

www.southend.gov.uk

Householder Extensions Advice Leaflet

southend on sea borough council
PO Box 5557, Civic Centre
Victoria Avenue
Southend-on-Sea
Essex Ss2 6ZF
doete@southend.gov.uk
01702 215330



Further information on the principles of good design, detailed design, sustainable development and development in the historic context can be found in the full Design and Townscape Guide which is available to view on the Council's website www.southend.gov.uk

This leaflet can be translated into alternative languages and can be provided in alternative formats. Please contact 01702 215408

southend on sea borough council
local development framework

delivering regeneration and growth
Jan 2009





In most cases, extensions should be subservient to the parent building and draw reference from the existing fenestration and proportions.

Alterations and Additions to Existing Buildings

This guidance has been taken from the Design and Townscape Guide and is in line with Saved Borough Local Plan Policy C11 - New Buildings, Extensions and Alterations

Alterations to existing buildings should be done so as not to destroy existing character. Even minor changes such as changing the window design can be detrimental. Key features and proportions should be retained where they are an integral part of the character.

Building an extension is one way of adapting to the changing needs of a household or business and most properties have the capacity to be extended in some form. A well designed and integrated extension can complement and even enhance an existing property, whereas a poorly designed addition can easily destroy the original character and have a detrimental effect on the streetscene.

Whether the proposed extension is modern or traditional, the simplest way to ensure that it does not conflict with the existing character of the property is to draw references from the parent building. For example:

- All extensions should be well designed, well detailed and respond to the unique constraints and opportunities of the site.
- The scale of the extension should be respectful of the scale of the present building - additions that are too large will be over dominant.
- Extensions that appear subservient to the parent building tend to fit more comfortably and integrate better with the existing building. Matching roof styles and pitches can help integrate old and new.
- Extensions should respect the amenity of neighbouring buildings and ensure not to adversely

affect light, outlook or privacy of the habitable rooms in adjacent properties.

- Where single storeys join to double storeys there should be a step in the plan form to give articulation and differentiation to the elevation

Permitted Development

If you live in a house, you can make certain types of minor changes to your home without needing to apply for planning permission. These rights are called 'permitted development'. They derive from a general planning permission granted not by the Local Authority but by Parliament (the General Permitted Development - Town and Country Planning Order, 1997 and amendment 2 2008 (the GPDO)). Flats, maisonettes and commercial properties have no permitted development rights.

However, in some areas of the Borough and individual properties, permitted development rights are more restricted. If you live in a Conservation Area, or an area covered by an Article 4 Direction, you will need to apply for planning permission for certain types of work which do not need permission in other areas. If you live in a listed building all works that affect the character of the building will require listed building consent.

It is always advisable to check with Southend Borough Council Planning Department whether planning permission is needed before commencing any development.

Further details about the General Permitted Development Order can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government Website www.communities.gov.uk the Planning Portal Website www.planningportal.gov.uk and the Council's Website www.southend.gov.uk.

If the project also requires an outside building to store fuel or related equipment the same rules apply to that building as for other extensions and garden outbuildings.

Heat Pumps

Installing a ground source or water source heat pump system does not usually need planning permission and should fall within permitted development rights.

Air source heat pumps will become permitted development as soon as standards and safeguards have been established to deal with noise.

If you live in a listed building or a conservation area, however, you should contact the Council beforehand.

Solar Panels

In many cases fixing solar panels to the roof of a single dwelling house is likely to be considered 'permitted development' under planning law with no need to apply for planning permission.

There are, however, important exceptions and provisos which must be observed.

These permitted development rights apply to houses. If you live in a flat and are considering fitting solar panels you are advised to contact the Council for guidance.

Roof or Wall Mounted Solar Panels

The following limits apply to roof and wall mounted solar panels:

- Panels should not be installed above the ridgeline and should project no more than 200mm from the roof or wall surface.
- If your property is a listed building installation is likely to require an application for listed building consent, even where planning permission is not needed.
- If your property is in a conservation area consent is required when panels are to be fitted on the

This front extension in Grand Parade maintains the traditional features but interprets them in a modern way.



principal or side elevation walls and they are visible from the highway. If panels are to be fitted to a building in your garden or grounds they should not be visible from the highway.

Standalone Solar Panels

The following limits apply to standalone solar panels:

- Should be no higher than four metres
- Should be at least 5m from boundaries
- Size of array is limited to 9 sq m or 3m wide and 3m deep
- Should not be installed within boundary of a listed building
- In the case of land in a conservation area it should not be visible from the highway.
- Only one stand alone solar installation is permitted.

All solar installations are also subject to the following conditions:

- Panels on a building should be sited, so far as is practicable, to minimise the effect on the appearance of the building.
- They should be sited, so far as is practicable, to minimise the effect on the amenity of the area.
- When no longer needed for microgeneration they should be removed as soon as possible.

Wind Turbines

The planning regime for installing wind turbines is complex and evolving.

At present in most cases you will need to apply for planning permission from your local authority to add a domestic wind turbine to your house, or grounds surrounding your home.

A full front extension in Danes Way has transformed this property from a 1970s style to one more in keeping with the streetscene.





A new porch has been used effectively to unite this pair of semis into a single house.

lead into flat roofs behind are not considered an acceptable design solution.

Garages should normally be set back at least one car's length from the footway to prevent cars parked in the driveway from overhanging the pavement. Integral garages that are set back behind the first floor building line can create a dark void below which may be detrimental to both the main property and the streetscene. This will not be considered acceptable. Where there is not enough space to achieve this alternative off street parking arrangements, such as parking to the rear, should be considered.

In exceptional circumstances, buildings that have their frontages on the highway may be able to incorporate a garage, however it should form an integral part of the design of the development and include an automated entry system.

Detached Garages and Other Detached Buildings

Detached garages and other ancillary buildings within the grounds of an existing building should be designed to complement the character of the associated building. As with all new buildings they should embrace the design principles set out in this document. Garages in particular should be set back from the pavement to allow room to pull up without causing obstruction.

Conversion of Garages to Habitable Rooms

Converting an existing garage to a habitable room may be one relatively easy option for extending a property but will not always be considered acceptable in principle. The viability of this option will depend on whether the parking space in the garage is required to meet the demand of the enlarged property and whether an acceptable design solution that successfully blends the converted garage with the rest of the dwelling can be found. Provided the loss of parking can be justified, a design that achieves a seamless integration with the existing house is



This custom designed conservatory is a significant asset to this property in Thorpe Bay.

normally the best option. This should include matching the materials and fenestration with the main building. However, where the garage is a particular feature that is replicated in a row of properties or where it projects significantly forward of the main front building line this type of proposal may be considered out of character with the existing building and the wider streetscene.

Front Extensions

Extensions to the front of existing properties are generally discouraged as they alter the relationship of property within the street and may be detrimental to the wider townscape. Where front extensions are considered not to harm the local townscape care must be taken to ensure that they are of an appropriate size and scale, that they show consideration for the established street frontage and do not unreasonably obstruct light to habitable rooms within the existing property or on the flank or front walls of adjoining properties.

Porches

Porches are a common addition to residential properties. Most property entrances are located on the front elevation and therefore it is particularly important that the design of the porch is of an appropriate scale, well integrated with the parent building and does not obscure or conflict with existing features such as bay windows.

Projecting porches are not normally appropriate in the historic environment. In these areas many of the properties have recessed open porches which contribute to the special character and the wider streetscene and these should be retained.

Conservatories

Conservatories are a common type of rear extension. Many new conservatories are not site specific designs so it is important that the size and style chosen is appropriate for the existing building. Generally the style of the conservatory should respect the period of the original property. This can be in either a traditional

way that blends in with the period of the building or a contrasting simple modern design that does not try and compete with the original building. Choosing the appropriate design and materials is especially important in conservation areas. In all cases the placement of any conservatory should normally be at ground level and preferably located away from the boundary to avoid overlooking.

Balconies

Balconies, particularly on front elevations are a traditional feature of seaside towns such as Southend. As an integral element of local character existing balconies should not be infilled. Where new balconies are proposed on existing buildings, care needs to be taken to ensure that the design is of a high quality, of an appropriate style for the period of property and that the privacy of neighbours is not compromised. Obscure screens may be used to prevent overlooking but these should not be at the expense of good design. Balconies created by cutting into the roofslope are a low impact alternative to the traditional projecting balcony and are more appropriate in some areas. All new balconies will need to meet building regulations and should be designed to minimise the risk of crime.

For new developments balconies and roof terraces can be a good way of adding visual interest and layering to a building whilst also providing additional private outdoor space. In flatted developments a usable private balcony or terrace can be a valuable asset to the future resident.

Roof Extensions and Dormer Windows

Proposals for additional roof accommodation within existing properties must respect the style, scale and form of the existing roof design and the character of the wider townscape. Dormer windows, where appropriate, should appear incidental in the roof slope (i.e. set in from both side walls, set well below the ridgeline and well above the eaves). The position of the new opening should correspond with the rhythm and

The dormers on this chalet in Thorpe Bay draw reference from the ground floor windows in their design and alignment but are subservient in scale.



align with existing fenestration on lower floors. (Note: one central dormer may also be an appropriate alternative.) The size of any new dormer windows, particularly on the front and side elevations, should be smaller to those on lower floors and the materials should be sympathetic to the existing property. The space around the window must be kept to a minimum. Large box style dormers should be avoided, especially where they have public impact, as they appear bulky and unsightly. Smaller individual dormers are preferred.

There are many types of dormers and it is important to choose the most appropriate one for the style of property. For example small dormers with a vertical emphasis tend to suit the Borough's older properties, whereas thin dormers with a horizontal emphasis (flat roofed or catslide) are better suited to the chalet style post war properties.

Some contexts, for example where there are unbroken roof slopes in a terrace or street, where the existing pitch is too shallow or where it would over dominate neighbouring properties, dormers and roof extensions will mainly be inappropriate. Where dormers to the front would disrupt the overall balance of the property or the wider streetscene they also will be considered unacceptable.

Side dormers often dominate the front elevation and, where appropriate, will only be acceptable where they are small scale, set back from the front building line and have limited visual impact.

In some cases it may be possible to increase the roofspace and remove the need for a side dormer by changing a hipped roof to a gable end. This type of development can be more acceptable than a side dormer provided it is not out of character with the streetscene or leads to an unbalanced street block or pair of semis i.e. It is more appropriate for a detached or end of terrace property than only one of a matching pair of semi's.

This gable has been glazed to form an attractive but subtle roof extension which makes the most of the sea views.



Large box dormers dominate the roofspace and are detrimental to the character of the house and the wider streetscene



Dormer windows should always appear incidental in the roofspace

Rooflights are a less obtrusive, cheaper alternative to dormer windows and may be more appropriate in certain circumstances. Flush fitted 'conservation style' rooflights are less conspicuous and are therefore preferred, especially in conservation areas. In the historic environment, rooflights may only be acceptable if they are not visible from the street.

All dormers and rooflights should be kept away from other forms within the roof including chimneys, dormers and gable features, etc.

'Mansard roof' style extensions are inappropriate for the style of buildings within the Borough. They are unsightly and often significantly increase the scale of the property to the detriment of the wider streetscene.

Extensions that raise the ridge height of an existing building are only considered acceptable in principle where they complement the design of the original building and where they do not break the continuity of the streetscene or appear overbearing.

Renewable Technologies

Southend Borough Council is keen to promote is keen to promote energy efficiency throughout the Borough, however it also has a duty to protect the quality of the existing built and natural environments, particularly with respect to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. In some cases, therefore the need to preserve the local environment will outweigh the need to encourage residents to use renewable technology. Accordingly, a balance needs to be struck between energy efficiency and environmental considerations. Some types of installations are permitted development and may be carried out to houses (not flats or commercial premises) without the need for planning permission. Where planning permission or listed building consent is required each case will be assessed on its merits.

Chimney stacks are integral to the character of a property and should be retained



dormers on the front and side elevations should be small and unobtrusive and substantial roof slopes should be maintained either side of the dormer

Micro – Combined Heat and Power (CHP)

Planning permission is not normally needed when installing a micro-combined heat and power system in a house if the work is all internal. If the installation requires a flue outside, however, it will normally be permitted development if the conditions outlined below are met:

- Flues on the rear or side elevation of the building are allowed to a maximum of one metre above the highest part of the roof.
- If the building is listed or in a designated area even if you enjoy permitted development rights it is advisable to check with the Council before a flue is fitted.
- Consent is also likely to be needed for internal alterations. In a conservation area the flue should not be fitted on the principal or side elevation if it would be visible from a highway.

If the project also requires an outside building to store fuel or related equipment the same rules apply to that building as for other extensions and garden outbuildings.

Biomass System

Planning permission is not normally needed when installing a biomass system in a house if the work is all internal. If the installation requires a flue outside, however, it will normally be permitted development if the conditions outlined below are met.

- Flues on the rear or side elevation of the building are allowed to a maximum of one metre above the highest part of the roof.
- If the building is listed or in a designated area even if you enjoy permitted development rights it is advisable to check with the Council before a flue is fitted. Consent is also likely to be needed for internal alterations.
- In a conservation area the flue should not be fitted on the principal or side elevation if it would be visible from a highway.

Types of Extension

Rear Extensions

The easiest and most popular way to extend your home is to build a rear extension. These additions are generally preferred to other types of extension because they usually have little or no impact on the public realm and therefore preserve the character of the streetscene. Whether or not there are any public views, the design of rear extensions is still important and every effort should be made to integrate them with the character of the parent building, particularly in terms of scale, materials and the relationship with existing fenestration and roof form.

Rear extensions can sometimes adversely affect neighbouring properties through overlooking, and blocking of light. The design should therefore ensure that these are kept within reasonable limits. Each application will be assessed on a site by site basis. Extensions on the boundary can have a significant affect on the neighbouring property and may not be considered appropriate.

Proposals which would result in a neighbouring window, as the sole source of light to a habitable room, being contained between two projections will require careful consideration to ensure that light, outlook and spaciousness to the adjoining property is retained. In some cases this type of extension may be unacceptable in principle.

Side Extensions

Many properties in the Borough have the capacity to extend to the side. However, side extensions can easily become overbearing and dominate the original property. In order to avoid this, side extensions should be designed to appear subservient to the parent building. This can generally be achieved by ensuring the extension is set back behind the existing building frontage line and that its design, in particular the roof, is fully integrated with the existing property. Poorly

This side extension in Leighcliff Road complements the property's original character whilst bringing a new dimension and excitement to the street.



designed side extensions will detrimentally affect the proportions and character of the existing property and so extreme care should be taken to ensure the original design qualities are preserved. Set backs can also alleviate the difficulty of keying new materials (particularly brickwork) into old and disguises slight variations.

Where a terracing effect would be out of character, it is important to maintain a degree of separation between two neighbouring properties. This separation should be maintained at all levels - narrowing an extension at first floor level creates an unacceptable design and must be avoided. Extensions over one storey should be set off the boundary to provide an equivalent amount of contextual separation that reflects the prevailing local character and should always be continuous in their form.

Side extensions will undoubtedly impact on neighbouring properties and care should be taken to ensure that they do not cause an unreasonable loss of light. This is particularly important when the adjacent property has side windows, to habitable rooms, which are the sole source of light. Each application will be assessed on a site by site basis.

Extensions incorporating Garages

Garages should be designed so that they do not dominate the parent building or the streetscene and in most cases they should be set back from the front building line. New garages should be large enough to accommodate a medium sized car and bicycles but not so large that they appear out of proportion with the main building.

The roof design and materials of a garage extension is the key to its successful integration with the parent building. It is usually a good idea to draw reference from the roof of the parent building. Where this is not possible a parapet is preferred over a flat roof as it provides a neater solution. Small pitched roofs that

This side extension integrated well with the existing building without being over dominant or upsetting the proportions of the original buildings

