HOUSING DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Supplementary Planning Guidance Produced by South Derbyshire District Council

Purpose of the Guidelines

The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Policy 11 of The South Derbyshire Local Plan (Policy ENV 21 of the reviewed Local Plan). It updates the previous SPG and has specifically been amended in light of the advice of the revised Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) No.3 on "Housing" and the advice contained in PPG 13 "Transport".

The advice is intended to act as a guide to the design and layout of all new housing. Where new housing is proposed next to existing dwellings, the advice has particular regard to the protection of the amenity of the people who already live there.

This guidance will be applied along side all relevant policies of the Development Plan and any changes made to the Development Plan. In all cases the policy advice contained in the Plan will be the most important.

Introduction

Satisfactory design in residential development can only be achieved when the particular character of a site and its surroundings have been assessed fully and taken into account in the proposed design and layout. This assessment is now a requirement placed on housing developers by PPG3 and this Council considers the assessment of a site essential in view of the diverse character of the District. PPG3 also requires that the detailed design and layout of housing should be attractive and assist in promoting a sense of place. The Council will seek to ensure that new housing development, in terms of its detailed design, respects the best of the traditional design of South Derbyshire and promotes local distinctiveness. Poor, unimaginative designs will be resisted.

This leaflet provides general guidance on the form of new residential development. However, the Council acknowledges that in certain cases, for example in historic environments, some modification of these guidelines is necessary to reflect the particular character of such areas.

Experience shows that the most successful new developments will be those where there has been a dialogue between the Council and the designers prior to the submission of a formal application. The Council encourages this approach.

Other factors will also influence the final form of the development. These may include the need to provide a particular form of housing or a specific requirement of the building regulations. The Council acknowledges this. However, the overriding aims of the Council are:

(i) to ensure the productive use of previously developed land,
(ii) to achieve a pleasant environment in which to live that respects the character and landscape of the area in which it is situated,
(iii) safe, functional, convenient and appropriate layouts,
(iv) reasonable levels of amenity for occupants of existing and new dwellings,
(v) appropriate levels of amenity around dwellings including the provision of areas of public open space and landscaping, and,
(vi) Safeguards to ensure new development on adjoining sites is not unnecessarily prohibited.
(vii) To promote energy efficient designs.

The Guiding Principles

The Council is aware that it is national planning policy that new housing development should be directed towards existing settlements and, where it is possible, should seek to ensure the use of previously developed land.

These aims are the main planks of the government's programme of sustainable development. This Council welcomes those aims and will, wherever possible, ensure they are achieved.

These aims have the consequence of seeking to ensure housing densities are higher than previously sought and that former standards relating to private amenity space, privacy and parking provision may be relaxed. This is a change from the previous stance of the Council and specifically reflects the change in the policy of Central Government.

This Council supports these objectives and will seek, wherever it is appropriate, to pursue these policies. However, this will not be at the expense of seeking to ensure that new housing respects the local vernacular and distinctiveness of South Derbyshire.

THE LAYOUT OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS

In designing the layout of new residential areas there will be many factors that will need to be taken into consideration. Many of these will stem from the site character assessment that will be carried out by the developer.

This will inevitably lead to the development respecting the landform of the site, the form and nature of the surrounding development, the design and orientation of properties so as to maximise natural light to habitable rooms, and the use of materials that reflect local distinctiveness.

The Council recognises that the designing of residential streets around the functional requirements of cars, service vehicles and utilities, with inadequate attention being paid to other important amenity requirements, has been one of the greatest failings of much recent development and has resulted in the loss of local identity and distinctiveness. With this in mind, the Council will promote the urban design principles as set out in the companion guide to PPG 3 'Better Places To Live' and the other criteria set out earlier in this document. More specifically, the following will be encouraged:

- Layouts that give priority to the needs of pedestrians rather than the movement and parking of vehicles. This includes the use of secure rear courtyard parking which can remove the dominance of cars parked on property frontages;
- layouts which are safer for pedestrians by reducing forward visibility (and other such devices) that force drivers to proceed with caution~~,~~ and reduce their speed. ~~and make the experience anti-intuitive;~~
- Streets should display characteristics which convey an appropriate sense of place. For example, the main access road to a site could be treated as an avenue with tree planting on each side to give it a grander more spacious feel in marked contrast to the smaller more intimate enclosed streets or 'homezones' which it serves. Where possible, dwellings should be set back a minim~~um~~al distance from the footway (or to the edge of the shared surface) and the street landscaped to encourage a more intimate environment and create enclosure in the street, a common feature in more historic streets in South Derbyshire.

In addition a number of other factors will need to be taken into consideration including crime prevention, the need for re-cycling and the provision of public open space. These are considered to be particularly relevant to the policies of sustainability that are promoted by both central government and this Council. The Council has an adopted cycling strategy and new housing development may need to contribute to the delivery of that strategy either through on site or off site works.

In the interests of promoting crime prevention, pedestrian/cycle routes and areas of public open space should be overlooked, where possible, to avoid the creation of dark, intimidating areas and so reduce the potential for crime.

In some circumstances, particularly, in historic environments, the rigid application of guidelines may lead to an inappropriate form of development. In such cases the innovative nature of a design, which lends itself to the character of an historic area, such as the layout of the roads, the orientation of properties and their position within the plots, requires particular consideration.

Further advice on many of the issues raised above can be found in additional publications to this one, which have also been adopted by the Council as SPG. These are detailed at the end of this document.

BUILDING DESIGN AND MATERIALS

Traditionally, buildings in South Derbyshire have been constructed with red brick walls (although stonework is evident in some locations) with plain clay tiles or natural slate roofs. However, this traditional approach has been eroded in some parts of the district by the use of non-traditional materials.

The Council is committed to improving the built environment of South Derbyshire in accord with the advice contained in the South Derbyshire Local Plan and PPG3. Where it is necessary ~~I~~the site character assessment that will be produced should identify the design and materials used in the local area and the submitted scheme should include features that promote local distinctiveness. In some settings, for example, a traditional feature of South Derbyshire has been narrow gables and the use of plain eaves and verge details. Innovative modern design is encouraged in appropriate circumstances.

Inappropriate design that does not respect local distinctiveness will be resisted unless the applicant can demonstrate circumstances showing why a particular design has been chosen. In areas of eroded or non-traditional character the Council will seek improved design in accordance with the above principles.

Particular attention to design will be applied in Conservation Areas and adjacent to listed buildings as detailed in the South Derbyshire Local Plan and as explained in the SPG "Historic South Derbyshire". In most such cases, development will ~~generally~~ not be permitted unless full details of the proposal are submitted and they are considered appropriate to the setting.

The Council will, where appropriate, adopt further Supplementary Planning Guidance in the form of village design statements and development briefs. These will set out

what the Council consider is the local character of certain areas of South Derbyshire. Where these are published they will be material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

New built development should also be sympathetic to the landscape in which it is situated. A landscape character assessment has been undertaken and prospective house developers are advised to consult the relevant information prior to the submission of an application and take account of the advice in any planning submission.

OVERLOOKING AND OVERSHADOWING

The Council is committed to the intensive re-use of both previously developed land and to the development of green field sites, where it is deemed necessary to achieve the aims of the Development Plan. In view of this the Council no longer intends to rely on restrictive guidance on the space about and between dwellings **within** new housing schemes. However, whilst minimum standards will not be applied, the Council will expect such an approach to be justified by a high standard of design incorporating an imaginative use of space and the provision of attractive areas of open space to create a feeling of place for future residents.

Where new development abuts existing development the Council will seek to ensure that the privacy and amenity of existing occupiers ~~is~~ are respected. The following guidelines will be used as a basis for ensuring this is maintained and will be applied where existing occupiers are affected by proposed development. The guidelines aim to retain~~secure~~ a reasonable level of privacy ~~is retained~~ for existing occupiers in terms of both direct overlooking and over bearing.

In order to protect the occupiers of the existing dwelling from overlooking and to protect privacy, the primary windows of the existing dwelling should not fall within the minimum distance (as set out in the table below) within the sector of view of the primary windows of the proposed dwelling. Secondary windows to either property will not be considered by this methodology but on the particular merits of the case. Generally, however, such windows will not be protected.

In order to protect existing dwellings from over bearing and to protect outlook, the blank/non-habitable elevation of a proposed two-storey property should not breach the minimum distance within the sector of view of the relevant **ground** floor primary windows of the existing property. New single storey dwellings will be considered, in terms of their ~~affect~~ effect on existing dwellings, on their own merits.

Where lounge, dining room, kitchen or conservatory windows on a proposed dwelling (or rooms large enough to be considered as such) are located at first floor greater

distances may be required. Such cases are not the norm and will be treated on their own merits.

Side windows, including those to a conservatory will be treated as a secondary window.

The guidelines assume a relatively level topography and little or no screening. Where this is not the case, the minimum distances may be increased/decreased as appropriate.

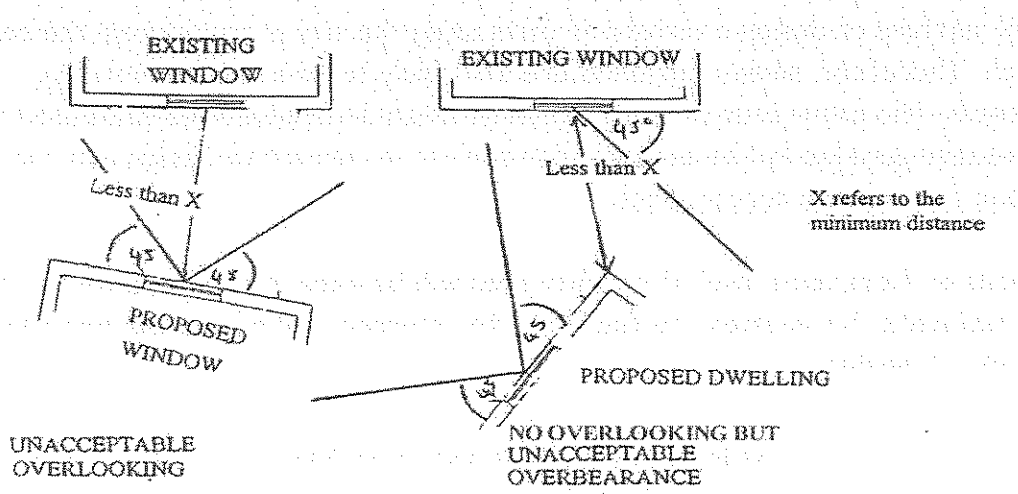
Guidelines (distances in metres)

		EXISTING DWELLING				
		Lounge/Dining Room (L/DR)	**Kitchen**	**Bedroom /study (first floor)**	**Bedroom /study (ground floor)**	**Conservatory**
PROPOSED DWELLING	L/DR	21	18	15	18	21
	Kitchen	18	15	12	15	18
	Bed/study (first floor)	21	18	15	18	21
	Bed/study (ground floor)	18	15	12	15	18
	Conservatory	21	18	15	18	21
	Blank elevation	12	9	N/M	9	9

Definitions:

N/M: No Minimum. The application is to be considered on its merits.
Primary window: Main window to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom/study or conservatory.
Secondary window: Any subsidiary window to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom, or conservatory affording light to that room. Side windows including those to a conservatory will be treated as a secondary window.
Blank elevation: An elevation with either no windows or with windows to rooms other than to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom or conservatory.

Sector of view: Set out below.



Where an application is submitted in outline, the Council should be satisfied that the standards set out above could be met. This may require the submission of an indicative plan at the outline application stage.

For dwellings of three or more storeys, greater distances, of the order of 20% more, will be required based on the particular merits of the proposal.

Where there are opposing elevations, separated by public areas, such as a highway, and having regard to the overall character of the surrounding area, the guidelines may be relaxed.

Sometimes, the garden of existing dwellings will be of such a depth that the distances between dwellings will be met regardless of how close to the boundary the new property would be sited. In these cases, the presence of first floor primary windows in the new dwelling could lead to a significant loss of privacy to the entire private space of the existing property. In such cases, the Council will seek to ensure that the proposed dwelling is located ~~an appropriate distance~~ about 5- 6 metres from the boundary of the existing dwelling.~~, of the order of half the distances in the guidelines above.~~

PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE

In order to encourage an increase in the density of housing on development sites the Council will set no minimum level of required provision. However, the design of the layout should reflect the need or otherwise for gardens. It is anticipated that many people will continue to require private gardens. ~~For example, the removal of the requirement for gardens does not necessarily mean they are not to be provided at all.~~

As in all matters of design a variety of units using the site is considered the correct approach. Therefore, ~~some~~ many units are still likely to have garden areas~~.~~ but ~~Additionally, the extra area within a site that would otherwise have been used to accommodate gardens will be available for the use in i~~innovative design may increase the scope for reduced garden sizes.

For blocks of flats some level of amenity area will be expected to be provided for the use of residents, for example, to facilitate the storage of a refuse bin and allow for the drying of washing.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND PLAY AREAS

Small areas of open space and landscaping within a housing site can add significantly to the character and sense of place of that development and will be expected to be part of the submitted detailed design of the housing layout. Whether these areas can be counted against the provision of formal play space will depend on the site specific circumstances. However, in accord with Recreation and Tourism Policy 4 of The South Derbyshire Local Plan, developers will be required to provide a more formal area of public open space to meet the needs of the development. This should be in accordance with the standards set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance "Provision of Outdoor Playing Space in New Developments". On occasion, commuted sums for the enhancement of existing facilities nearby in lieu of formal play space may be more appropriate. The Council will normally adopt recreation spaces in accordance with that guidance. ~~(see SPG).~~

Unprotected gable areas adjacent to open spaces should be avoided as damage and nuisance can be caused by ball games played against such walls. Landscaping or some private space along the wall with a solid boundary will usually avert the problems.

Changes in level should be ramped as well as, or instead of, stepped to facilitate access for disabled people to these play areas and areas of open space.

ACCESS AND PARKING

All roads and footpaths are to be designed in accordance with Derbyshire County Council's "Roads in Housing" document (under review at the time of going to press) as amended by the principles of PPG3.

PPG3 has also revised the average level of car parking to be provided within housing. The Council will, therefore, seek to ensure that an average of 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling are provided within new residential areas in accordance with the standards appended to the Local Plan. Notwithstanding this the Council will also seek to ensure that sufficient space is designed into the layout of new residential areas for visitor parking. Such parking should be integral to the scheme and should be well landscaped.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping plays an important role in enhancing the quality of the built environment. For all new housing developments a landscaping scheme will be required detailing all new planting and the retention of any existing trees and vegetation on the site. The Council will encourage the retention of existing trees and vegetation and expect ~~it~~ them to become an integral part of the scheme.

Within the National Forest structural landscaping may be required in accord with the National Forest Strategy/Planting Guidelines. Regard should also be had to the County Council's Landscape Strategy in designing schemes.

Planning Obligations

Where necessary, to make a proposal acceptable from a land use point of view and to meet the needs of new residents, planning obligations under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act may be entered into either in partnership with the Council or on a unilateral basis. These obligations will often seek off site works and have the benefit of ensuring the wider aims of the Council are met and should be in accordance with Circular 1/97. One example may be assistance in fulfilling the Council's commitment to provide an integrated cycle network.

Examples of facilities that may be secured in this way include the following:

(i) the creation of cycle routes,
(ii) the provision of improvements to traffic calming,
(iii) the provision of affordable housing,
(iv) the provision and maintenance of public areas or play space,
(v) financial contributions towards the provision of additional school places in local schools
(vi) the provision of street furniture or other works of art, and,
(vii) the provision of health facilities and other community services.

Additionally, much of the District lies within the National Forest. In areas that fall within the National Forest there will be a requirement that planting, is carried out either on or off site, or, as an alternative to both, through the provision of monies that will be put towards planting elsewhere in the forest within South Derbyshire. Details of the level of planting, or alternative provision, that will be required is contained in the National Forest Guide: "The National Forest: A Guide for Developers and Planners".

Other Matters

Other important considerations when designing housing schemes may include the following:

- the need to ensure that any new house is designed fully in accordance with the building regulations and particularly Part M "Access and facilities for disabled persons"
- the need to ensure the layout is consistent with the Council's aim to provide safe and secure residential areas
- the need for new housing to be sustainable allowing for new housing to be adapted to accommodate occupants of all ages
- the need to incorporate within the design of new houses facilities to allow for the re-use of renewable energy sources, such as solar power, and the re-use of other resources, such as water.

Definitions:

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Primary window: Main window to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom/study or conservatory.
Secondary window: Any subsidiary window to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom/study, or conservatory affording light to that room.
Blank elevation: An elevation with either no windows or with windows to rooms other than to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom/study or conservatory.

Further Advice

This leaflet is one of a series of leaflets (Supplementary Planning Guidance) published by South Derbyshire District Council Planning Service. Other documents in the series are as follows:

Car Parking Standards (as appended to the South Derbyshire Local Plan)
Cycling Strategy
Historic South Derbyshire
House Extensions
Protecting Trees
Provision of outdoor playing space in new development
Satellite Dishes
Shardlow Article 4 Direction
Melbourne Article 4 Direction

If you require any further advice or require clarification on any of the issues raised or other planning matters do please contact:

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Website: www..south-derbys.gov.uk

EXTENDING YOUR HOME

South Derbyshire District Council
Supplementary Planning Guidance

Introduction

This guidance has been prepared to help those who wish to make a planning application to extend their home. It has been written in accordance with Housing Policy 13 of the adopted South Derbyshire Local Plan. It updates the previous guidance and takes into account the revised supplementary planning guidance on Housing Design and Layout. The Council aims~~is trying~~ to ensure that extensions are in keeping with the main dwelling and the general character of the area and avoid unreasonable impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of nearby dwellings. The guidance does not try to protect the amenities of the applicant, as it is for they themselves to judge how they would be affected.

In some cases planning permission will not be needed to extend your home. An enquiry form can be obtained from the Planning Service. Once you have filled in the form a Council officer will give an opinion (free of charge) as to the need for permission.

Where permission is needed the Council will require drawings that clearly show what is proposed. It is a good idea to use a person qualified and experienced in designing residential extensions. This should help to make sure that a speedy and satisfactory decision is made and avoid unnecessary work and expense to you. Because of the wide variety of house types and street patterns in the area (and therefore possible extensions) planning officers are pleased to discuss preliminary drawings to help to make sure that a scheme is likely to meet the requirements of these guidelines. You may send drawings in or, by prior appointment, call in to discuss them with the officer responsible for your area.

Once you have obtained permission you may need to address other legal issues, for example Building Regulations, Party Walls Act and private covenants and obligations.

Appearance

With such a wide variety of types of house and layout in the environment there can be no hard and fast rule about how an extension should be designed. This can only be decided by careful examination of a particular building and its surroundings. Special considerations apply to listed buildings and conservation areas and "Historic South Derbyshire" (a further publication available from the Planning Office) will be used to consider the design of proposals affecting these. Outside settlements the Council will try and make sure that the impact on the countryside is minimal – this can mean that an extension is not as large as you may wish it to be.

For all applications, the following points will be looked at:

Scale

What an extension looks like can have an important impact on the character of an area. As a general principle it is a good idea to ensure that an extension looks like a smaller part of the main dwelling, in a way that the main part of the building is not

overpowered by it. This becomes particularly important when the main dwelling displays the traditional local distinctiveness of South Derbyshire. However, it is possible to gain a lot of extra space by designing the extension so that it looks smaller than it actually is. For example instead of a large extension to the side of a house, a smaller side extension and a rear extension could be used to achieve a similar amount of space.

Character and Form

When extending it is usually necessary to reflect the existing character, form and proportion of buildings. This means paying careful attention to gable widths, roof form, angles of roof pitches, the pattern and detailing of window and door openings, eaves and verges and any other particular detail characteristic of the house. The fine detailing of an extension can be crucial in fitting in with the main building. Where streets have an obvious character (e.g. Victorian and inter-war streets) it will be particularly important to ensure careful attention to detail. In more modern housing estates, where dwellings are not all the same, there can be more flexibility, but the general principles set out above will still be looked at. In some cases, for example in a street of houses set at regular intervals, care will need to be taken when extending to the side to avoid a 'terraced effect'. [illustration]

Position

The front of a dwelling is generally the most sensitive to alteration. Extensions here may not always be acceptable, particularly where there is an obvious 'building line'. Where an extension is acceptable, the Council will look very carefully at the features that make up the main building, especially roof pitches, window patterns and other architectural details.

Side extensions can also have a significant effect on what a building will look like. Where side extensions are acceptable, particularly if higher than single storey, care should be taken to make sure that they look like a smaller part of the main dwelling. However in some cases, for example at the end of a terrace, the best design solution may be to add an extension at the same height and width as the terrace. Rear extensions should have fewer problems, but two-storey extensions, in particular, should not upset the basic shape and design of the house.

Roof extensions will normally be very noticeable and in some cases may not be acceptable. Small roof dormers with pitched roofs set well below the ridge generally look better because they are less likely to harm the character of a building. Roof extensions to the rear are likely to be more acceptable but must still be in keeping with the building. Flat ~~roovesroofs~~ on two storey extensions will not normally be allowed.

Materials

The use of the right materials is very important and the Council will usually require that materials match the existing building or will want to see samples for approval. Sometimes, for example where an existing building has been rendered, it may be better to use materials that do not match, although it is usually a good idea to find materials that have similar colour, size and texture. Setting an extension in reveal to existing walls can help to reduce the visual impact of a slight mis-match in materials.

Effect on Neighbours

The effect of an extension on neighbours often causes most concern. Because one person's idea of what is acceptable is not necessarily the same as another's, the Council has written guidelines to be fair to both sides, although it is always necessary to consider proposals on their own merits. Normally, extensions that meet the guidelines will be acceptable. The main issues that concern neighbours are overlooking (or loss of privacy) and overshadowing (or overbearing).

In order to protect the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings from overlooking and to protect privacy, the 'primary' windows of the existing dwellings should not fall within the minimum distance (as set out in the table below) within the sector of view of the 'primary' windows of the proposed extension. These guidelines will be applied on the particular merits of the situation but not to side and 'secondary' windows to either property as this would be likely to result in those applying being unfairly disadvantaged. Where the view between windows can be prevented (e.g. by a screen wall or fence of reasonable height) then the minimum distances may be reduced. Shrubs and trees are not normally reliable as a screen because they may not always be there.

In order to protect windows in existing dwellings from overshadowing, proposed two-storey extensions should not breach the minimum distance within the 'sector of view' of the relevant ground floor 'primary' windows of the existing property. Single storey extensions will be decided on their own merits, on the basis of preserving privacy along the lines set out above.

The guidelines assume that sites are relatively level, with little or no screening and normal ground floor and first floor layouts. The guidance also assumes straightforward identification of front, rear and side elevations. Where situations arise that do not readily fit these guidelines, decisions will be made on the merits of the case. For example balconies and full height first floor windows can exacerbate overlooking.

Guidelines

	Existing Dwelling				
	Lounge/Dining Room (L/DR)	Kitchen	Bedroom (first floor)	Bedroom (ground floor)	Conservatory
Proposed Dwelling					
L/DR	21	18	15	18	21
Kitchen	18	15	12	15	18
Bed (first floor)	21	18	15	18	21
Bed (ground floor)	18	15	12	15	18
Conservatory	21	18	15	18	21
Blank elevation	12	9	N/M	9	9

Definitions

N/M: No Minimum. The application is to be considered on its merits.

Primary window: Main window to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom or conservatory.

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Blank elevation: An elevation with either no windows or with windows to rooms other than to a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bedroom or conservatory.

Sector of view: Set out below. (diagram).

All distances are set out in metres.

Where elevations are opposite each other, separated by public areas, such as a road, and having regard to the overall character of the surrounding area, the guidelines may be relaxed.

Sometimes, the garden of neighbouring dwellings will be so long that the distances between dwellings will meet the guidelines regardless of how close to the boundary the new extension would be. In these cases, the view from first floor 'primary' windows in the new extension could lead to a significant loss of privacy to the entire private space of the ~~existing~~ neighbouring property. In such cases, the Council will try to make sure that the proposed extension is set back a suitable distance from the boundary of the neighbouring dwelling.

Access and Parking

When looking at proposals for extensions, the Council will try and make sure that there is enough parking at the property that meets with current parking standards. However, these are maximum requirements and will be applied flexibly. As of November 2002 the standards are:

1 Bedroom houses	1.5 spaces
2 & 3 bedroom houses	2 spaces
4 and more bedroom houses	3 spaces