This information can be made available in other languages and formats upon request by contacting us on 01604 837 861

Disclaimer

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PART A:

CONTEXT
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the document

1.1 This Residential Alterations and Extension Guide provides planning advice to homeowners when they are planning to extend or alter their home. It will also assist architects and other professional agents involved in submitting applications for domestic extensions and alterations. The guidance does not apply to flats.

1.2 The principles contained in the Guide will;

- Provide clear and accessible guidance on good design principles and practice to help promote high quality inclusive design that positively contributes to the character and appearance of an area; and

- Ensure that the proposed works do not adversely affect the amenity of occupiers of adjoining and surrounding properties, particularly through loss of light, overshadowing, overlooking and outlook.

1.3 Council Officers will work proactively with householders to find the best design solutions that are in line with our policies and also meet your aspirations. This Guide is applicable to all residential alterations and extensions; even those classed as permitted development and therefore not requiring planning permission. Building Control regulations must still be met separately.

1.4 Northampton Borough Council has produced this Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document, to support relevant saved policies in the adopted 1997 Northampton Local Plan as well as emerging policies contained within the Central Area Action Plan and the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (See Appendix 3). It also replaces the existing Residential Extensions Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance, published by Northampton Borough Council in September 2002.
2.0 BEFORE WORK STARTS

Do you need planning permission?

2.1 Not all types of building works including alterations and extensions to houses, require planning permission as they may be covered by 'Permitted Development' rights. Further information can be found by accessing the planning portal via www.northampton.gov.uk. Alternatively, telephone contact details are available in Appendix 2.

2.2 The Council as the Local Planning Authority can remove Permitted Development Rights, by a condition attached to an existing planning permission at the property or by using an Article 4 Direction. Article 4 Directions are made in order to control alterations / extensions to dwellings which in normal circumstances could normally be built without a formal planning permission. For example, Article 4 Directions can be used in areas of historic interest to bring under control works which could damage the character of the area. Please contact the Council if you are unsure if the property you want to do work on is within an area covered by an Article 4 Direction. For further information, please see the contact details in Appendix 2.

Information to submit with the planning application

2.3 It is recommended that potential applicants seek pre-application advice from Planning Officers at the Borough Council or independent planning experts. A number of supporting documents are required to be submitted with the planning application form itself. Further details on the type of supporting documents required can be found in Appendix 2.

Application Publicity

2.4 Before submitting a planning application it is recommended that applicants consult the owners of properties in their immediate area. Early consultation will make the owners of neighbouring properties aware that a planning application is to be submitted. They will then be contacted by a Planning Officer who will formally consult them as part of processing the planning application.

2.5 Once the planning application has been formally submitted by the applicant, full details of the planning application and representations received during its public consultation will be available to view on the Council's website.

Heritage Assets and Conservation Areas

2.6 If a home is a registered Listed Building or located within a Conservation Area, particular attention must be given to ensuring extensions and alterations enhance and / or preserve the character of the home and the surrounding streetscape. Works to Listed Buildings (including internal alterations) may not always require planning permission, but Listed Building Consents will generally be required. Undertaking unauthorised work on a listed building is a criminal offence. Due to the often delicate nature of carrying out works to Listed Buildings it is recommended that applicants seek advice from the Council's Built and Natural Environment Team before undertaking any works.
2.7 It is recommended that Listed Building homeowners assess the character and history of their properties, to ensure that any proposals will be in keeping with its status as a heritage asset (for more information see Appendix 5). For those living in Conservation Areas, please refer to the relevant Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for your area, these can accessed at www.northampton.gov.uk.

**Trees and Landscaping**

2.8 In determining planning applications, the Council will consider the impact of an extension and alterations upon trees and landscaping.

2.9 Many trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO’s) and Conservation Area designation. It is an offence to top, lop, fell or otherwise damage these trees, subject to a few minor exceptions, without first gaining the formal consent of the Local Planning Authority. The Council’s Arboricultural Officer should be contacted for advice on what work is permitted and whether or not a tree is legally protected in this way.

**Protected Species**

2.10 Protected species such as bats and birds at nesting times can roost in the roof space of residential dwellings. It is illegal to harm and / or destroy these creatures and / or their habitat under the Habitats Regulations 2010 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 respectively. Where appropriate the Council recommend that proposals should demonstrate how wildlife habitats and natural features will be retained and enhanced.

2.11 If protected species are suspected to be living in a roof area, it is strongly advised that the homeowner contacts Natural England to ascertain whether a survey is required and what other works may be required prior to the extension / alteration taking place. Contact details can be found for Natural England in Appendix 2. In addition, the Council may impose planning conditions on planning permissions to ensure that the identified protective measures are implemented.

**Enforcement**

2.12 Homeowners are advised that where planning controls have been breached, planning enforcement action will be taken if deemed necessary.

2.13 The Planning Enforcement Team within the Council’s Planning Division deals with any alleged breach of planning control reported to them by members of the public, Councillors or other departments within the Council.

**Building Control**

2.14 It is advised, that whether planning permission is required or not, that potential applicants liaise with a Building Control Officer who can provide professional advice on matters relating to building regulations. Applicants can also use independent building control experts.

**Contact details for the Council services referenced above can be found in Appendix 2.**
3.0 RESIDENTIAL CONTEXT

3.1 Northampton possesses a variety of housing in terms of style, quality and age. Each area of residential development has its own character borne out of architecture style, layout and landscaping (as shown by the examples below). The content of this Guide is equally applicable to all residential development, except flatted development, to ensure proposals for extensions and alterations preserve, enhance and complement the character of the individual house and the surrounding area.
4.0 PLANNING POLICY

Policy Context

4.1 This Guide provides details and interpretation of relevant policies contained in the:

• Northampton Adopted Local Plan (June 1997)
• Pre-submission draft Central Area Action Plan (November 2010)
• Pre-submission draft West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (March 2011)

4.2 The Guide also conforms to guidelines contained in:

• Planning Policy Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)
• Planning Policy Statement – Planning and Climate Change (supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1)
• Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing)
• Planning Policy Statement 5 (Planning for the Historic Environment)

4.3 Further information on relevant policies can be found in Appendix 3.

Sustainability Objectives

4.4 The main sustainability objectives for preparing the Guide build on the requirements contained in the saved policies of the adopted Local Plan (1997) and the policy direction provided by the Northampton Central Area Action Plan and the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (see Appendix 3). The sustainability objectives are:

Social objectives

• To provide clarity and guidance to home owners about the planning process and the principles of good design when proposing to extend and/or make alterations to their homes.
• To promote an inclusive society where people are able to improve their homes whilst respecting the privacy and rights of the adjoining neighbours
• To reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Economic objectives

• To actively promote continuing investment and regeneration of existing residential areas
• To ensure that the residential stock meets the needs of the population
• To promote a more economical lifestyle whilst contributing positively towards reducing climate change
Environmental objectives

• To contribute towards reducing climate change by seeking to incorporate sustainable development measures into proposals

• To improve the character of residential streets making them desirable places to live in the longer term

• To reduce waste by encouraging reuse of materials wherever possible

5.0 ACCESS FOR ALL

The Disability and Equalities Act 2010 (Equality Act 2010)

5.1 This Guide has been prepared in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act requires plans to not discriminate, nor deem to discriminate against anyone, especially those within protected characteristics. The Council remains committed to ensuring that its plans and policies are prepared and implemented fairly.

5.2 The Guide has been prepared to advise all homeowners about considerations required in both planning and design terms, when thinking about making extensions or alterations to their homes. Everyone is given the same advice.

5.3 The design principles have been shaped by:

• Planning requirements – there are some requirements which need to be complied with such as the restrictions surrounding listed buildings; and

• Informal consultations – the Government published guidelines on how to approach design issues and the consultation process. Officers held discussions with colleagues within the Council, the Police and relevant Community Groups.

5.4 The consultation exercises highlighted the need for the Guide to be written in plain English and to ensure that all technical planning terminology is referenced appropriately, so that the contents can be understood by all. Publications in other languages and alternative formats will also be made available on request.
PART B: DESIGN GUIDANCE
6.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Understanding your home

6.1 It is important that applicants have a firm understanding of the key features of their home. Figure 1 shows the location of several features of a standard home that are referenced within this Guide and potentially within a planning application in an applicant’s development proposals.

General Design Principles

6.2 The General Design Principles outline the key requirements and considerations for homeowners and Planning Officers when assessing the potential impact of any residential extension or alteration. These principles should be applied to improve the appearance and value of a home and its neighbouring properties, whether or not planning permission is required. Unsympathetically designed extensions can progressively change the character and appearance of a street or the wider locality (as shown by Figure 2). This does not mean that a new extension has to exactly replicate the style and character of the existing dwelling or its locality, but it should be harmonious with what is already there.

In all cases, planning applications will be considered on their own individual merits.
GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. **Respect the character of the building and the streetscene**

   6.3 The character of an area is reflected in the layout, massing, scale, height, style and materials of buildings and spaces. Any extensions or alterations to a property should:

   **A. DESIGN**
   
   • Respect the form, shape, balance and proportions of the existing dwelling and surrounding streetscene.

   **B. SCALE**
   
   • Generally appear subordinate in relation to the existing dwelling in terms of massing, scale and overall appearance.

   **C. MATERIALS**
   
   • Respect the architectural integrity of the existing dwelling. External materials and finishes should be durable and of good quality. They should be visually appropriate for their surroundings and sympathetic in terms of colour, texture and detail in relation to the existing dwelling.

   **D. WINDOWS AND DOORS**
   
   • Ensure windows and doors are of appropriate style, positioning and proportions to complement the character of the host house and the character / setting of the surrounding streetscene.

   **E. ROOF FORM AND PITCH**
   
   • Complement the roof of the existing house in terms of pitch and form, neighbouring properties and the rhythm of the wider streetscene. Roof form and pitch is particularly important on extensions higher than a single storey.

   **F. SPACING**
   
   • Not disrupt the established street pattern, for example, where open space and gaps between properties help to define the character and setting of a street.

   **G. AMENITY**
   
   • Not result in the loss of an unacceptable level of private amenity space and parking space within the curtilage of the property. Any remaining amenity space should be commensurate to the type and scale of the property.
2. **Respect neighbouring properties**

**A. PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING**

6.4 In determining planning applications, the Borough Council shall seek to ensure that new extensions do not impose an unacceptable loss of privacy on the occupants of neighbouring dwellings. An unreasonable loss of privacy often occurs when windows of habitable rooms look directly into or overlook a principal window belonging to a habitable room of a neighbouring dwelling. A loss of privacy can also occur when windows look directly into or overlook private spaces within gardens belonging to a neighbouring dwelling. The following guidelines will be taken into account when considering the effect on neighbouring privacy:

- Windows of proposed habitable rooms at ground and first floor level should not allow views into the habitable room windows of neighbouring dwellings or immediate views into their private gardens.

6.5 Habitable rooms include lounges, living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, play rooms, studies, conservatories, and any other rooms where occupants spend significant amounts of time.

![Figure 3: Inappropriate location for a window on the common boundary of a rear extension](image1)

![Figure 4: An inappropriate 2 storey rear extension which is overbearing, increases shadowing and loss of sunlight for neighbouring properties](image2)

**B. OVERSHADOWING AND OUTLOOK**

6.6 An extension which is sited close to a window belonging to a habitable room of a neighbouring dwelling or its private garden area can create a poor living environment for the occupier in terms of overshadowing and intrusiveness.

6.7 Most extensions are likely to cause some degree of shadowing, it is the position of the extension relative to the path of the sun (orientation), combined with its height, shape and massing which will determine the amount of shadow that will be cast.
6.8 An extension should not harm a neighbouring dwellings level of daylight to an unacceptable degree. When assessing this, the impact of the proposal on the amenity of the dwellings as a whole will be considered.

6.9 The ‘45 Degree Guide’ will be used when the Council looks at planning applications for new buildings and extensions to existing properties which might affect the outlook from or daylight to a nearby house or flat. The ‘45 Degree Guide’ aims to provide a fair balance between the wishes of those who want to build and the people who live next door.

See Appendix 6 for details on appropriate separation distances between dwellings

See Appendix 7 for details on the ‘45 Degree Guide’ and how to apply it.

3 Accessibility

6.10 External access to the rear of properties should be maintained to provide residents with access to their rear gardens and convenient and secure bin / recycling storage without having an adverse impact on the character of the streetscene.

6.11 If a proposal involves changes to a site’s access arrangements, such as the widening of a driveway or the construction of a replacement access, the access should be designed so that vehicles can safely and practically enter and exit the site. An appropriate level of visibility will need to be provided at the access.

4 Sustainability

6.12 Where possible, extensions and alterations should look to improve energy efficiency in the home and help reduce climate change by incorporating sustainable measures such as solar panels and green roofs. In addition, proposals should look to provide south facing windows to maximise levels of natural light and heat from the sun to reduce household energy bills.

6.13 However, sustainability needs should be balanced against the need to preserve and / or enhance the character of the local townscape.

5 Designing out Crime

6.14 Altering or extending a property provides the opportunity to consider security measures in the home. Adding physical space to a property should not result in easier access into a house for intruders (See Appendix 4 for further information).
7.0 SPECIFIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Front extensions / porches

7.1 Extensions to the front of a property can often have the greatest visual impact. Front extensions should aim to:

• Leave sufficient space between the extension and the front boundary of the house to retain the appearance of openness around the dwelling.

• Not be obtrusive, and / or introduce prominent features in the streetscene.

• Respect the size and proportions of the existing house.

• Not unduly affect neighbours’ amenity.

7.2 Front porches look best where the materials, glazing pattern and degree of roof pitch, match the existing house. Where there is a strong established building line or an architectural cohesiveness to the street which would be broken, front extensions are unlikely to be supported.

Figure 5 & 6: A small but obtrusive front extension not in character with the streetscene or the host house

Side extensions

7.3 Side extensions are often the most desirable way of extending a house as they provide additional floorspace in an area which is generally considered to be of less functional value than a rear garden.

7.4 Whether single or two storey, side extensions should:

• Respect the form and design of the existing dwelling with a roof design that complements the existing appearance. Flat roofs are generally unacceptable, an exception to this could be the provision and retention of a green or brown roof in the appropriate context;
• Generally, be subservient to the main dwelling with the ridge level of extensions set below the main ridge line of the original house;

7.5 A linked or infill effect between neighbouring dwellings should be avoided by leaving a visibly adequate gap between the boundary and the sidewall of the extension. The Council is concerned that where two storey side extensions are proposed to homes in areas of mainly semi detached housing the character of the streetscene is damaged through the ‘terracing effect’.

Figure 7: The side extension on the left suffers from a significant amount of overshadowing from the neighbouring dwelling.

The side extension on the right detracts from the character of the streetscene as it: projects forward from the established building line, has a flat roof and inappropriate fenestration.

Each of the individual side extensions have not kept external access to the rear of the dwelling.

The combination of developing these two extensions has led to the ‘terracing effect’.

Rear extensions

7.6 Rear extensions should respect the shape and form of the existing dwelling with a roof design that complements the existing appearance (See Figures 8 and 9). As explained with side extensions, flat roofs are generally unlikely to be acceptable, an exception to this could be the provision of a green roof.

7.7 The most common problem with rear extensions is the affect that they can have on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Poorly designed or overly large extensions can cause a loss of outlook, overshadowing or an overbearing impact to neighbouring properties.

7.8 To avoid such an impact (on a terrace or semi detached properties) a single storey rear extension should take into account of the following:

• Comply with principles of the ‘45 Degree Guide’ (see Appendix 7); and

• Not allow unrestricted views of neighbouring properties. Any side windows, particularly on conservatories should either be obscure glazed, high level or screened by a fence of appropriate height.

7.9 Rear extensions should be avoided where they would be sited adjacent to a party boundary, particularly on the south facing side.
Corner Plots

7.10 Extensions located on corner plots and end terraces require sensitive design solutions as two elevations of the extension are viewable from the public highway. The opportunity to enhance the character of the streetscene and the natural surveillance of the street should be taken. Elevations should provide ‘active frontage’, through the use of windows and doors, without impacting on the privacy of neighbouring properties.

7.11 Corner extensions on properties should look to preserve the character of the street, where uniform building lines are an important element of a street’s character, as shown in Figures 10 and 11. In addition, if the provision of open space on the corners of streets is a strong characteristic of the residential area, side extensions at corners should respect this. A side extension should not normally be built in line with the pavement edge to maintain the openness of a corner site.
Roof extensions

A. DORMER EXTENSIONS

7.12 A dormer at the rear of the house is usually more acceptable than one at the front as it will be less readily seen by the public. Exceptions may occur where such features are typical of the local area, or it can be demonstrated that the extension will not disrupt the streetscene.

7.13 Dormer extensions should generally:

• Be in proportion to the roof and set into the roof slope so that they are not a dominant feature;

• Have a pitched roof. Flat roof dormers added to pitched roofs can often look out of place and unacceptably harm the character of the host house and the wider area.

• Complement the window design and align vertically with the windows of the property below; and

• Be set back from the eaves and provide an appropriate distance between the cheek of the dormer and the common building line.

7.14 Dormers should form part of the roof instead of dominating the roof scene. It should be noted that some houses have limited roof space due to a shallower pitch which may mean they are incapable of providing this type of extension. In these instances an unacceptably large dormer would be required to provide the adequate floor to ceiling heights. Such applications are unlikely to be supported.

B. ROOF LIGHT

7.15 When converting loft / roof space without a dormer, a roof light is often required. Designed appropriately, roof lights have a minimal impact on the character of the building and streetscene. As with dormers, proposals should look to provide roof lights on the rear of the property, rather than the front. Although roof lights can often be developed under Permitted Development rights.
C. HIP TO GABLE EXTENSION

7.16 Hip to gable extensions can have a negative impact on the character of a property and the wider streetscene, particularly in areas dominated by detached and semi-detached dwellings where such extension would create an imbalanced style. Therefore, hip to gable extensions which require planning permission will normally be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that there would be no detrimental impact on the streetscene.

Upward Extensions

7.17 Where an upward extension is acceptable in principle, it must respect the established character of the area. The height, massing, use of materials and roof pitches, should complement the host house and the surrounding streetscene. Extensions which cause an unacceptable loss of privacy or outlook to neighbouring properties, will be refused.

Outbuildings

7.18 Garages, annexes and other outbuildings can have a similar effect on the amenity of neighbours as other extensions. Whether or not planning permission is required for this form of development, buildings should in general:

- Be sited so as not to affect neighbouring amenity or streetscene. Buildings between a house and a road in most cases are likely to appear as overly prominent features and should generally be avoided; and

- Be of an appropriate scale and appear clearly subordinate in relation to the main house.

Outbuildings built forward of the principal front elevation are likely to be unacceptable.
Parking and Hard Standing

7.19 Any parking or areas of hard standing to the front of a house should be constructed in porous materials or drain towards a permeable surface such as a lawn or flower bed. This will help reduce surface water run-off and relieve pressure on drains. Careful consideration needs to be given to the appearance of hard standing / front gardens to ensure proposals do not detract from the character of the property and streetscene. Normally a length of 5.5 metres hard standing should be provided in front of a garage. Development of a hard surface is likely to need planning permission if it’s located to the front of a property.

![Figure 17](image)

Parking / hard standing areas should drain towards a permeable surface.

Areas of impermeable hard standing increases surface run off and can increase the chance of flooding

Balconies

7.21 Balconies will only be acceptable if it can be demonstrated that they will not:

- compromise the security of the property;
- overlook and have detrimental impact on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties; and
- detract from the character of the property and the wider streetscene.
8.0 GLOSSARY

Bargeboard: Finished surface below the rafters or eaves

Brown Roof: A roof covered with recycled material which would attract wildlife and biodiversity.

Cheek: The side of dormer extension

Cill: Horizontal bar at the bottom of a window or a door

Conservation Area: An area worthy of preservation and enhancement due to its heritage importance

Dormer: Structural element of a building that protrudes from the plane of a sloping roof surface, used to create additional space.

Eaves: The eaves of a roof are its lower edges, usually projecting beyond the walls of the building to provide weather protection.

Elevation: A particular side of a building.

Fenestration: Design and arrangement of openings in a building such as doors, windows and skylights.

Gable: The pointed end of a wall

Green Roof: A roof of a building which is covered with vegetation.

Heritage Asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape which are valued components of the historic environment and merit special consideration in planning decisions

Hip: A hip roof, is a type of roof which slopes down towards the walls of house and has not vertical sides to the roof

Lintel: Horizontal block that spans the space between two supports

Listed building: A building which has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historical interest by English Heritage

Parapet Wall: A low wall enclosing a roof of an individual property, common on terraced or semi detached houses

Permitted Development: Development which can be undertaken without the need to apply for planning permission

Ridge line: The highest part of the roof structure.

Terracing Effect: When a single side extension or the cumulative impact of a number of side extensions on a street combine to create the impression of a row of terraced houses.
9.0 REFERENCES

National Policies

- Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1) (*CLG*, 2007)

Local Policies

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Pre-submission draft (*West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit, February / March 2011*)
- Central Area Action Plan Pre-submission draft (*Northampton Borough Council, October 2010*)
- Sustainability Appraisal to the Central Area Action Plan Pre-submission draft (*Environ UK, October 2010*)
- Statement of Community Involvement (Northampton Borough Council, March 2006)
- Northampton Adopted Local Plan (*Northampton Borough Council, June 1997*)

Technical Studies

- West Northamptonshire Manual for Design Codes (*West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, December 2009*)
PART C:

APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1: Extending or making alterations to your home?

*Check if you need planning permission?*

- **Yes**
  - Consider speaking to a Planning Officer about your proposal (see Appendix 2 for contact details)
  - Go to the Planning Portal for online planning application information or request a form from the Planning Development Control Section
  - Speak to your neighbours about your proposals
  - View the design principles in this Guide before finalising the proposal and completing the planning application form
  - Complete and submit the planning application and building control forms and all related document for approval.

- **No**
  - If you are unsure, speak to a Planning Officer (see Appendix 2 for contact details)
  - View the design principles in this Guide to help you design your proposals effectively
  - Speak to your immediate neighbours about your proposal
  - Speak to a Building Control expert before starting any building work (see Appendix 2)

*If you are unsure about any of the stages outlined above speak to a Planning Officer*
APPENDIX 2: Submitting a Planning Application and Key Contacts

Pre-application advice

Northampton Borough Council offers pre-application advice. There maybe a cost attached. For further information, please contact the Planning Department’s Development Control Team:

• www.northampton.gov.uk or
• 0300 330 7000 and ask to speak to a Planning Duty Officer in Development Control

Submitting a planning application

All planning applications must comprise:

• The completed and signed forms, to include precise information about the proposals
• A site location plan with the property outlined in red
• The appropriate fee
• Accurately scaled drawings and clear annotations of the materials to be used
• A Design & Access Statement if in a Conservation Area and/or is a Listed Building

Planning application forms can be obtained in the following ways:

• Online – www.northampton.gov.uk and viewing the National Standards 1 APP forms (or subsequent versions)
• By post – call 01604 838 915 to request a copy
• At the Council Offices – a hard copy can be obtained from the Council’s Planning area in the One Stop Shop

Three hard copies of the form and the supporting documents need to be completed if they are to be posted or delivered by hand. If completing online, only 1 copy of the form and supporting documents is required.

Submitting a Buildings Regulations Application

Applicants are encouraged to submit a Buildings Regulations Application either simultaneously with the planning application or straight after planning permission has been granted.

Applicants are recommended to speak to a Building Control expert to ascertain which relevant regulations are to be met and whether these requirements have been updated or changed.
Key Contacts

For further information relating to the use of this Guide, or pre-application discussions, please contact the relevant Northampton Borough Council Officers listed below, during normal working hours:

Main switchboard: 0300 330 7000
Development Control: 01604 838 915 option 2
Built and Natural Environment: 01604 837 637
Building Control: 01604 838 920
Enforcement: 01604 838 914
Community Engagement: 01604 837 861

For information relating to Highways Regulations and Crime Prevention, please contact:

Northamptonshire County Council: 01604 236 236
(Highways Regulation)

Northamptonshire Police: 03000 111 222
(Crime Prevention Design Advisor)

Natural England 0845 600 3078
enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk
APPENDIX 3
Planning Policy Context

Northampton Adopted Local Plan (June 1997)

Northampton’s Local Plan was adopted in June 1997. Following the establishment of a new planning system under the Planning & Compulsory Act 2004, some of the policies were saved by Government Office for East Midlands to assist with the determination of planning applications. The relevant saved policy is:

Policy H18: Extensions
Planning permission for extensions to dwellings will be granted subject to the following criteria:

a) The design and appearance of the extension itself being acceptable
b) The design of the extension being in keeping with the appearance and character of the original dwelling
c) The effect upon adjoining properties

Central Area Action Plan (Pre-Submission Draft, November 2010)

The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) is being prepared by Northampton Borough Council. It is the future development plan which will guide how Northampton town centre and its immediate surrounding areas will develop. When adopted, it will guide and regulate the type, quality and quantity of development up to 2026.

The CAAP completed its Pre-Submission publication stage in December 2010. The document contains policies which the Council intends to take to Examination by an Independent Government Inspector. This Residential Extension will support policy 2 of the CAAP:

Policy 2: Promoting Design Excellence (extracts)

All new development within the Central Area must demonstrate a high design standard and successfully address the following design objectives:

• Preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the Central Area’s heritage asset; and

• Promote high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact on the character and quality of an area
West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Pre-Submission Draft, February 2011)

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) is being prepared by the Joint Planning Unit. The WNJCS covers the administrative areas of Northampton, South Northamptonshire and Daventry. It will set out the long term vision and objectives for the whole of West Northamptonshire to 2026, as well as strategic policies for steering and shaping developments.

The WNJCS reached its Publication stage in February 2011. The key policy which the Residential Extensions and Alterations Design Guide SPD will conform to is Policy S10.

**Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles (extracts)**

In order to achieve the overarching goals of sustainability, development will:

- Achieve the highest standards of design including in relation to safety and security
- Make use of sustainably sources materials
- Maximise use of solar energy, passive heating and cooling, natural light and ventilation
- Generate a minimum of 10% of its energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources
- Maximise water efficiency
APPENDIX 4: Designing out Crime

Extensions & Alterations

Designing out crime or the perception of crime in an area is an important consideration when planning to extend your home. The crime deterrent measures below recommend a number of ways of improving the security of your home. However, when looking to incorporate such measures into proposals it is important to remember that they should not prejudice the Design Principles in this Guide.

• When fitting new doors into an extension consider using a door tested and certificated to British Standard PAS 24-1 ‘Doors of Enhanced Security’. Bought as a complete kit, this shows that the door, frame, locks and fittings have been attack tested.

• Laminated glazed windows and/or windows should comply with BS7950

• A pitched roof for single storey rear extensions prevents easy access to first floor windows

• If a balcony forms part of the extension ensure that it is not able to be used as a climbing aid to reach upper floor windows. If upper floor windows are accessible fit window locks.

• Access to rear gardens should be gated with a gate to the same height as the rear fence and set as close to the front building line as possible. The gate should be lockable with a key operated mortice lock operable from both sides of the gate for convenience.
APPENDIX 5: Extensions and the Historic Environment

For dwellings which are designated heritage assets such as Listed Buildings or are located within a Conservation Area, the following needs to be considered by the applicant prior to undertaking any works:

- **Character** - Establish all the different elements that contribute to the special character of historic buildings, for example, original windows, door, joinery and any decorative features. Even simple alterations can become very complicated if the character of a property is not properly understood before work commences. A series of small isolated changes to a historic building could cumulatively cause a considerable amount of damage; and

- **Building methods and construction techniques** - The method of construction and built condition of the property need to be assessed side by side. This will inform the design of the extension / alteration and protect the performance of traditional building materials so that long-term building decay can be avoided.

If works are to be a Listed Building or within a Conservation Area it is strongly recommended that you speak to an expert in historic assets. The Council has a Built Environment Team who deals with such queries and details are available in Appendix 2.

*Residential dwellings in the Billing Road Conservation Area.*
APPENDIX 6: Separation Distances

When planning an extension attention should be paid to the separation distances between neighbouring properties. The Council’s recommended separation distances between properties are set out below:

**Two storey dwellings**
- Front elevation to front elevation = 21 metres separation distance
- Back elevation to back elevation = 21 metres separation distance
- Back / front elevation to side elevation = 13 metres separation distance

**Three storey dwellings**
- Front elevation to front elevation = 27 metres separation distance
- Back elevation to back elevation = 27 metres separation distance
- Back / front elevation to side elevation = 16 metres separation distance

As a general guide the separation distance should be increased by 1 metre for every 1 metre rise in ground level between new and existing dwellings. This standard will be more strictly applied at the rear rather than the front.

The separation distances above cannot always be applied successfully, particularly in areas of more modern housing development. Therefore the Council will take into account a homeowner’s privacy (physical, visual and acoustic) and the typology of the open space (private, public or communal) between neighbouring or adjacent properties, when considering proposals for extensions or alterations.

The Council will also give careful consideration to individual circumstances including assessing the potential use of screening and separation to overcome amenity and overshadowing issues. Solutions to such problems may include boundary screening such as a wall or fence, the use of obscure glazing and / or high level windows.
APPENDIX 7: Using the ‘45 Degree Guide’

To help ensure that there is a positive relationship between neighbouring houses and extensions in terms of sunlight, privacy and visual impact, the ‘45 Degree Guide’ should be followed. Figures 19 and 20 show extensions that do not exceed an imaginary line taken 45 degrees from the centre of the neighbouring ground floor window. If an extension extends beyond this imaginary 45 degree line it would have a negative affect on the outlook and daylight of the neighbouring property, and would therefore be unacceptable.

Applying the ‘45 Degree Guide’ allows for flexibility in how far an extension can project. For example, an extension could project a further 1 metre long as the side wall of the extension moved 1 metre in from the common boundary (as shown by Figure 20). When applying the 45 Degree Guide the position from which this imaginary line is drawn is depends on the type of extension:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extension Type</th>
<th>Line position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-storey extension</td>
<td>• Mid point of the nearest ground floor window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-storey extension</td>
<td>• Quarter point (nearest the proposed extension) of the nearest ground floor window</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18 & 19: Single storey rear extensions which vary in width and length, but still respect the ‘45 Degree Guide’.

Figure 20: How to building a larger extension in terms of area, whilst successfully respecting the ‘45 Degree Guide’.
Special Circumstances which may affect the use of the ‘45 Degree Guide’

The Guide is relatively simple to apply in most cases, but there are some circumstances which also need to be taken into account. These include:

- If the ground level is different between properties. This may either improve or worsen the effect on a neighbour’s light and outlook, therefore appropriate allowances must be made by applicants when they are formulating their proposals;

- If there is an existing solid boundary wall, permanent outbuilding or other type of solid screen between the neighbouring properties. As long as the new building / extension is not significantly larger than the wall, outbuilding / screen it may be accepted; and

- The distance between the new building / extension and the neighbouring property can also be taken into account. The greater the distance the less the effect on the neighbour’s outlook and light.
Residential Extensions and Alterations Design Guide SPD, 2011

Planning Policy Team