

# **Residential Extensions & Alterations**

Supplementary Planning Document

Final Version for Cabinet: April 2013

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## Introduction

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) were introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as part of the reforms to the planning system. Although not forming part of the statutory development plan, one of the functions of an SPD is to provide further detail on policies and proposals within the development plan. SPDs must be consistent with national and regional planning policies as well as the policies set out in the development plan.

The SPD has been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Regulations (SI 2004.2204) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), conforming and responding to all relevant local and national policies and is based on a robust and up-to-date evidence base. It will form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Preston City Council. SPDs do not seek to allocate land but are to be considered alongside Policy in the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Development Plan Documents (DPDs). Their guidance should therefore be taken into consideration from the earliest stages of the development process of any site, including any purchase negotiations and in the preparation of development schemes.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

Given the relationship between this SPD, the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (the new Preston Local Plan), and the level of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) that these documents have undergone, together with the anticipated absence of any significant environmental effects arising from these proposals, it is considered that an independent SA of this SPD is not required.

In addition, the, now adopted, Core Strategy has undergone a Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment to determine the likely significant effects of the plan on sites of international nature conservation importance. Given the SPD is in conformity with policies contained within the Core Strategy, it is not considered that a Screening Assessment of this SPD is required.

Further explanation and justification of this position is provided at Appendix A.

## Cancellations

This SPD has replaced SPG7: Residential Alterations & Extensions Design Guide which is now cancelled.

## Policy Background

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the guidelines used in determining planning applications for alterations and extensions to residential properties. It should be read in conjunction with other planning policies of the City Council, the most relevant of which are set out below.

The development plan for Preston currently comprises the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted July 2012) the Local Plan (adopted 2004) and the Regional Strategy.

The particular Core Strategy policy which relates to this SPD is:

- Policy 17: Design of New Buildings

The particular Local Plan policies which relate to this SPD are:

- Policy H8: House Extensions
- Policy D1: Design Criteria
- Policy D13: House Extensions

The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (the new Local Plan) is currently at 'Preferred Options' stage and as such has only limited weight in the determination of planning applications. The weight will be increased as the document progresses through the statutory process and the document will, once adopted, form part of the development plan for Preston. The draft policy which relates to this SPD is:

- Policy EN8: Design of New Development

The guidelines contained within this SPD will not only help you obtain planning permission but will help you achieve a high standard of design which fits in with the character of your property and your neighbourhood and does not detract from the amenities of your neighbours.

# 1 GENERAL ADVICE

## Permitted Development

Extensions and other householder developments may not always need planning permission. In some instances alterations and extensions may be permissible under 'permitted development rights'. This depends on factors relating to the dimensions of the proposal, its siting, whether the house is a Listed Building or in a Conservation Area, or whether permitted development rights have been removed from the property. Initial guidance to determine whether an extension would be permitted development or would require planning permission can be found online at [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).

## Article 4 Directions

In some conservation areas the Council has removed householder 'permitted development rights' by making an Article 4 Direction. An Article 4 Direction does not prevent occupiers from altering or repairing their homes. Rather it requires planning permission to be sought before any external works are carried out. Such works can include the changing or replacing of doors or windows but you should check the specific restrictions of your conservation area first. The conservation areas affected are:

- Avenham
- Fishergate Hill
- Fulwood
- St. Ignatius

For further advice please contact Planning Design on 01772 906594 or via e-mail at [planningdept@preston.gov.uk](mailto:planningdept@preston.gov.uk) who can advise on whether the works you are proposing will require permission.

## Trees

Consideration should be given at the design stage of development for adequate distancing between an extension and mature trees and hedging to avoid subsequent vegetation loss due to concerns over loss of light and to allow sufficient spacing for future growth to maturity. In circumstances where trees (including canopies and root structures) are likely to be affected by a proposed extension or hardstanding, a tree survey will need to be submitted with the application.

## Tree Preservation Orders

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is an Order made by the City Council in respect of a tree(s) because the tree is considered to bring amenity value to the surrounding area. The order makes it an offence to cut down, uproot, prune, lop or damage the tree in question without first obtaining the Council's consent or having a valid planning permission that allows such works as part of the approved development. A TPO can apply to a single tree, a group of trees or a woodland.

To find out whether a tree (s) at a proposed development site is protected by a TPO please contact the City Council's Development Management Service on Preston 906912.

## 2 DEVELOPMENT OF SENSITIVE BUILDINGS AND IN SENSITIVE AREAS

### Conservation Areas

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Proposals within Conservation Areas must respect the character of the area through maintaining high quality design detail by the use of appropriate materials, scale, form and massing. It is important to note that Article 4 Directions bring even tighter control over development in specific areas than ordinary Conservation Areas. Further information on Article 4 Directions is given at Section 1 above. Details of whether your property is within a Conservation Area can be found on the Conservation and Heritage page on the City Council's website ([www.preston.gov.uk/yourservices/planning/conservation-and-heritage/](http://www.preston.gov.uk/yourservices/planning/conservation-and-heritage/)).

### Trees in Conservation Areas

Trees form important features within conservation areas and loss of tree cover can have a detrimental impact upon the appearance of the area. Any trees measuring over 7.5cm diameter 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 first giving the Local Planning Authority six weeks notice. Please see Section 1 General Advice for guidance on development considerations in proximity to trees.

### Listed Buildings

In addition to a planning application Listed Building Consent will be required if internal or external works are proposed to a listed building that affect the building's special interest. This is whether or not the particular feature is specifically mentioned in the list description. Listed Building Consent applications must include a design and access statement justifying the proposals and impact on the significance of the heritage asset. Use of traditional and historic materials are encouraged in this context such as the retention or refurbishment of traditional wooden sash windows rather than use of uPVC and use of slate as a roofing material rather than concrete tiles.

### Development in the Countryside

Extensions to dwellings within the Open Countryside and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ANOB) must have special regard to the unique character of the surroundings and the host building.

Further information is contained within the Central Lancashire Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

## Development in Flood Risk Areas

Careful design principles need to be adopted for development within a flood risk area. To establish whether your property is in a flood zone and which appropriate design measures should be employed please visit [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk). Further information on improving the flood performance of buildings can be found at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/improvingflood>.

Development in Flood Zones 2 & 3 must be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the nature and scale of the proposed development.

## 3 OTHER CONSENTS

### Building Regulations

The Building Regulations are concerned with public health and safety, energy conservation, access and facilities for disabled people in respect of buildings. Consent for Building Regulations may be required for a house extension, even for works which are permitted development.

Preston City Council's Building Control team can offer a service to meet the needs of your specific project. The team has a number of experienced and highly trained surveyors with local knowledge, who can offer pre-submission advice, rapid application turnaround and a same day inspection service. The Building Control team works very closely with the planning department and is happy to offer advice at an early stage to ensure your project runs as smoothly as possible from start to finish.

Further information can be found online at [www.preston.gov.uk/yourservices/planning/building-control](http://www.preston.gov.uk/yourservices/planning/building-control)

The Building Control team can be contacted via telephone on 01772 906913 or via e-mail at [buildingcontrol@preston.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@preston.gov.uk).

### Party Wall Act 1996

This act controls works that are close to or on the boundary of the property or party wall. Advice should be sought from an appropriately qualified person as this is not controlled by the council.

### Covenants

Necessary checks should be made to ensure that land proposed for development is examined for any associated covenants which may restrict development.

## 4 GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

This section contains the general principles which apply to residential extensions and alterations and should be read in conjunction with the Specific Policies contained with Section 5 of this SPD.

Alterations and extensions should be designed so that they:

- fit in with their surroundings and do not look out of place;
- do not cause an unacceptable loss of sunlight or daylight to neighbours;
- do not cause an unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbours;
- are not dominant or overbearing and;
- are either in keeping with the appearance of the original dwelling by incorporating architectural details present in the existing house or are designed to be compatible and complementary. Alterations and extensions of an innovative nature may be supported if the design is of exceptional quality and in accordance with Policy EN8 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document: Preferred Options Paper.”

Specifically, the following aspects should be considered:

### Siting

The proposed use of the extension and the internal plan of the existing house will strongly influence the siting of the extension. However, the siting should not have an unacceptable effect on the street scene or your neighbour’s amenities.

### Size

A good extension should not overwhelm the existing house. It should be subordinate in terms of its basic size and scale.

### Height

In general, the higher the extension the more likely it is that the extension will impact on adjacent neighbours and the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

### Roof

Pitched roofs are best for most extensions, especially when the extension is visible from the street. The roof pitch and basic design should match that of the original dwelling – hipped or gabled with tiles or slates to match.

## Overlooking

An extension should not unduly intrude on the privacy of neighbouring property by overlooking. The siting of windows in all new extensions, particularly those above ground floor level, should avoid intrusive overlooking. For this reason, balconies are unlikely to be acceptable. Should obscure glazing be considered as acceptable mitigation this will be required at level 5 obscurity.

## Separation Distances

New development should retain a satisfactory degree of privacy and daylight so that residents are not unduly affected. To achieve this, minimum separation distances should be maintained between houses, and in particular, between windows lighting primary habitable rooms. Primary windows are the main source of outlook and light to a room and are generally not obscure glazed.

Habitable rooms are the main rooms used within a dwelling and include:

- living rooms
- dining rooms
- studies
- kitchens with dining areas
- bedrooms
- breakfast areas

They do not include:

- kitchens without dining areas
- bathrooms
- storerooms
- circulation spaces (hallways, stairs and landings)
- garages

Where two habitable rooms face each other such that direct overlooking is physically possible, the windows should be a minimum of 21 metres apart. Where a window in a habitable room faces a blank wall, the height of which exceeds the top of that window, there should be a distance measuring a minimum of 13 metres between them. In the case of a kitchen window, these standards may be relaxed provided suitable screening is in place. These standards apply on flat ground.

On sloping ground an increased distance will be required, so that for every half metre difference in height, the distance in the standard is increased by one metre. Applicants will be required to indicate on their plans the finished floor level(s) of their building(s) in relation to a fixed datum point and, where there are windows on adjacent existing properties, the levels of these properties.

## Car Parking

Where extensions affect existing parking arrangements, a minimum of 2 off-street vehicle parking spaces should be retained or provided for a 1-3 bedroom property or 3 off-street spaces for a 4+ bedroom property. The minimum dimensions for a driveway parking space are 6m x 2.6m to include sufficient space for an up and over garage door or 5.5m x 2.6m if a roller shutter garage door is fitted. A garage of minimum dimensions 6m x 3m counts as one parking space.

The existing driveway may need to be extended to comply with the required car parking specifications. New and replacement driveways should be designed using materials that complement the building and minimize flood risk. The emphasis should be on using permeable surfaces whilst keeping the amount of impermeable surfaces to a minimum. 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/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/)).

In some circumstances the surfacing or resurfacing of a driveway may require planning permission depending on the materials, surface area and drainage proposed. To find out if planning permission is required please refer to the Planning Portal ([www.planningportal.gov.uk/](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/)).

## Refuse and Recycling Storage

Refuse and recycling facilities should be stored to the rear, side or behind the front elevation of the house to avoid an adverse impact on the appearance and amenity of a neighbourhood.

An extension to a property should not compromise existing space for refuse and recycling facilities and must reserve space for the provision of additional wheelie bins in line with the Council's Waste Storage and Collection Guidance for Domestic and Commercial Developments or any subsequent guidance which is introduced (in general two large and two small wheeled bins).

## Character

Extensions should be sensitive to the proportions of the existing house and echo its architectural details such as:

- courses of decorative brickwork
- window design and window pattern
- bay or feature windows
- use of stone detailing
- types of eaves
- barge-boarding on gables
- decorative ridge or hip tiles, pantiles
- the range of materials and how they have been applied

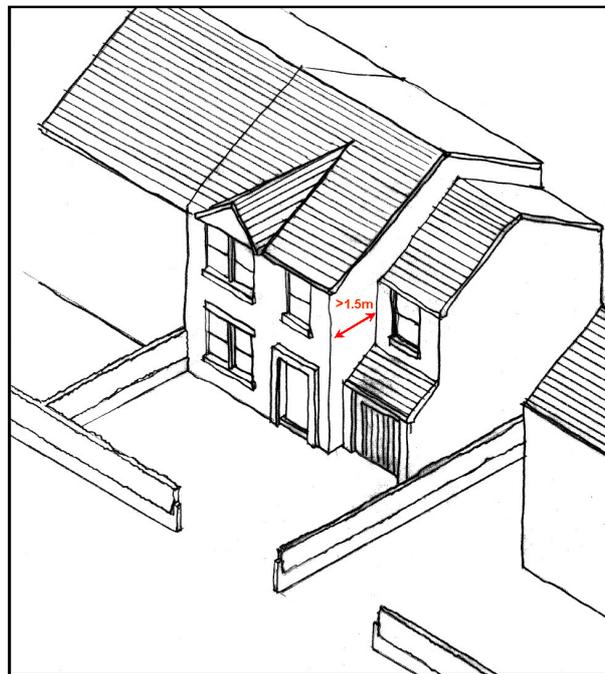
## 5 SPECIFIC POLICIES

Planning permission will normally be granted if the design pays attention to the following policies. However, all planning applications are considered on their individual merits and the particular layout and setting of the property may require specific design solutions which are not detailed in the policies below.

### SP1 side extensions (excluding corner properties)

In general, side extensions that are unsympathetic, overly large or poorly designed/detailed can have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the character of a street and therefore:

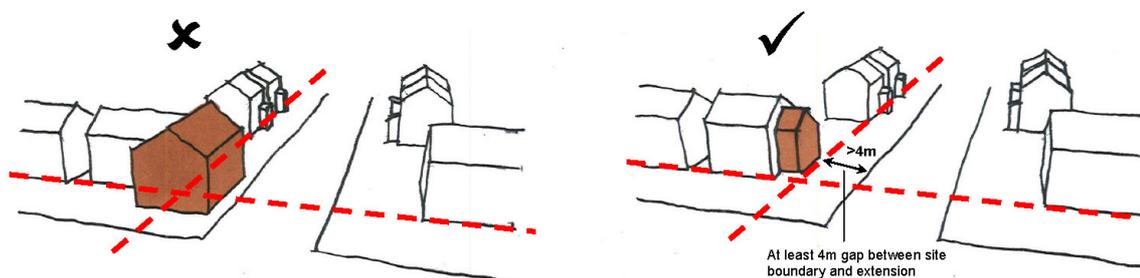
- A minimum of 1m must be retained between the side wall of the extension and the boundary of the plot to allow for sufficient access to the rear for bin, recycling and cycle storage, unless there are other satisfactory alternative arrangements.
- Two storey and first floor side extensions must be set back 1.5m from the main front wall at first floor level.
- The width of the extension must not exceed 50% of the width of the frontage of the original dwelling.
- The ridge height of the extension must be lower than that of the main ridgeline.
- Accessible parking and garage space must be proposed or retained in accordance with the general design principles set out in Section 4 which reflect the guidance of Lancashire County Council Highways.
- Extensions should not appear to fill the gaps between residential buildings where these are important characteristics of the locality i.e. where the layout of the houses has a certain rhythm or the gaps make a very positive contribution to the character of the street.



## SP2 corner properties

Extensions on corner properties should respect the streetscene and the character of the area. Where appropriate, extensions on corner plots should achieve a compatibility with two potentially very different streetscapes. Specifically:

- A minimum of 4m must be retained between the extension and the side boundary of the property to avoid the creation of an undesirable pinch point or obscure visibility at the road junction
- A side extension at a corner site must not encroach beyond the established building lines on either street which would adversely impact upon the character of the locality.
- The width of the extension must not exceed 50% of the width of the frontage of the original dwelling.
- The ridge height of the extension should be lower than that of the main ridgeline.

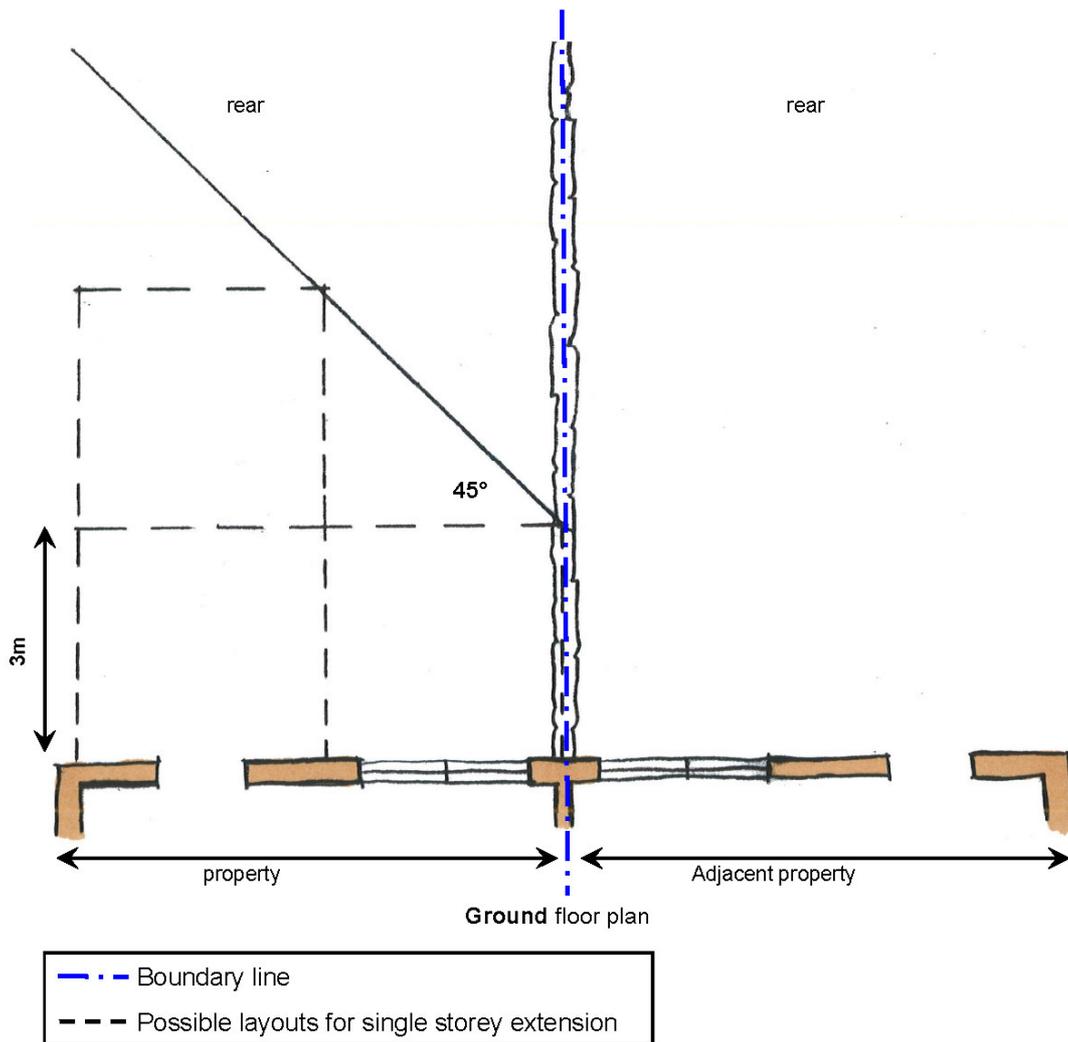


## SP3 Single storey rear extensions

Single storey extensions must not protrude more than 3 metres from the rear wall or beyond a 45° line drawn in the horizontal plane from a point on the boundary with an attached house, 3 metres from the rear wall.

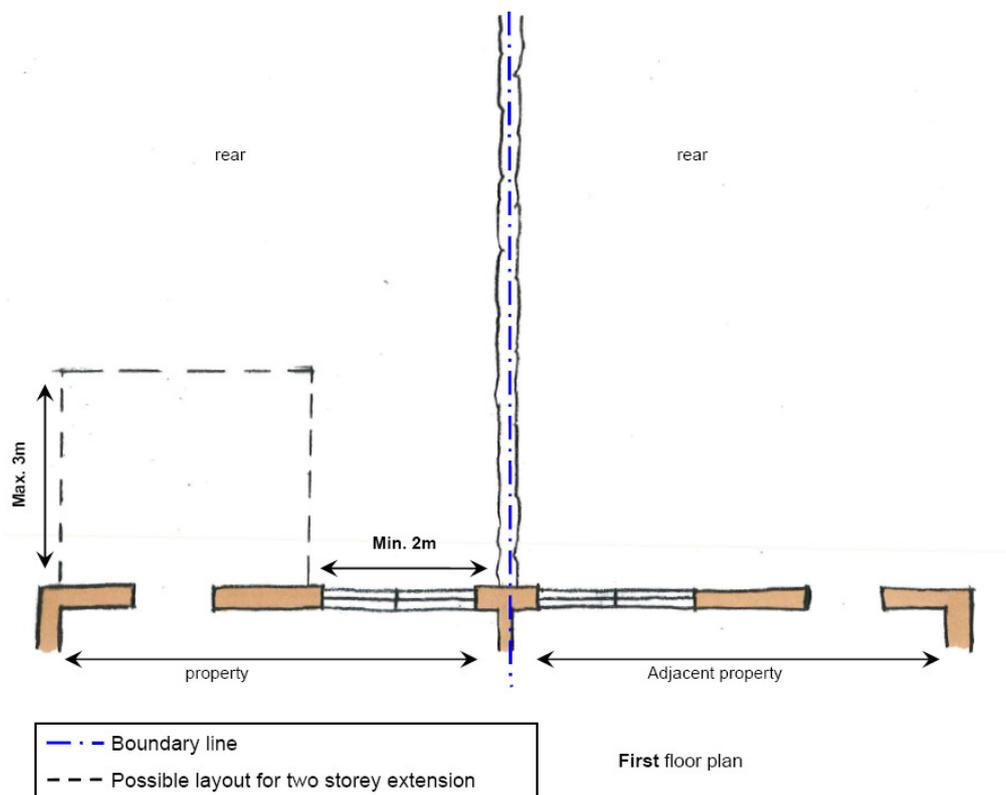
Where the length of the 45° line would exceed 12 metres before reaching any part of a proposed extension the 45° rule need not apply.

Additionally, single storey extensions must be designed in accordance with the general design principles set out in Section 4.

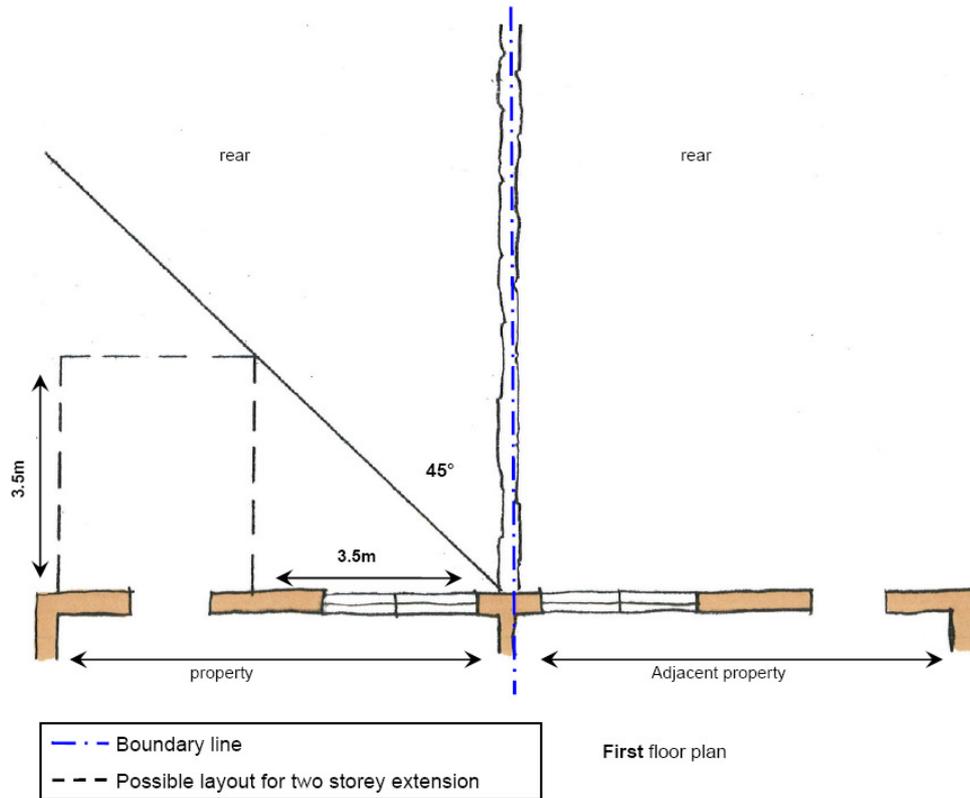


## SP4 Two storey & first floor rear extensions

On semi-detached properties or terraced properties with gardens, two storey or first floor extensions must be a minimum of 2 metres from the adjoining house.



For extensions longer than 3 metres, the distance between the boundary of the adjoining property and the first floor element of the extension must be equidistant (i.e. the distance must be same or greater than the projection of the extension).



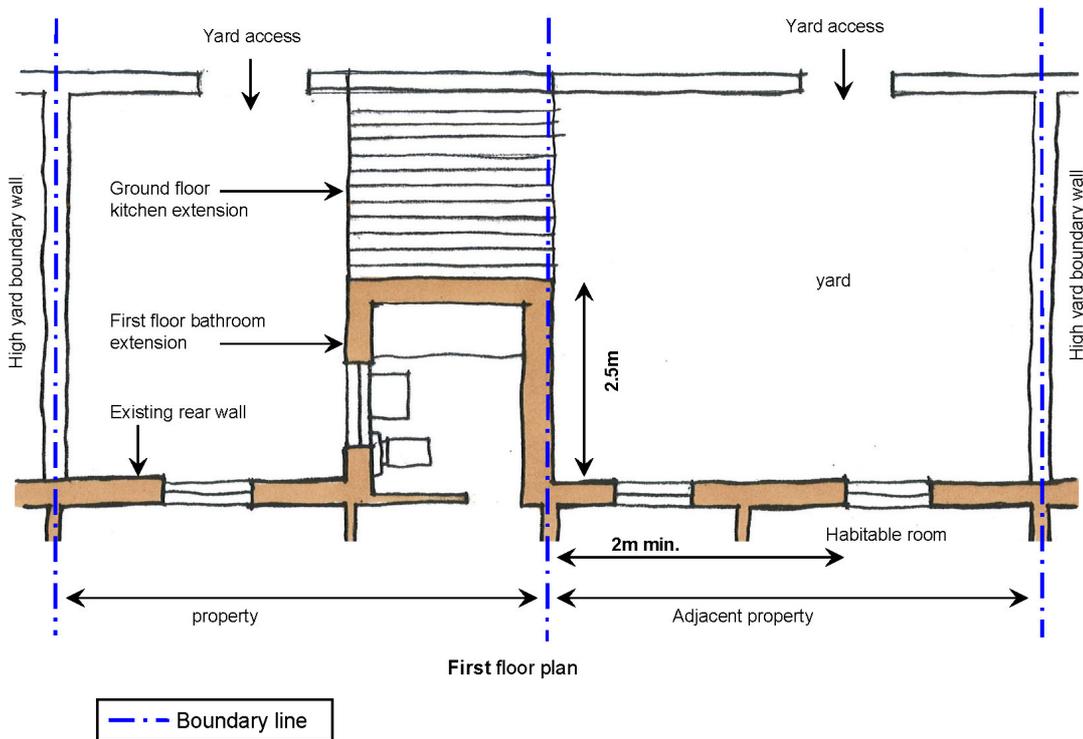
On a detached property no part of a two storey extension should cross the point at which a 45° line in the horizontal plane is drawn from the nearest part of a window to a habitable room on the immediately adjacent dwelling.

Where the length of the 45° line would exceed 12 metres before reaching any part of a proposed extension the 45° rule need not apply.

## SP5 Special considerations at terraced properties

In older terraced properties with high yard boundary walls, two storey and first floor extensions will be permitted in order to provide a bathroom, providing that:

- The side wall of the first floor element of the extension must be a minimum of 2m from the nearest window of a habitable room in the adjacent property.
- The first floor element of the extension must project no more than 2.5m from the main rear wall of the house.
- The yard remaining must be of a size and shape to form a useful private amenity space and to retain sufficient space for refuse/recycling storage and bicycle storage (i.e. a minimum of 8m<sup>2</sup>).
- The existing external access to the yard must be retained or an adequate alternative provided.

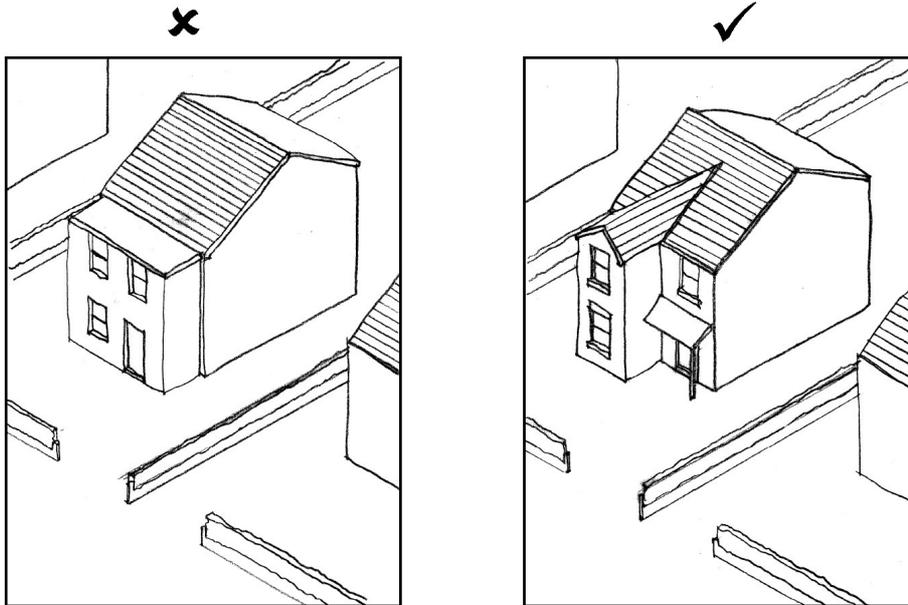


## SP6 Front extensions

Both single and two storey front extensions will only be permitted where they:

- are not intrusive in the street scene paying particular attention to the building line;
- are modestly sized and are sympathetically proportioned;
- do not unduly affect neighbouring amenity; and
- do not harm the character of the building.

Opportunities for acceptable front extensions are more likely to exist where there is ample space at the front of the property, where housing is of low density and is also detached.



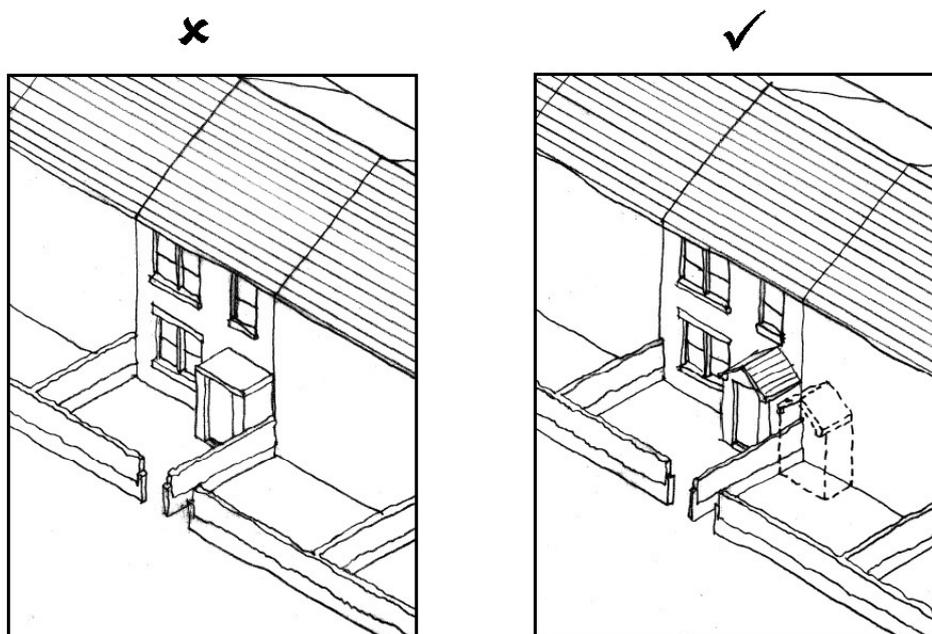
On semi-detached properties or terraced properties with gardens two storey extensions must be a minimum of 2 metres from the adjoining house.

For extensions longer than 3m, the distance between the boundary of the adjoining property and the first floor element of the extension must be equidistant (i.e. the distance must be same or greater than the projection of the extension).

## SP7 Porches

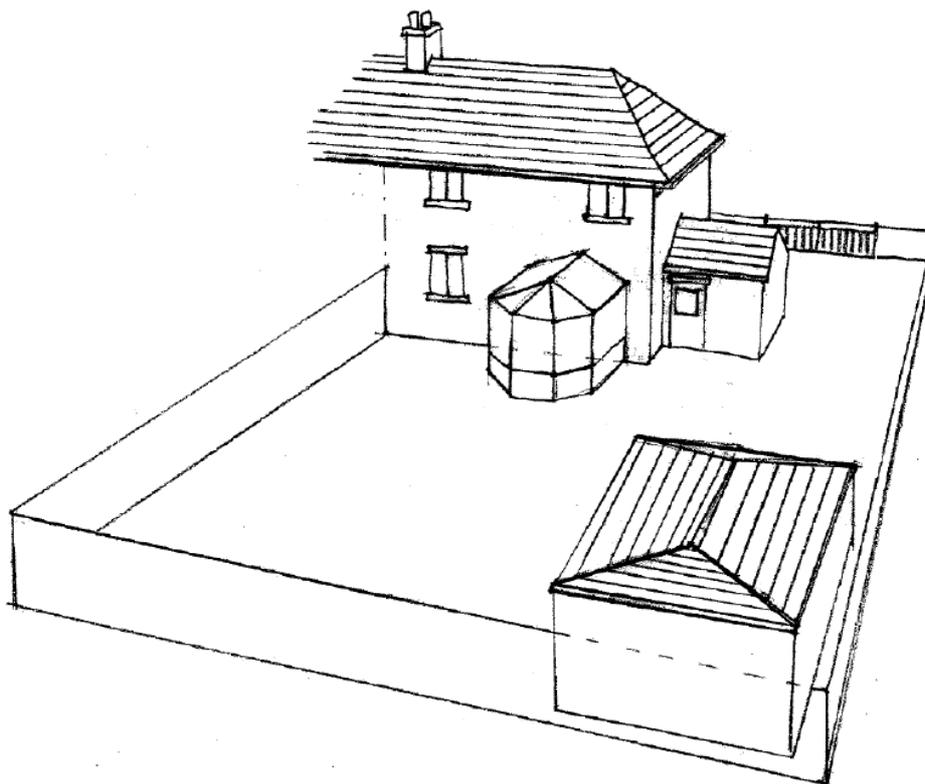
Porches should easily fit within the existing elevation and not destroy the existing features around the door. Porches that break up a frontage which has an identity centred on a uniform design or where existing door surrounds are an important feature of the street will not be permitted.

Small porches are often 'permitted development' and do not require formal planning consent. For further information please refer to the Planning Portal ([www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)).



## SP8 Other extensions/ conservatories/ garages

Other extensions and domestic buildings such as conservatories, sunrooms, and garages etc. should be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. Please refer to the general design principles at the front of this document and the specific Policies SP1 side extensions and SP3 rear extensions for more detailed design advice.



## SP9 Roof extensions and dormers

Front dormers are unlikely to be acceptable unless they are a characteristic feature of the locality or a feature original to the dwelling.

In general dormers should:

- 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 eaves gutter line;
- line up vertically with the existing windows below;
- have a pitched roof wherever possible; and
- be constructed with cheeks and pitched roofs clad in tiles or slates of a matching colour and texture to the existing roof and not be clad in board or plastic.

Some rear and side dormers are 'permitted development'. For further information please refer to the Planning Portal ([www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)).

## SP10 Disabled facilities

Extensions to provide disabled facilities will be considered sensitively but significant deviation from policy is unlikely to be acceptable.

## SP11 'Granny' annexes

Proposals for 'granny' annexes will be considered on their own merits, with issues of design, scale and how the annexe relates to the main dwelling being key considerations in assessing the scheme.

Where proposals to provide 'granny' annexes are considered to be acceptable, planning permission will be controlled by condition or a Section 106 agreement to ensure that this accommodation remains ancillary to the main house.

## Appendix A: Explanation surrounding Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

### **Sustainability Appraisal Background**

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is an integral component of the plan making process, performing a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan. The purpose of the SA process is to evaluate the social, environmental and economic implications of the plan from the outset and to ensure that this informs the decision making process. The SA should ultimately help to demonstrate that the final plan is the most appropriate given the range of reasonable alternatives.

SA is a mandatory part of the production of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) under Section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The requirements of how SA should be carried out are set out in guidance – the Plan-Making Manual and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC.

In most cases Supplementary Planning Documents will not require an SA unless the document raises significant environmental effects which have not been adequately appraised in a higher level DPD.

### **Habitats Regulations Assessment Background**

In accordance with The Conservation of Natural Habitats and c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, and European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive), the City Council is required to undertake a screening exercise of the plan (the SPD) on sites of international nature conservation importance. The plan can only be permitted where it has been satisfied that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of international nature conservation sites.

### **Preston Local Development Framework**

The guidance and policies contained within the SPD are related to policies contained within two 'parent' documents that are part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) in Preston, as well as the current adopted Preston Local Plan.

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012, and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (the new Local Plan) reached 'Preferred Options' stage in May 2012. In accordance with statutory requirements, both these LDF documents have been subject to SA. As the Core Strategy has been adopted, the SA for this document has been finalised. Whilst the new Local Plan for Preston has not yet reached its final stages of production, it has been subject to rigorous SA of all proposed allocations and policies.

The role of the House Extensions SPD is to provide clear and detailed guidance to householders within Preston on acceptable additions to their property, and what constitutes best practice in design terms. This is set in the context of both national and local standards, and within the framework of the following policies:

Core Strategy Policy 17: Design of New Buildings.  
New Local Plan Preferred Options Policy EN8: Design of New Development.

Given the SPD only provides additional detail to aid the implementation of these two policies, along with the level of SA these policies have undergone, together with Government guidance removing the specific need for SA of SPDs, it is proposed that an independent SA of this SPD is not required. It is considered that the SA work already undertaken on the 'parent' policies to this SPD satisfies statutory requirements, and that an independent SA of this SPD would not successfully further this work and can therefore not be justified.

Both the Core Strategy and new Local Plan have been subject to screening in respect of Habitats Regulations, in conformity with the requirements set out above. Given the SPD is entirely in conformity with both the Core Strategy and new Local Plan, it is considered that a full Habitats Screening Assessment of the SPD is not required.

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment Report concludes that the Core Strategy will not result in any likely significant effects for any sites of international nature conservation importance. Where any potential impacts have been identified, these have been mitigated through the implementation of other policies in the Core Strategy.