

House Extensions

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE NOTE NO. 8

Introduction

This advice note is to help you apply for Planning Permission. The Council wishes to encourage imaginative, sensitive and innovative design, and while it gives design guidance, this is not intended to be a 'rule book'. It describes the basic principles which are considered important in achieving a good design and which will be used by the Council when assessing a Planning Application for a house extension.

Design Advice

At the outset, we strongly recommend that you seek professional advice from someone trained and experienced in designing buildings a well designed extension can enhance your property. The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland has a list of local Architects which is available from the Council.

Planning Permission

If you are considering an extension, arrange to have an informal discussion with a Planning Officer to establish whether you need permission and what you need to do - our advice at an early stage may save you time and money in the long run. The design advice will still be of value even if consent is not required. If you need Planning Permission you will require a formal application and plans showing your proposals.

Listed Building Consent

Houses which are listed as being of "Special Architectural or Historic Interest," or an houses within a Conservation Area are usually subject to more stringent planning control. This means that you will normally require Planning Permission for all external alterations to buildings in a Conservation Area, and Listed Building Consent for alterations to any Listed Building. Applications for work on some listed building swill also require the consent of the Secretary of State - allows extra time for this application.

Building Warrant

In most cases, you will need a Building Warrant for your alterations to ensure that your extension is structurally sound and complies with the Building Regulations. You should contact our Building Control Section to discuss your proposals at an early stage.

Other Consents

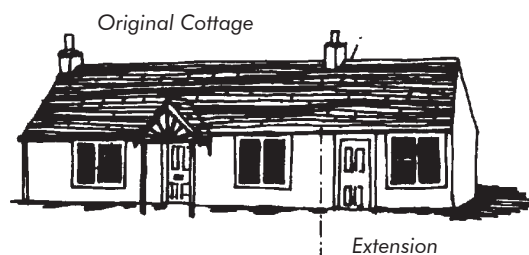
Through your title deeds your development may be limited, for example by a Feu Superior or the Council's Housing Department. Restrictions may apply if your house was formerly owned by the Council. Your solicitor should be able to advise. If your proposal affects a road access or requires a new one you may need separate consent from the Council's Roads/Traffic Section.

Neighbour Notification

It may be helpful to discuss your intentions with your neighbours at an early stage. Their comments will be considered when your application is assessed. The special notice for neighbours is included with the Planning Application form.

General Design Principles

An extension to a house should be sympathetic in style to the original building or of exceptional architectural quality. Normally an extension will be considerably smaller than the original house, and should be designed to look like as if it is an integral part.



Small extension reflecting style and scale of original cottage.

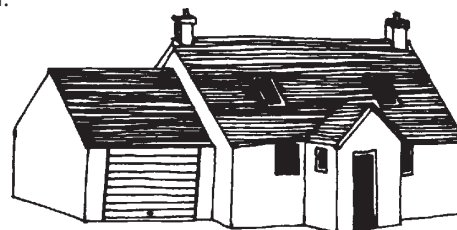
A badly designed extension can spoil the appearance of the existing house and its surroundings.



Unsympathetic extensions relate badly to original cottage

Vehicular Access

Your extension should not restrict or affect your existing access, turning area or parking space, reducing highway safety. Generally, cars should be able to leave your site without the need to reverse into a main road.



Garage set back from building frontage

Security

Have you considered security issues? Advice on 'Secured by Design' can be obtained from the Central Scotland Police. (Security and Crime Prevention details on the back page.)

Modern Houses

It is worthwhile to take equal care over the extension of modern houses. There may be more scope for use of modern materials and design. However, these should still "respect" the materials and design of the original house.

Size Relative to Plot Size

Generally, the ground area of the original house (including garage and outhouses) plus your proposed extension should not be greater than 30% of the total plot area. Proposals taking up more of the plot than this are likely to be considered as an over-development of the site. However within a town centre, it may be acceptable for the house and proposed extension to take up a greater proportion of the total sit area. Discuss this possibility with a Planning Officer at an early stage.

Daylight and Sunlight

It is important that your proposed extension does not significantly reduce the daylight and sunlight received by your neighbour's house and garden.

This could happen, for example, if you plan to build your extension on or close to the boundary with your neighbour - or wish to build higher than the original roof ridge.

Privacy

Your extension may affect privacy between you and your neighbour's house and garden by overlooking. As a 'rule of thumb' where a room is directly overlooked at a distance of less than 18 metres, the loss of privacy is considered to be significant. This loss of privacy will be less if your windows are not directly opposite one another. In assessing this, however, the existing building line of adjoining and neighbouring properties will be taken into account.

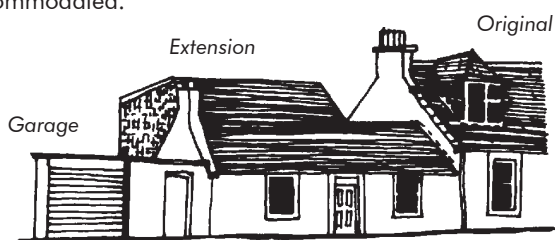
Orientation, site levels and the location of neighbouring properties will be considered when assessing your application.

Roof Form

In Scotland, most roof pitches are at an angle of between 30 degrees and 45 degrees. Steeply pitched roofs tend to be more effective against wind and rain than flat or low pitched roofs.

Extensions should generally have roofs at the same pitch as the original and at a minimum slop of 30 degrees (unless the original is shallower). The new roof ridge should not normally exceed the height of the original roof.

Flat roofed extensions are not generally encouraged, although they may be acceptable in certain instances - for example, extensions which are not visually prominent or where a pitched roof cannot be accommodated.



Roof ridge of extension exceeds that of original cottage and dwarfs it in terms of scale.

Materials

Materials must be chosen with care to avoid destroying the integrity of the original building. Generally, either the same or compatible materials should be used - materials which will harmonise and be sympathetic to the character of the original and neighbouring buildings. While contrasting materials can be successful if carefully detailed, the introduction of new materials not already used in your building or its neighbours is generally discouraged - they may make your extension look like an 'add on' rather than an integral part of the original.

You are also encouraged to use materials that will minimise the energy used in the extension.

In Conservation Areas and in the case of Listed Buildings, materials must be chosen with particular care to ensure that the appearance and character of your house and the neighbouring area is maintained and enhanced.

Detailed Design

Having established the general form of your extension, careful consideration must also be given to its detailed design.

It can prove difficult to join old and new successfully: in older buildings, recreating and echoing traditional details such as decorative

stonework, metalwork and bargeboards can help to relate it to the original. An experienced architect can advise you on these specialised aspects of design.

Windows and Doors

In the past the size of openings in buildings was influenced by climate and construction materials - windows were generally set back from the face of building for protections against driving rain, and the width of an opening was governed by the span of a stone lintel. With modern building techniques and materials these constraints are not so severe.

The following guidelines will help you in most instances:

The proportion and size of windows and doors in your extension should complement the design and proportions of the original building.

If your house has a traditional building style, windows should be kept fairly small and of a vertical proportion on public elevations. Respect the local character by siting large areas of glazing, such as patio doors, on the private side of the house where they are not visible to the public. It may be appropriate to give a vertical emphasis to large windows by using mullions evenly spaced at traditional window width intervals.

Is there a mixture of styles in the existing doors and windows in your house? If so, consider whether replacement of some of these as part of your proposals would enhance the character of your building.

Dormer Windows

If you are planning to extend your roof space with dormer windows, the preferred form is likely to be influenced by any traditional dormers in the area.

The following guidelines should be taken into account:

The size and scale of the dormer should not dominate the original roof;

Dormers should not project above the original roof ridge;

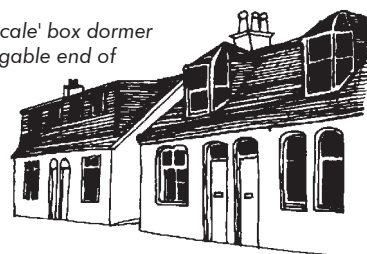
Generally, dormers should not be built off the wallhead unless they are of a traditional design in a traditional building;

Dormers should not extend to the gable end;

In Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings, where the principle of dormer extensions has been accepted, dormers should be small, designed in a traditional manner and have a pitched roof.

Wide 'box' dormers are likely to be out of scale and may spoil the appearance of your house. As an alternative two smaller dormers may greatly improve the overall visual effect.

'Out of scale' box dormer built off gable end of cottage.



Size and scale of traditional dormers in keeping with original cottage.

You may wish to consider using "roof lights" instead of a dormer.

Garages

Garages should be designed to respect the shape of your house. They should preferably be set back from the frontage and use materials which relate to the house. They should not obscure the original building or be over dominant.

Produced by:
Development & Environmental Services
Clackmannanshire Council
Kilncraigs, Greenside Street
Alloa, FK10 1EB
Telephone: (01259) 450000
Fax: (01259) 727450
development_services@clacks.gov.uk
www.clacksweb.org.uk