

LDF

WIGAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

House Extensions Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document



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ONE

Introduction

Purpose of Supplementary Planning Document

1.1 Adapting a dwelling to suit a family's present and future needs can prove to be a more economic and satisfactory solution than moving to a new house. However, in seeking to meet these needs, such development must not have an adverse affect on the dwelling, the immediate neighbours or reduce the quality of a residential estate.

1.2 The borough has a variety of residential estates hence this guidance cannot cover every possible scenario, nor is it intended to. The Supplementary Planning Document explains general issues that the council will take into account when judging whether an application is acceptable or not. In some instances there may be particular reasons that allow for a departure from this guidance, for example, a unique context or where an innovative design solution is put forward.

1.3 The document relates to householder developments, although the principles should still apply to development of non-householder developments found in residential areas.

Do You Need Planning Permission?

1.4 Some extensions do not require planning permission. This is known as 'Permitted Development.' The Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 and subsequent amendments, such as The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order 2008 outlines what is classified as permitted development. This is explained in more detail on the planning portal website (www.planningportal.gov.uk)

1.5 However, the regulations relating to permitted development are complex. So to avoid any confusion as to whether a dwelling benefits from such rights it is recommended that the form, "Do you Require Planning Permission or Building Regulation Consent for Building Works at Your Home?" is completed and submitted to the council to enquire whether planning permission is required.

1.6 This form as well as additional information on the planning application process is available from the council's Civic Buildings Offices, New Market Street or from the planning section of the council's website under the section "Do you need planning permission" (www.wigan.gov.uk). Alternatively, you can call the council on 01942 404364.

Aims of this Document

1.7 The main aims of the guide are to:

- Expand on planning policies set out in government guidance and local development plans.
- Raise awareness of the value of good design and how it can protect the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings as well as enhance the local built environment.
- Improve the quality of submissions for planning approval, in order to achieve better quality development and quicker decisions.

Status of the guide

1.8 The document supersedes the development control advice note 'Extending your home.' The guide holds the status of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This means that it both supports and reinforces the planning policies as set out in the adopted Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006). It will equally apply during the transitional arrangements for the Wigan Local Development Framework and once the Core Strategy is adopted.

1.9 The guide supports and reinforces national planning policy particularly, Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development and Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing.

TWO

Common Forms of Extension

2.1 The following section gives design advice on specific types of householder developments.

2.2 While each planning application is decided on its own merits, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the forthcoming Local Development Framework and the guidance set out in this document will form the basis for all decisions on householder applications.

2.3 For the purpose of this guide an 'habitable room' is any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, living or eating purposes. This excludes kitchens with no eating spaces, pantries, bath or toilet facilities, service rooms, corridors, laundries, hallways, utility rooms or similar spaces.

Rear Extensions and Alterations (including conservatories)

2.4 Development to the rear of a dwelling is often the most practical way in increasing the size of a dwelling and its living space. Rear extensions often have little or no impact on a street scene but

can have an adverse affect on the character of the area in general and the amenity of a neighbouring dwelling in terms of inappropriate materials, inappropriate architectural styles, overshadowing, over dominance, loss of privacy, loss of daylight and sunlight.

2.5 The "tunnel effect" should be avoided. This is created when a rear extension, particularly two storey is added to a dwelling when a rear projection already exists on a neighbouring dwelling. This creates a tunnel between the two extensions and consequently has an adverse affect on resident's private amenity space in terms of overshadowing and wind conditions.



Creating the 'tunnel effect' can affect a neighbours residential amenity

2.6 Due to development pressures in recent years there has been a significant reduction in the size of private garden space. Private garden space allows for personalisation and outdoor recreational

activities. The council will resist proposals that would result in a disproportionate loss of usable back garden/yard space.

2.7 A rear extension should be of a scale and form that means it is subordinate to the original dwelling. A rear extension should also fit appropriately into the setting of dwellings within a neighbourhood.

2.8 It is important that a rear extension has a roof form that respects the character and appearance of the built environment.

Therefore flat roof extensions are rarely acceptable in areas of traditional sloped roofs.

2.9 To address the impact on amenity of an adjacent dwelling, a single storey extension should not project along a common boundary by more than 3 metres. In some instances longer extensions may be acceptable if set off the boundary by a distance directly proportional to the extra length.

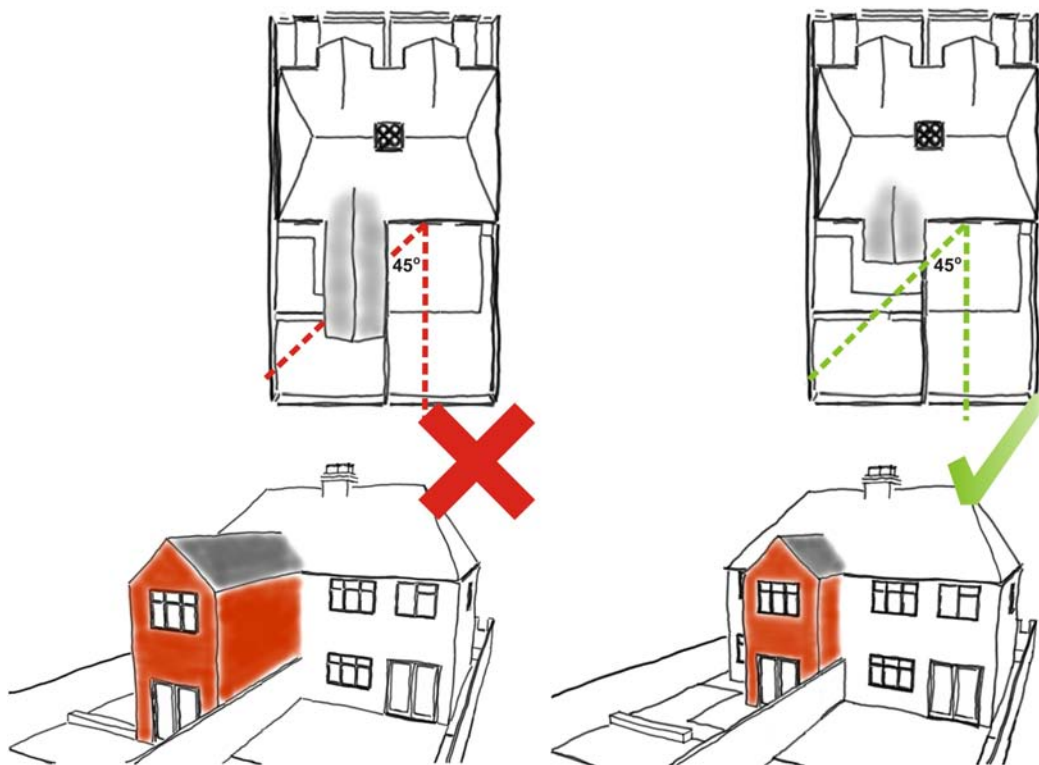


A single storey extension should not project more than 3 metres unless it is set off the boundary by a distance proportional to the extra length

2.10 Since a two storey extension is likely to have a greater impact on residential amenity, the '45 degree rule' will be applied. The rule is applied by drawing a line at 45 degrees from the mid-point of the nearest window to a ground floor habitable room on any adjoining dwelling. If the line cuts through any part of the proposed development,

then the extension is too large and should be reduced in size in order to prevent any negative impact on residential amenity.

2.11 Only in very exceptional circumstances will it be acceptable for development to extend beyond the permitted '45 degree rule.' In such instances the council will expect the applicant to satisfactorily demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity.



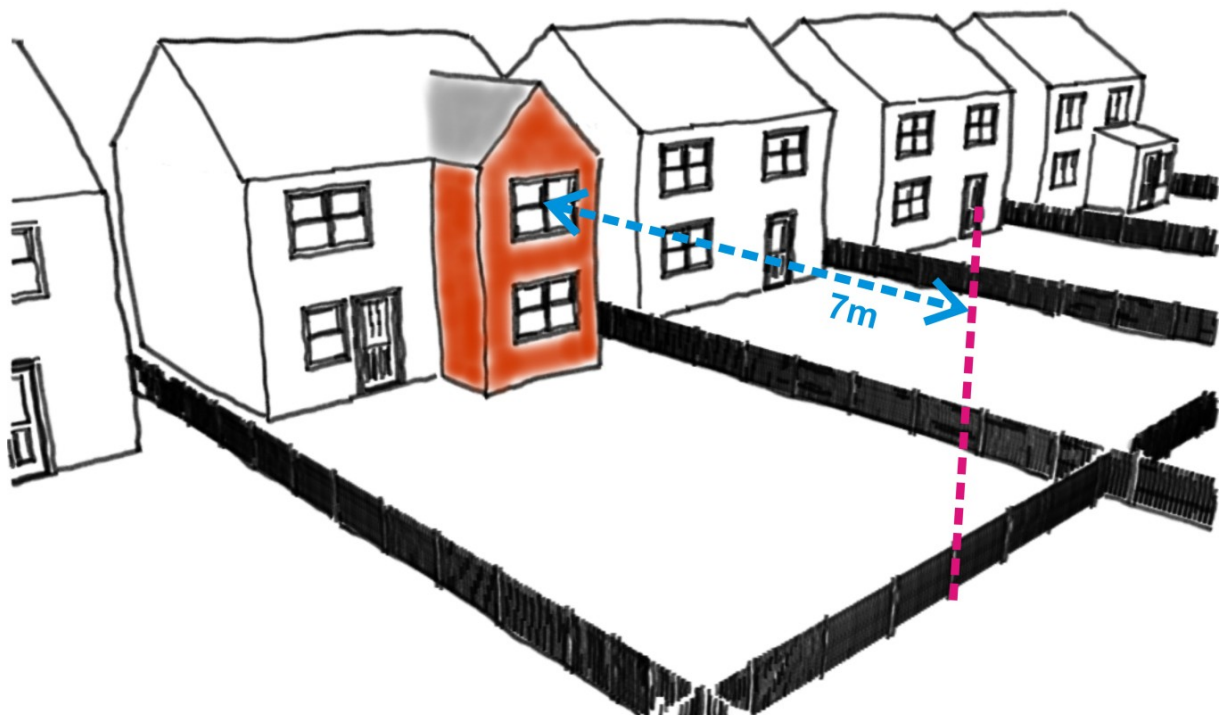
A two storey extension should adhere to the '45 degree rule'

2.12 It is important that the planning and design of house extensions retains adequate levels of privacy and amenity. Therefore, an absolute minimum separation distance of 7 metres must be achieved between any part of an extension containing new windows of an habitable room above ground floor level and any boundary with a neighbouring garden.

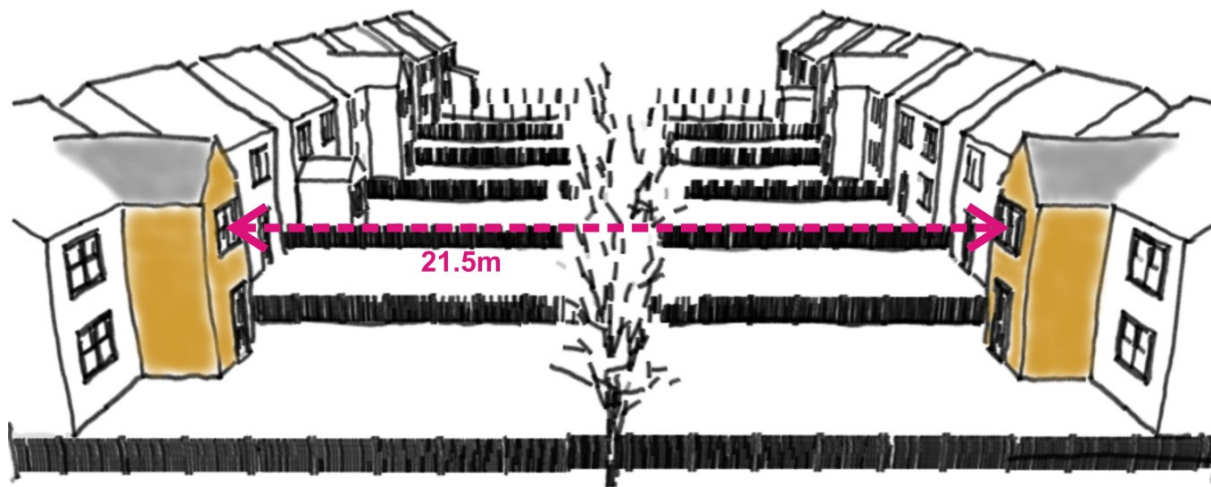
2.13 In addition, a house extension should satisfy the council's interface distances of either no less than 21.5 metres between the main elevations

containing habitable rooms or an interface distance of no less than 12.2 metres between the main elevations and those that do not contain windows of habitable rooms.

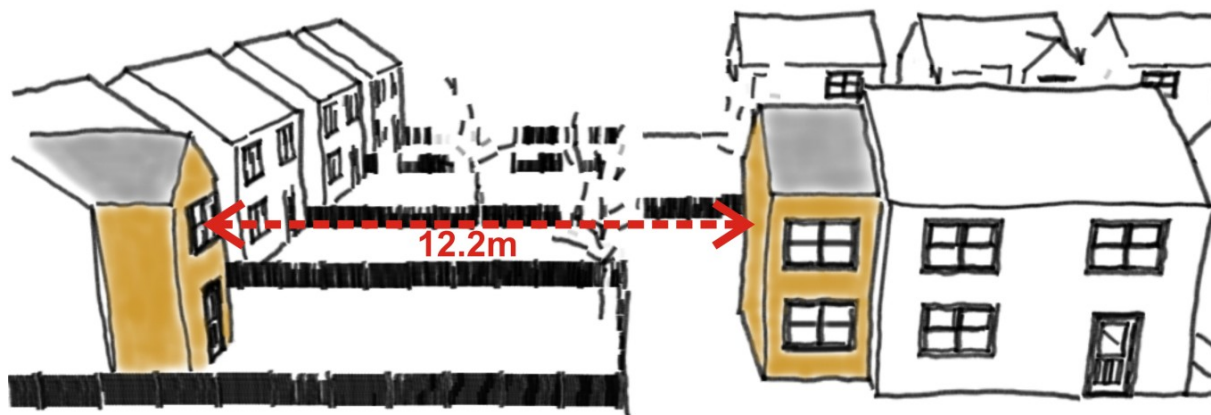
2.14 These distances may be relaxed where the design or orientation is such that privacy and amenity of a neighbouring property is not compromised. Alternatively, these distance may be increased if there is a change in topography, which would result in an adverse affect on the privacy and amenity of a neighbouring property.



A separation distance of at least 7 metres between a first floor habitable room and the boundary must be achieved



An interface distance of no less than 21.5 metres should be achieved between the main elevations containing windows of habitable rooms



An interface distance of no less than 12.2 metres should be achieved between the main elevations and those that do not contain windows of habitable rooms

Side Extensions and Alterations

2.15 Side extensions not only impact on the setting of a dwelling, but can also have an impact on the character and appearance of a street scene. The council will seek to prevent the loss of spaces between buildings, where the spaces are important in defining the character of the street scene, and where their loss would give the impression of a continuous built form.

2.16 This is particularly true when two neighbours decide to extend at two storey level over their driveways up to the common boundary. The result is that the two dwellings lose their 'semi-detached' or 'detached' appearance and appear as terrace dwellings. This can adversely affect the appearance of the street scene and the character of the area. To avoid this 'terrace effect,' a side extension

should be stepped in from the boundary by 800 millimetres and at first floor stepped back from the front of the main building by one metre.

2.17 A side extension must be well designed, with the use of building materials and styles that match or complement the original dwelling.

2.18 A side extension should have a lower roofline and should not consist of any awkward roof finishings and flashes. If a side extension is to be single storey then the proposed ground floor element must be set back from the front of the building by a minimum distance of one brick length (200 millimetres). This would equally apply to the ground floor of two storey extensions. This will help to create a subordinate appearance and avoid problems of joining the new with the old building materials.



Side extensions should be set back and set in to avoid the 'terrace effect'

2.19 Where an extension exceeds two storeys, or includes dormer windows within the roof slope, it will be necessary for a bespoke approach to be adopted, having regard to the particular design of the dwelling and the character of the area. Therefore, in exceptional circumstances the above guidelines may be relaxed, but the principle of avoiding the 'terrace effect' still applies.

2.20 The diagram below shows how the extension to a dormer bungalow might be best designed to accord with the character of the existing dwelling and the street scene. However, as shown in the diagram on page 16 this kind of design would not otherwise be acceptable.

2.21 A side extension should not result in the loss of existing off-street car parking unless adequate provision exists elsewhere within the residential curtilage. This would equate to one parking space for dwellings with up to 3 bedrooms and two parking spaces for dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms.

2.22 The removal of a front boundary wall or hedge and the development of the front garden into a forecourt for parking will be resisted where it would have an adverse impact on visual amenity or the character of the street scene, or where it may cause localised flooding. Thought should be given to appropriate boundary treatments when designing extensions.



Side extensions on dormer bungalows should also avoid the 'terrace effect'

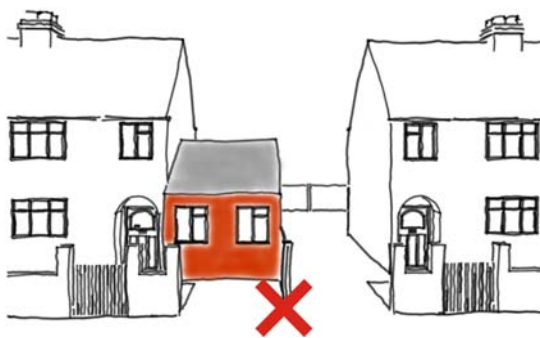
2.23 Bins can have an adverse impact on the appearance and amenity of a neighbourhood hence they should be stored to the rear, side or behind the front elevation of a dwelling.

2.24 An extension to a dwelling should not compromise existing space for bin facilities and should reserve space for the provision of additional wheelie bins in line with the Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy (i.e. 4 wheeled bins for dwellings with gardens and 3 wheeled bins for dwellings without gardens).

2.25 A side extension must ensure that residents can continue to move their bins from the back to the front of the dwelling and vice versa, without the need for them

to pass through rooms in the dwelling. Therefore, the council will seek to retain a minimum of 800 millimetres from an extension to a side boundary, unless it is demonstrated that there is an alternative access to a screened bin storage facility. The 800 millimetre space should be clear of any obstacles such as vegetation, gate posts, fence posts, down pipes, etc and the council will expect the applicant to submit plans showing this.

2.26 In very exceptional circumstances, bin facilities may have to be stored to the front of a dwelling. In such cases a well designed and sited bin storage facility will be sought, to satisfy existing and future bin provision.



An 800 millimetre space should be retained between a side extension and the boundary

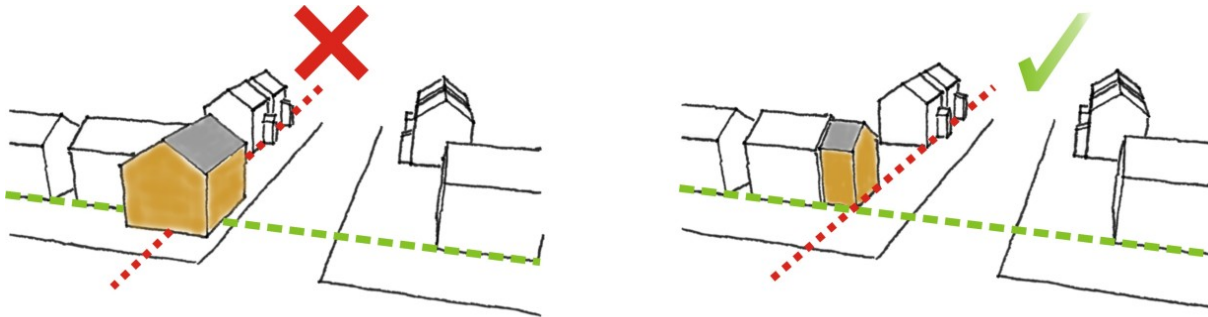
Corner Plots

2.27 Particular consideration should be given to the design and siting of either a single storey or two storey extension on a corner plot due to its visual prominence in the built environment.

2.28 A corner plot extension must not encroach beyond established building lines on either street as it may have an

adverse impact on the character of the local area. The building line is the line of the main front walls of the dwellings.

2.29 A corner plot extension should not create undesirable pinch points or obscure visibility from an entrance to a side road that would harm highway safety.



Development should not dominate the street corner

Front Extensions and Alterations

2.30 Front elevations are the most important components in defining the character and appearance of a street scene. Any extension proposed to the front of a dwelling, especially those that project forward of an established building line, should be designed to make a positive contribution to improving the character and appearance of a street scene.

2.31 Front extensions that have an adverse affect on residential amenity or a detrimental affect on highway safety will not be acceptable.

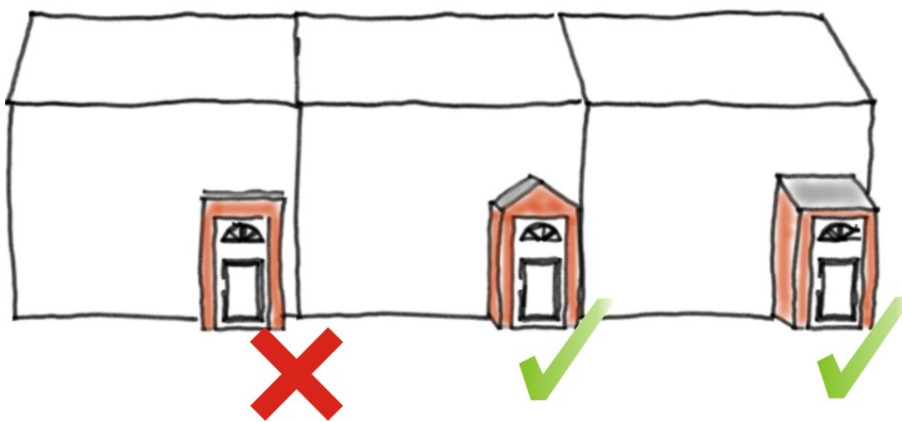
2.32 Streets are often characterised by a common design based upon the repetition of an architectural style and/or a setting which establishes a distinctive building rhythm. Unless a front extension is small enough to be absorbed within the design of the building and the street scene as a whole it will rarely be visually acceptable as it will interrupt such rhythm and have a detrimental impact on the character of the street.

2.33 The council will take into consideration any significant loss of garden amenity space or boundary treatment adjacent to the highway as it may have an adverse affect on the open setting and character of the built environment. In line with parking standards the council will take into consideration any loss of space for parking as it may increase demands for more on-street parking.



Front extensions should be small in scale and not harm the character of the street scene

2.34 Some porches can be developed under the General Permitted Development Order. However, any projection to a house such as a porch, canopy or bay window should have building materials, styles and a roof pitch that complement the original building's design.



A porch should be small in scale and have a pitched roof

Roof Extensions and Alterations

2.35 Roof extensions or alterations can allow residents to use the attic space effectively. However, the potential implications of such extensions or alterations on the built environment must be considered carefully, especially if the proposal is likely to introduce a new building feature to a local area.

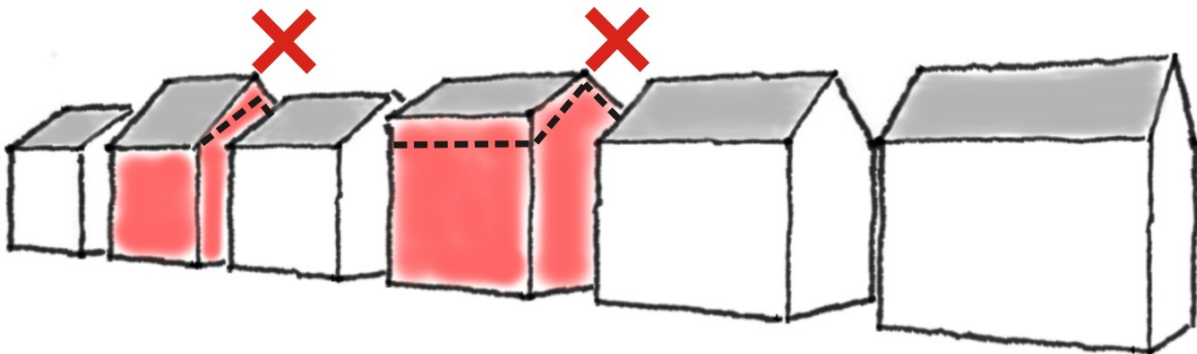
2.36 The use of roof lights and dormers can have serious amenity implications in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy to adjacent dwellings. Thus this impact will be taken into consideration when assessing proposals involving dormer windows or rooflights.

2.37 Proposals for altering either the eaves or the ridge of the roof should be treated with caution as such a transformation could have a significant

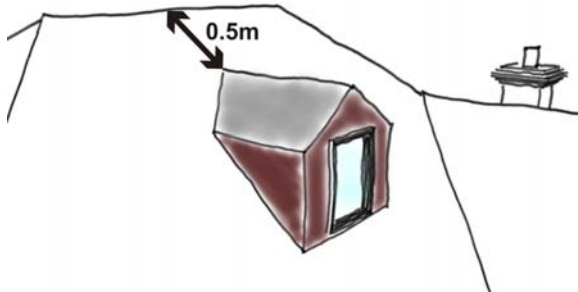
effect on the character of a street scene. This is especially true where there is a clear consistent roof line or distinctive roof form for a group of houses.

2.38 A dormer extension should be of a scale that is in-keeping with the original property. A dormer extension which is large in scale and dominates the roofscape is unacceptable.

2.39 Roofs with shallow pitches may be unable to accommodate dormer windows effectively due to insufficient head height, and the required new, deeper floor structure. It is unacceptable for a dormer to project too close to the ridgeline. Therefore, dormers should be set down the roof slope by a minimum of 0.5 metres, unless the design of the dormer is such that it remains subordinate to the main roof structure.



Altering the eaves or the ridge of the roof should be treated with caution



A dormer should be set down the roof slope by 0.5 metres

2.40 The architectural style and building materials of a dormer extension should complement the original residential dwelling. A dormer extension that has a small window opening with either a gabled or hipped roof form is more appropriate than a dormer extension that has a large

window opening and a flat roof form, unless these help define the character of the area.

2.41 A dormer extension should not have a detrimental impact on the balance of the building. For instance, a dormer on one half of a pair of semi detached bungalows may not be acceptable if it will unbalance the pair. Also a window opening in the dormer should be positioned so that it is in line with the existing window and door openings on the existing dwelling.

2.42 Where a side extension includes a dormer, the rules about the 'terrace effect' in paragraph 2.18 also apply.



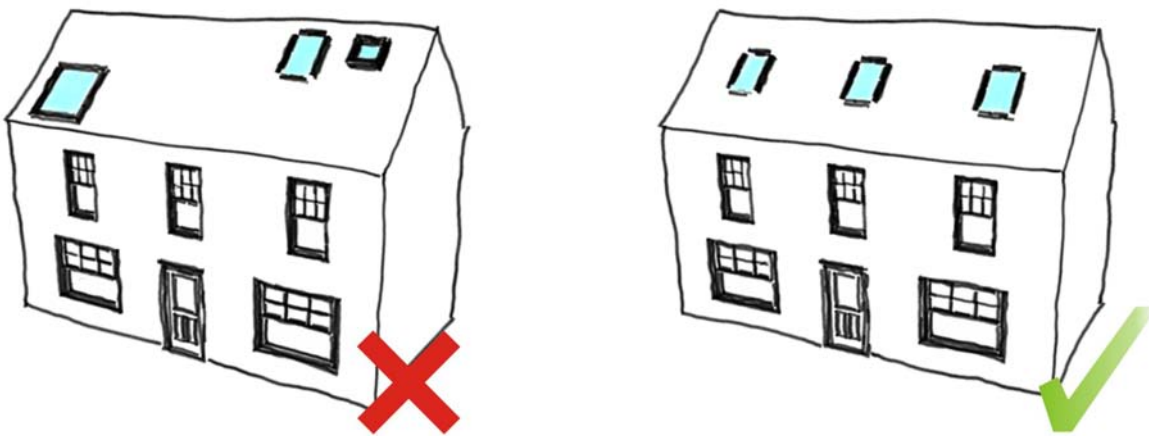
Dormers should be designed so that they fit comfortably within the roof of the building

2.43 Roof lights can be used to allow natural light into a roof space without the need to significantly alter the scale or form of a residential dwelling.

2.44 Roof lights can affect the appearance of a building and subsequently the street scene. Roof lights should be sensitively sited and should be of a 'low profile' type to reduce their impact on the appearance of the roof and the general street scene. They should be small in scale and located in line with other window and door openings.

2.45 The above principles for rooflights would also apply for solar panels.

2.46 Chimneys contribute to the character of a building and establish visually interesting roofscapes. Where chimney pots and stacks are important features in helping to define a local built environment's characteristic roofscape, they should be retained or appropriately replaced when extensions and alterations are proposed.



Rooflights should be small in scale and in line with other window and door openings

Garages, other Outbuildings and Car Parking

2.47 Proposals for the development of a garage or outbuilding, or the conversion of a garage must not affect the character and appearance of the street scene. They must also complement the original dwelling in terms of building materials, design, scale and form (including roof form).

2.48 Garages and outbuildings should be sited in such a way that the street scene and neighbouring dwellings are not adversely affected in terms of obtrusiveness, overlooking and overshadowing. Therefore, garages and outbuildings should be of an appropriate scale and sited behind established building lines to avoid any adverse affect on the street scene.



A garage or outbuilding should be set behind the building line

2.49 Roof heights should be kept to a functional minimum, particularly when located close to the common boundary.

2.50 A garage should be a minimum distance of 6 metres from the back of the footpath or service strip to allow for a vehicle to be parked in front of the garage. This also ensures that a garage door is able to be opened without having an affect on users of the highway. It also ensures access around the car is maintained and rooms on the ground floor do not suffer from either the loss of daylight/outlook or from excessive vehicle fumes.

2.51 Garage doors with either roller shutters or remote control openings do not justify a reduction in the length of a driveway. If gates are to be provided they should not open out onto the pavement hence the forecourt must be deep enough to allow them to be opened and closed inwards when a vehicle is parked.



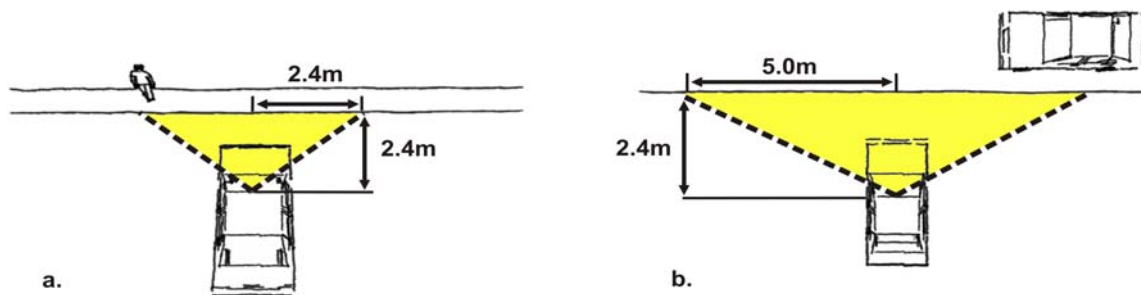
2.52 In addition, any boundary treatment must ensure a visibility splay of 2.4 metres by 2.4 metres from the edge of the driveway/footway and a visibility splay of 2.4 metres by 5 metres from the edge of the carriageway. These splays should be measured from the centre of the driveway. Any boundary treatment within the visibility splay must not be higher than 1 metre in height. Care should also be taken in the placing of boundary treatments and landscaping within the visibility splay to ensure that their obstructive effect is minimal. These visibility splays are requested to ensure that adequate visibility is achieved from access points along the pavement and carriageway.

2.53 Provision should be made for separate pedestrian side gates and access to the front door of the dwelling.

2.54 The car parking forecourt area should be designed using materials that complement the building and minimise

flood risk. The emphasis should be on using permeable surfaces whilst keeping the amount of impermeable surfaces to a minimum. However, materials such as loose gravel should not be used as this is likely to spread onto an adjacent highway and have an adverse affect on highway safety. For further information please refer to the document 'Guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens,' published by the Environment Agency and Communities and Local Government. (www.communities.gov.uk/)

2.55 A dropped kerb is required to access off-street parking space, and these must be constructed to a standard approved by the council. New vehicular access onto classified roads require planning permission and in most cases the council will require a turning head to permit vehicles to enter and leave the drive in forward gear.



Desirable Visibility: a. at the edge of the footway and b. at the edge of the carriageway

Boundary Treatments and Landscape Schemes

2.56 Although some boundary and landscape treatments may not require planning permission, the following design issues and guidelines should be taken into consideration.

2.57 Boundary treatments such as gates, walls, fences, as well as vegetation help to define private from public areas, whilst landscape schemes can help to integrate extensions into their context. They should be considered as an integral part of the design when drawing up a proposal and should not be used simply to counter the effect of a scheme that would either be out of scale or poorly designed.

2.58 A boundary may already consist of hedges and/or screening plants. Such distinctive landscape features can help an extension blend in more readily than new fences or walls. Therefore, where possible they should be retained and incorporated into any new boundary treatment.

2.59 Where new boundary treatments are proposed they should:

- Be of an appropriate scale and be constructed from building materials and styles that match or complement

the street scene and local built environment.

- Respect visibility splays where they abut the highway, by not being over one metre in height to ensure the safety of highway users.
- Still allow the ground floor windows to overlook the street to assist with natural surveillance.
- Not affect the integrity of the original design of an open plan estate.

2.60 Open areas of land in residential areas are important where their function is to soften the street scene and provide an amenity function. These are often privately owned land. A change of use would be required to incorporate open space areas into gardens.

THREE

General Design Guidelines

3.1 The following general design guidelines should be considered before a householder development is proposed.

Siting

3.2 Any proposed householder development should be positioned so that it does not dominate the street scene. It

must instead complement the existing dwelling and respect neighbouring properties.

3.3 New extensions should effectively be incorporated into the existing urban fabric hence they should respect building lines and the pattern of buildings and spaces.

3.4 In some instances, it may not be possible to design an acceptable extension due to the sensitivity of the site, limited space, or the relationship with neighbouring dwellings.

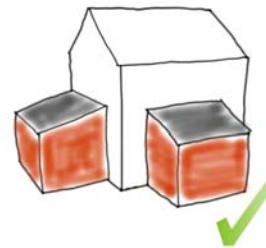
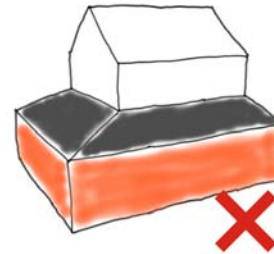


Extensions should be subordinate and positioned to not dominate the street scene

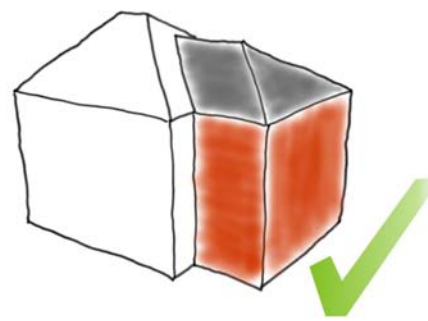
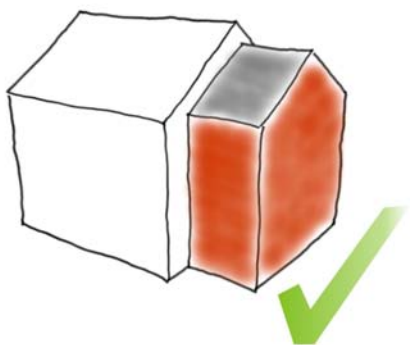
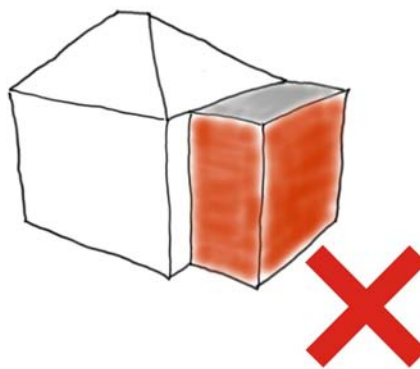
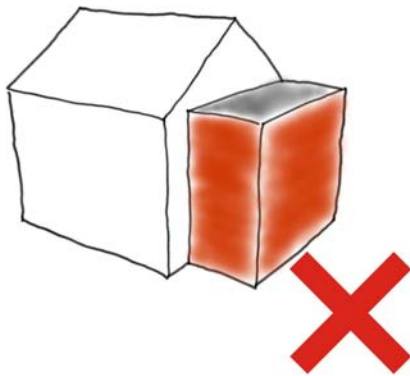
Built Form and Scale

3.5 The form and scale of the extension should be subordinate to the existing and neighbouring buildings.

3.6 The roof is a key feature that helps define the shape and massing of a building. Any proposed extension should have a roof that enhances the character of the existing building. This often means that flat roofs are unacceptable. Instead, either a pitched or a mono-pitched roof is likely to be more appropriate.



Extensions should not visually dominate the built form of the original building



Extensions should have a roof form that enhance the character of the original building

Architectural Details

3.7 The architectural detailing found on a residential dwelling gives it a unique character and contributes to the appearance of the street scene.

Therefore, a householder development should, where appropriate, repeat any architectural detailing on the existing building as they are important features that define the character of the building. For instance, the continuation of plinths and string courses, sills and lintels, decorative brickwork and quoins, barge boards and cornices, fascias and/or decorative tiling.

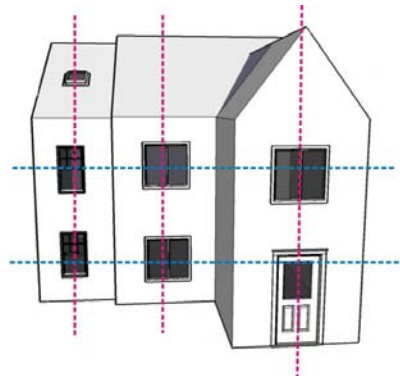


Key architectural features should be replicated on house extensions

3.8 Innovative or interesting designs which address the objectives of the guidance, and enhance the design and character of the building will be given consideration.

New Openings

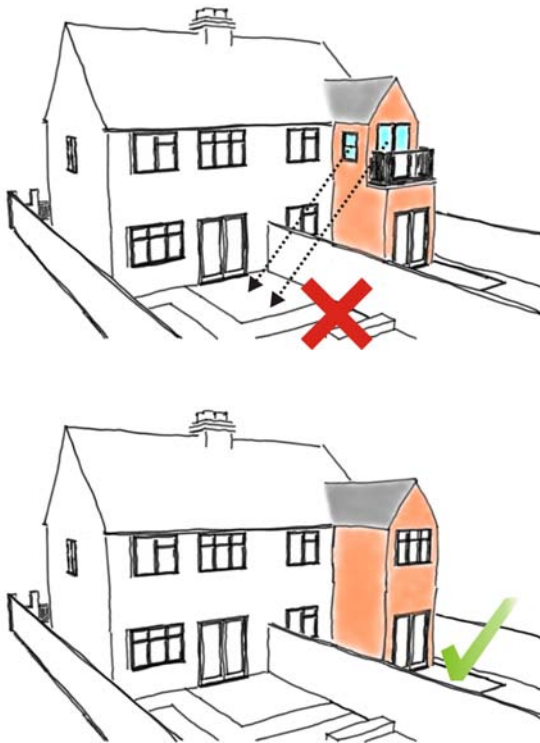
3.9 When introducing new windows (including rooflights) or doors, careful attention must be given to the sizes, proportions and styles, as well as the internal division of the proposed openings and the materials used. In general all windows or doors should be the same or complementary to the existing windows or doors. The positioning of windows or doors within an elevation should 'line up' with existing openings.



New and existing openings should align vertically as well as horizontally

3.10 The installation of new openings should not compromise a neighbour's residential privacy in terms of overlooking. Therefore, habitable room windows, roof terraces, Juliet balconies

and balconies that overlook or compromise residential privacy will not be permitted.



Overlooking must be avoided

Building Materials

3.11 To ensure that an extension enhances the appearance of a dwelling and the character of the local area, it should be constructed from building materials that match or complement the main building.

3.12 Many older buildings use a red brick type called 'common brick.' After a number of years the brick becomes soiled and appears to have a mix of blacks, and red shades. When the brick is cleaned,

the original mix of red shades is restored. It is good practice to use a brick type that complements the original brick colour and not the soiled brickwork.

3.13 It is also important that care is taken when trying to match the brick or stone bond, the colour of the mortar mix and pointing method on an extension.

3.14 Where slate has been used on the original building roof it is recommended that this is retained and also used on the extension. Tiles do not often visually complement the slate roof and tend to be a lot heavier than slates.

Alterations to assist People with Disabilities

3.15 A dwelling may need to undergo a number of alterations to make it possible for people with disabilities and older people to be able to remain living there.

3.16 For instance, a level or ramped approach may be needed to a widened front door or the ground floor may need to be extended to enable it to accommodate a bedroom or bathroom. However, a disability will not automatically mean that a scheme can breach guidelines stated within this document.

3.17 In such cases the applicant will need to produce a case for special circumstances to justify a scheme. It will

have to be shown that what is proposed is the best design to adequately meet the specific requirements of the people living there. At the same time protecting the amenity of neighbouring dwellings and ensuring the character of the street is not adversely affected.

FOUR

Development on Sensitive Buildings and in Sensitive Areas

4.1 More stringent planning legislation and policies will apply to a statutory listed building; a building or structure of local architectural or historic interest; or if development falls within a conservation area, the green belt, a flood risk area; or if it is likely to affect a protected tree, a protected species or the ground stability. These are explained briefly below and require specific consideration when preparing proposals. In some instances this may mean the owners aspirations are not achievable. Personal circumstances and need is not acceptable as reasoned justification for inappropriate changes.

Heritage Assets

4.2 The borough has a substantial number of listed buildings, buildings and structures of local architectural and historic interest (BLINTs) and conservation areas, which are all identified under the planning section of the council's website (together with Conservation Area Appraisals, of which have been undertaken) (www.wigan.gov.uk). The

council has a statutory obligation to preserve, protect and enhance these heritage assets.

4.3 In addition to satisfying the principles set out in this guide it is important that development affecting heritage asset(s) must also satisfy other policy documents such as:

- Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the Historic Environment
- Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan
- Emerging Wigan Core Strategy
- Conservation Area Appraisals

4.4 In addition to submitting a planning application, Listed Building Consent will be required if you are proposing works to listed buildings including, carrying out alterations, extensions or conversions. Furthermore, Listed Building Consent applications must include a Design and Access Statement, justifying the proposals and impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

4.5 The council encourages the use of traditional and historic materials. Typical examples include the loss of traditional wooden sash windows with replacement uPVC and the removal of traditional slate or stone roof tiles for man-made substitutes.

4.6 The council will support a contemporary design proposal where it would not detract from or harm the special character and appearance of the heritage asset. A contemporary design may be a more appropriate solution than a pastiche design.

4.7 The council will always seek to protect original historic and architectural features of listed buildings and their settings as well as for buildings or structures of local architectural or historic interest. The council will not usually permit development where there is a loss of key physical and natural features that contribute towards the character of a conservation area, such as walls, railings, trees and spaces between the buildings.

4.8 It is recognised that trees form an important feature within conservation areas and loss of tree cover can have a detrimental impact upon the appearance of a conservation area. Any trees which measure over 7.5cm at a height of 1.5m from the ground within a conservation area are protected under government legislation from being topped, lopped or felled without the relevant permission having been granted. Tree Preservation Orders can be applied to individual trees and are a method by which local authorities can protect specific species and groups of trees from being damaged or removed.

Article 4 Directions

4.9 In certain cases where it is felt necessary to exercise a greater degree of control over minor items of work, the council can bring additional work under its control by implementing specific measures known as Article 4 Directions. This means that certain permitted development rights are removed and planning permission will be required for works, which previously were allowed under the General Permitted Development Order.

4.10 Areas that have to accord with Article 4 Directions are listed under the planning section of the council's website (www.wigan.gov.uk).

4.11 An Article 4 Direction does not prevent you from altering or repairing your home. It is a method of ensuring that works are carried out which are sympathetic to the appearance of the building and the character of the area. It also prevents the loss and the encouragement of traditional features.

Green Belt and Safeguarded Land

4.12 To maintain their primary purposes a more restrictive approach will be taken for proposals in the green belt or in safeguarded land. Guidelines outlined in this document will apply in principle but it

will be important for proposals to accord with Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts as well as policies GB1, GB1A, GB1B and GB2 of the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan.

4.13 Particular attention will be given to the setting, scale, form and design of an extension as well as any previous additions in order to maintain the openness of the green belt and safeguarded land.

Areas of Flood Risk

4.14 Before extending your property it is important to check whether or not your house is located within a flood risk area. This can be done by contacting the Environment Agency (www.environment-agency.gov.uk).

4.15 In line with policy G1C of the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan, you may be required to incorporate flood proofing measures into the design and construction of any extension, in compliance with Environment Agency advice. Further information on flood resilient construction techniques can be found on the Communities and Local Government website (www.communities.gov.uk).

4.16 Where a watercourse is designated as a main river, any development within 8 metres of the bank top will need Environment Agency consent under the Land Drainage Byelaws of the Water Resources Act 1991. This 8 metre easement will allow for any essential maintenance works to take place. Applicants should contact the Environment Agency for further information (www.environment-agency.gov.uk).

Protected Trees

4.17 In line with policy EV2E of the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan the council will protect and enhance trees, woodlands and hedgerows.

4.18 Trees and hedges are key soft landscape elements, which provide a street with visual variety and interest. They help give a street a sense of maturity and offer a green setting within a built context.

4.19 It is important to ensure that an extension is appropriately located to preserve existing trees and hedges, whether they are protected or not. Where it can be demonstrated that this is not possible, trees and hedges should be replaced with suitable new planting.

4.20 The council has additional powers to protect important trees in the interest of amenity with the use of Tree Preservation Orders.

4.21 If a tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order you need the council's consent to prune or fell it. Unauthorised works may result in legal action.

Protected Species

4.22 A house may provide refuge for protected species, such as a roost for bats or a nesting place for birds. Particular attention will be given to Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, Part IV of the Circular 06/2005 and policy EV2D of the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Protected Species Supplementary Planning Document. The presence of any protected species or their natural habitat, is a material consideration in determining a planning application.

4.23 It is important for a proposal to comply with the current legislation for protected species as it is an offence to knowingly disturb the habitat of a protected species.

4.24 Further information on development with regards to protected species can be obtained from Natural England's website

(www.naturalengland.org.uk) or under the planning section of the council's website (www.wigan.gov.uk)

Ground Stability

4.25 Extensions should take account of the potential for ground stability, or other mining related hazards to exist on sites within existing residential areas. Further advice in relation to previous mining activity can be obtained from the Coal Authority website (www.groundstability.com).

FIVE

Good Practice for Householder Development Submissions

5.1 This section will outline a number of considerations that should be taken into account before an extension or alteration is proposed. It will also detail the necessary procedures for a successful planning application.

Benefits of Good Design

5.2 It is strongly recommended that early professional advice is sought for any proposals to alter or extend a dwelling as this will help in the examination of the design options and the costing of the scheme. If a proposed scheme involves a listed building, trees, or is within a conservation area, ensure that the advisor has experience or specialises in dealing with such sensitive situations.

5.3 The use of a good designer will save time and money by offering a good quality design which addresses all the issues outlined in this document. Furthermore, it is likely to be repaid in

terms of reduced maintenance costs, more efficient building performance and an increased re-sale value of the dwelling.

Site Appraisal and Survey

5.4 An appraisal of the surrounding area, the existing dwelling and its setting should be undertaken as part of understanding the context of the site and making design decisions with regards to extensions.

5.5 An appraisal should note unique characteristics of the building, the site and its immediate surroundings. It may note:

- key views and ground level changes across the site;
- relationships to adjoining dwellings and whether walls are blank or contain windows;
- the position of trees, their canopies and root spread as well as other landscape features;
- the path of the sun and shadows that will be cast from buildings and trees;
- site access points;
- any subsidence and other mining related hazards;
- and service constraints.

Pre-application Discussions

5.6 The council welcome pre-application discussions with applicants. Ideally, these should be carried out at an early stage, so that the scope of relevant policies and all issues can be identified. Specialists in matters such as highways, access, urban design, conservation, protected trees and ecology should be involved.

5.7 Depending on each individual case the council can also advise on other external agencies, organisations and interested parties who may require specific discussions.

Consultation with Neighbours

5.8 The council strongly recommend that you consult with your neighbours and anyone else who may be affected by your proposals at as early a stage as possible. This is good practice and minimises any potential dispute and subsequent delay in the processing of your planning application.

What a Planning Application should include

5.9 When submitting an application for planning permission, the council will require certain information to be submitted to enable an informed decision to be made on a proposal. An application must

satisfy criteria listed on the council's Validation Checklist for Planning Applications, which can be found under the planning section of the council's website (www.wigan.gov.uk).

Sustainable Design and Construction

5.10 Requirements for sustainable construction are going to become increasingly challenging as the Government strives for zero carbon development. All new extensions will be required to meet these tougher standards through compliance with the building regulations.

5.11 Therefore, the applicant is encouraged to consider more wide ranging energy efficiency improvements and the use of more sustainable methods of construction, as a first step in improving a dwelling's energy and carbon performance, in line with these more challenging standards.

5.12 Simple measures such as insulation can often be applied at little cost. For further information on how to make a dwelling more energy efficient, visit the Energy Saving Trust website (www.energysavingtrust.org.uk).

5.13 Low carbon technologies such as solar panels, heat pumps and biomass boilers can also be installed on homes. As well as the environmental benefits and cost savings achieved from such technologies the Government also offers an incentive to install low carbon technologies by paying a set price to the owner for any electricity or heat that is generated. For further information visit the Department for Energy and Climate Change website (www.decc.gov.uk).

5.14 Although the council recommends the use of small scale low carbon technologies we recommend that you fully consider their effectiveness and suitability for your property before installation. Some technologies do not require planning permission, but there are exceptions, so it is advisable to check with the council.

5.15 It is good practice for you to consider the following questions before submitting your planning application, such as:

- What energy efficiency measures will be implemented and how will this lead to reduced energy use/carbon savings?
- Are low carbon energy technologies suitable such as more efficient boilers, solar panels, ground source heat pumps?

- What will be the impact on flood risk and surface water run-off and what measures have been taken?
- Are any water efficiency measures such as low flush toilet and spray taps to be implemented?
- Are the proposed security features certified or recommended by bodies such as 'Secured by Design'?
- Is the extension or the alteration to a dwelling able to support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, in line with the principles of 'Lifetime Homes?' (www.lifetimehomes.org.uk)
- Is there adequate provision for the storage of waste for recycling?
- Will development use construction materials with a high recycled content?
- Will development use construction materials with low embodied energy content such as timber instead of PVC?
- Are construction materials sustainably sourced, for instance are timber goods accredited?
- How is it intended to minimise construction waste?

Secured by Design

5.16 Altering or extending a dwelling provides an opportunity to improve security. It is recommended that where

appropriate development should satisfy the principles of 'Secured by Design,' which can be found on the Association of Chief Police Officers Secured by Design Initiative website (www.securedbydesign.com).

Design and Access Statements

5.17 A Design and Access Statement is required if the dwelling that is intended to be extended or altered is a listed building and/or is within a conservation area. Guidance on how to prepare a Design and Access Statement is available from the planning section of the council's website (www.wigan.gov.uk).

Other Consents

5.18 There are a range of other consents that may be necessary before works are undertaken, for example,

- *Building Regulations*

5.19 These cover the technical aspects of construction and are entirely separate from the planning system. For information with regards to Building Regulations please see the council's leaflet 1 "Applying for Building Regulations approval." A form can be completed and submitted to the council to enquire whether building regulations are required.

5.20 This form as well as advice on Building Regulations is available from the council's Civic Buildings Offices, New Market Street or from planning section of the council's website (www.wigan.gov.uk). Alternatively, you can call the council on 01942 404364.

- *Party Wall Act 1996*

5.21 This controls works that are close to, or on, the boundary of the property, or party wall. It is recommended that advice is sought from an appropriately qualified person as this is not controlled by the council, although there is guidance under the planning section of the council's website (www.wigan.gov.uk).

- Covenants

5.22 It is recommended that all the necessary checks are made to ensure that land proposed for development is examined for any associated covenants which may restrict development.