

# **Householder Design Guidance**

## **Supplementary Planning Document**

### **January 2017**



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આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર ૫૨ કોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کے لئے ہر اور مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance provides help for people who wish to extend or alter their property. It sets out the general principles which should be considered when designing an extension as well as giving advice on particular types of extensions and alterations. The aim is to achieve high quality extensions which respect their surroundings and protect the amenity of neighbours.
- 1.2 This guidance is in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document. Once adopted, this SPD should be afforded significant weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 1.3 This SPD supports the design standards set within Policy 17 (Design of New Buildings) of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Policies HS5 (House Extensions) and BNE1 (Design Criteria for New Development) of the adopted Chorley Local Plan (2012-2026) and the Central Lancashire Design Supplementary Planning Document. These documents can be found in the [planning policy](#) section of our website. SPD replaces the Householder Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (February 2008). If properties have, historically, been altered in a manner that conflicts with this guidance, such changes will not set a precedent for future decisions, where planning permission is required.

## Do I Need Planning Permission?

- 1.4 If you are considering extending or altering your home you should first establish whether or not you require planning permission. Planning permission can be required for a range of operations from digging a ditch to constructing a raised patio or decked area, pruning a tree, erecting a conservatory or extension or converting an outbuilding.
- 1.5 In some cases “Permitted Development Rights” may allow you to make alterations to, or extend, your home without applying for planning permission or only applying for “Prior Approval”. The regulations relating to permitted development are complex and in some instances, permitted development rights may have been withdrawn by the imposition of an Article 4 Direction in a conservation area, or a planning condition attached to an earlier permission.
- 1.6 Advice can also be found on if planning permission is needed on the [Planning Portal](#) website.  
View information on planning permission for [extensions](#). There is also technical guidance (Permitted Development Rights for Householders April 2016) which provides advice on how to interpret the legislation.
- 1.7 Other consents which need to be considered are referred to in para 1.15.

## **Pre-Application Advice**

1.8 The Council has a formal pre-application advice service for planning schemes, only for people who need planning permission. It provides a general level of advice to members of the public about the planning process without the need to pay a fee for householder developments. More information on [pre application advice](#). The Council's duty planning officer can also offer general advice during office hours. Advice is also available from the [Planning Portal](#) website.

## **Planning Requirements for all Planning Applications**

1.9 The Council has prepared a validation checklist which outlines the level of detail/the information required for different types of application. This document, together with the necessary application forms, is available on the Councils website [planning page](#).

## **The Site Appraisal**

1.10 It is important when beginning to think about extending your property to undertake a site appraisal to inform the shape, position, size and scale of the extension which in turn will inform the level of additional accommodation which is possible. Any alteration or extension should be designed to relate to and enhance its surroundings. A careful analysis of the existing building and its setting will provide a good basis for the design of any scheme. Consideration should be given to the type of design; and contemporary designs that do blend in can be just as successful and acceptable where they complement the existing context.

1.11 When considering applications for extensions and alterations, there are many planning related considerations that will be taken into account by the Council. These include, for example:

- The design quality of the extension;
- Its impact on the amenity of neighbours;
- Its relationship with adjoining properties;
- Impact on the streetscene/landscape and character of the area;
- Impact on protected species such as bats, newts and some birds;
- Access, parking and vehicle turning arrangements;
- Impact on trees and other landscape features such as watercourses, ponds and hedgerows;
- Impact on archaeology or other heritage assets;
- Impact on utilities assets.

1.12 It is important to incorporate flood risk into a design prior to submitting a planning application. An applicant will need to follow the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Standing Advice if they are carrying out a flood risk assessment for a development classed as a minor extension (household extensions or non-domestic extensions less than 250 square metres) in Flood zone 2 or 3. View [The Environment Agency's Standing Advice](#)

1.13 Certain other matters, that are not land use planning matters, will not be taken into account by the Council but need to be explored by the householder as they could impact on the proposal. These include, for example:

- Whether or not third party consents are required;
- Property values;
- Rights of access;
- Restrictive covenant

## Talking to your Neighbours

1.14 Before applying for planning permission it is a good idea to speak to neighbours who may be affected by the proposal or other interested bodies such as Parish Councils. This can help to resolve potential conflicts at an early stage and also reduce the number of objections. Once an application is received the Council will undertake consultations with relevant statutory bodies and adjacent properties and residents who may be affected by the proposal.

## Other Consents and Regulations

1.15 As this SPD and the principles contained within it relate solely to planning issues you should be aware that other consents may be required before works are undertaken. These may include:

- **Building Regulations** – These cover/control the technical aspects of construction and are entirely separate from the planning system.
- **Land Owner** – You may need consent from previous or adjoining land-owners depending on the nature of the works proposed. Planning permission or any similar consent does not override rights derived from ownership or other sources.
- **Party Wall Act** – This controls works that are close to, or on, the boundary of your property, or affect an existing boundary or party wall. Information is available at the Planning Portal at: View more information on [party walls](#) on the planning portal website  
Advice can also be obtained from an appropriately qualified person (solicitor), but it is not a matter that is controlled by the Council.
- **Water, Waste and Pollution Controls** – Advice on these matters should be sought from the Environment Agency, from whom consent may also be required.
- **Protected Species** – The planning authority is required to take account of the impact of any development on protected species and habitats and this will be considered as part of the planning application process. Planning permission does not override the legislation relating to protected species.
- **United Utilities** has a Developer Services team available to help you through every stage of your development; adhering to these processes will help in avoiding any potential delays in the future: View more on the [United Utilities developer services team](#)

## Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

1.16 Over 400 buildings in the Borough are of national significance in terms of their architectural or historic interest. These are designated as Listed Buildings. A smaller number of buildings have been identified, on similar grounds, as locally important. In addition, nine areas are currently designated as Conservation Areas:

- St George's Street, Chorley
- St Laurence's, Chorley
- Abbey Village
- Croston
- Rivington

1.17 View [location of Listed Buildings and Conservation areas](#) on our website.

1.18 More planning controls apply to Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas than elsewhere to allow the Local Planning Authority to preserve, protect and enhance their heritage value. Separate consent is required for demolition and special controls apply in conservation areas to the display of advertisements and in relation to trees. Whilst it may be possible to alter or extend listed buildings or buildings in conservation areas, proposals often require a greater understanding of design, materials and context than elsewhere. For Listed Buildings any proposals should also be accompanied by a heritage statement, which includes details on how the proposal takes into account the significance of the heritage asset and avoids causing harm.

1.19 There may also be occasions where dwellings are located in or close to Registered Parks and Gardens or Scheduled Ancient Monuments and these will need to be reflected in the proposal.

1.20 It is strongly recommended that you contact the Council for advice prior to undertaking detailed design work in respect of heritage assets.

1.21 Works to locally listed buildings are less tightly controlled but schemes should comply with the general guidelines set out in this document. Reference should also be made to the Chorley Local Plan and Core Strategy design policies at paragraph 1.3

### Key Points: Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

- Extensions should be designed to preserve or enhance the special character of Conservation Areas.
- Extensions to Listed Buildings should respect the character and scale of the original building and be designed to complement that character.

## **Tree Preservation Orders**

1.22 A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) protects trees (all types and species, including hedgerow trees, but not hedges, bushes or shrubs) which are considered to make a significant visual amenity value. impact on their local surroundings. A TPO can cover anything from a single tree to groups of trees and woodland. Trees in conservation areas are also protected.

View [Guidance on TPOs](#).

1.23 It is an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot or wilfully destroy a tree without the planning authority's permission.

### **Key Points: Tree Preservation Orders**

- A TPO is normally made without giving prior notice to the land owner. There is chance to make representations after notice has been given.
- An application must be made to the Council before any works to a protected tree are made.
- New requests to protect trees can be made to the Council in writing stating the reasons after which the Council will undertake an assessment.

## **2 Specific Advice**

- 2.1 The following sections provide specific advice about certain types of extensions or alterations and should be read in the context of relevant policies within the Development Plan. As schemes are likely to relate to several of the following sections, relevant advice from each should be applied.
- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning guidance on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It states that; "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people".
- 2.3 When considering extending/undertaking alterations to any residential property, good design should begin with an appraisal of the context, whether it be distinct features in the immediate locality, landscape features, including trees, site conditions such as variations in land levels, the existing dominant architectural language or style and the overall mass and scale, of the parent building or found in the immediate area. See paragraphs 1.10 to 1.13.
- 2.4 Permitted development rights allow householders to improve and extend their homes without the need to seek a specific planning permission where that would be out of proportion with the impacts of works carried out. For definition "dwelling house" does not include buildings containing one or more flats or a single flat contained within a building. The definition of an "original" building means a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 where it was built before that date, and as it was built if built after that date. Where planning permission has been granted for a replacement dwelling, the term "original" means the new replacement dwelling becomes the original.
- 2.5 The Central Lancashire Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance on the threshold size of extensions in the Green Belt and the Area of Other Open Countryside (Local Plan Policy BNE2) within Chorley borough. Proposals for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt and the Area of other Open Countryside, which have an increase of over 50% of the volume of the original building, will be considered inappropriate.
- 2.6 Any extension can have a noticeable effect on the amenities of neighbours. In particular there can be an overbearing effect on or a poor outlook created for neighbours where main windows to habitable rooms face onto new development. This can be exacerbated by development on sloping sites. Therefore, where the proposed slab levels are 0.5 metres or more above that of neighbouring existing housing, the above spacing guidelines should be increased by 1 metre for every 0.25 metre difference in the slab levels.

### **Front Extensions**

- 2.7 Extensions that project forward of the original building have a significant effect on the building itself and on the wider streetscape. Inappropriate front extensions upset building lines and architectural rhythms, and appear unduly prominent in the streetscene. In general terms, they are rarely acceptable.

- 2.8 Front extensions may be acceptable, however, in cases for example where there is no distinct building line or form, in a street with a wide variety of architectural styles. It is wise to seek informal advice at an early stage from the Council, should you wish to pursue a front extension.
- 2.9 The most common form of front extension is a porch. In order to ensure that it does not significantly alter the principal elevation of the building by altering its focal point, or changing its character, the form and scale of a proposed porch should respect the proportions of the original building, and should complement rather than compete with existing features, such as bay windows.
- 2.10 On a terraced street where porches are not characteristic of the original design, their addition can have a detrimental effect on terraced houses; as terraces depend upon conformity, rhythm and consistent design to provide much of their architectural interest and integrity. In such cases a single porch can cause severe detriment to the character and appearance of the whole terrace and would be resisted by the Council.

### **Key Points: Front Extensions**

- Are not acceptable where they would upset established building lines and character.
- In cases where porches may be acceptable, they should be subservient to the original building and complement rather than compete with existing features.
- Porches are rarely acceptable on terraced properties, unless they are identified as having been an original feature of a terrace.

## **Side Extensions**

- 2.11 The side elevation of a property will often provide scope for an extension. In such cases the success of a design will generally depend upon establishing a good relationship with the style and form of the building and the surrounding streetscape. It is important that the design relates to the whole structure of which it is part, whether that is a simple dwelling, a pair of semi-detached or a group of dwellings.
- 2.12 An extension should generally be subservient in design to the parent property. To achieve this, elevations should ideally be set back from the existing elevation and the ridge height made lower than the main ridge by a minimum of 1 metre.

## **Semi-Detached and Terraced Houses**

- 2.13 Extensions to such dwellings must be subservient and maintain the overall integrity of the streetscape. Particular care is needed to avoid upsetting the balance between the subject building and its twin or neighbours. Subservience can be achieved in many ways, as outlined elsewhere in this document, including stepping the front elevation back and lowering eaves and ridge.

## Detached Houses

- 2.14 There is a greater degree of flexibility when extending detached properties, especially where there is no obvious streetscape pattern. Subservience remains important, however, as it allows the viewer to appreciate the original building and extension, and ensures that the extension does not dwarf the original building.

## Gaps Between Buildings – The Terracing Effect

- 2.15 The gaps between buildings often contribute to the quality and appearance of a street or locality. Care must therefore be taken, to ensure that this character is not eroded by building on these gaps and changing the balance between buildings and spaces.
- 2.16 Where spaces are filled by side extensions, the buildings can appear cramped. This effect, known as the ‘terracing effect’, creates the impression of one enormous and unrelieved mass of building.
- 2.17 In order to overcome this, two storey side extensions should normally leave a gap of at least 1m between the extension and the boundary with the adjacent property. If however this distance cannot be achieved, a reduction may be considered acceptable where a substantial set back from the front elevation is provided (minimum of 2 metres) sufficient to give a visual break between two properties.



*Failing to employ adequate setbacks or principles of subservience can result in the creation of a terracing effect and the appearance of an unrelieved mass of building frontage*

## **Key Points: Side Extensions**

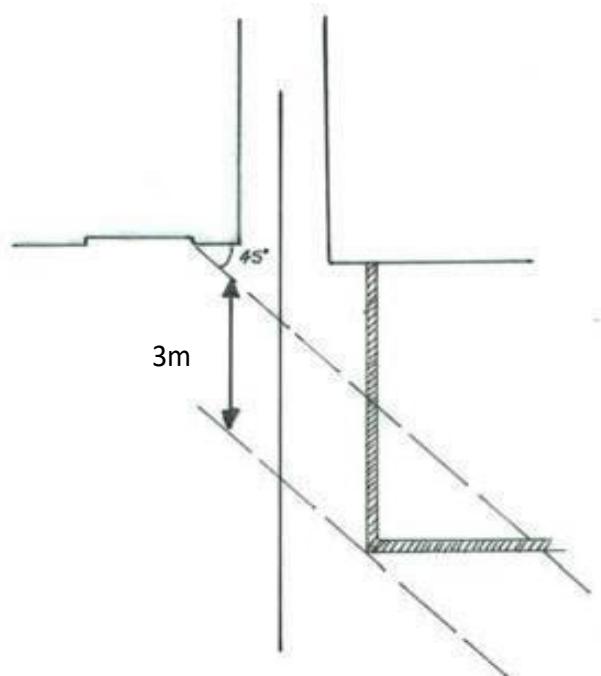
- Should not lead to an unacceptable loss of space between an original building and its neighbours.
- Should be subservient to the original building.
- Should be set back no less than 1 metre from the main elevation of the existing building
- In order to avoid terracing, side extensions should leave a reasonable gap (at least 1m) between an extension and the boundary with the adjacent property, or incorporate in some circumstances a substantial set back from the front elevation which creates a clear visual break between properties.
- If there is no route to the rear of the property there should be sensitive siting/storage of wheelie bins.
- The interface distances at paragraph 2.6 will be applied where there is a difference in levels between properties.

## **Rear Extensions**

- 2.18 There are many different styles of rear extension and it is important that the design complements the original building, the key issues normally being the roof arrangement, massing and detailing. Due to the more substantial scale of a two-storey rear extension, greater care should be taken with its design and detailing to ensure that a satisfactory relationship is achieved between the original building and the extension.
- 2.19 Rear extensions may not be seen from the public highway but can have a very significant impact upon the amenity of neighbours. Equally such extensions impact upon the space around buildings, which is an important consideration in relation to the character and amenity of an area.
- 2.20 Whilst there are differences in terms of what is acceptable between single and two storey extensions, the Council uses the '45-degree' guidelines. It relates to main living areas such as living rooms, bedrooms, dining rooms and kitchens, it usually does not apply to utility rooms, toilets, staircases or landings. This seeks to:
- Maintain a satisfactory relationship between existing buildings and proposed extensions.
  - Avoid overbearing impacts on adjacent properties and amenity areas.
  - Prevent excessive loss of daylight or overshadowing of habitable rooms and amenity spaces of adjacent properties.
- 2.21 In relation to neighbouring conservatories the angle will be drawn from the edge of the pane of glass closest to the back of the original house. Where there is a significant change in ground levels a stricter standard will be applied.

## Single Storey Rear Extensions

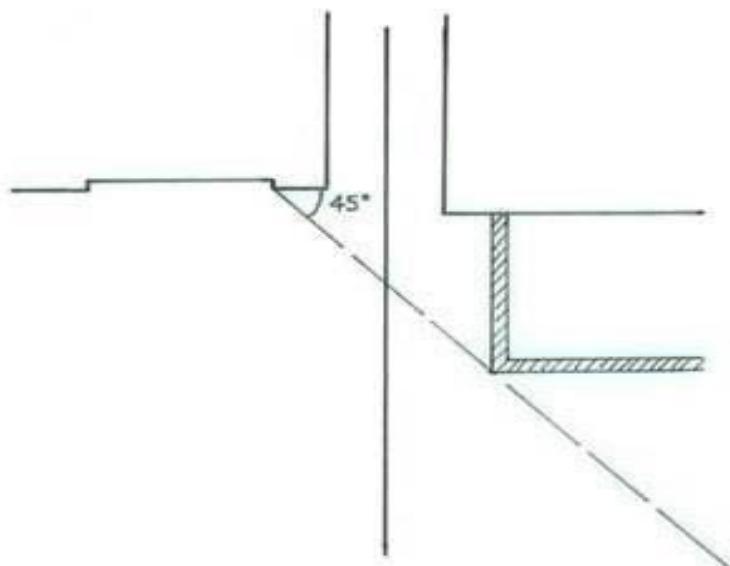
- 2.22 The '45-degree' guideline in assessing loss of light and over-dominance in relation to rear single storey extensions will be applied in most cases. Any proposed single storey rear extension should not project more than 3 metres beyond a '45-degree' guideline, drawn on plan, from the near edge of the closest ground floor habitable room window on an adjoining property.



*Illustration showing how the 3 metre plus '45-degree' guideline will be applied in the case of single storey rear extensions*

## Two Storey Extensions

- 2.23 The '45-degree' guideline is applied in the assessment of first floor and two storey rear extensions. Any proposed extension should not project beyond a '45-degree' guideline drawn from the near edge of the closest ground floor habitable room window on an adjoining/affected property.



*Illustration showing how the '45-degree' guideline will be applied in the case of two-storey/first floor rear extensions*

- 2.24 In the interests of reducing the visual impact of any blank façade/gable wall upon neighbours any blank wall should be located a minimum of 12 metres from any facing habitable room windows at first floor.
- 2.25 Two storey and first floor extensions, without proper consideration, can result in an overbearing addition, not only with respect to the over-dominance of neighbouring/affected private amenity space but also in relation to the existing/parent building. Where the extension or large part of the house has more than one storey, it must be a minimum 7 metres away from any boundary of its curtilage which is opposite the rear wall of the house being enlarged. The interface distances at paragraph 2.6 will be applied where there is a difference in levels between properties.
- 2.26 For this reason it is imperative to ensure any such proposal remains visually subservient to the original building, usually by setting the roof ridge and eaves below that of the existing although in some cases it may be more practical to match the existing eaves line with regards to dealing with drainage and roof construction. In order to achieve a satisfactory proportion, such extensions should always have a greater eaves length than depth.

## Hipped Roofs

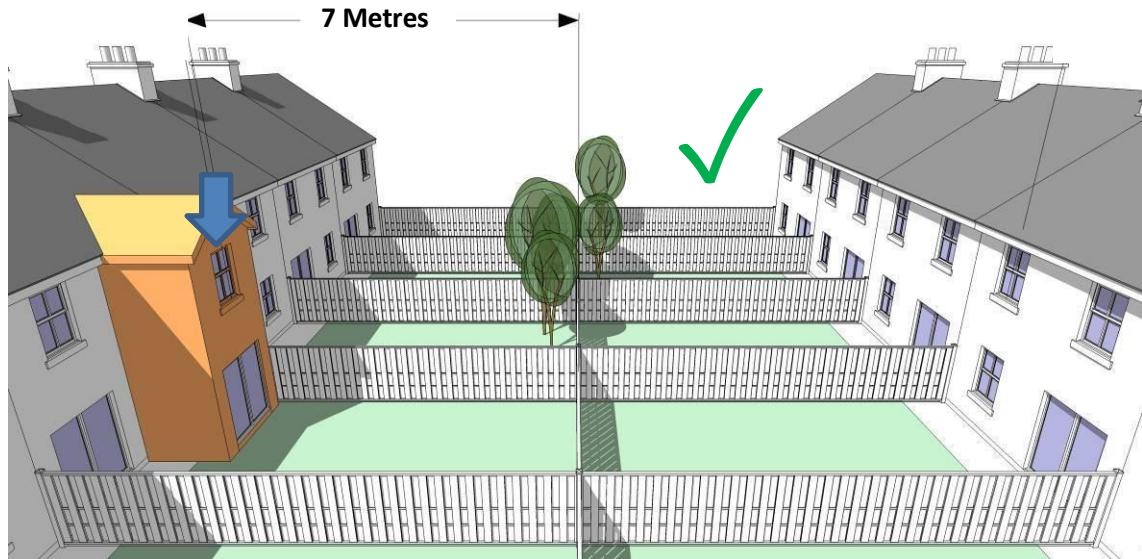
- 2.27 In relation to hipped roofs the roof style should match the original building.

### Key Points: Rear Extensions

- Shall remain visually subservient to the parent/original building.
- Single storey extensions shall project no further than 3 metres beyond a '45-degree' guideline drawn from the near edge of any ground floor habitable room window on an adjoining/neighbouring property.
- Single, first floor and two storey floor rear extensions shall not project beyond a '45-degree' guideline drawn on plan from the near edge of the closest ground floor habitable room window on an adjoining/affected property.
- Blank walls on any proposed extension shall be located no less than 12 metres from any neighbouring/facing habitable room windows.
- A two storey extension with habitable room windows should be located no less than 7 metres from any facing boundary/garden.
- The interface distances at paragraph 2.6 will be applied where there is a difference in levels between properties.

## Rear Extensions

*Any first floor proposed facing windows must be located no less than 7 metres from any facing boundary/garden.*



*Two storey/first floor extensions shall remain visually subservient and respond well to the overall scale and form the original/parent building*

## Extensions on Corner Plots

- 2.28 Whilst extensions on corner plots should adhere to the guidance outlined elsewhere in this document, there are a number of further matters to consider. Corner plots require special consideration due to the open character of such sites, particularly if they are located on a road junction.
- 2.29 Extensions in such locations must achieve a degree of compatibility with two, potentially very different, streetscapes.
- 2.30 Ideally, as a general rule for both single and two-storey extensions, a gap of 1 metre should remain between the extension and any side boundary and not appear over dominant in the street scene.

### Key Points: Extensions on Corner Properties/Locations/Plots

- Should not compromise existing building lines where this would be of detriment to the street scene.
- Shall remain visually subservient to the original/parent building in terms of overall scale and roof form.
- Where there is an inherent staggered building line shall adopt a similar staggered approach regarding overall sideward projection.
- Are visible from a number of locations. It will therefore be especially important to assess their impact and produce a high standard of design and detailing
- The interface distances at paragraph 2.6 will be applied where there is a difference in levels between properties.

## Conservatories

- 2.31 Conservatories are a popular means to extend properties. As they constitute an extension, their design should take into account the guidance within this document to ensure a satisfactory relationship with the original building.
- 2.32 Many buildings do not lend themselves to extension with a conservatory. Severe detriment can be caused to the architectural quality of small, simple dwellings by the addition of an off-the-peg conservatory.
- 2.33 However, should the principle be acceptable, the design of a conservatory should relate to the original building. A highly detailed conservatory, with fussy period detailing such as finials, for instance, is unlikely to be suitable for a simple rural building with limited detailing. Many modern 'off the shelf' conservatory designs are not suitable for traditional buildings and, where planning permission is required, are unlikely to be permitted.
- 2.34 Where dwarf walls are to be incorporated into the design they should be of a material and finish compatible with the original building.
- 2.35 Conservatories sited adjacent to a boundary with a neighbour should have a solid side, or be obscure glazed, or be screened by a fence or wall. The elevation facing the neighbour should not contain any opening windows.

## **Key Points: Conservatories**

- Many properties cannot accommodate a conservatory extension due to their size or design.
- Design and detailing of any conservatory should relate to that of the original building.
- Conservatories close to a boundary with a neighbour should pay careful attention to the impact on neighbours' amenity. For privacy's sake, it may be advisable to incorporate a solid side, obscure glazing, or screening in the form of a fence or wall. A neighbour facing elevation in close proximity to a boundary should not contain any opening windows.

## **Dormers, Roof Lights & Roof Extensions**

2.36 The roof of a building is an important element of its design. Unsympathetic alterations can have a dramatic and adverse effect.

### **Dormer Windows**

2.37 Some roof alterations are permitted development. However, throughout the Borough, there are many examples of badly designed and executed dormer windows which cause detriment to the character of the buildings to which they are attached as well as to the surrounding area, due to their prominent position and unattractive form. They may also increase the extent to which neighbouring properties are overlooked.

2.38 Dormers need to be carefully designed on the front elevations of properties, due to their prominence. Where they are acceptable on the front elevation they should cumulatively occupy less than 1/3rd of the width of the roof slope on which they are sited. Any front dormer window should be set at least 1 metre from the flank wall of the house, and/or the boundary line with the adjoining property.

2.39 Where rear dormer windows need planning permission they should cumulatively occupy less than 2/3rds of the width of the roof.

2.40 Dormers will not be acceptable if they are built off the house walls or project above the ridge of the roof and should be set below the ridge. They should be designed with care, to be subordinate to the main roof structure and set in from the side elevations. Flat roofed dormers do not sit comfortably with pitched roofs and are unlikely to be acceptable, particularly on front elevations.

2.41 Where dormers are considered acceptable, they should be designed to complement the original building in terms of style, detailing and materials. The roof pitch should normally match that of the original roof. The section of the dormer construction between window and sides should be kept to a minimum and should be of vertically hung material to match the main roof or lead. Dormer windows should have a vertical alignment and be of a lesser proportion than windows on the existing elevations of the house.

2.42 Dormers are unlikely to be acceptable in the roofs of converted farm buildings unless they relate to the design of an adjacent building.

## **Rooflights**

- 2.43 Rooflights often represent an easy opportunity to obtain natural light into loft conversions or roof space and may not need planning permission. However, they should generally be restricted to the rear or least visible elevations of the original building.
- 2.44 Rooflights should be introduced with caution. Too many destroy the character of an unbroken roof slope and can create an unacceptable level of clutter on the roof of the original building. If more than one roof light is proposed on any roof plane, careful thought should be given to size and siting.
- 2.45 Flush fitting ‘conservation style’ rooflights should be used on listed buildings and in conservation areas.

## **Roof Extensions**

- 2.46 Increasing the height of a dwelling by amending the roof pitch or eaves height, will significantly affect the character and proportions of the building and will impact on the surrounding streetscape.
- 2.47 Such changes are unlikely to be acceptable in areas where roof pitches and heights are consistent, as they will cause detriment to the visual impact of the streetscape altering its rhythm and form.

### **Key Points: Dormers, Rooflights & Roof Extensions**

- Proposed dormers shall be contained well within the body of the roof, by being well set back from the party/end walls, below the ridge of the roof and above the eave gutterline.
- Proposed dormers shall be aligned vertically with the existing window arrangement and in most circumstances be set off the flank/party walls of the original/parent building by no less than 1 metre.
- In most circumstances the roof ridge of proposed dormers shall be set down from the main roof ridge and shall be set up from the eaves.
- Rooflights should, where possible, be located on the rear or least visible roof slopes.
- Excessive numbers of Rooflights are detrimental.

## Dormers and Roof Extensions



### 3 Balconies & Terraces

- 3.1 The installation of balconies and terraces is almost always problematic, and in many cases unacceptable. In most suburban areas, such features will lead to unacceptable overlooking of neighbouring properties. One possible solution is to incorporate some form of privacy screen. However it is imperative to consider the impact any screen will have on neighbours in terms of its appearance and potential to overshadow. Privacy screens can significantly increase the visual impact of a proposal, and should only be used with great care. Ideally they should be designed into the fabric of an extension rather than be added as an afterthought.

#### Key Point: Balconies & Terraces

- Balconies or terraces, which lead to an unacceptable level of overlooking or are visually intrusive, are unacceptable.

### 4 Garages and Outbuildings

- 4.1 It is important to consider and understand that garages and other outbuildings, whether or not they require planning permission, can have a similar impact as other extensions. Such features should, therefore, respect the scale, character and materials of the original property and care should be taken to safeguard the amenities of neighbours.
- 4.2 Outbuildings should generally be sited in an inconspicuous position and should be commensurate in scale and function to the original property. It will rarely be acceptable to site outbuildings in front of the original property as they would then be too prominent; and conflict with any established building lines. Ideally garages at the side of an original building should be set back from the main building line, with space for car parking, and preferably turning, in front of the garage.
- 4.3 In rural areas outbuildings should normally be sited close to the house; otherwise they may intrude into the open/ rural character of the area to which gardens can make an important contribution. The siting and design of outbuildings needs particular care in rural areas, where they can be particularly prominent, in conservation areas, and in the setting of Listed Buildings. It is unlikely that planning permission will be forthcoming for more than equivalent of a double garage, a small shed, and a small greenhouse on a single dwelling in the countryside.
- 4.4 Outbuildings should be constructed in a style that reflects the original building, in terms of materials, detailing and proportion. Garage doors should generally be the width of a single car to minimise their visual impact upon their surroundings. In a double garage, this can be achieved by using two doors with a pillar between.
- 4.5 In the past, garages have been developed with 'storage' space above which has later been converted to habitable rooms. In many cases, this scale of building will require planning permission and is unlikely to be acceptable. Any space above ground floor will be restricted to storage use and should not be capable of later conversion to residential use.

- 4.6 Care must always be taken to ensure that any outbuildings and other structures, such as decking, do not lead to an unacceptable level of overshadowing of neighbouring properties, disturbance or loss of privacy.

### **Key Points: Garages & Outbuildings**

- Proposals should respect the design, materials and form of the original building, its setting and the residential amenities of neighbours.
- The siting of such buildings should respect established building lines
- A minimum 6 metre long parking space should be provided between any garage and the highway to allow for the garage door to be opened when a car is in front of it, without the car having to overhang the highway.
- Existing outbuildings and extensions will be taken into account in the assessment of proposed rural extensions and cumulatively shall not result in an unacceptable loss of private amenity space or over dominate the site.

## **5 Access and Parking**

- 5.1 The design of extensions should ideally not involve the loss of existing off-street parking provision and should meet the Councils parking standards. If this is not possible replacement provision can be considered, elsewhere within the curtilage provided there is no detriment to the overall streetscape, unacceptable loss of amenity space, traffic hazard nor harm to the amenities of neighbours.
- 5.2 Off-street parking should generally be provided at a ratio of 1 space for a single bed dwelling, 2 spaces for a two or three bed dwelling, and 3 spaces for a larger property. This will include garages. Car parking spaces occupy a space 2.5m by 5.5m but parking spaces in front of a garage should be 2.5m by 6m to allow for opening/closing doors. If a garage is to be classified as a parking space the size must be 6m by 3m and conditions may be imposed to retain it for parking if it is relied on as a parking space. Relaxation of the parking standards may be accepted in highly accessible locations if it can be demonstrated that on-street parking is not causing a traffic hazard or harming the amenities of neighbours.
- 5.3 On main roads, such as classified roads or roads with a speed limit greater than 30mph, turning space should be provided within the site. Proposals that result in the loss of existing manoeuvring facilities are unlikely to be acceptable. Where gates are proposed, they should be positioned to allow a vehicle to pull off the carriageway even when the gates are closed. So gates should be set at least 5 metres from the back edge of the footpath and open into the site. Alternatively, 5 metres plus the width of the gate if they open out of the site. Appropriate visibility will also be needed, the standards for which will vary depending on the location and site.
- 5.4 The creation of a new hardstanding and access is only likely to require planning permission if the access is to/from a classified road or where permitted development rights have been withdrawn.

- 5.5 Further detailed or technical advice can be obtained from Lancashire County Council which is the Highway Authority for the area at [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk) or Tel: 0300 123 6780.

### Key Points: Access & Parking

- Access and parking space should not prejudice highway safety and should respect the amenities of neighbours.

## 6 Works to Front Gardens

- 6.1 Most walls and fences up to 2 metres if not fronting a highway (1 metre if fronting a highway) to the rear of a dwelling will not require planning permission. But they can look intrusive and overshadow neighbouring land. Care should therefore be taken in the choice of material, detailed design and siting.
- 6.2 The treatment of front boundaries contributes a great deal to the character of buildings and of the wider scene. Here, careful thought should be given to the impact of demolition. In some areas, consent to demolish will be required and is unlikely to be acceptable where harm would be caused to the streetscene.
- 6.3 Associated with this, a popular solution to ever-increasing car parking problems is to surface front gardens. This greatly alters the setting of the building and streetscape, often causing detriment, flooding and pollution of watercourses, and where such proposals require permission, is unlikely to be permitted.
- 6.4 Detailed guidance on [how you can install a new driveway or hard surface](#) in your front garden and what works will require planning permission can be found at [The purpose of the guidance is to advise householders of the options for achieving permeability and meeting the condition for permitted development status.](#)

## 7 Boundary Treatments

- 7.1 Boundary treatments, whether traditional or modern, contribute a great deal to the streetscape and character of an area. They define areas of private space and often make a positive contribution to the setting of the building. Poorly designed boundary treatments can undermine the quality of the built environment.
- 7.2 The removal of enclosure alters the hierarchy of spaces, making it difficult to identify where public space ends and private space starts. This can produce very confused and awkward rhythms in the streetscene.
- 7.3 Where new boundary treatments are proposed, care must be taken to ensure that the proposed materials and detailing take a lead from the surroundings. Care should be taken to ensure that proposed walls and fences do not harm the streetscene or cause detriment to the amenities of neighbours.

- 7.4 Where estates are open plan, or have a distinctive, sylvan character, the erection of walls and fences at the front of the property is unlikely to be acceptable. Such areas often have permitted development rights removed or conditions/covenants associated with the land to restrict such development. The character of such estates is derived from the open, landscaped environment and physical built barriers will significantly detract from that character. Likewise, development that would obstruct visibility, for highway purposes, or would otherwise cause highway danger, will also be unacceptable.
- 7.5 In rural areas, any new boundary treatment should be of the traditional style typical of the immediate locality. Standard modern solutions will generally have an adverse visual impact.

### **Key Points: Boundary Treatments**

- The removal or substantial alteration of historic boundary treatments is unlikely to be acceptable.
- Boundary treatments should be designed in materials and details that respect the surrounding streetscape or area.
- Boundary treatments must not be oppressive and should allow the building within the site to remain engaged with the wider streetscape.

## **8 Solar Panels and Wind Turbines**

- 8.1 Chorley Council is committed to the incorporation of sustainable energy sources into domestic dwellings. Many of the technologies are applicable at a micro scale for integration into new and refurbished buildings or for 'retro-fitting' to existing structures.

### **Solar Panels**

- 8.2 In general terms, planning permission will not be required for the installation of solar panels on the roofs of existing dwellings, provided that the panels are roof mounted and fitted flush with the external plane of the roof slope so that there is no material alteration to the shape of the dwelling house. There may, however, be a need for planning permission if the property is in a conservation area and, if the property is a Listed Building, there will also be a need to obtain Listed Building consent.
- 8.3 Whether formal permission is needed or not, however, design principles are still relevant and should be taken into account when contemplating where to site such an installation. The guidance concerning rooflights should be used as a guide and panels should preferably be sited on least visible roof slopes, away from eaves, verges and ridge. It is, however, recognised that their efficiency is dependent on solar gain, which will have a bearing on siting and orientation.
- 8.4 This said, highly visible solar panels are unlikely to be acceptable in sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings.

## Wind Turbines

- 8.5 Building mounted and small freestanding turbines have a strong contemporary design that will often contrast with traditional buildings and streetscapes. Where they are to be incorporated into traditional layouts care will therefore be needed to ensure that their siting does not cause detriment to the historic form. Design solutions should be sought that will minimise views of the turbine and, wherever possible, siting in prominent locations should be avoided. The location should also be selected so as to avoid an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.
- 8.6 Building-mounted turbines should, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise their effect on the external appearance of the building and streetscape, for example upon non-public frontages and below the highest part of the roof or chimney. This may mean that they have to be sited in a location that is not as effective as other, more prominent locations. A balance should be sought between the visual impact of the proposal and its performance.
- 8.7 In terms of all forms of sustainable energy devices, it is advised that you contact the planning department at an early stage to discuss design and siting issues, as well as any need to submit a planning application.

### Key Points: Solar Panels and Wind Turbines

- Solar panels should be sited on the least visible roof slopes and installed flush with the roof plane.
- Highly visible solar panels are unlikely to be acceptable in sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings.
- Building mounted wind turbines should be carefully sited, to minimise any impact on the building or streetscape.

## 9 External Lighting

- 9.1 Local Plan Policy BNE6 (Light Pollution) covers new development especially commercial and leisure facilities requiring or likely to require external lighting. Minor domestic light fittings, are not subject to planning controls.
- 9.2 Nevertheless, if you are planning to install external lighting for security or other purposes, you should ensure that the intensity and direction of light does not disturb others. Many people suffer extreme disturbance due to excessive or poorly-designed lighting. Ensure that beams are not pointed directly at windows of other houses. Security lights fitted with passive infra-red detectors (PIRs) and/or timing devices should be adjusted so that they minimise nuisance to neighbours and are set so that they are not triggered by traffic or pedestrians passing outside your property.

## **10. Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes**

- 10.1 As emphasised throughout this guide, the key to designing any alteration or extension is to appreciate the character and form of both the building and its setting.
- 10.2 Most applications are successful. Those that are refused are often rejected because mistakes have been made during the design process. Care should be taken to avoid the following errors:
- Limited contextual analysis so that the proposal fails to respect the building or its wider setting.
  - Use of a standard design that fails to respect the particular character of the original building and/ or locality.
  - Lack of a clear design rationale that fails to secure a proposal that complements its context.
  - Lack of commitment to a quality outcome and consequent failure to respect architectural principles or traditions.
  - Competent contextual analysis, but no evidence that this has informed the design solution put forward.
  - A lack of clarity in the plans submitted making it very difficult to understand exactly what is being proposed.
  - Allowing the internal layout to dictate an inappropriate external design.
  - A proposal that is poorly designed with little consideration given to its surroundings, compromising the streetscape and neighbours amenity.