

**RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS AND HOUSEHOLDER  
DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT –  
FINAL VERSION**

*Contact Officer: Judith Orr (01494 732268)*

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet**

- 1. Agree the recommended responses to the Draft Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (as set out in Table 1 below) following public consultation**
- 2. Recommend Council adopt the Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document as set out in Appendix 1.**

**Relationship to Council Objectives**

*Objective 1 - Efficient and effective customer focused services*

*The Supplementary Planning Document offers residents an informative tool that will assist them when preparing householder planning applications and proposals to extend or alter their properties through permitted development rights. The document is written so as to be customer focused.*

*Objective 3 - Conserve the environment and promote sustainability*

*The Supplementary Planning Document will help to bring forward better designed residential extensions and householder development that in turn will safeguard or improve the character and visual aesthetic quality of the District.*

**Implications**

- (i) This matter is a Key Decision within the Forward Plan.*
- (ii) This matter is within the Policy and Budgetary Framework.*
- (iii) The Supplementary Planning Document is a proposal in the Council adopted Local Development Scheme*

**Financial Implications**

*Costs associated with the preparation, consultation and eventual publication of the Supplementary Planning Document is within current budgets. Local residents will be encouraged to access the documents via the Council's website and, if supported by members, the Council could seek to recover printing costs for hard copies by imposing a*

*reasonable charge.*

### **Risk Management Implications**

*The Supplementary Planning Document will help to ensure that the Council's Core Strategy objectives in relation to quality of design can be effectively implemented for householder development proposals. Without the guidance there is a risk that best practice on design will not be used.*

### **Equalities Implications**

*The Council's Core Strategy was supported by an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). This EqIA shows that the Core Strategy does not disproportionately affect one specific group over another. The Supplementary Planning Document does not include new policy or go beyond the scope of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District.*

### **Sustainability Implications**

*The Supplementary Planning Document includes advice that may help bring about more sustainable building practices, for example using local building materials in extensions.*

### **Report**

- 1 The Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supplements Policy CS20 (Design and Environmental Quality) of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District which requires all new development to be of a high standard of design which reflects and respects local character and those features which contribute to local distinctiveness.
- 2 The SPD provides design guidance to householders on the principles of good design when extending a property. The SPD also includes advice on development other than dwelling extensions, for example, gates, walls and fences and garages and outbuildings. Whilst this goes beyond that which was initially envisaged in the Local Development Scheme, such development also contributes to the appearance of place, therefore is highly relevant to the implementation of Policy CS20 from the Core Strategy.
- 3 The Cabinet will recall that they approved the Draft Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (March 2013) for Public Consultation on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013. In order to minimise costs the consultation period for the SPD was the same as for the Delivery Development Plan Document and ran for eight weeks from the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013 to 7<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The consultation was carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation period for the draft SPD has now ended and a total of twelve responses were received. In addition the Housing and Planning Overview Committee have been consulted and their views incorporated into the proposed SPD.

- 4 This report sets out the issues raised in the responses (see Table 1 below). Commentary is provided in the table, alongside each point to show if the matter is agreed or not and whether changes to the SPD are necessary.
- 5 Some amendments are recommended as a result of public consultation. Appendix 1 contains the proposed SPD incorporating changes as a result of public consultation and consultation with the Housing and Planning Overview Committee and is now put forward for recommended adoption by the Council.

**Table 1: Summary of responses to the draft SPD**

<b>Respondent / Organisation</b>	<b>Support / Object / Comment</b>	<b>Summary of Comment(s) Received</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Network Rail	Not specified	As Network Rail is a statutory undertaker please ensure that we are consulted on all planning applications for extensions and householder development adjacent to our land and the operational railway.	Comments noted but not relevant to the contents of the SPD.	No change needed
Highways Agency	Not specified	The HA will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network. We have reviewed the consultations and do not have any comments at this time.	Comments noted but not relevant to the contents of the SPD.	No change needed
Health and Safety Executive	Not specified	Thank you for inviting the Health and Safety Executive to comment on the above documents. Health and Safety Executive does not wish to submit any comments.	Noted.	No change needed.
Chiltern Conservation Board	Support	Thank you for consulting the Chilterns Conservation Board in connection with the above. The Board welcomes the production of the SPD and supports the document as drafted, particularly in connection with the prominence given to the need to adhere to the advice in the Chilterns Building Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on Flint, Brick and Roofing Materials.	Support welcomed.	No change needed.
Amersham District Residents Association	Support/ Comment	Overall, the guidelines are extremely useful. With regard to applications for extensions - a simple guidance on the 45 degree light line from the centre of a window of a normal room to the neighbour's proposed building line –as in some of the Council's old documents, will save lot of aggravation for both the parties – the applicant as well as the neighbour!	Support is welcomed. Officers use the 45 (and 60) degree diagrams referred to as guide but non-compliance may not necessarily lead to a development proposal being unacceptable. It is considered that the wording in the SPD addresses the issues of concern.	No change needed.

Respondent / Organisation	Support / Object / Comment	Summary of Comment(s) Received	Response	Recommendation
Natural England	Not specified	We have no comments to make with regard to this SPD.	Noted.	No change needed.
Mr. Carl Skinner	Object	Hiding away behind planning documents is no substitute for face to face meetings. The document is very one sided and is based on personal opinion rather than Government guidelines on planning. More specifically, the statements made on page 5 are incorrect in that 1. flat roofs no longer have shorter life spans than pitched roofs 2. crown roofs aren't bulky when designed properly and 3. with regard to amenity, to suggest that past precedents do not play a large part in legal disputes is misleading.	With regard to flat roofs, it is acknowledged that modern building materials have led to a greater life span for flat roofs and the text will be adjusted accordingly to reflect this. It is also agreed to amend the text on crown roofs. In relation to amenity, it is not agreed that the SPD is misleading.	<p>Flat roofs p. 5 at the end of the first sentence add "although modern building materials and methods can improve both life span and maintenance costs."</p> <p>Crown Roofs p 5 to read "Crown roofs can result in a building which appears bulky and are not generally encouraged. They frequently indicate that a building span or foot print is too large. Crown roofs may however be acceptable in locations where the roof form would not be prominent, especially if there are other acceptable examples of crown roofs in the vicinity.</p> <p>No other changes needed.</p>

Respondent / Organisation	Support / Object / Comment	Summary of Comment(s) Received	Response	Recommendation
Robin A Bretherick and Fraser Kirkcaldy	Support / Object	<p>This document is generally well-written and helpful. The criticism of crown roofs is however ill-founded. With regard to two-storey extensions, in some circumstances consideration should be given to maintaining apparent space around a building by setting back the first floor of a 2-storey extension (from the front) rather than setting in 1m from the boundary e.g. for semis. With regard to roof alterations to bungalows, it is suggested that in many circumstances it is preferable to raise the roof to form a two storey dwelling than to add dormer windows. In addition, large flat-roof dormer windows, if well detailed (and of a suitably modest scale) can be visually acceptable on the front roof slope, especially for larger detached houses. Inadequate parking, as a result of expanding an existing house, should only be an issue in exceptional circumstances. Annex 2 Planning Constraints should make reference to the fact that stricter constraints exist within Areas of Little Change.</p>	<p>Support welcomed.</p> <p>Crown roofs – agree to modify the text.</p> <p>With regard to setting back the first floor of a 2- storey side extension, roof alterations and large flat-roof dormer windows, it is not considered that the advice contained in the SPD should be changed. The SPD is guidance and for setting out key principles of design. For example, the SPD does not preclude the raising of a bungalow roof to form a full two-storey dwelling.</p> <p>Comments on Residential Parking are noted but it is not considered necessary to amend the SPD.</p> <p>It is agreed that Annex 2 on Planning Constraints should include reference to Areas of Little Change.</p>	<p>Crown Roofs p 5 to read “Crown roofs can result in a building which appears bulky and are not generally encouraged. They frequently indicate that a building span or foot print is too large. Crown roofs may however be acceptable in locations where the roof form would not be prominent, especially if there are other acceptable examples of crown roofs in the vicinity.</p> <p>Include text on Areas of Little Change in Annex 2.</p> <p>No other changes needed.</p>
Mr. Adrian Norris	Object	<p>Object to the relaxation of existing planning regulations relating to residential and commercial development extension proposals within Green Belt and within the AONB, other than one for one replacement of existing houses under the current rules for development within the Green Belt/ AONB.</p>	<p>Changes to the planning regulations are undertaken by the Government and so beyond the scope of this SPD. The scope for the SPD does not include replacement dwellings</p>	<p>No change needed.</p>

Respondent / Organisation	Support / Object / Comment	Summary of Comment(s) Received	Response	Recommendation
Mrs Carole Powell	Object (2 representations)	<p>'Significant tree' should be defined and the SPD made clear (including deleting text in Annex 2 allowing loss where the benefits of the development outweigh the loss) that protected trees should not be lost unless deemed unsafe by a specialist and where lost replaced. Policy TW3 of the Local Plan should be included.</p> <p>The SPD should state residential extensions should not include windows that overlook neighbouring properties; not block the light of neighbouring properties or gardens; discourage 2 storey extensions as far as possible and (overbearing nature); have clear guidance on parking provision for extended properties; and existing density.</p> <p>All relevant CDC policies and legal points should be included in the document - the public should not be expected to source the information from elsewhere (e.g. national Green Belt policy, Policy CS20, policy on privacy and AONB).</p>	<p>The SPD provides guidance and is not considered necessary/helpful to define 'significant trees' as this will need to be considered in the context of each case.</p> <p>The SPD should not repeat or introduce policy. It is not appropriate to include the information requested which is available on the Council's website.</p> <p>There is a presumption that a TPOed trees would be retained within a proposed development, unless there was a good reason for its removal, as set out in Annex 2 of this document. Applications for development will be determined against the Development Plan informed by the guidance in the SPD.</p> <p>The advice on blocking light from neighbouring properties has been reviewed and should be changed to be clearer.</p> <p>In relation to the other concerns, it is considered that the SPD appropriately addresses these.</p>	<p>Daylight and Sunlight pg 6 and 7 amend to just refer to Daylight.</p> <p>No other changes needed.</p>
English Heritage	Not specified	English Heritage has no comments to make on this document.	Noted.	No change needed.

Respondent / Organisation	Support / Object / Comment	Summary of Comment(s) Received	Response	Recommendation
Ian Corbett	Object (2 representations)	<p>'Significant tree' should be defined to prevent the loss of protected/unprotected trees unless deemed unsafe by a tree specialist and text in Annex 2 allowing loss of protected trees where the benefits of the development outweigh the loss deleted. Where trees are lost through being unsafe then they should be replaced.</p> <p>Local distinctiveness should include windows not overlooking neighbouring properties and not block out light to neighbouring properties or gardens.</p> <p>All relevant CDC policies and other information should be included in the SPD (e.g. Policy CS20 written out in full; national Green Belt policy; listed buildings; a list of conservation areas; privacy; Chilterns Design Guidance). The SPD is not clear enough as to which policies relate to the Green Belt.</p> <p>The SPD should make it clear that prevailing density should not be exceeded; building patterns/lines should be maintained; more guidance on Site Assessment is needed; two storey extensions discouraged due to overbearing; and sufficient parking provision made within the site for extended properties and discourage extensions built on existing car parking space.</p>	<p>The SPD provides guidance and is not considered necessary/helpful to define 'significant trees' as this will need to be considered in the context of each case. There is a presumption that TPOed trees would be retained within a proposed development, unless there was a good reason for its removal, as set out in Annex 2 of this document. Applications for development will be determined against the Development Plan informed by the guidance in the SPD.</p> <p>Overlooking windows and lighting is not considered a local distinctiveness matter. Advice on these, with amendment to the lighting section, is covered in the SPD.</p> <p>The SPD should not repeat or introduce policy. It is not appropriate to include the information requested which is available on the Council's website. The SPD will apply to all areas of the District, including the Green Belt.</p> <p>In relation to 'building lines' it is considered that the text on Garages and Outbuildings should have additional text.</p> <p>In relation to the other concerns, it is considered that the SPD appropriately addresses these.</p>	<p>Daylight and Sunlight pg 6 and 7 amend to just refer to Daylight.</p> <p>Garages and Outbuildings pg 11 add the following text "Care needs to be taken in the siting of garages, particularly in areas characterised by open frontages which are clear of built form. In these areas it unlikely to be acceptable to site a garage forward of a dwelling as this could disrupt the existing pattern of development."</p> <p>No other changes needed.</p>



## **Next steps**

- 5 The Cabinet is asked to recommend that the Council adopts the SPD (set out in Appendix 1) at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013. After the SPD is adopted those making comments on the draft SPD will be informed of its adoption. The Adopted SPD, the summary of representations on the draft SPD and a formal adoption statement will be made available on the Council's website, in local libraries and in the Council's planning services reception.

***Background papers:***

*Chiltern District Local Plan, Consolidated Version, November 2011*

*Core Strategy for Chiltern District, Adopted November 2011*

*Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2021-2015*

*Draft Residential Extensions and Householder Development SPD, March 2013*

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# Residential Extensions and Householder Development

Supplementary Planning Document



September 2013



# Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Guidance

## Introduction

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a document which contains additional detail on how the Local Planning Authority (LPA) will interpret and apply specific policies in its Development Plan which it compliments but does not replace. A SPD cannot include any new policies that do not currently form part of the Development Plan and a SPD also does not form part of the Development Plan. However it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and applicants are advised to refer to the contents of the SPD as this will provide guidance on how the Council will carry out its decision making functions.

This SPD relates to the design of residential extensions and other householder related development constructed throughout the District. One of the fundamental aims of the planning system is to deliver high quality, and well designed development that it makes a positive contribution to its surroundings, creating better shaped places for the future. The need for high quality design is embedded in The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where it is placed as one of the core planning principles and over-arching roles of the planning system.

The Council's Development Plan also contains a number of policies which require new development to be designed to a high standard taking into account local context and local distinctiveness. This supplementary planning document provides householders with an understanding of the principles that should be taken into account when designing householder development.

## Using this SPD

The SPD is divided into three sections; these are:

**Site Appraisal:** Which provides householders with a series of questions they should ask themselves about a site and its surroundings before designing a development.

**General Principles:** Which provides a set of design principles that relate to all forms of householder development and can therefore be regarded as the underlying considerations which the Council will have regard to when assessing householder development.

**Specific Design Guidance:** Which provides householders with specific design advice for an array of householder related development; this section **must** be read in combination with section two – General Principles.

Supporting the above are two annexes which provide a more detailed understanding of elements of the planning process. These supporting annexes are:

**Annex 1 – Getting Started:** Which provides householders with a basic understanding of planning permissions and the planning application process.

**Annex 2 – Planning Constraints:** Which provides householders with an understanding of the planning constraints other than design based policies that can influence householder related development.

## Section 1 - Site Appraisal

Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District requires new development to contribute to local distinctiveness. This policy is of fundamental importance to decision making because the Core Strategy is the overarching key plan that sets a vision for the District and its main settlements setting the ambitions and principles to guide future development in the area.

### What is local distinctiveness?

It can be broadly understood as the features of a place which contribute to its character, creating a place that is valued and has its own sense of identity

### How do you define local distinctiveness?

Figure 1 below illustrates some of the various components that can contribute to the local distinctiveness of a place:



**Figure 1 – Urban features which contribute to local distinctiveness**

Understanding local distinctiveness will provide householders with the ability to design a development which takes account of the important qualities and characteristics of a place which defines it. Once local distinctiveness is understood, householders should then consider the opportunities and constraints that apply to their property by asking themselves the following questions:

## Location of site

- Is the site within or adjacent to a designated area, e.g. a Conservation Area, the Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc? Refer to annex 2 for more information,
- Is the site a listed building or is it adjacent to a listed building? Refer to annex 2 for more information.

## The Surrounding Locality

- Does the site have a strong visual relationship to its surroundings?
- Does a site form part of an important view or could an important view be disrupted by a development?
- What is the prevailing density and pattern of buildings near to a site?

## Neighbouring / Adjoining Buildings

- What is the relationship of the site with neighbouring buildings?
- Is the site overlooked by any windows?
- Are there any windows on neighbouring buildings which potentially could be overlooked by a development?

## Site Assessment

- What are the overall dimensions of the site?
- What is the topography of the site; does it have any significant dips or rises or does it slope from one side to the other?
- Is there existing landscaping; how does this contribute to the site?
- Are there any significant trees or any protected trees on or around the site?
- What are the existing boundary treatments; do these provide a sense of privacy that should be maintained?

The above questions are not an exhaustive list. However they, along with the ways to identify local distinctiveness, will allow householders the ability to design development that responds to these and meets the Council's requirement for all new development to contribute to local distinctiveness.

Householders should note that where a development site is located in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) then they will also need to refer to the Chilterns AONB Design Guide and supporting technical notes on Chilterns Brick, Chilterns Flint and Chilterns Roofing Materials.

Some of the Council's Development Plan policies make reference to the Chilterns AONB Design Guide and supporting technical notes, therefore they are given **substantial weight** when the Council determines planning applications

## Section 2 - General Principles

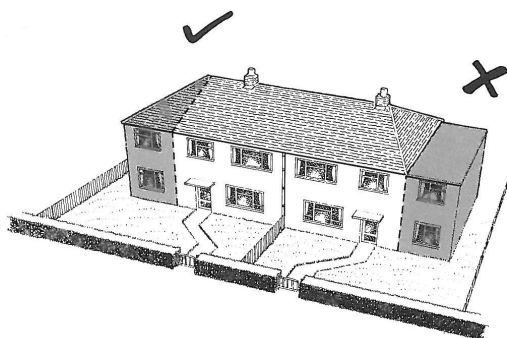
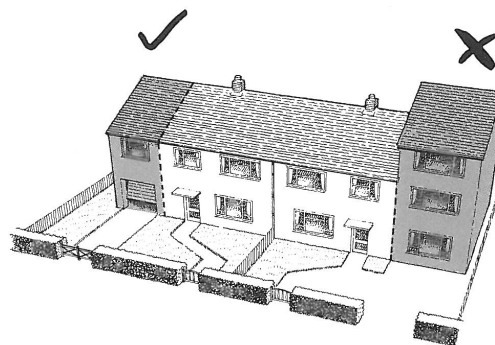
The following offers householders the general principles that should be followed when designing householder related development.

### Residential Extensions

An important goal for any extension should be to harmonise with a building, striking a balanced visual relationship with its existing features and integrating in such a way that it does not adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality. Methods to achieve this include:

(i) Ensuring that an extension respects the scale and proportions of an existing building and relates well to the characteristics of a site in terms of its size and shape.

(ii) Ensuring that an extension respects prevailing gaps and spaces between buildings and existing patterns of development. This is especially important in areas which are spacious in character.



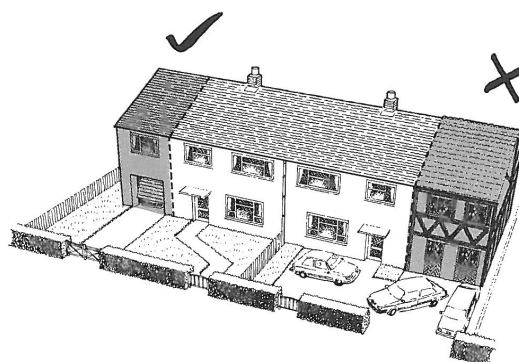
(iii) Ensuring that an extension blends into the street scene

(iv) Ensuring that an extension has a roof style and pitch which matches the original roof.

(v) Using design features which complement a building and avoid using features which conflict with its existing design. For example:

- Avoid creating poor linkage between an extension and the original building e.g. using clumsy roof junctions or disjointed roof forms.

- Replicating external features, such as timber or stone panelling in an extension when they are present in the existing building.



(vi) Using materials, windows and doors to match or harmonise with those on the existing building

(vii) Designing an extension so that it does not appear overbearing or intrusive and does not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or daylight to neighbours (see 'Amenity' overleaf).

(viii) If incorporating an original or innovative design element, ensuring that this will not look out of keeping with the existing design and character of the building and surrounding buildings.

(ix) Ensuring that residential extensions take into account the need to store wheelie bins within the curtilage of the property. In this connection adequate access to the rear of the property should be retained or provided.

### General Advice on Roofs

Flat roofs - Flat roofs commonly have a shorter lifespan than pitched roofs and can attract higher maintenance costs although modern building materials and methods can improve both life span and maintenance costs. In general, the Council does not encourage flat roofs; however they may be suitable for a single storey rear extension or other location where the roof form would not be prominent, especially if there are other examples of flat roofs in the surrounding area. Flat roofs at two storey level are discouraged, unless they are mainly surrounded by pitched roofs and would not be prominent.

Crown roofs - Crown roofs can result in a building which appears bulky and are not generally encouraged. They frequently indicate that a building span or foot print is too large. Crown roofs may however be acceptable in locations where the roof form would not be prominent, especially if there are other acceptable examples of crown roofs in the vicinity.

## Amenity

In the planning system, there is no single definition for 'amenity'; however, it can be understood as how one experiences the pleasantness of place. The National Planning Policy Framework states one of the key principles of the planning system is to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Subtle changes in ground level, differences in the orientation of neighbouring buildings, the position of windows serving habitable rooms and the location of private amenity space can all be factors that influence whether an extension will impact on neighbouring properties. It is important to make certain that a development does not have a significant adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.

Householders are advised that the Council will assess all planning applications on their merits. It should not be assumed that because there are similar householder developments in the surrounding area that this sets a precedent, as every site is different and every planning application is judged on its own merits.

The following are some general principles which apply to residential extensions and other householder related development:

**(i)** A development should not dominate a neighbouring property, or result in important windows serving habitable rooms being presented with a building that appears visually intrusive or overbearing.

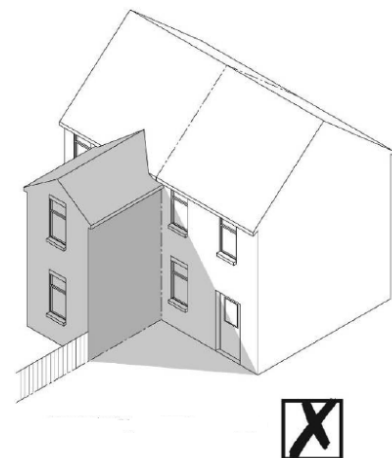
**(ii)** A development should not appear overbearing or visually intrusive when viewed from neighbouring dwellings and/or their gardens.

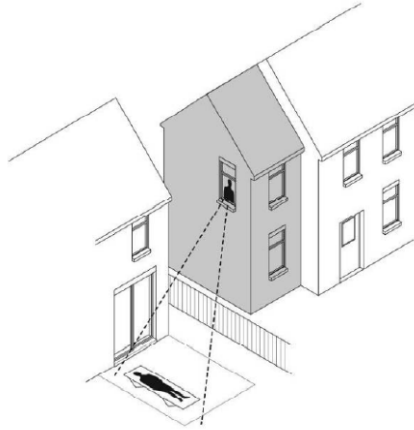
**(iii)** The height of a development should not loom over neighbouring dwellings or their amenity areas.

It is important that new development also sustains the privacy of neighbouring dwellings and in this regard, development:

**(i)** Should not enable direct overlooking into neighbouring habitable rooms (including kitchens).

**(ii)** Should not facilitate direct overlooking to the private amenity space of neighbouring gardens. There should generally be a buffer zone between the rear walls of a neighbouring property and its garden which is not overlooked by an extension so as to provide existing neighbours with an area of privacy in their gardens.





Certain residential development that involves the formation of a raised platform or elevated vantage point can result a significant loss of privacy to neighbours. Householders are therefore advised of the following:

**(i)** Balconies (including roof terraces) will rarely be acceptable; exceptions may be where a property is set in very spacious grounds and the balcony or terrace will not facilitate overlooking, where the balcony has obscure screens to the sides, or where a property is isolated in comparison to its nearest neighbours.

**(ii)** Juliet balconies may be acceptable; however, these should not be in side elevations directly facing neighbouring dwellings.

**(ii)** Decking and raised terraces can also lead to significant overlooking to neighbours. Decking should not be built at a height which allows neighbours to clearly overlook the private amenity space of neighbours. A raised terrace that is on sloping ground should avoid being built up to a height that provides a site with a clearly elevated point to overlook neighbours.

### Daylight

Householders should note that the legal provisions afforded through the 'Right to Light' are not a planning issue. Any person concerned that their right to light may be, or is being, infringed by a development should seek appropriate legal advice. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors has produced guidance on Right to Light\*which is available at <http://www.rics.org/us/knowledge/more-services/guides-advice/rights-to-light>.

Nevertheless, development should not result in a significant loss of daylight to neighbouring properties. The Council uses guidelines from the Building Research Establishment to assist in assessments of light levels. However, an extension that does not result in a loss of light to neighbouring windows may still result in a visually intrusive or overbearing appearance when viewed from those windows or from the neighbouring garden, and daylight issues are just one part of the consideration of impact on neighbour amenity.

### Mitigating potential loss to amenity of neighbouring properties

Where development may have a detrimental effect on amenity then there may be ways to alleviate the harm arising from a development. For example, any windows that could result in a loss of privacy of neighbouring properties or their gardens should be permanently obscurely glazed and also non-opening up to a height of 1.7 metres above the internal floor level. It should also be noted that large intrusive windows can still give rise to the perception of overlooking and can appear intrusive even if obscurely glazed.



Having to rely on ways to try to alleviate potential loss to amenity could be an indication that the design of a development is not right for that particular site.

### **Talk to your neighbours**

To judge any potentially impacts, the best advice is to first talk to neighbours and understand any concerns they may have. Extensions should be designed reflecting neighbours comments and also the individual merits of a site.

Once a planning application has been submitted the Council will advertise it in accordance with its Neighbour Notification procedures so it is best to know any neighbour concerns early on in the design process. However, even if neighbours do not object to your proposal, or write in support of it, this does not guarantee that the application will be permitted, as Officers must be satisfied that your proposal complies with the relevant planning policies.

### **Existing Trees and Landscaping**

Any proposed development should have regard to the existing trees and landscaping on the site and should seek to retain those features that are important to the character of the area. If there are many trees on the site that could be affected by a proposal, it may be useful to commission a tree survey in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations, before any other feasibility studies are undertaken. This would identify the most important trees on the site and any constraints to development as well as advising on appropriate measures for the protection of the trees during development.

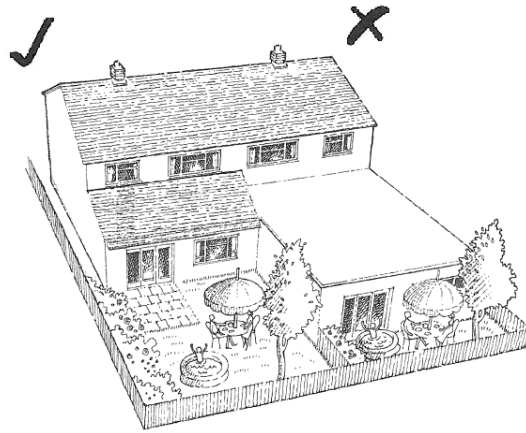
As a general rule, there should be no excavation for foundations or for any other reason within the root protection area of an important tree without advice from an arboriculturist. The root protection area of a tree is defined as an area equivalent to a circle with a radius of twelve times the stem diameter of the tree measured at a height of 1.5m above ground level.

## **Section 3 - Specific Design Guidance**

The following provides householders with guidance on specific householder related development. This section **must** be read in combination with the general principles in Section Two of this document.

### **Single Storey Extension (including conservatories)**

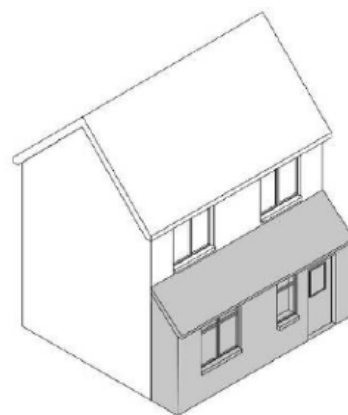
(i) A single storey rear extension should not occupy a disproportionate amount of garden space. Where a garden depth measures 15 metres or greater, an extension should not reduce this overall depth, especially in areas which are characterised by gardens which are extensive in depth.



(ii) If an extension projects from the front of a building then it should not be a disproportionate addition, nor should it be so deep that it disrupts existing patterns of development or the general set-back of buildings from the street as this can be harmful to the street scene.



Large scale flat roof extension projects beyond the common building line at the front of properties



Scale, form and roof pitch appropriate to the original property



(iii) Extensions should not include windows in a side wall if an extension is built close to a common boundary to prevent overlooking to neighbours.

Extensions that are built up to the common boundaries should give consideration to the location of foundations or guttering to prevent encroaching onto neighbouring land, although it should be noted that any such issues are private civil matters between the parties involved and are not planning-related issues. The Council does not get involved in boundary disputes or land ownership issues.

## Two Storey Extensions

### Two storey side extensions

(i) Should be designed having regard to the prevailing character of the locality, especially with regard to the gaps and spaces between existing buildings in the area, in order to respect the surrounding pattern of development.

- In areas where buildings are generously spaced, or where there are uniform gaps between buildings, side extensions should be designed to respect these existing patterns of development.

- Where buildings are in a definable visual row, the first floor of an extension (including roof overhang) should be set in from the boundary in order to prevent visual coalescing between buildings or an uncharacteristic terracing effect. In areas

where there are modest spaces between buildings, an extension should be set in from the side boundary at first floor level by at least 1 metre, and in areas where the spaces between buildings are greater, the gap left to the boundary should be significantly more than 1 metre.



(ii) The eaves and ridge heights of a two storey extension should integrate with those of the existing building and ensure that the proportions of the existing building are respected.

(iii) Side extensions should give due consideration to the impact of a development on the street scene by ensuring that the design properly integrates with the existing building and replicates any external features which are locally distinct. Materials should be used that harmonise with the existing building. Within the Chilterns AONB, householders should have regard to the Chilterns AONB Buildings Design Guide and supporting technical documents.

#### Two storey rear extensions

(i) Should avoid using a flat roof unless it will not be prominent and is a feature on the existing building.

(ii) Should avoid appearing excessively large in depth, particularly when flank walls are visible in the street scene as this can result in a building which appears disproportionately bulky. Where an extension could add to the visual bulk and depth of a building then attempts should be made to add visual breaks to an extension.

(iii) Should avoid creating a sense of unacceptable enclosure in neighbour's gardens.

#### **First Floor Extensions**

Should not result in a terracing effect between buildings and should adopt a roof pitch and style to match the original building.

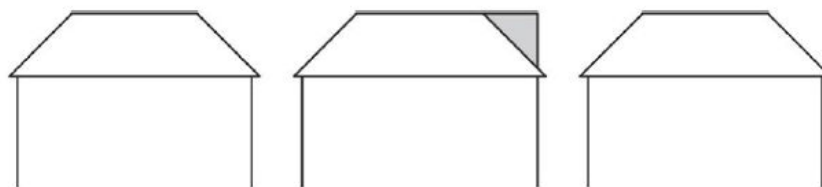
#### **Roof Alterations (including roof extensions to alter a bungalow to a two storey dwelling) and dormer windows**

Roof alterations can be a more difficult way to extend a dwelling; especially if it results in the roof of the building being increased by such an amount that the building appears 'top heavy' or oversized in comparison to adjacent or neighbouring buildings.

(i) Roof alterations should take into account the ridge height of nearby buildings and should respect the general character and height of other nearby buildings or by such

a degree that it does not result in the building appearing more prominent in the street scene.

**(ii)** Development which involves an alteration to the style or form of a roof, for example changing a hipped roof to a gable ended roof, should take into consideration prevailing roof styles in the surrounding area. If a building is located in a row of buildings which all adopt a single roof style then it will normally not be suitable to alter this to a different style.



Common roof profile broken by loft extension

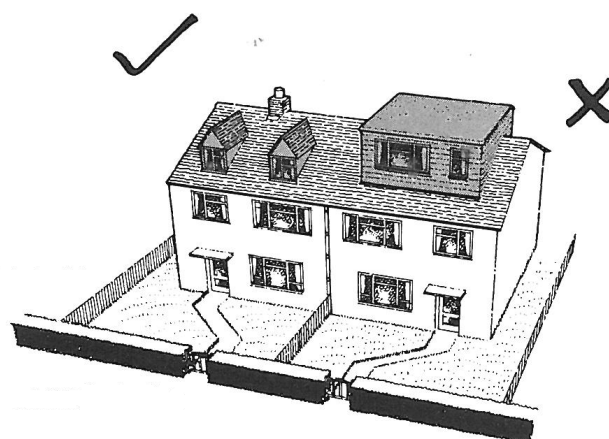


**(iii)** Altering a bungalow to a two storey dwelling should consider the impact the development will have on the street scene and on neighbouring amenity. A development should not result in a building which appears uncharacteristically different in form and style in comparison to buildings in the surrounding street scene. If the side walls of a bungalow are located close to the boundaries of a plot, it will rarely be acceptable just to extend these walls upwards to create a two storey dwelling, as the resulting building will appear more cramped within its plot. The exception to this will be if the resulting dwelling would be set at a comparable distance from the side boundaries at first floor level as other nearby buildings.

**(iv)** Dormer windows:

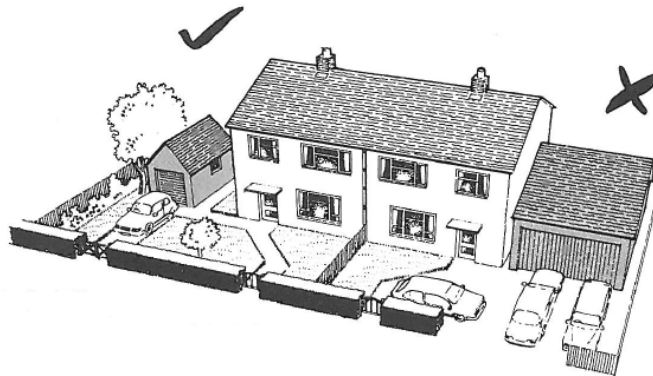
- Should respect the scale and proportions of the roof including any existing windows which form part of the roof.
- They should be designed to avoid any excessive horizontal or vertical emphasis and be of a size which is commensurate to the roof in which it is to be located, and should not dominate the roof
- They should be designed to light and ventilate a room, not to provide additional floorspace.
- External finishing materials should match existing materials in the original building; householders in the Chilterns AONB should refer to the Chilterns AONB Buildings Design Guide and supporting technical documents.

**(v)** Large flat roof dormer windows are not encouraged because they often result in a window which appears bulky and overly dominating in a roof slope. Flat roofs may only be appropriate on rear roof slopes which are not readily visible to the surrounding area or in roof slopes which have a steeper pitch, for example in a chalet bungalow on the proviso that the dormer window is not excessively wide and does not project too great a depth from a roof slope.



## Garages and outbuildings

- (i) Buildings should be modest in size and subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling, particularly when sited in front of a dwelling.
- (ii) Care needs to be taken in the siting of garages, particularly in areas characterised by open frontages which are clear of built form. In these areas it is unlikely to be acceptable to site a garage forward of a dwelling as this would disrupt the existing pattern of development.



- (iii) Materials should be appropriate to the site and surrounding locality
- (iv) Sites located in the Chilterns AONB should refer to the Chilterns AONB Buildings Design Guide which includes a section on garages and outbuildings.
- (v) Garages and outbuildings should not provide independent residential accommodation separate from the existing dwelling. Such a proposal will require planning permission.

## Gates, walls and fences

Depending on their size and location, some gates, walls or fences may not require express planning permission from the Council; however they should still be designed to respect the character of an area.

- (i) The materials, height and design of any development should respond to local character and should avoid unsympathetic designs for example, altering a boundary to a close boarded fence in an area which is predominantly characterised by open boundaries or by vegetation and hedges.
- (ii) Where creating a gated access into a property, there should be a minimum distance of 5 metres from the highway boundary to the entrance gate to allow sufficient distance for vehicles to wait clear of the highway.
- (iii) For more information on potential highway impacts arising from gates, fences or walls, householders are advised to contact Buckinghamshire County Highway Authority.

## Residential Parking

- (i) The Council's Parking Standards are based on the gross external floor space of a dwelling. Householders should be aware that as an extension will result in the size of a dwelling being increased, it may also result in a change to the parking standard for the property. Householders should refer to the Council's parking standards for more information.

**(ii)** When forming new residential parking space(s), householders should consider the surrounding street scene. Front gardens contribute positively to the aesthetic qualities and character of a street scene and create a physical boundary between properties.

**(iii)** New parking spaces should take into account the impact they will have on the street scene. Any new hardsurfacing should ideally only cover the minimum space necessary to allow a vehicle to be parked and, if necessary, to manoeuvre within the site. Hardsurfacing should be permeable or there should be provision to direct surface water run-off to soft landscaping. Low hedges and planting can help areas of hardstanding blend in with the street scene, providing they do not interfere with any visibility splays that are required to be provided from vehicular access to the street.

### **New Access and Crossovers**

Planning permission is always needed to make a new access onto a classified road and sometimes when the road is not classified. Planning permission should be sought from the Council following advice from its planning officers. If a new vehicular crossover is proposed, crossing a pavement or verge, constructional details should be obtained from Buckinghamshire County Council as Highway Authority.

### **Basements and Lightwells**

Whilst some basement or lightwell developments may be wholly underground in certain locations, this may not be possible. For example, in areas of sloping ground, a basement or lightwell may be more visible as it becomes exposed when the land slopes away. In these situations, development should not harm the character and local distinctiveness of an area or result in an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

**(i)** Exposed basements or lightwells should be discrete and should not significantly add to the overall bulk and depth of a property or dominate the existing building.

**(ii)** Visible fenestration and other external detailing should be in character with the existing building.

**(iii)** Exposed basements and lightwells should not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring properties, by reason of visual intrusion, loss of privacy or loss of light.

**(iv)** Where necessary, landscaping should be used to soften the impact of visible basements or lightwells; however, landscaping should not be relied upon to justify poorly designed developments.

**(v)** Underground works should take into account potential damage to the root system of trees, especially where there are protected trees. They should also not adversely interfere with ground water conditions.

**(vi)** Exposed basements and lightwells can present additional issues in the Green Belt, as they can affect the openness of the area. More detailed advice should be sought from the Council prior to undertaking such works.

## **Annex 1 – Getting Started**

- **Do I need planning permission?**

Carrying out 'development' which could be building an extension or garage or laying hardsurfacing etc will require a form of planning permission. This could be an "express" permission which the Council grants in response to a planning application. Or it could be a "deemed" permission which is granted by Parliament through the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).

- **Permitted Development**

Deemed planning permissions are normally referred to as "permitted development" rights. These grant households (not including flats and maisonettes) the right carry out certain householder related development without having to submit a planning application to the Council. Permitted development rights are subject to a number of conditions and limitations which must be met in order for development to benefit from being "permitted development". If these conditions and limitations are not met then an extension will need planning permission from the Council, or if permitted development is removed by a condition of a previous planning permission, previous Legal Agreement or by an Article 4 Direction.

- **Planning Portal**

More information on permitted development can be found on the Planning Portal website – [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk), which has an 'interactive house' that allows viewers to see the types of extensions and other householder related development that can be carried out without having to apply for planning permission from the Council. Householders are advised that the Government continually amends the General Permitted Development Order; accordingly, it is strongly recommended that sufficient checks are made to ensure the most up-to-date version of the General Permitted Development Order is being applied.

- **Certificates of Lawful Development**

If before building an extension you would like formal confirmation that it is permitted development then you can apply to the Council for an "Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed Development". These applications consider whether an extension meets the conditions and limitations of the General Permitted Development Order. There is no statutory requirement to apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness; however it can be beneficial to do so because it demonstrates to any interested person that an extension did not require planning permission from the Council at the time of construction and provides householders with a valuable document should they ever consider selling their property.

- **Restrictions to permitted development rights**

**IMPORTANT** - Householders should be aware that additional restrictions apply to permitted development when a building is listed or when it is located in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or in a designated Conservation Area.

The Council can also impose planning conditions and/or Article 4 Directions which remove permitted development rights; therefore checks should always be made to confirm whether these restrictions apply to a property before beginning work.

- **Pre-Application Advice**

Once a scheme proposal is drafted, it can be useful to seek a professional overview from the Council, prior to making a formal planning application. A modest fee applies and details are available on the Council website.

- **Planning Enforcement**

If development is ever undertaken without complying with the conditions and limitations of permitted development and without the benefit of planning permission from the Council it is unauthorised and in breach of planning control and may be subject to enforcement action from the Council. More on the Council's approach to planning enforcement can be found in its Enforcement Policy which is available on its website [www.chiltern.gov.uk](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk)

- **Submitting a planning application**

Once a design has been finalised and it has been determined that development will require planning permission from the Council, then the relevant application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website [www.chiltern.gov.uk](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk).

All submitted applications must be accompanied by sufficient information to comply with National and local validation lists as well as the relevant application fee. The Council's up-to-date validation list can be found on its website. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the requirements of these lists are met. Applications which do not meet these lists will not be validated and will face processing delays.**

Once an application has been validated the Council will normally determine planning applications for householder related development within 8 weeks.



## **Annex 2 – Planning Constraints**

When assessing a planning application, planning officers will have regard to all design policies as well as other relevant policies from the Council's Development Plan. The following provides an overview of some of the other policy considerations.

- **Green Belt**

A large proportion of land in the Chiltern District falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt where strict controls apply to any new development. The National Planning Policy Framework advises on the type of development that can be carried out in the Green Belt. Development which does not conform with this National guidance is inappropriate development that by definition causes harm to Green Belt and should not be approved except in 'very special circumstances'. 'Very special circumstances' not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

With regard to residential extensions, The National Planning Policy Framework states that only extensions which do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building are appropriate development. Extensions which do not meet this test are inappropriate development. Householders should be aware that when considering any application for an extension in the Green Belt the Council will take into account the cumulative impact of any previous extensions.

Other householder related development should be considered having regard to National Green Belt policy and relevant policies from the Council's Development Plan.

- **Listed Buildings**

A listed building is one which has special architectural or historic interest and is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. If a building is listed then both planning permission and listed building consent will be required for any proposed development. Householders should be aware that listed building consent may also be required for internal works to a listed building.

Development involving a listed building must ensure that it does not result in harm to the significance of a building or the special historic character of a building that warranted it being listed. It should be borne in mind that harm to a listed building can arise from a development intruding into its setting; therefore any proposed development should give consideration to how it will be read in the context of the setting of the listed building.

- **Designated Conservation Areas**

The Chiltern District has 20 Designated Conservation Areas. To ensure the continued preservation of these areas there are stricter controls in place for all development. Whenever designing any householder development, householders should take into account the features of the Conservation Area which define its special character and in this regard, householders should refer to the Conservation Area Appraisal leaflets which are available on the Council's website, [www.chiltern.gov.uk](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk)

- **Areas of Little Change**

Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy refers to Areas of Little Change to be defined by the Delivery DPD. Within Areas of Little Change the distinctive character of the area will be protected or improved by applying criteria set out within the Policy. These criteria apply to residential extensions and alternations as well as new build proposals.

- **Protected Trees and other vegetation**

Protected trees are those which are covered by a Tree Preservation Order or those located in a designated Conservation Area. Trees are protected because of their value to public amenity. Residential extensions and other householder related development which will result in the loss of or damage to a protected tree will not normally be permitted unless there are special circumstances which mean that the benefits of a development outweigh the loss of the protected tree.

In addition to protected trees, the Council wishes to prevent any unnecessary loss of unprotected trees and other vegetation which have amenity value or provide screening between sites. Before designing a development, householders are advised to consider the effect that it will have on existing landscaping, especially where it will result in the loss of landscaping which has an amenity interest.