will identify a need for specialist input (e.g. in relation to listed buildings or trees) before you make your application.
- We will point out potential issues and reduce the chance of you applying for something which is likely to be unacceptable.
- We may indicate that a proposal is completely unacceptable, saving you the cost of making a formal application.
- We will let you know what information you should provide with your application, reducing the chance that you will make an invalid application.

1.17 There is a charge for this service. Details of our preapplication service can be found here:

[Sefton Council: Pre-application advice on development proposals](#)

## 2. General design principles

2.1 We expect proposals for house extensions and alterations to adhere to the key general design principles set out below.

### Local character and street scene

2.2 The character and identity of the local area and street scene will be a significant factor in determining the appropriate form, scale and design of house extensions and alterations. You should take account of the character of the area in preparing your proposal.

#### General design principle 1: Local character and street scene

Extensions and alterations to residential properties should be in keeping with the appearance, scale, design and character of the local area and the street scene.

2.3 The following considerations should help ensure proposals are appropriate to the local character and street scene:

- **Terracing effect-** Extensions to detached or semi-detached homes should not create a 'terraced' effect by giving the impression that one home is linked to the next where this is out of character with the local area (see section 4). If your house is situated within a group of buildings similar in appearance and significance to the character of surrounding area, the extension to your home should take account of the appearance of the group, as well as your own house.
- **Building line-** Where a street or group of buildings have a clearly defined building line this should be retained. Extending forward from the street's building line will only be

appropriate in certain circumstances and will be assessed on the merits of the particular proposal.

- **Local Character-** Extensions should be in keeping with the existing character or appearance of the local area and street scene. This can include the use of materials, window form, position and size, architectural style and roof pitch. Any deviation away from the local character will require justification and be considered case by case.
- **Enhance appearance-** Where practical, opportunities should be taken to improve the appearance of existing buildings, particularly by the removal or replacement of existing unsightly extensions or alterations.

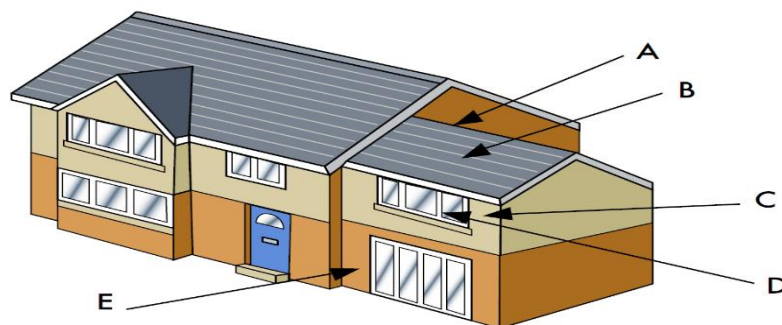
2.4 Contemporary designs and high-quality modern interpretations of distinctive and significant local characteristics will be permitted where they are appropriate to the site context and make a positive contribution to the wider environment. In some cases, applicants may wish to develop proposals which do not conform to the street scene. We will assess these schemes on merit. Where you propose an innovative architectural approach, we ask you to provide a rationale for the approach and to justify why the scheme would enhance rather than detract from the character and street scene of the area.

## The existing house

### General design principle 2: Impact on the existing house

We expect the design of a house extension to complement the existing building. Extensions should not dominate or be larger than the existing house and should be in keeping with the existing building in terms of scale, materials and detail. Two storey extensions should integrate with the existing roof and should be designed with a roof in keeping with the style of the existing property.

2.5 We expect proposals for extensions to be proportionate to the existing building. Two-storey extensions should be set down from the ridge line, set back from the front elevation and generally be small in footprint. The materials, design, roof pitch and detailing should match the existing house. This includes two storey extensions to the rear where the extension is visible from surrounding houses.



- A. Lower ridge line to reduce impact of extension.
- B. Roof materials to match.
- C. Materials to match existing.
- D. Window form to match existing.
- E. Extension set back to avoid bonding of old with new brickwork.

*Figure 1 Key features of an extension.*

- 2.6 Where extensions seek to differ from the existing materials, design, roof pitch or detailing, or present a scale that would not be subordinate to the main house, we will consider proposals case by case. We will take account of the character of the area and street scene and other material considerations.
- 2.7 We will support innovative and modern design approaches which are high quality and appropriate to the local context. The scale and proportion of elevations and the quality of contemporary materials and detailing will be important. You should provide reasons to support such a design approach.

### Neighbouring Properties

- 2.8 Extensions or alterations should be designed so they do not significantly impact on the living conditions of neighbours.

#### General design principle 3: Privacy

Extensions and alterations should be designed to achieve reasonable levels of privacy for inhabitants, future occupants and neighbours.

- 2.9 Extensions which significantly overlook neighbouring homes and gardens will not be permitted.
- 2.10 In some instances there may be a significant difference in ground levels between your extension and neighbouring homes. Where this is the case, we may not approve your extension even if it meets our usual requirements. We will expect increased distances if there are significant differences in land levels and / or additional floors above two storey (see paragraph 3.8 below).

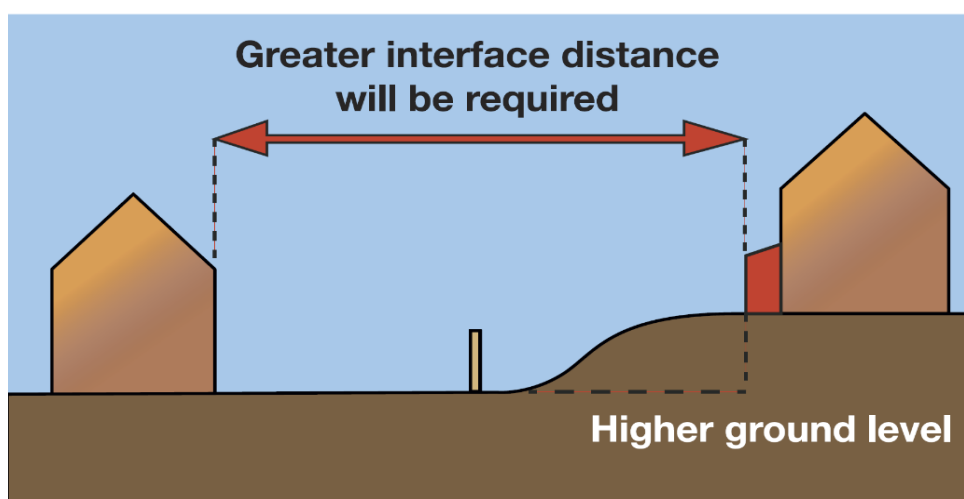


Figure 2 Ground level change

- 2.11 Obscure glazing can help avoid harmful overlooking. We will generally allow obscure glazing when used in non-habitable rooms but is unacceptable for primary windows serving a habitable room. Appropriate screening at ground floor level, such as boundary treatment (e.g. fence, wall, shrubs and trees), can also protect the privacy of neighbouring properties.

- 2.12 We consider light and outlook to be of greater importance to some rooms than others. We will give significant weight and protection to rooms in which most people spend much of the day, known as habitable rooms. Limited weight will be given to protecting the amenity of non-habitable rooms.

#### **General design principle 4: Habitable rooms and side windows**

Extensions and alterations should consider the design and layout of habitable and non-habitable rooms both on the proposal and neighbouring properties to reduce harm to neighbouring properties relating to loss of privacy, light and outlook.

- 2.13 In some cases, a neighbouring property may have a habitable room with secondary windows on the side of the house. In these circumstances, development may be allowed closer to the secondary window. Where neighbouring properties have primary windows on the side of their house, we seek to ensure appropriate distances are maintained so the proposal does not impact on such windows.

##### **Habitable rooms**

- Kitchens
- Living rooms
- Dining rooms
- Bedrooms
- Studies
- Conservatories

##### **Non-habitable rooms**

- Bathrooms
- Toilets
- Stairways
- Landings
- Small porches
- Garages

**Primary Window-** A primary window is the main or only window through which light illuminates the room and provides the main outlook for the room.

**Secondary Window-** A secondary window is usually a smaller, subordinate, window which serves the same room as a primary window.

- 2.14 Side windows should not be included in proposals where they would unacceptably overlook neighbouring gardens or otherwise constrain the development potential of adjoining land. If you think side windows are necessary, you should consider using obscure glazing. In order to protect privacy of neighbours, any openings to side windows should be at a minimum height of 1.7m above floor level.

#### **General design principle 5: Overshadowing/loss of light**

Extensions and alterations should not significantly affect the amount of natural light enjoyed by a neighbouring property.

- 2.15 Extensions should not result in significant overshadowing to neighbouring homes or gardens. If an extension is likely to significantly reduce the amount of sunlight entering



a habitable room or overshadow a major part of a neighbour's garden planning permission will not be granted.



Figure 3a Unacceptable overshadowing

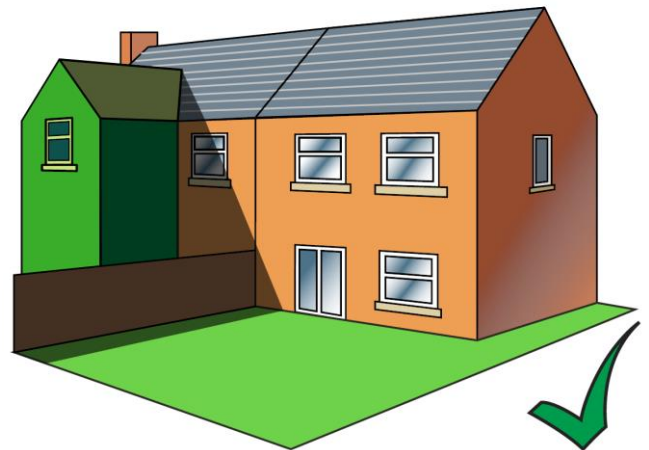


Figure 3b Appropriate level of sunlight.

- 2.16 We will apply the '45-degree guideline' as a starting point to assessing overshadowing to neighbouring properties. The '45 degree guideline' is set out at Annex 1 of this document.
- 2.17 We will consider the position of the extension in relation to the sun's path and the likely effect at different times of day and year when considering the impact on neighbouring properties.

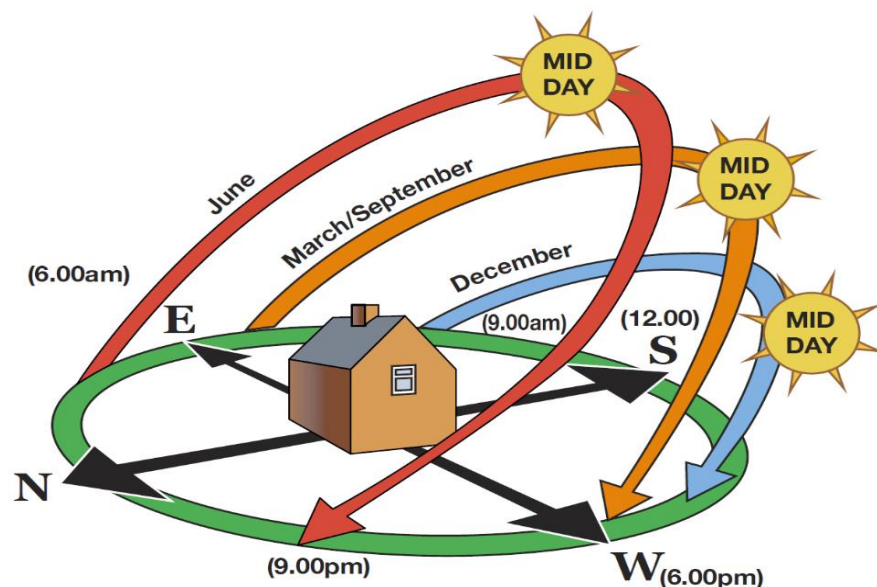


Figure 4 Sun path and orientation.

- 2.18 We will expect there to be a minimum distance of 12 metres between a window of a habitable room that faces a blank wall of two storeys or more. The blank wall could either be part of what you are proposing or part of the neighbouring property.

Extensions that do not meet or retain this standard are unlikely to be acceptable but will be decided case by case.

### General design principle 6: Outlook and overbearing / over dominant effect

Extensions and alterations should not unduly reduce the outlook from a neighbouring property.

- 2.19 Your extension should not have an overbearing or over dominant effect on nearby properties. This occurs when the physical presence of an extension (size, height and form) results in a significant impact on the living conditions of neighbours and/or their usable garden space. We will apply the '45-degree guideline' as set out at Annex 1 as a starting point to assessing whether an extension is likely to have an overbearing or over dominant effect on neighbouring properties or have a significant impact on their outlook.



Figure 5a Appropriate extension



Figure 5b Unacceptable overbearing effect.

- 2.20 You can avoid poor outlook through maintaining space and key distances from neighbouring habitable rooms and gardens or reducing the scale of your extension. The extension can also be designed to reduce the impact on neighbours such as sloping roofs away from boundaries.
- 2.21 A standard distance of at least 12 metres is required from blank walls of two storey extensions to the habitable rooms of nearby homes opposite the blank gable. We may require further distance if the extension has more than two storeys or if there are significant changes in land levels.

- 2.22 When assessing the impact that an extension or alteration may have on outlook, we will take account of the established character of an area and the existing feeling of openness.

**General design principle 7: Outdoor space**

Extensions and alterations should ensure an appropriately sized and useable area of private outdoor space is retained. Normally at least half the garden area should be retained as part of the proposals.

- 2.23 Extensions should be proportionate to the size of the plot within which the house sits. An extension that takes up too much of the plot may result in the site being over-developed. Therefore, extensions should ensure the remaining garden size reflects the character of the surrounding area and is not reduced to an unacceptable size. Extensions should ensure at least 50% of garden space is retained.

### 3. House extensions to the rear

- 3.1 Rear extensions should not have a significant impact on the living conditions of neighbours. The proximity of an extension to the boundaries and windows of adjacent homes will be considered. We will use the 45-degree guideline within Annex 1 to check if your proposal is acceptable in principle.
- 3.2 Where the 45-degree guideline is not complied with, we will only allow extensions where you can justify that there will be no significant harm to neighbouring homes and the character of the existing building. The orientation of the façade on which the extension is proposed will be taken into account when considering if it is acceptable.
- 3.3 If a neighbouring home has itself been previously extended, an extension of the same depth or further may be acceptable. We may restrict extensions to the same depth as neighbouring extensions if we consider that a larger extension will have a significant impact on the living conditions of neighbours or the character of the property or the wider area.
- 3.4 Rear extensions should keep an acceptable amount of garden space and should ensure at least 50% of garden space is retained.

#### Two Storey (+) rear extensions

- 3.5 Two storey+ rear extensions have a greater potential to cause significant impact to neighbouring homes and should comply with the 45-degree guideline outlined in Annex 1.
- 3.6 A joint extension with your neighbour may be an option to reduce the impact of a two-storey rear extension (see figure 6). However, a condition may be attached to the planning permission to ensure that both extensions are constructed at the same time, or within a short time frame of the adjacent extension being completed.

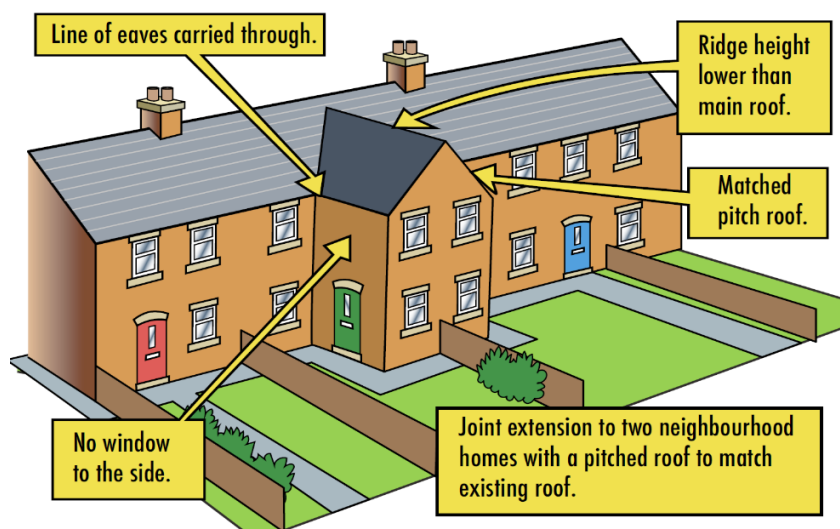


Figure 6 Acceptable rear extension and key principles.

- 3.7 Extensions close to the boundary with neighbouring homes are particularly sensitive; extensions should not have a harmful impact on habitable room windows. Two storey extensions which create a 'tunnelling effect' on a habitable room window will not be permitted (see figure 7). Extensions should avoid creating a 'tunnelling effect', where light into a habitable window is reduced from two sides.

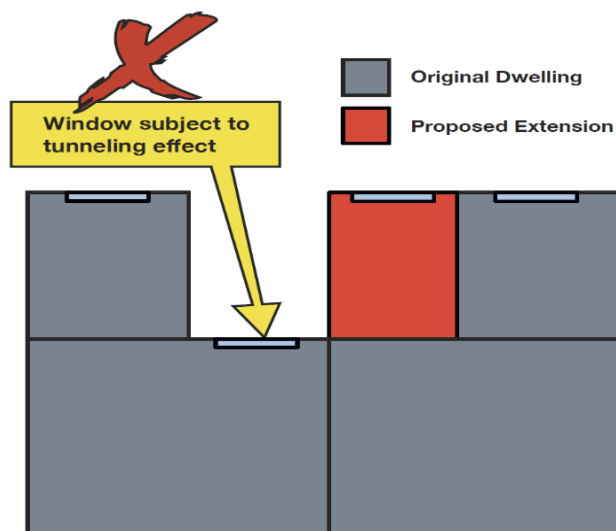


Figure 7 Tunnelling effect

- 3.8 Extensions should avoid creating a poor outlook or overlooking of neighbouring homes. Two-storey rear extensions should retain 12m where a habitable room window would face a blank wall. There should be a minimum 7m distance between habitable room windows within the extension and the boundary fence/wall of the property opposite. These distances should be increased by 3m for each additional storey and / or 1m for each metre of difference in land level. If an extension does not meet this standard, we will assess the character of the area and the existing levels of privacy when determining the planning application.

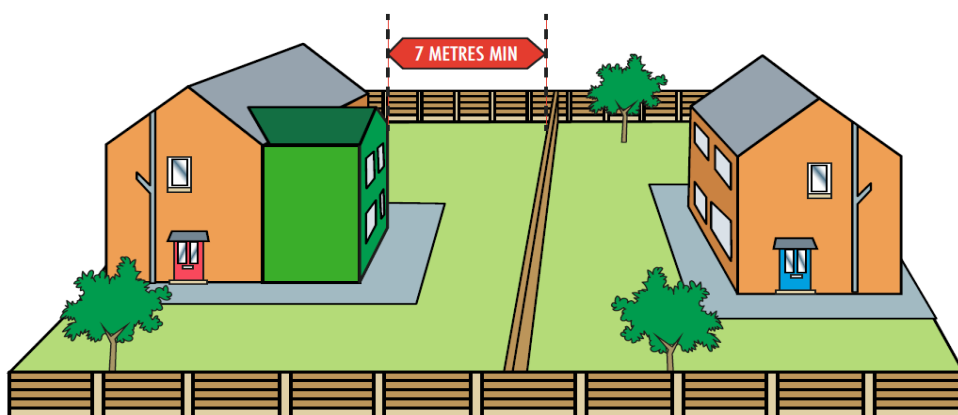


Figure 8 Minimum interface distance between a rear extension and opposite boundary

## 4. House extensions to the side

- 4.1 Side extensions should be designed to match to the design of the existing house and respect the character of the surrounding area. This includes preserving gaps between buildings to avoid creating the appearance of linking properties or a “terracing effect”.
- 4.2 Single storey side extensions should be set back from the main front wall by at least one course of brick. Extensions of more than one storey should be set back from the front main wall by at least 1 metre (at first floor level) unless:
- The line of buildings is staggered by at least two metres.
  - The direction your property faces is significantly different to neighbouring homes, or
  - The extension is set in from the side boundary by at least one metre and/or would not give the appearance of linking properties or result in a terracing effect.
- 4.3 If the building line is significantly staggered, we will use the 45-degree guideline outlined in Annex 1 to check if your side extension is acceptable in principle having regard to the living conditions of neighbouring residents.
- 4.4 If your neighbour has a window on their side elevation, facing your extension, we will carefully consider the outlook of this window, particularly if this is the only window in a habitable room.



Figure 9a Acceptable side extension



Figure 9b Unacceptable side extension

4.5 Side extensions should not result in an unacceptable loss of parking.

### Corner Plots

4.6 Corner plot extensions can be particularly prominent due to their visibility from two streets. A corner plot extension should be carefully designed so that it respects the character of both streets and does not appear more dominant in either street than the existing property.

4.7 Your extension should not encroach beyond the established building lines on either street (see figure 10). Side extensions on corner plots where the extension projects towards a highway should not normally occupy more than half the available width between the side of the house and the highway, unless:

- Corner plots in the area are characterised by a lesser distance, and
- The reduction would not impede the visibility of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- The reduction would not harm the appearance of the street scene.

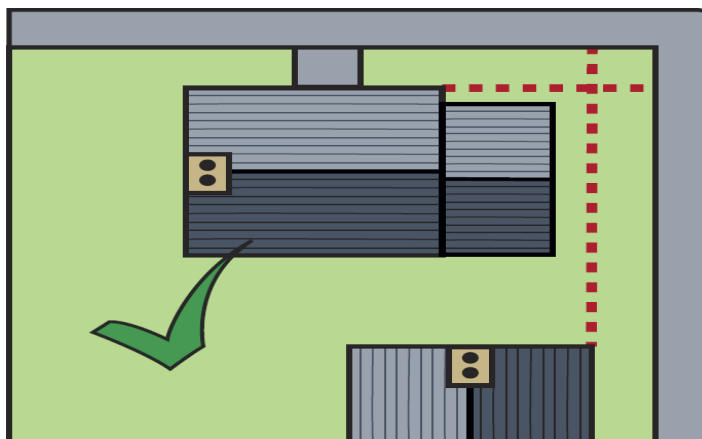


Figure 10 Acceptable corner plot extension

4.8 Extensions that do not meet the above guidance will not be permitted.

## 5. House extensions to the front

- 5.1 Front extensions should be of high-quality design and compatible with the character and appearance of the existing building. We will expect front extensions to be set well back from the street or well screened. We encourage the roof pitch of the extension to reflect the pitch of the of the original building. The design and features of a front extension should match that of the existing house.
- 5.2 The extension should be in keeping with character of the surrounding area. This includes respecting existing building lines and the character of other properties in the area. The front extension should be small or subservient to the existing building.
- 5.3 Extensions should ensure no adverse impacts on neighbouring homes. In instances where your front extension could impact neighbouring homes, we will apply the principles of the 45-degree guideline (see Annex 1).
- 5.4 Extensions should ensure no adverse impact on highway safety or result in an unacceptable loss of car parking space. A gap of 5.5m should be retained between the front of a garage door and the public footpath if a car parking space is to be retained.

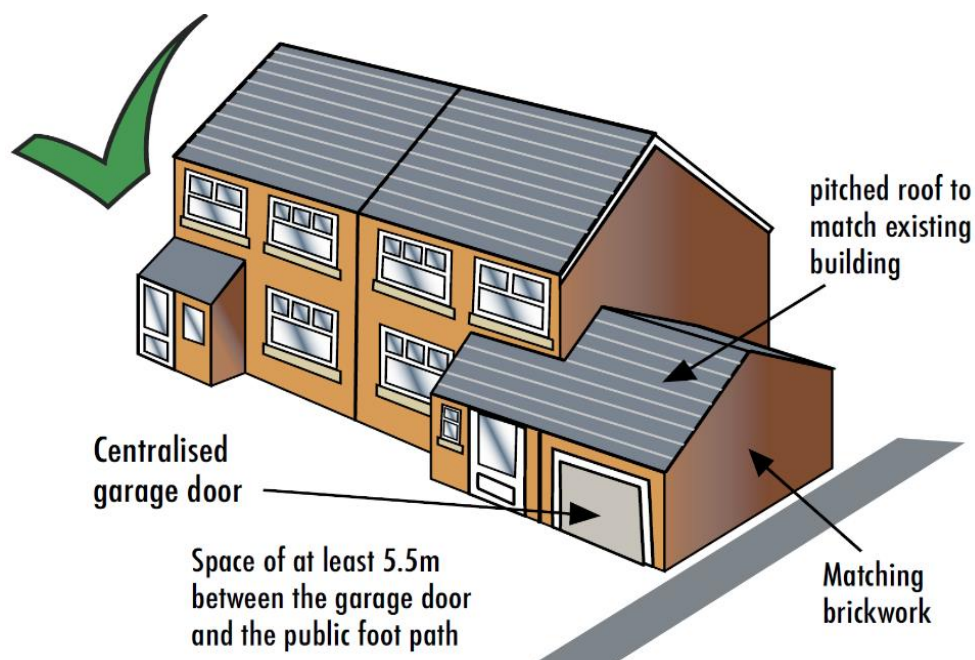


Figure 11 Acceptable front extension



## 6. Roof alterations

### Dormer extensions

- 6.1 Dormer extensions should be positioned to minimise the impact on the existing property, neighbouring properties and the character of the area. Dormer extensions should not cause harm to the character of the area. We encourage you to place new dormers on the back of properties to minimize the impact on the character of the street.
- 6.2 Dormers should not exceed the height of the ridge of the roof. They should be pitched unless flat roofs are prevalent within the area.
- 6.3 We would expect a number of smaller individual dormer windows in preference to a large continuous one. Dormer windows should be vertically aligned with existing windows if practicable. Dormer extensions should be constructed in similar external materials to the existing home.

### Front and side dormer extensions

- 6.4 Front dormer extensions are generally considered unacceptable. In instances where they will be permitted (e.g. if front dormers are characteristic of the immediate area) they should be of a high quality design, not create a dominant 'top heavy' appearance which is out of proportion with the rest of the building, and not wrap around the side ridge of a hipped roof. Dormer windows should be aligned with windows on the main frontage of your home.
- 6.5 The face of the front dormer should be at least 1 metre back from the front main facade of the existing house (excluding bay windows). The sides of the front dormer should be at least 0.5 metres from the side of the roof. A single front or side dormer extension should take up no more than 20% of the roof face.
- 6.6 Front and side dormer extensions should have pitched roofs unless there is a prevalence of front or side flat-roofed dormer extensions within the immediate area.

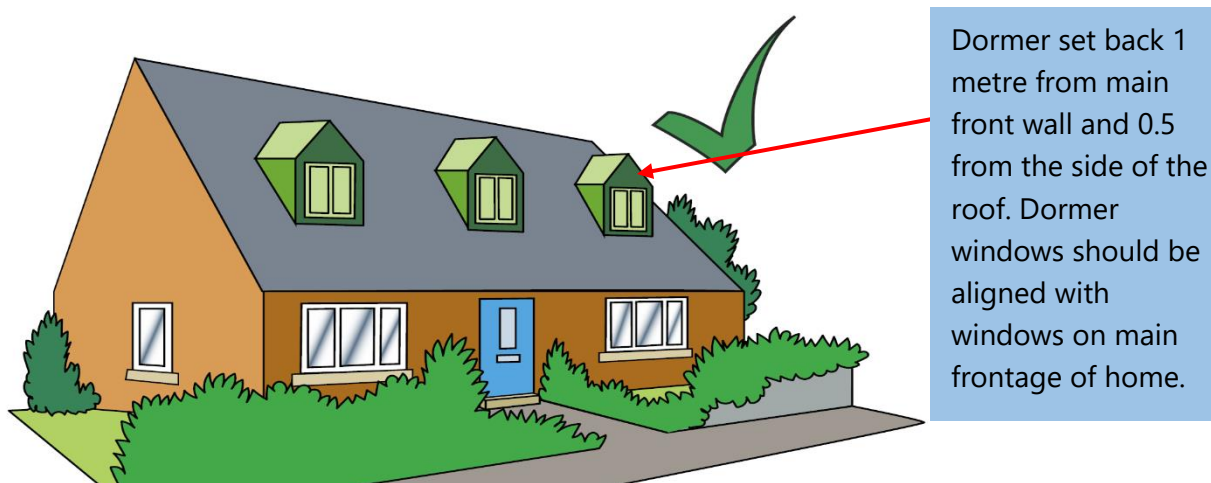


Figure 12 Acceptable front dormer extension

Side Dormers are acceptable if there is no adverse effect on the street scene or neighbouring properties.



Figure 13 Acceptable side dormer extension



Figure 14 Unacceptable dormer extensions

## Balconies and roof terraces

- 6.7 Poorly designed and positioned balconies and roof terraces can significantly impact a neighbour's privacy. They should be carefully designed to avoid having a significant impact on the living conditions of adjacent properties.
- 6.8 Balconies and roof terraces that compromise the privacy of windows of habitable rooms in neighbouring homes or an otherwise private neighbouring garden will not be permitted. Obscure glazing screens may be used on balconies and roof terraces to prevent loss of privacy, provided this would not harm the neighbours' outlook or result in unacceptable levels of overshadowing.

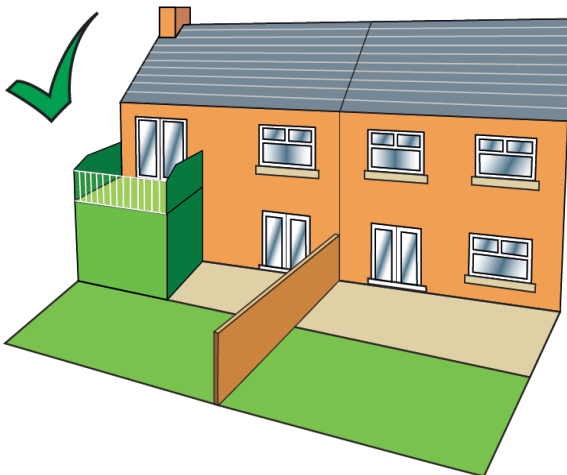


Figure 15a Acceptable roof terrace

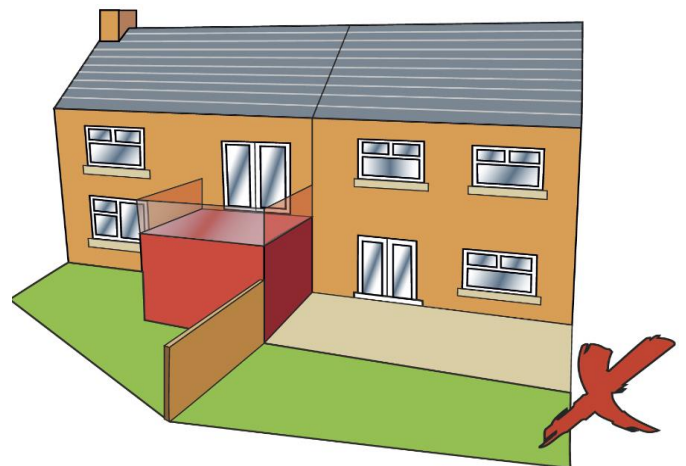


Figure 15b Unacceptable roof terrace

## 7. Chimneys, flues, antennas and satellite dishes

- 7.1 The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney or flue will generally be considered acceptable if the height of the chimney or flue does not exceed the highest part of the roof by 1 metre or more. If the chimney or flue would exceed this height, we will consider design and the character of the area when determining whether it is appropriate.
- 7.2 Similarly an antenna should not exceed 1 metre in length.
- 7.3 We discourage homes from having multiple antennas or satellite dishes.
- 7.4 If you propose to install, alter or replace a chimney or flue and your home is within a conservation area, you should ensure it is in keeping with the existing house and the wider area.

## 8. Outbuildings

- 8.1 Detached garages and other outbuildings should be designed to respect the character of your property and area and minimise effects on neighbouring properties and road safety. We will assess this in terms of location, size, style and materials. Garages or outbuildings should not appear too high, bulky or disproportionate in relation to your and your neighbours' homes.
- 8.2 Detached garages and other outbuildings should not cause loss of light to or overbear your neighbours' homes and gardens.
- 8.3 Detached garages and other outbuildings should not be built in front of established building lines. The garage should not be forward of the main building unless the site is well screened by trees or a front wall. The garage should allow sufficient room for parking both within and between the garage and pavement.

**For guidance on self-contained annexes for relatives see paragraph 11.7.**

## 9. Parking and hardstanding

- 9.1 Applicants are always encouraged to drain any new or replacement hardstanding to a permeable surface, such as gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt. Any new hard surface should also direct rainwater to a lawn or border to drain naturally. If you do not do this and your hardsurface exceeds 5 square metres, you may be required to apply for planning permission.
- 9.2 Extensions should not have a negative impact on road safety and should not be built where they obstruct the views of pedestrians, cyclists or motorists. All garages should be at least 5.5 metres back from the pavement or service strip to ensure that your car does not obstruct the pavement.
- 9.3 Where you need to provide or retain off-street parking, we will normally ask you to show that sufficient space could be adapted for car parking if required. You should follow the car parking standard guidelines as set out in Sefton Developers pack- Street Design Guide.

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/parking-roads-travel/highway-development-and-design/>

## 10. Permitted Development and Prior Notification

- 10.1 Planning permission is not required for some household extensions and developments. This is known as 'Permitted Development'. Large single storey rear extensions have to obtain approval from the Council before work can start (otherwise known as an application for 'prior approval'). If you have started an extension before getting prior approval, you will need to apply for planning permission.
- 10.2 What you are entitled to build as Permitted Development is explained in detail within the following webpages:  
[Permitted development rights for householders: technical guidance document](#)  
[Planning Portal: Extensions](#)  
[Planning Practice Guidance: When is permission required?](#)
- 10.3 Some Permitted Developments are subject to an Article 4 Direction. This restricts the scope of permitted development rights either in relation to a particular area or site, or a particular type of development anywhere in the authority's area. Some Permitted Development rights can also be removed by a condition attached to a planning approval. For more information please see the following webpage:  
[Sefton Council: Planning Constraints](#)
- 10.4 If you are unsure whether your proposed development requires planning permission or wish to receive confirmation in writing that an existing development is lawful, you can apply for a certificate of lawful development. More information on lawful development certificates can be found within the following webpages:  
[Planning Portal: Lawful Development Certificates](#)  
[Planning Practice Guidance: Lawful Development Certificates](#)

- 10.5 The regulations relating to permitted development are complex. We recommend that you clarify whether your extension is permitted development through our pre-application service.

[Pre-application advice on development proposals \(sefton.gov.uk\)](https://sefton.gov.uk/pre-application-advice-on-development-proposals)

## 11. Other Considerations

### House extensions in the Green Belt

- 11.1 We will only allow extensions within the Green Belt where they are relatively small scale and proportionate to the original home. Proposals which increase the volume of the original home by more than one third, either individually or cumulatively with other extensions, are considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. Any previous extensions or outbuildings that are within 5 metres of the main home that are not original will be counted as part of the one third increase to the original home. If you provide calculations of the volume as part of your application we will be able to determine your application more quickly.
- 11.2 Any extension that exceeds one third of the original home will only be approved in 'very special circumstances', as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework . It is your responsibility to show how your proposal constitutes 'very special circumstances'.
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- 11.3 In rare cases we may take the context of your area into account. We may consider there are 'very special circumstances' if your extension is in a village 'washed over' by the Green Belt. The purpose of the extension will also be considered, for example if your proposal is to bring an unimproved small home up to modern standards, then a larger extension may be justified as 'very special circumstances'.
- 11.4 The size, form and materials of an extension should be in keeping with the original home and its setting.
- 11.5 Extensions creating a separate unit of accommodation will be treated the same way as applications for a new home in the Green Belt and will only be permitted in 'very special circumstances'. Extensions of a garden onto agricultural land will only be permitted in 'very special circumstances'.
- 11.6 We will not treat outbuildings as extensions to your house. Unless allowed under permitted development rights, outbuildings will normally be considered inappropriate and only permitted in 'very special circumstances'.

## Extra accommodation for relatives

- 11.7 Applications for extra accommodation for residents should consider the following:
- a) The extra accommodation should be linked to the existing home rather than form a separate building.
  - b) Substantial evidence should be provided to demonstrate why the existing home, or a minor extension cannot be used to accommodate the relative.
  - c) Where the extra accommodation cannot be linked to the existing home and you propose a separate building, steps must be taken to prevent the building becoming a self-contained home and ensure it can be used over the long term as part of the main home (e.g. as a garage, playroom etc).
  - d) The extra accommodation should not have a harmful effect on any neighbour's living conditions.
  - e) The extra accommodation should ensure acceptable outlook, privacy and living conditions for the occupiers of both the existing property and the extra accommodation.
  - f) If we do grant planning permission, we will probably attach a condition outlining that the extra accommodation will be ancillary to the existing home and will not be occupied or sold off separately as an independent unit of accommodation.

## Extensions and extra accommodation for individuals requiring additional need

- 11.8 We may apply our guidance more flexibly where an individual with a specific additional need outweighs the impact on neighbouring homes. In addition to the requirements set out in paragraph 11.7 you must provide appropriate evidence of the additional need and a written statement justifying why we should make an exception.
- 11.9 The extension or extra accommodation should be no greater than the additional need that the individual requires.

## Extensions affecting heritage assets

- 11.10 Heritage assets (e.g. listed buildings, buildings in conservation areas and non-designated heritage assets) are more sensitive to changes than a typical residential building or areas. Some extensions that may be acceptable within a normal residential area may not be an acceptable development if it affects a listed building, non-designated heritage asset or is within a conservation area. In these cases, you should submit a heritage statement with your application.
- 11.11 Any changes to a heritage asset must be sympathetic in their design, form, layout and materials in order to make them acceptable and minimise harm. We recommend you appoint an accredited professional who has experience in working with heritage assets

if you are working up proposals which might affect a listed building or conservation area.

- 11.12 We also recommend you seek pre-application advice before you make an application affecting a heritage asset. Please contact [Pre-application advice on development proposals \(sefton.gov.uk\)](https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/conservation-and-heritage.aspx)
- 11.13 Extensions or alterations to a listed building will need listed building consent, even if planning permission is not required.
- 11.14 You can find more details on Sefton's Conservation and Heritage at: <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/conservation-and-heritage.aspx>

## Trees

- 11.15 You should position your proposed extension to avoid harm to existing mature trees and hedges. You can do this through:
- a) Providing adequate distances between your extension and mature trees and hedges.
  - b) Adopting construction methods that reduce the potential impact on trees.
- 11.16 If your extension is likely to affect a tree, you should include a survey which assesses the impact on the tree with your planning application.
- 11.17 You must replace any trees lost as a result of your development at a ratio of 1:1 within the site.
- 11.18 Some trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). It is an offence to cut down, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree covered by a TPO without the permission of the Local Planning Authority (except for specified exemptions). For more information on TPO'S please see the following webpage:

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/apply-for-permission/tree-preservation/>

## Sustainability

- 11.19 We encourage you to take the opportunity to incorporate sustainable design in your extension. For example:
- a) Extensions can incorporate larger windows to the south than to the north in order to maximize sunlight entering the house and minimize heat loss.
  - b) Habitable rooms can be positioned to the south and non-habitable rooms to the north to maximize warmth in habitable rooms.
  - c) Garage and greenhouse extensions attached to houses should not be heated.
  - d) Extensions can present an opportunity to install renewable energy such as wind turbines and solar panels, or electric vehicle charging points.
  - e) Extensions can use recycled materials to save resources.
  - f) A water butt can be installed to save money spent on watering the garden.

- g) Reduction of surface water run-off and flood risk (see the Council's [Information Note](#) on this)

### **Building Regulations**

11.20 In addition to Planning Permission, house extensions require Building Regulations consent. You are advised to contact our Building Control Team as early as possible to discuss your proposals.

11.21 Further information on this and on how to make a Building Regulations Application is available on the following webpage.

<http://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/building-control/making-a-building-regulations-application.aspx>

### **Considering water and wastewater assets**

11.22 Prior to preparing the detail of designs for your extension (including any replacement trees – see above), you should obtain an extract of the map of public sewers and water mains to confirm whether there are water mains or sewers in the area where you plan to extend or work. United Utilities will not allow building over or in close proximity to a water main.

11.23 Also, United Utilities will not allow a new building to be erected over or in close proximity to a public sewer or any other wastewater pipeline. This will only be reviewed in exceptional circumstances. Proposals to extend domestic properties either above, or in close proximity to a public sewer will be reviewed on a case by case basis by either by a building control professional or following a direct application to United Utilities. For further details see United Utilities website at <http://www.unitedutilities.com/builders-developers.aspx>). If you do not do this, you may not receive building control approval for your proposed extension which would have implications for you when you sell your house.

11.24 You will also need to carefully consider your landscaping proposals in the context of any utility assets. This is because the roots of trees can cause damage to water mains and sewers. For example, they can cause a blockage inside a sewer which then increases the likelihood of flooding to your house and your neighbours.

11.25 In some instances, your right to extend your property under permitted development rights may have been removed as a result of a water main or sewer being near to your house. This would have been done via a condition on the original grant of planning permission. You will need to check whether this is case in instances where there is a sewer or water main in the curtilage of your house.



# Further Sources of Information

## Legislation

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/contents/made>

## National Policy/Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Plain English Guide to the Planning System

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plain-english-guide-to-the-planning-system>

Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

Department for Communities and Local Government: Permitted development for householders Technical Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/permitted-development-rights-for-householders-technical-guidance>

## Contact details

Planning Department Email [planning.department@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:planning.department@sefton.gov.uk)

Pre Application Service [Pre-application advice on development proposals \(sefton.gov.uk\)](#)

## Annex 1 The '45-Degree' Guideline

The Council will use the '45-degree' guideline to establish whether your proposal is acceptable in principle. It provides a clear guide to what is considered acceptable in principle, however, on occasion we may consider an extension to be unacceptable even if it complies with the 45-degree guideline.

### Comply or Justify

If your proposal breaks the 45-degree line set out it is likely to be considered unacceptable unless a full justification is provided with the application as to why the extension will not cause harm to neighbour living conditions. The applicant should provide this justification at submission of the application. Mitigating factors which may make an extension which does not comply with the 45-degree guidelines acceptable include:

- The width of the window on the neighbouring property (for example large patio doors which span the entire rear elevation).
- The number of windows that serve the closest habitable room in the neighbouring property.
- The degree of transparency on proposed conservatories, including its roof.

### Assessing the depth of the extension

In assessing if the depth of your extension is acceptable, the following procedure will be followed:

- The nearest main window of a habitable room on the ground floor of a neighbouring property will be identified.
- A line will be drawn from the point of this window closest to the proposed extension at a 45° angle (see below).
- On a bay window or conservatory, the point of measurement is the point where the window leaves the perpendicular from the elevation of the dwelling – see figure 16b and 16c below.



Figure 16a-Measurement point on window flush with house elevation

### House with bay window

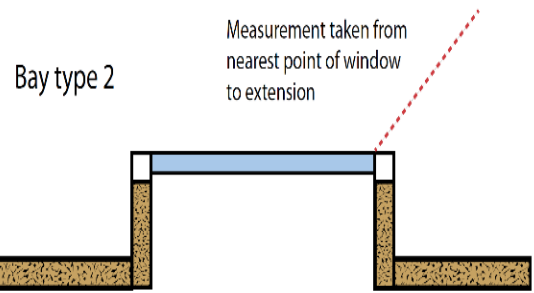
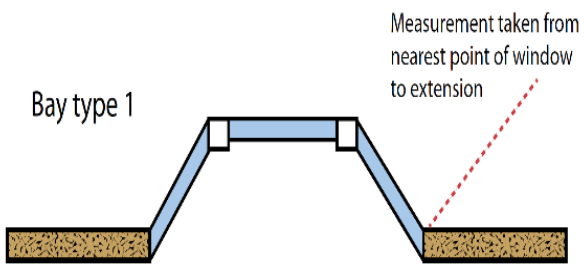


Figure 16b-Measurement point on bay windows

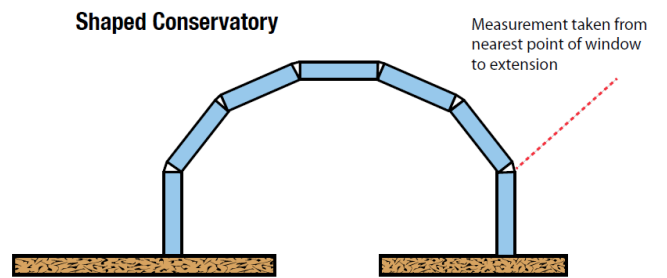
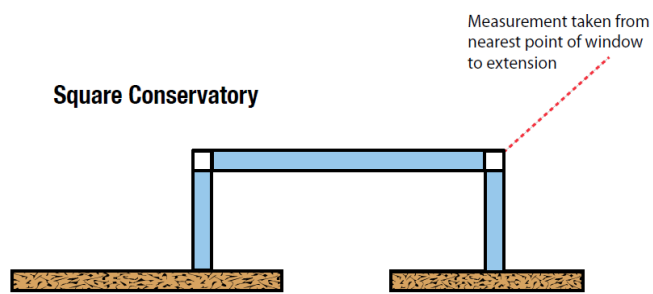


Figure 16c- Measurement point on conservatories.

## 45-Degree guideline for single storey extensions

If a proposed single storey extension breaks this line by more than 3m then the extension will be considered unacceptable unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity.

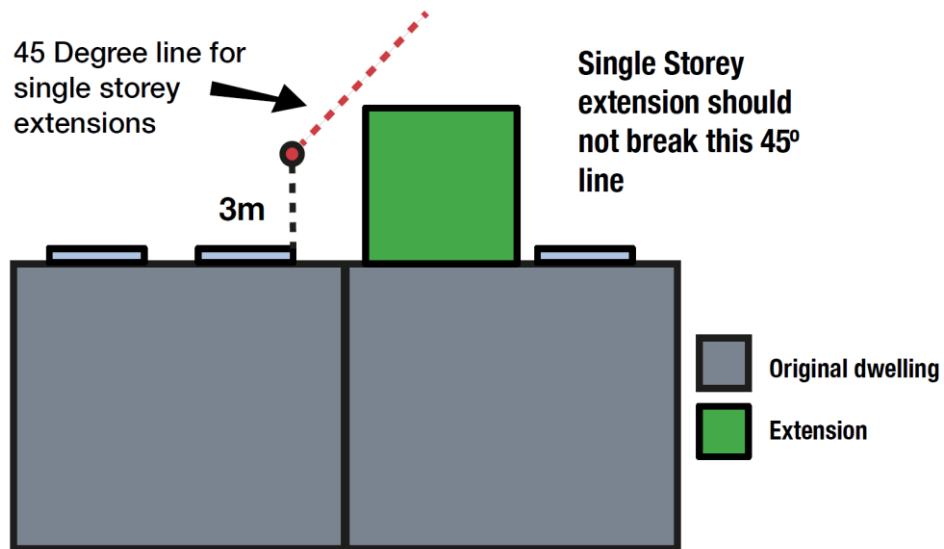


Figure 17 - 45-degree guideline for single storey extension.

If the proposed extension is adjacent to a neighbour's existing extension, then this will influence the size of the extension that we would likely permit. The following figure outlines how we will assess your extension in situations where your neighbour has already extended near the closest shared boundary.

### Proposed single storey extension with neighbour with existing single storey extension

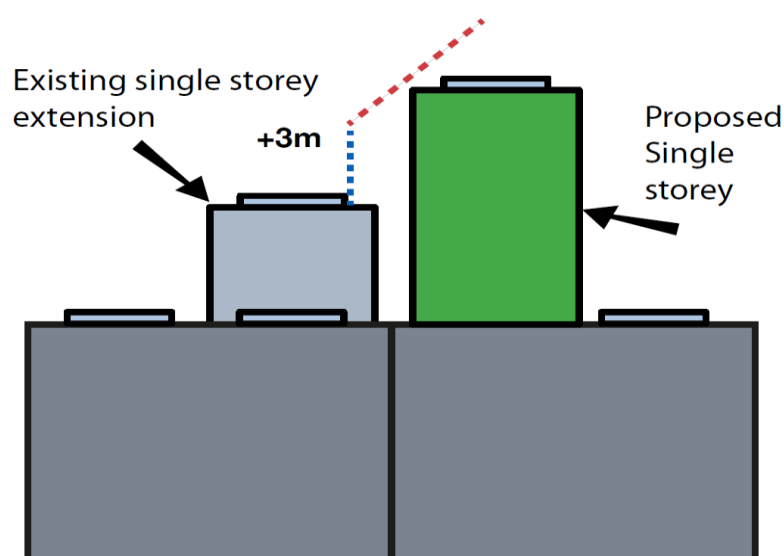


Figure 18 - Single storey extension where the neighbour has a single storey extension.

A similar approach will be applied when there is an irregular building line.

### Irregular building lines (single storey extension)

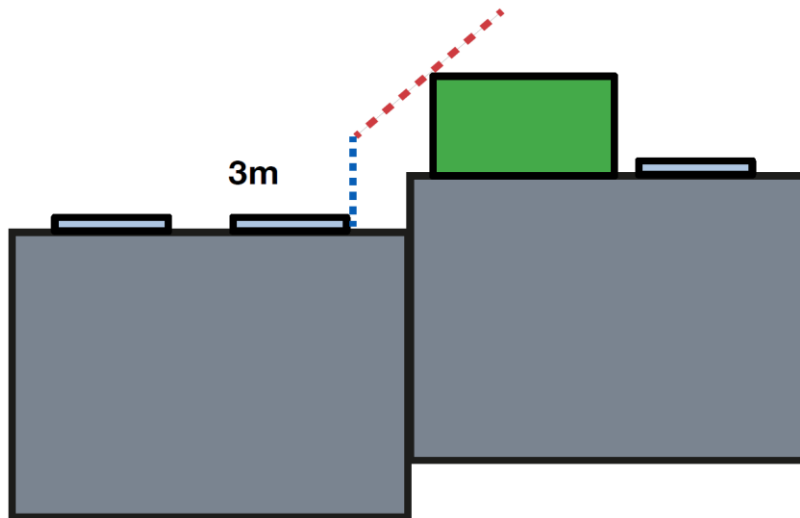


Figure 19 - Proposed single storey extension where there is an irregular building line.

### 45-Degree guideline for two storey (or higher) extensions.

If a proposed two storey (or higher) extension breaks the 45-degree guideline the extension will be considered unacceptable unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity.

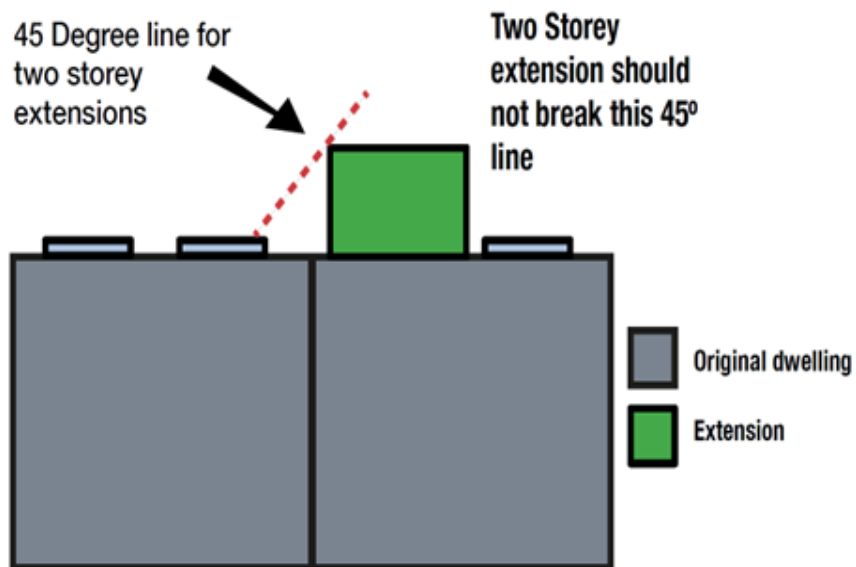
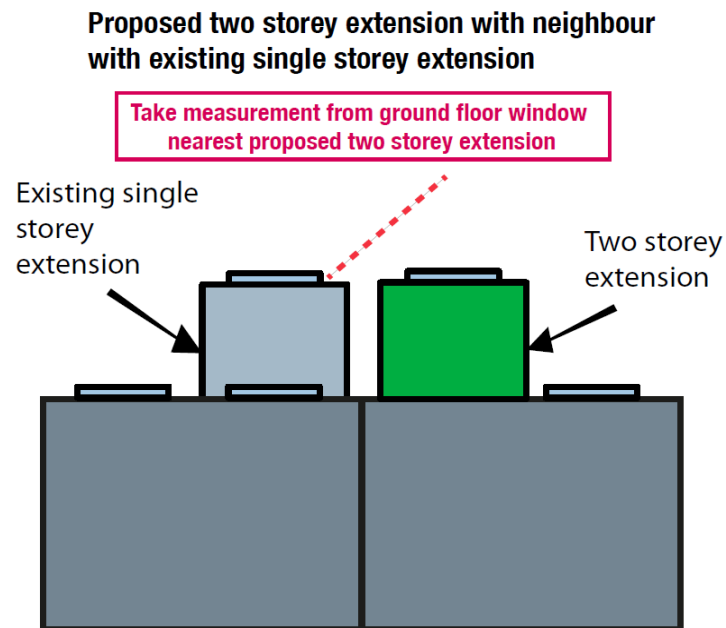


Figure 20 - 45-degree guideline for two storey extension.

If you are proposing a two-storey extension and your neighbour has an existing single storey extension, then we will take a measurement from both the neighbour's nearest ground and first floor window. Both would have to be within the 45-degree measurement to be considered acceptable.

On the ground floor, take the measurement from the window within the existing extension nearest the proposed extension (see below). The proposed two storey extension should not break the 45-degree line.



*Figure 21a - Proposed two storey extension where the neighbour has single storey extension.*

Secondly, take the measurement from the first-floor window nearest the proposed extension (see below). The proposed two storey extension should not break the 45-degree line by more than 3m.

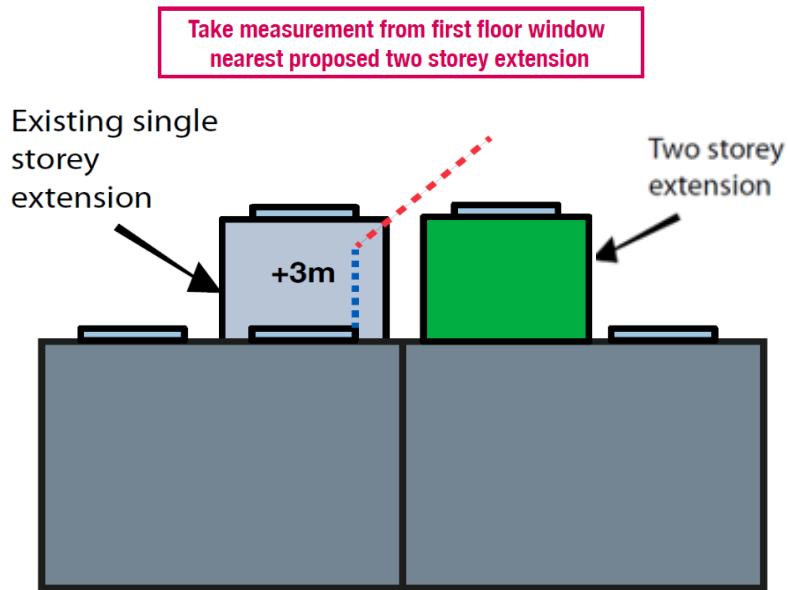


Figure 21b - Proposed two storey extension where the neighbour has single storey extension.

If the neighbour has an existing two storey extension and a two-storey extension is proposed, then the proposed extension should not break the 45-degree line when measured from the nearest ground floor window on the neighbour's property (i.e. in the existing extension).

**Proposed two storey extension with neighbour with existing two storey extension**

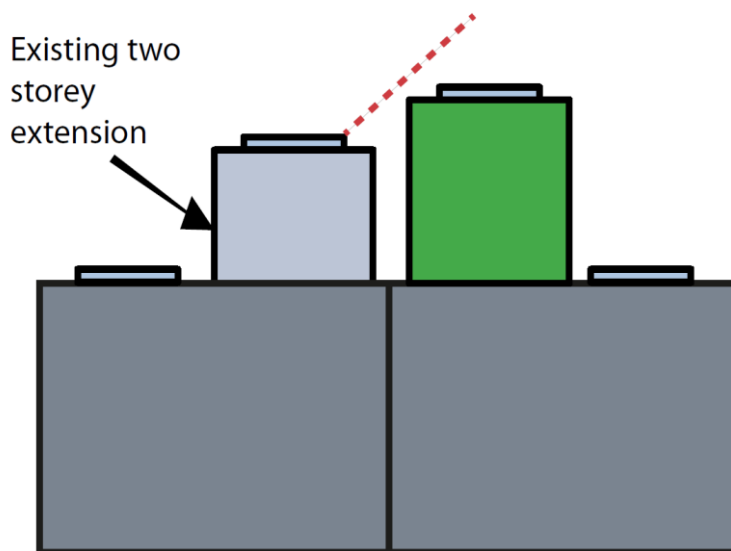


Figure 22-Proposed two storey extension where neighbour has two story extension.