

1.	Foreword from Councillor Ferry	3
2.	Introduction	5
	Purpose and Scope	5
	Status	6
	Consultation	6
3.	Planning Policy	8
	National and Regional Policy	8
	Harrow's Unitary Development Plan	9
	Strategic Environmental Assessment	10
4.	Design and Layout Guidance for New Residential Development	12
	Creating the Urban Structure	12
	Making the Connections	16
	Detailing the Place	19
	Successful Living Space	23
5.	Design and Layout Guidance for Residential Conversions	31
	Responding to the Urban Structure	31
	Detailing the Place	31
	Successful Living Space	32
6.	Design and Layout Guidance for Householder Development	35
	Preliminary Information	35
	Design Principles and Elements	36
	Amenity Considerations	40
	Detailed Guidelines	43
7.	Monitoring	53
	Glossary	55

Foreword from Councillor Ferry 1

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

1 Foreword from Councillor Ferry

Harrow enjoys a surprisingly diverse range of homes and contains some of London's best kept and desirable leafy suburbs. However, many recent developments have at best been of mediocre design, and have failed to meet residents' reasonable aspirations. The Council is determined to improve the quality of the built environment in Harrow and ensure that new homes are fit for purpose.

In preparing this document the Council has taken the opportunity to provide some detailed guidance for those seeking to carry out conversion of existing houses to flats to ensure that their impact on the quality of existing residential areas is not detrimental.

The Council's supplementary planning guidance 'Extensions: A Householders' Guide' has been updated and incorporated into this SPD. It provides a set of principles and guidelines for domestic extensions and alterations in the Borough, bringing together all guidance on residential design into one document.

As the portfolio holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise, I welcome and support this SPD and its aims of ensuring that new residential development in Harrow is built to the highest quality, creates vibrant, attractive and safe places that contribute positively to the existing character of the Borough.



Councillor Keith Ferry

Portfolio Holder

Planning, Development and Enterprise.

Introduction 2

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

2 Introduction

2.1 Harrow is a vibrant and prosperous outer London borough characterised by a rich historical, cultural and physical landscape. Good public transport links to central London, well developed physical, social and green infrastructure and the generally high quality of residential dwellings makes Harrow a highly desirable place to live. However, growing pressure to provide sufficient new homes to cater for London's projected population growth means that the Council needs to ensure that future residential development is of a high design quality, capable of responding to distinctive local character and enhancing the quality of people's living environments and the surrounding public realm. There has also been concern expressed through consultation, notably as part of the preparation of the new Local Development Framework, that the quality of much new housing developments is poor and so improving the design of new buildings is of particular importance.

2.2 Pending the adoption of new policies in planning documents to form the Local Development Framework, this supplementary planning document seeks to address concern about the quality of new residential development with design and layout guidance to amplify existing provisions contained within the saved policies of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2004. In the preparation of the guidance, the Council has been mindful that many such documents have already been published by other agencies and that other local supplementary planning documents already establish guidelines relating to accessibility⁽¹⁾, sustainability⁽²⁾ and conservation areas⁽³⁾. This supplementary planning document therefore seeks to provide locally specific guidance focusing on elements of residential design and layout, but does not duplicate or supersede the provisions of other relevant publications.

Purpose and Scope

2.3 The purpose of this supplementary planning document is to help achieve a consistently high standard of design and layout in residential development in Harrow by amplifying the main considerations already set out in relevant UDP policies. The document incorporates and replaces (with revisions) existing supplementary planning guidance on householder development, first adopted by the Council in 1992, and re-states the '45 degree code' in relation to new residential development. Established practice in relation to the design and layout of residential conversions is also formalised within the document.

2.4 The guidance in this supplementary planning document is structured as follows:

- Guidance for New Residential Development
- Guidance for Conversions
- Guidance for Householder Extensions including outbuildings.

1 Accessible Homes SPD

2 Sustainable Building Design SPD

3 Harrow on the Hill and Pinner Conservation Area SPDs

Status

2.5 This supplementary planning document on residential design forms part of Harrow's Local Development Framework. It will therefore be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for new residential development (including changes of use to residential), conversions of houses to flats, and householder development. It has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and associated regulations and guidance on supplementary planning documents.

2.6 Proposals for new residential development (including changes of use) and conversions should be informed by the guidance contained in this document, but should also comply with the Council's Sustainable Building Design, Accessible Homes and (where relevant) Conservation Area supplementary planning documents⁽⁴⁾, and the requirements of London Plan policies. Development affecting conservation areas, listed buildings and the Green Belt requires particular care and attention. The need to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas and listed buildings, and to safeguard the openness and character of the Green Belt, will take precedence even where a development complies with the guidance set out in this supplementary planning document.

2.7 In relation to the proposed Harrow & Wealdstone Intensification Area, the Council is preparing an Area Action Plan to manage the expected high level of development activity and achieve a coherent, new urban character across the area. Once adopted, the policies and proposals contained within the Area Action Plan will have 'development plan' status and may in certain circumstances over-ride the guidance set out in this supplementary planning document. Elsewhere, this supplementary planning document should not be applied or interpreted on a purely mechanical basis, but must always take into account site circumstances and other relevant considerations.

Consultation

2.8 In accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, the following consultation exercise was undertaken in the preparation of this supplementary planning document:

- written notice (by letter or e-mail) to over 1,200 persons and organisations registered on the Council's LDF consultation database and online consultation portal;
- text and a link from the LDF pages of the Council's website to the online consultation portal;
- local newspaper advertisement (30 September); and
- two workshop sessions with Harrow's Planning Agents' Forum.

2.9 The formal consultation period on the draft document lasted for a period of four weeks from 30th September to 28th October 2010. A total of 19 responses to the consultation were received. Following the close of consultation and in response to consultees' comments the supplementary planning document was substantially revised prior to adoption on [date to be inserted] December 2010.

2.10 A consultation and adoption statement for this supplementary planning document is available on the Council's website: <http://www.harrow.gov.uk>

4 All of Harrow's SPDs are available to download from the Council's website: http://http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/856/local_development_framework_policy/1504/harrow_spds

Planning Policy 3

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

3 Planning Policy

National and Regional Policy

3.1 Planning Policy Statement 1: *Delivering Sustainable Development* (2005) emphasises the importance attached by the Government to good design. Paragraphs 33 & 34 state that:

"Good design ensures attractive, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development, Good design is indivisible from good planning.

Planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted".

3.2 Paragraphs 34-39 go on to give further, pertinent advice on the importance of good design.

3.3 Planning Policy Statement 3: *Housing* (2010) further underlines the importance of good design in the delivery of high quality housing. Paragraph 14 states that:

"Local Planning Authorities should develop a shared vision with their local communities of the type(s) of residential environments they wish to see and develop design policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the local area, aimed at:

- *Creating places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity and maintain and improve local character; and*
- *Promoting designs and layouts which make efficient and effective use of land, including encouraging innovative approaches to help deliver high quality outcomes".*

3.4 Urban design guidelines are recognised in paragraph 18 as one of the appropriate tools to achieve the delivery of high quality housing. The definition of previously developed (or 'brownfield') land is contained at Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 3 and, as amended in 2010, specifically excludes private residential gardens alongside other forms open land within built-up areas.

3.5 The London Plan (2008) forms part of the 'development plan' for Harrow, giving its policies the same status for decision making purposes as those contained within the Unitary Development Plan. The London Plan contains a number of policies relevant to and which cut across the issue of residential design and layout. At the time of this supplementary planning document's adoption a replacement London Plan incorporating revised housing and design policies was at an advanced stage of preparation.

3.6 The London Plan and associated planning policies are therefore expected to change over the short term. As part of the Development Plan these policies have the status of development plan policy and regardless of this guidance will be treated as a significant material consideration in accordance with S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).

Harrow's Unitary Development Plan

3.7 Harrow's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted 30th July 2004. Pending the adoption of the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents as part of Harrow's Local Development Framework, a number of UDP policies were 'saved' and remain in force as the current development plan. The saved UDP policies most closely concerned with the matters covered by this supplementary planning document are D4 *The Standard of Design and Layout* and D5 *New Residential Development - Amenity Space and Privacy*. Together, they seek to achieve a high standard of design, layout, amenity and privacy for existing and future residents of the Borough.

POLICY D4 *The Standard of Design and Layout*

THE COUNCIL WILL EXPECT A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND LAYOUT IN ALL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS. THE FOLLOWING FACTORS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN CONSIDERING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- A. SITE AND SETTING;
- B. CONTEXT, SCALE AND CHARACTER;
- C. PUBLIC REALM;
- D. ENERGY EFFICIENCY, RENEWABLE ENERGY, SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION;
- E. LAYOUT, ACCESS AND MOVEMENT;
- F. SAFETY;
- G. LANDSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE; AND
- H. ADEQUATE REFUSE STORAGE.

THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR NEW-BUILD DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE A SUPPORTING DESIGN STATEMENT.

POLICY D5 *New Residential Development - Amenity Space and Privacy*

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD:-

A. PROVIDE AMENITY SPACE WHICH IS SUFFICIENT:-

- 1) TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY AND AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF SURROUNDING BUILDINGS;
- 2) AS A USABLE AMENITY AREA FOR THE OCCUPIERS OF THE DEVELOPMENT; AND
- 3) AS A VISUAL AMENITY.

B. MAINTAIN ADEQUATE SEPARATION BETWEEN BUILDINGS AND DISTANCE TO SITE BOUNDARIES IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY AND AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED NEW ADJOINING DWELLINGS. PROPOSALS SHOULD PROVIDE SPACE AROUND BUILDINGS TO REFLECT THE SETTING OF NEIGHBOURING BUILDINGS; AND

C. ENSURE THAT THE AMENITY AND PRIVACY OF OCCUPIERS OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED DWELLINGS IS SAFEGUARDED.

IN OR ADJACENT TO TOWN CENTRES, IT MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO PROVIDE FLATS WITH ONLY LIMITED EXTERNAL AMENITY SPACE. IN SUCH INSTANCES ALTERNATIVE PROVISION SUCH AS BALCONIES, ROOF GARDENS OR INTERNAL COMMUNAL AREAS WILL BE SOUGHT.

3.8 Other saved UDP policies will be relevant to the design and layout of residential development, including D9 *Streetside Greenness and Forecourt Greenery*, D10 *Trees and New Development* and C16 *Access to Buildings and Public Spaces*.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.9 As part of a statutory process for environmental assessment the preparation of the document involved consideration of its potential for environmental consequences. In consultation with English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency, it was found that the supplementary planning document will not have any significant negative environmental effects. Formal, strategic environmental assessment of the supplementary planning document is not therefore required.

Design and Layout Guidance for New Residential Development 4

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

4 Design and Layout Guidance for New Residential Development

4.1 Within the design principles established by Planning Policy Statements 1 and 3, the following guidance supplements saved UDP Policies D4, D5, D9, D10 and C16. The guidance has been structured so that it can be read alongside the Urban Design Compendium (2007)⁽⁵⁾, to which it gives local interpretation, and to support the implementation of the Building for Life criteria⁽⁶⁾ as relevant to the matters addressed in the saved UDP policies supplemented by this guidance.

Creating the Urban Structure

Introduction

4.2 The urban structure deals with the character and pattern of development, including the form and function of open spaces. In Harrow, few previously developed sites are physically divorced from their surroundings or are sufficiently large to establish their own, independent urban structure; more usually, redevelopment sites are modest in size and have a direct interface with established residential areas. These established areas will provide both a context and a setting which should inform the design and layout of development from the inception of a proposal and through the planning process. The sustainability of the development as a whole should also be considered as part of the urban structure.

4.3 The following Building for Life questions are particularly relevant when creating the urban structure:

- 05. Does the development have any features that reduce its environmental impact?
- 07. Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?
- 08. Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?
- 09. Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?
- 10. Are the streets defined by a well-structured building layout?
- 16. Is the public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?

Pattern of Development

4.4 The pattern of development refers to the arrangement of plots, buildings and spaces around the building which, repeated over an area, forms part of that area's character and identity. Town centres typically have an urban identity, and are often characterised by development which forms a continuous building frontage directly abutting the pavement edge, with service areas at the rear of the buildings. In Harrow, residential areas are most frequently suburban in identity, characterised

5 *Urban Design Compendium*, English Partnerships and Housing Corporation, September 2007; see <http://www.urbandesigncompendium.co.uk>

6 *Delivering Great Places: 20 questions you need to answer*, Building for Life, November 2008; see <http://http://www.buildingforlife.org/>

by houses set back from the road with front gardens, gaps between the buildings/on corner plots and rear gardens of greater or lesser depth. The pattern of development may be an integral part of a historic, planned layout or an established character that has evolved over time.

4.5 The pattern of development plays a vital role in:

- defining the character of the street;
- influencing the perception of spaciousness and landscape capacity;
- establishing daylight, outlook and privacy relationships between dwellings;
- influencing the perception of safety on the street; and
- the accommodation of parking, storage and service requirements.

4.6 The design and layout of new development should be informed by the pattern of development of the area in which it is situated. The continuity of building lines, forecourt depths, road layout, space about the building and rear garden areas are all likely to be important components when redeveloping sites within existing residential areas, or at the interface of larger development sites and existing housing. Within town centres, attention will be paid to the continuity of building frontage, plot widths, residential access and servicing arrangements, the treatment of return frontages and the transition between the urban and suburban development pattern.



Picture 4.1



Picture 4.2

Examples of distinctive development pattern

Local Character

4.7 An area's character may be derived from a range of attributes. As well as the pattern of development described above, these include:

- built form;
- roof form;
- streetside and garden greenery; and
- uses/activity

4.8 The design and layout of new development should recognise the character of the area in which it is situated and, in applying minimum density and other policy requirements, respond to the positive features of that character. In instances where the surrounding area lacks an identifiable character with positive attributes, or the proposal site is severed from its surroundings (i.e. by railway lines, major roads, industrial areas), the design of new development may establish a distinctive new local identity.

4.9 New development often creates 'edges', for instance, where new buildings adjoin older developments, green or open spaces and streets, or at the interface of two character areas. The sensitive and innovative treatment of these edges is critically important. Where edges are treated in such a manner, even a radically different architectural building design can be accommodated into the existing built environment. Special attention should therefore be paid, where appropriate, to edge treatment.

Space Around the Buildings

4.10 The space around buildings often has multiple functions. The space may be needed for the retention or provision of trees & landscaping, as an ecological resource, to provide a setting for the building and to accommodate refuse storage and parking facilities. Space will often also be needed as an amenity for residents or to provide for children and young people's play and recreation, whilst the separation that open space provides will help to achieve satisfactory daylight/sunlight, outlook and privacy relationships between buildings. It is therefore imperative that the layout and function of all space between buildings is addressed, at the outset, as part of the design and layout of new residential development.

4.11 The amount of amenity space to be provided will be informed by the London Plan standards, the needs of the future occupants of the development and the character of the area. On higher density developments, consideration of amenity space requirements will need to sit alongside other policy objectives. Applicants will be expected to place the role and function of on-site space within the context of the needs of occupiers for a range of different uses and spaces. The Mayor of London has separately set out guidance for providing children's and young people's play and informal recreation and this will inform requirements for dedicated space in connection with major residential development.

4.12 The layout and function of open space may also contribute to a sustainable movement network and, in larger developments, to the extension of the public rights of way network as enhancement of Harrow's 'green grid'. Due to the topography of the Borough, many areas within Harrow benefit from glimpses, views and vistas towards Harrow Hill or towards the Green Belt. Where these occur on development sites, the layout and function of open space should also take into account the opportunity for future residents and the public to benefit from these.

4.13 Building forecourts make a particularly important contribution to streetside greenness and leafy, suburban character in Harrow's residential areas. Development that leaves insufficient space for forecourt landscaping will not be accepted.



Picture 4.3



Picture 4.4

Use and Layout of Space Around Buildings

Scale, Massing and Roof Form

4.14 The scale and massing of a building relates to its physical dimensions, namely its height, width, depth and roof profile. The scale and massing of buildings may also be significant components in an area's character and help to convey the distinction between urban, suburban and semi-rural parts of the Borough.

4.15 Roof form is an important visual element of a building. The roof design can help to convey the overall design approach of a development - such as the flat form of 1930s modernist buildings - or contribute to the continuity of a series of buildings. Roof lines and pitches, roofing materials and colour all serve to frame the streetscape and skyline, particularly on low-rise development.

4.16 New development should recognise the scale, massing and roof form of surrounding buildings and reflect these where they are a positive attribute of the area's character. Consideration should be given to the grouping of buildings, roof pitches, the detailing of eaves and gables, chimney stacks and the size/siting of any dormer windows.

4.17 Tall buildings, defined as those with a height that significantly exceeds that of surrounding development, can be of townscape merit where they create new landmarks or focal points. Paragraph 4.11 of the reasoned justification to UDP Policy D4 states that "...high buildings should be of outstanding architectural quality, well related to other buildings or features nearby, contribute positively to their surroundings and avoid any adverse effect on things such as the local micro-climate, services or telecommunications". Schedule 3 of the UDP sets out detailed criteria for assessing tall buildings and Schedule 4 identifies important local views and landmarks to which Policy D31 applies. Given the complex and significant impact of tall buildings, the Council would expect any proposal for a tall building to be subject of detailed pre-application discussion and public consultation, alongside a thorough assessment of the site and surrounding area in accordance with guidance provided by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and English Heritage⁽⁷⁾.

7 Guidance on Tall Buildings (2007)

Ecology

4.18 Albeit unintentionally, many older buildings often provided roosting and nesting habitats for wildlife, including now threatened migratory birds and bats. Their long association with humans means that many of these species have become dependant on human settlements providing suitable habitats for their long term survival. In recent years however, many of these important niches have been lost as old buildings are demolished or renovated in line with changing design trends, resulting in a loss of habitat and a dramatic decrease in wildlife numbers. In order to reverse this trend it is important that new residential buildings incorporate design solutions targeted at providing a habitat for vulnerable species.

4.19 Major residential development must utilise opportunities for ecological preservation and/or restoration as part of scheme design and layout, informed by surveys where existing buildings are to be demolished. The following measures, or suitable alternatives where relevant, should be demonstrated:

- designing proposed development in a manner that maximises the retention of existing vegetation, especially locally significant mature or veteran trees, preferably including these within local amenity space for the development;
- develop a landscape plan early in the design process taking into account surrounding green infrastructure and wildlife habitats with a view to developing landscape designs that link up to existing wildlife corridors or begin the process of creating new corridors;
- fitting dedicated commercially available 'Swift Bricks' or 'nest boxes' on northern aspect walls or other shaded walls, either under building eaves or at other points in 5 metres or more from ground height;
- fitting dedicated bird and bat boxes on northern aspect walls or other shaded walls, either under building eaves or at other points 5 metres or more from from ground height;
- encouraging the incorporation of green roofs, green walls, balancing ponds, swales and other features that would improve biodiversity levels; and
- encourage developers to consider the strategic location of development sites in relation to their potential to form wildlife corridors connecting fragmented ecological sites or form new wildlife corridors; this is especially relevant in areas in the Borough identified as being deficient in access to nature.

4.20 The Council's Biodiversity Action Plan identifies further actions that may be relevant to the design and layout of some residential developments.

Making the Connections

Introduction

4.21 Permeability within and between development is of vital importance in the urban and suburban environment. The network of roads, footpaths and cycle routes - and their quality - will influence the ability of residents to move between places and will determine the success with which visitors can find their way around. Striking the right balance between road space and the needs

of pedestrians and cyclists will help to influence modal choice. The layout of new development, and its connectivity with the surroundings, should be designed with the objective of contributing to the inclusive legibility of the place.

4.22 The following Building for Life questions are particularly relevant when making the connections:

01. Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs and cafés?
04. Does the development have easy access to public transport?
11. Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?
12. Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the streetscene?
13. Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?
14. Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?
15. Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?

Sustainable Movement Network

4.23 Residential development must be designed and laid out in a manner that permits a high level of permeability with the surrounding area, particularly for pedestrians. The emphasis should be to create an accessible movement network connecting the development to surrounding streets, footpaths, open spaces and public transport connections. Pedestrians and cyclists are sensitive to distance and, in addressing permeability, attention should be paid to desire lines and the need to avoid off-putting detours and barriers to movement. Development which impedes or reduces existing sustainable movement will not be permitted.

4.24 A successful sustainable movement network will be well used at all times of the day and this in itself will help to encourage perceptions of safety and security. Nevertheless, development should provide natural surveillance and the network should be well lit, carefully landscaped and be protected from dangerous traffic.

4.25 In major developments opportunities to extend the public rights of way network to provide improved access to the 'green grid' in Harrow will also be sought. Smaller development also have an important contribution to make to overall accessibility and the perceptions of permeability, even if it is only the connection between the new homes within the development and the surrounding area. For this reason, there will be a presumption against gated residential areas.

4.26 The layout of development should ensure that any surviving historic routes through the area are not harmed or lost. Where opportunities arise, consideration should be given to the reinstatement of historic routes, urban grain and block forms that have been lost through earlier redevelopment.



Picture 4.5



Picture 4.6

Gated Development: Contrary to Sustainable Movement Network

Cycle Parking

4.27 All new residential development is required to provide secure, integrated and accessible cycle parking facilities. The Council will expect the cycle parking requirements set out in the London Plan to be met.

4.28 Cycle parking facilities should be located in safe, well-lit and overlooked areas that are within close proximity to main building entrances. The facilities should provide weather protected parking and be built with durable, high quality materials that are resistant to wear and age well. Developments should incorporate innovative, visually attractive designs for cycle parking racks as these can also act as a feature for the development.

Car Parking

4.29 The London Plan and Harrow's UDP set out a range of maximum car parking standards for residential development. The appropriate level of provision, within the maximum standards, will be determined by public transport accessibility and other considerations such as network stress. However, in line with the approach set out in the London Plan, developments should make provision for disabled people with at least one accessible on or off street car parking bay designated for use by disabled people, even if no general parking is proposed. All developments with associated off street car parking should have at least two bays for use by disabled people.

4.30 The provision of large amounts of poorly designed car parking spaces to serve new residential developments will not be accepted. A thorough analysis of the need for car parking spaces should be undertaken, having regard to the nature and location of the development including its public transport accessibility level. Where car parking is required, for example because of inadequate public transport accessibility, the design and layout of the development should ensure that it does not dominate the site or take precedence over the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Parking spaces should be accessible, well lit, overlooked and carefully landscaped.



Picture 4.7



Picture 4.8

Examples of Cycle and Car Parking

Detailing the Place

Introduction

4.31 The appearance of a building is often the most sensitive component of a development's design in the planning process. Building design can significantly influence public perceptions of the quality of an area; the typically long lifespan of buildings mean that the impacts of external appearance can often last many decades. Attention to the detail of development will compliment the principles for creating the urban structure and making the connections, set out above, to create high quality and distinctive places that are appropriate in the suburban and urban environment.

4.32 The following Building for Life questions are particularly relevant when detailing the place:

06. Is the design specific to the scheme?

17. Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?

18. Do the internal spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?⁽⁸⁾

19. Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?

20. Do the buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as building regulations?

Sustainability

4.33 This part of Policy D4 has been supplemented by the Council's supplementary planning document Sustainable Building Design (2009), which should also be used when designing residential development. The following topics are addressed:

- Land and Building Re-Use
- Energy Efficiency

⁸ This criteria is especially relevant to the Lifetime and Wheelchair Home Standards set out in the Council's Accessible Homes SPD.

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

- Sustainable Materials
- Water Use and Conservation
- Mitigating Flooding
- Soundscapes
- Air Quality
- Transport
- Recycling and Waste

4.34 The Sustainable Building Design SPD is available to download from the Council's website: http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/856/local_development_framework_policy/1504/harrow_spds

Building Style

4.35 At the outset, it will be necessary to determine whether the building's design should reflect or contrast with that of its neighbours. In many parts of Harrow there is strong coherence of building design where it will often be appropriate to compliment what already exists. However rigid replication of existing development is not always desirable and, where this is the case, innovative building designs will be more appropriate. Consideration of the appropriate approach to building design should be informed by the need to realise the opportunity of previously developed sites and by the other factors addressed by Policy D4, in particular: context, scale and character; the public realm; and energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable design and construction.

4.36 Irrespective of whether a development compliments the existing building fabric of an area or constitutes an innovative new style in its setting, the design must be of a high standard. Building designs which are harmful in their site and setting will not be accepted.

Architectural Detail

4.37 The architectural features and details on buildings can greatly influence their overall visual appearance and, therefore, design quality. The architectural details must be informed by the chosen design and architectural style. For example many 'modernist' buildings of the 1930s achieved high quality design through a limited palette of features and materials to give simple, horizontal emphasis to the external appearance; by contrast many of the best suburban houses from the same period achieved high quality design through the use of a variety of features and materials such as gables, bay windows, timbers or tile hanging, decorative brick work panels, stained glass windows, etc. Modern interpretations of existing features based upon a demonstrable understanding of the original architectural style can add further variety and interest to an area and help to strengthen local character and distinctiveness.

Materials and Colour

4.38 The type and quality of materials used in the external finish of development plays a critically important role in perpetuating continuity, where the building seeks to compliment its neighbours, or in the creation of distinctive new identity where the building seeks to innovate. In larger developments the considered use of a wide variety of materials can effectively address massing

and avoid monotony, as well as helping to manage the visual transition between the existing and new buildings at the site's interface with neighbouring areas. In smaller developments it will often be preferable to use a more limited palette of complimentary materials. Other considerations in the choice of finishing materials include durability and energy efficiency and sustainability; Harrow's Sustainable Building Design SPD provides further amplification on the sustainable use materials.

4.39 In deciding whether to approve the materials details of a development, the Council may take into account the colour and texture of the bricks, rendering or other cladding to be used. The colour of materials can be used effectively as part of a building's design to, for example, emphasise architectural features or distinguish between different components of the development. Where development is to be integrated into the existing urban fabric, for example on 'in-fill' sites and particularly in relation to listed buildings & conservation areas, it will often be most appropriate to match closely the appearance of the materials of the neighbouring buildings.

Entrances and Windows

4.40 The entrance to residential buildings marks an important transition between public and private space. The main entrance to a building can be an important part of its architectural expression and aid a wider understanding the function(s) of the building when viewed from the public realm. Main entrances should be clearly visible in the street, contributing to the overall legibility of the development, and must be fully accessible. In larger buildings, this may require greater height or more considered design elements to ensure that the proportion and scale of the entrance reflects the overall scale of the building.

4.41 Where building design seeks to compliment that of neighbouring buildings, special attention should be paid to fenestration details. This will include consideration of the window proportions (horizontal or vertical emphasis), the relationship of the window with the surface of the building elevations (flush or set-back), the opening design (casement, sash or other), glazing bars (horizontal, vertical or none) and the external perception of storey heights.



Picture 4.9 Making an Entrance! But note the poorly sited satellite dish and television aerials

External Services

4.42 Multiple flues, ventilation pipes, meter cupboards, mail boxes and other external services on the outside of a building often detract from the finished appearance of an otherwise well designed development. In multiple-occupancy developments, such as blocks of flats, the building design should incorporate measures for the discreet accommodation of these services. Such measures might include recessed channels for down-pipes or routing of flues/outlets to non-sensitive elevations. Flues, ventilation units and other services that appear as 'add-on' elements will not be accepted.

4.43 Satellite dishes are similarly visually obtrusive and, again, this can be particularly so on multiple-occupancy buildings such as blocks of flats. Buildings intended for multiple occupation will therefore be required to make provision as part of the building design for the communal provision of satellite and similar domestic telecommunications apparatus in discreet locations. In other cases satellite dishes should be:

- of 'standard' size for television reception;
- positioned discreetly, such as on a non-exposed rear elevation; and
- located so as not to impact unduly upon the outlook of neighbouring properties.

4.44 Where justified, the Council will seek to restrict permitted development for freestanding satellite dishes and require details of shared systems as a condition of planning permission. Satellite dishes should be removed as soon as they become obsolete.

Boundaries

4.45 Boundary treatment functions to distinguish between public and private space within the public realm, which helps to convey use entitlement, maintenance responsibility and perceptions of security. The absence of clearly defined boundaries especially along building frontages can blur the edge between public and private space and lead to neglected poor quality spaces between buildings and streets. However, obtrusive boundary treatment such as high railings and gates can have a negative impact in the streetscene by conveying a sense of severance and defensiveness.

4.46 The permitted height of means of enclosure is 1 metre adjacent to a highway and 2 metres elsewhere⁽⁹⁾. Generally, these heights will be appropriate in most suburban situations in Harrow except where the original character of an area is open plan, or where for example the return frontages of corner property are enclosed up to a height of 2 metres. Boundary materials should reflect those prevailing in the area and the use of hedges and other green boundaries (preferably using native plant species) is also encouraged. The use of high railings and gates will be unacceptable.

4.47 Consideration should also be given to pedestrian-vehicular inter-visibility. This may influence the appropriate height of boundary treatment at vehicle access/egress points, or may require the use of formal visibility splays where justified by the expected number of vehicle movements or site circumstances.

9 Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995

Safety

4.48 Designing for community safety is a central element in providing high quality residential developments. The manner in which building design relates and responds to the adjacent street and public realm plays a significant role in influencing perceptions of safety and the risk of crime, both for the building occupants and people making use of these public areas. Local Authorities are responsible under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their activities and to do all that they can to reduce opportunities for crime and fear of crime in the exercise of their functions.

4.49 The design and layout of new residential development should be informed by 'Secured By Design' principles⁽¹⁰⁾. Secured By Design is a Police initiative to guide developers to adopt crime prevention measures in new development. The initiative has resulted in the publication of detailed guidance that seeks to reduce crime through the adoption of appropriate building materials as well as broader urban design approaches to achieve this objective. These guides detail crime prevention principles including accounting for defensible space, natural surveillance, visibility, street lighting (with shades to prevent light pollution) and other security measures. It is important to also account for local conditions regarding safety and security during the building design stage.

Refuse Storage

4.50 The design and layout of residential development must make satisfactory arrangements for the storage and collection of recycling and waste. The arrangements should secure compliance with the detailed specifications set out in the Council's adopted *Code of Practice for the Storage and Collection of Refuse and Materials for Recycling in Domestic Properties* (2008) which can be downloaded from the Council's website:

4.51 Waste and recycling storage can cause a nuisance to neighbours and future occupiers, by reason of odour and noise, and can be visually intrusive in the streetscene. In meeting the specifications set out in the Council's Code of Practice, consideration must therefore also be given to the amenity of residents and the appearance of the area, but also to ensure ease of access for all future occupiers of the development. Refuse storage areas should be screened within an enclosure or by landscaping.

4.52 Details of refuse storage and management will need to be addressed as part of the planning application in most cases. Poorly designed, intrusive or inadequately sized facilities give rise to adverse visual impact and will not be acceptable. A Management Plan should accompany applications for major development to demonstrate how on-site composting of residential organic waste will be achieved.

Successful Living Space

Introduction

4.53 Amenity and privacy are highly valued components of living in outer London suburbs. Successful schemes will achieve relationships with existing development which protect the amenity and privacy of neighbouring occupiers, and through design and layout will provide a high standard

10 <http://www.securedbydesign.com>

of amenity and privacy for occupiers of the new development. Development which is detrimental to the amenity and privacy or neighbours, or which fails to secure a high standard of design and layout for its intended occupants, will not be accepted.

Size and Layout of Residential Accommodation

4.54 The Council expects a high standard of design and layout in residential development. This expectation applies to the internal design and layout of development, ensuring that new homes are fit for purpose, as well as to the external design of the building and the site layout.

4.55 The minimum space standards for new homes set out in the London Plan will be applied to all new residential development in Harrow. Proposals for the conversion of existing houses to flats should also be guided by the London Plan minimum space standards (see separate section relating to conversions).

4.56 With greater occupation densities and changing lifestyles, such as home working and the evening economy, the design and layout of development should also minimise the potential for noise transfer between new homes. This will be particularly important in blocks of flats where the technical provisions of the Building Regulations should be supplemented with the careful arrangement of rooms. The vertical stacking of rooms between flats should ensure that bedrooms do not overlap living rooms, kitchens and bathrooms on other floors. Where possible, the horizontal arrangement of rooms between flats in a block should also avoid bedrooms adjoining neighbouring living rooms, kitchens and bathrooms, as well as communal areas such as halls and stairs.

4.57 Built-in storage spaces are highly valued components within new homes. Lack of such spaces can lead to domestic clutter being stored on balconies, within hallways or other communal areas. New development should therefore ensure that there is sufficient provision within each home for the storage of domestic clutter such as vacuum cleaners, ironing boards and children's toys, commensurate with the likely needs of future occupiers.

4.58 The Council accepts that not all homes within higher density development will be capable of having a dual aspect. However, dual aspect homes have the potential advantages of greater opportunity to enjoy sunlight, improved outlook and cross-ventilation. Wherever possible, and subject to other considerations such as privacy, the design and layout of new development should therefore utilise opportunities to provide dual aspect homes.

Amenity Space

4.59 In the development of traditional houses or maisonettes it will usually be preferable for each home to have its own, private garden. For blocks of flats, communal provision of amenity space is acceptable.

4.60 The amount of amenity space to be provided will be informed by the London Plan standards, the needs of the future occupants of the development and the character of the area. The London Plan standards are expressed as minima for communal amenity space provided as part of flatted development. However the amount of communal amenity space sought for flats may be increased where this is justified in relation to the demographics of the future occupiers of the development or to provide a setting for the building.

4.61 For developments of traditional dwellinghouses, the size of the private garden to be provided should be proportionate to size of the dwelling and the likely needs of the intended occupiers. For example a small, manageable garden is more likely to be appropriate for one or two bedroom houses intended as starter homes or for occupation by elderly people; such a garden would also provide an appropriately sized setting for a modest building. By contrast a dwelling of four or five bedrooms, suitable for occupation by a large family, would be expected to have a garden of sufficient size both to accommodate the more extensive needs of a family and as a suitable setting for the house.

4.62 In all cases, in considering what is reasonable to meet the needs of future occupiers and to provide an appropriate setting for the building, attention will be paid to the prevailing characteristics of development in the surrounding area.

4.63 In blocks of flats with communal amenity space, larger family sized homes should be located at ground level and utilise opportunities to provide direct access from these homes onto the outdoor space. It is desirable for communal amenity space to be overlooked by the development that it serves and preferable for that space to be located to the rear of the block or in an inner courtyard, to ensure reasonable privacy from surrounding land uses and exclusive use by residents of the development.

4.64 In all cases the configuration of communal amenity space and private gardens must be carefully considered. The space should benefit from shaded and sunlit areas at different times of the day; an amenity space that is predominantly in shade is unlikely to be well used by occupiers. Narrow, fragmented or otherwise unusable parcels of space will not be counted as part of the site's amenity space provision. Proposals containing amenity spaces that are ambiguous in function or appear as 'left-over' open space will not be acceptable. Proposals for the future management of communal amenity space in large developments should be detailed as part of the planning application.

4.65 In circumstances where it is not possible or appropriate to provide private gardens and communal amenity space, such as developments within town centres, suitable alternative arrangements for the future occupiers of the development must be made. Balconies and roof gardens will be acceptable alternatives where they do not result in overlooking relationships that are harmful to the privacy of neighbouring residents or other occupiers within the development. An internal communal amenity space, such as an atrium, may also be a practical alternative.



Picture 4.10



Picture 4.11

Usable, Screened Balconies

4.66 Where alternatives to outdoor amenity space are appropriate they should be of equivalent value in terms of amount, usability and accessibility. Internal communal amenity spaces must benefit from natural daylight and sunlight. Where balconies are accepted as the only form of amenity space to be provided within a development, then:

1. they should be at least 1.5 metres in depth and of sufficient size to be used as a sitting out area;
2. the development should include a suitable, dedicated communal space for the drying of washing; and
3. they should include appropriate enclosure to provide privacy and screen storage of equipment/domestic paraphernalia.

Visual Impact, Light and Outlook

4.67 The relationship between buildings is a significant determinant of the amenity enjoyed by residents. The proximity, orientation and size of one building can impact upon the light, outlook and visual environment of occupiers of an adjoining building. When assessing the impact of development upon amenity, whether it is the amenity of future occupiers of a new development or that of the existing occupiers of neighbouring property, attention will be paid to site circumstances including but not limited to the:-

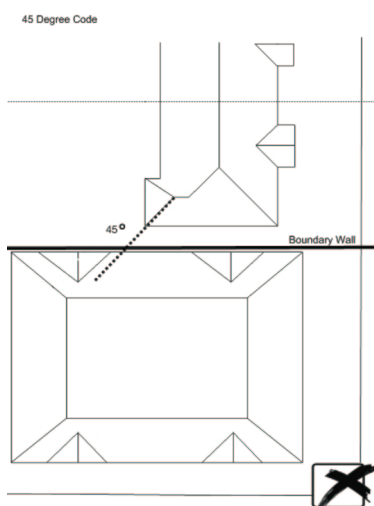
1. design and character of the existing and neighbouring houses (established pattern of development);
2. use of neighbouring buildings;
3. height of the proposed development;
4. distance of existing buildings from boundaries;
5. siting of buildings within the site or on neighbouring premises;

6. siting of windows to habitable rooms and kitchens on neighbouring premises;
7. existing features, for example, outbuildings, fences, walls, trees;
8. orientation in relation to the path of the sun;
9. changes in levels between properties and gardens; and
10. garden and plot sizes.

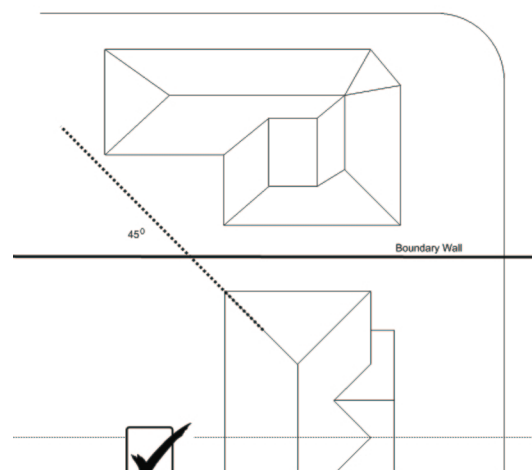
4.68 The size and siting of buildings must avoid unreasonable loss of light to, or overshadowing of, adjoining buildings and spaces. Developments which have an overbearing visual impact, when viewed from within a neighbouring building or its amenity space, and those which leave inadequate outlook from habitable room windows will not be acceptable. The 45 degree code will be used in conjunction with site circumstances to determine the appropriate relationship between buildings and 'protected' windows. There are two elements to the 45 degree code:

I) The Horizontal Plane

4.69 Two and three storey buildings (including any projecting roof eaves) should not interrupt a 45 degree line drawn on plan from the nearest first floor or two storey corner of a neighbouring building. Where a neighbouring dwelling has a nearer single storey component which contains an existing, established 'protected' window, and that window would be affected by the development, then the 45 degree line should be drawn from the relevant single storey corner. For developments of four or more storeys, greater separation and/or reduced rearward projection in relation to the neighbouring building may be required.



Picture 4.12



Picture 4.13

45 Degree Code: Horizontal Plane

II) The Vertical Plane

4.70 New development should not interrupt an upward plane angled at 45 degrees from any existing, established 'protected' window in the facing wall of a neighbouring building. The plane will be taken from the lower edge of the glazed area, measured across the whole width of the window. Development up to both sides of the plane will not be acceptable.

4.71 For the purposes of the horizontal plane 45 degree code, the impact of single storey development will be assessed having regard to site considerations and - in relation to existing neighbouring dwellings - the need to achieve consistency with guidance in this supplementary planning document on householder extensions.

4.72 In this supplementary planning document a 'protected' window is the principal source of light to, and outlook from, a habitable room and kitchen (where the kitchen is 13 square metres or larger). When considering the relationship between buildings in a development, attention will be paid to the arrangement of windows to ensure that the occupiers of new homes enjoy reasonable light to and outlook from habitable rooms and kitchens.

4.73 Some dwellings contain habitable rooms and kitchens with multiple aspect on two or more walls. When a development affects a room with multiple aspect, an assessment of the size of the glazed area and site considerations will be used to determine which is the 'protected' window. Where alterations or extensions to a neighbouring dwelling result in a secondary (non-protected) window in the side elevation becoming the main or only window to habitable room or kitchen, that window will not be 'protected'.

4.74 For the avoidance of doubt windows to halls, bathrooms and utility rooms are not 'protected'.

4.75 For relationships between buildings within a development, the design and layout should achieve a consistent approach to visual impact, light and outlook, appropriate to the character of the development being created. Where the 45 degree code is not used for this purpose, an application should be supported by an independent daylight & sunlight assessment to demonstrate that the new homes would enjoy a satisfactory standard of amenity in these regards.

Privacy

4.76 The degree of overlooking between buildings, and residents' expectations of privacy, can vary significantly within the urban environment. In town centres and at the interface between town centres and adjoining suburbs, overlooking relationships between buildings (and uses) will usually differ from that which exists between houses in residential and open areas. New development must have regard to the character of its location and ensure that reasonable levels of privacy for existing, neighbouring occupiers are maintained.

4.77 When assessing the impact of development upon privacy attention will be paid to the relevant site circumstances listed above and in particular:

1. the distance between habitable room and kitchen windows; and
2. the suitability and effectiveness of mitigation measures such as obscure glazing or privacy screens.

4.78 Windows and doors in the flank walls of development which face the boundary of a neighbouring property should be avoided, where possible, but otherwise must only be high level and obscure glazed. In developments of up to three storeys, large windows in a flank wall that is

sited within 3m of a boundary will be unacceptable whether or not the windows are obscure glazed. Of developments of four or more storeys, a greater separation than 3m may be required between large windows in a flank wall and the boundary, dependant upon site circumstances.

4.79 For relationships between buildings within a development, the design and layout should achieve a consistent approach to privacy between the new homes, appropriate to the character of the development being created.

Design and Layout Guidance for Residential Conversions **5**

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

5 Design and Layout Guidance for Residential Conversions

Responding to the Urban Structure

5.1 The residential suburbs of Harrow have strong local character and streetscapes. This is typified by the suburban 1920s and 1930s character that is prevalent across the Borough with coherence and uniformity giving a sense of place to the suburbs. Therefore, when conversions seek new exterior alterations, such as replacement windows, doors or porches, these should reflect the prevailing local character and enhance, not disrupt, the streetscape.

5.2 Conversions may impact upon places of historic interest, including listed buildings, conservation areas and other heritage assets. Where this is the case, proposals should comply with the development management policies contained within Planning Policy Statement 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* (2010). Some historic buildings may not be suitable for conversion to residential use and flats.

5.3 For the avoidance of doubt, the content of this SPD relating to householder extensions will also apply to any proposals for extensions and alterations which form part of a conversion scheme. The use of excessive extensions to create additional units may indicate an overdevelopment of the site and will be unacceptable.

Detailing the Place

Forecourt Treatment

5.4 In most cases there will only be sufficient space to satisfactorily accommodate a single car parking space on the forecourt and this will normally be allocated to the ground floor flat. The parking space should be sited at right angles to the road, preferably set away from neighbouring boundaries, leaving sufficient space for landscaping, and be located adjacent to the pathway between the highway and footpath to the front door. The Council's Accessible Homes SPD provides detailed guidance in connection with the specification for a forecourt parking bay forming part of a conversion scheme.

5.5 Forecourt treatment is an important part of suburban character in Harrow, but in many areas unsympathetic hardsurfacing of front gardens has resulted in a deterioration in the level of streetside greenery and a blurring of the traditional boundary between public and private domain. This supplementary planning document seeks to ensure that forecourt changes being carried out as part of a conversion scheme enhance traditional suburban character, even if the forecourt is already substantially or wholly hardsurfaced. The layout of the forecourt should comply with the relevant provisions set out in the Council's Accessible Homes SPD and should make provision for soft landscaping of the parts of the forecourt not needed to provide car parking space and access to the premises. On a conventionally sized dwelling forecourt the provision of two or more car parking spaces on the forecourt, with minimal landscaping, will be unacceptable.

5.6 Where enclosure of the forecourt forms part of the established character of a residential area, the conversion scheme should provide boundary treatment appropriate in height, siting and materials. As with new development, consideration should be given to pedestrian-vehicular inter-visibility.

5.7 The permitted height of means of enclosure is 1 metre adjacent to a highway and 2 metres elsewhere⁽¹¹⁾. Generally, these heights will be appropriate in most suburban situations in Harrow except where the original character of an area is open plan, or where for example the return frontages of corner property are enclosed up to a height of 2 metres. Boundary materials should reflect those prevailing in the area and the use of hedges and other green boundaries (preferably using native plant species) is also encouraged. The use of high railings and gates will be unacceptable.

Refuse and Recycling

5.8 The design and layout of residential development must make satisfactory arrangements for the storage and collection of recycling and waste. The arrangements should secure compliance with the detailed specifications set out in the Council's adopted *Code of Practice for the Storage and Collection of Refuse and Materials for Recycling in Domestic Properties* (2008) which can be downloaded from the Council's website: <http://www.harrow.gov.uk>. For each dwelling in Harrow six bins are provided (for waste, recycling and organic waste respectively) and consequently a conversion of one house to two flats results in the need to accommodate six bins, and these can be visually intrusive when located on the forecourt. The preferred solution is to site these bins at the rear or side of the building and, where such a solution is possible, use of the forecourt for this purpose will not be acceptable. Exceptionally, where siting of bins on the forecourt is unavoidable (for example in the case of the conversion of a terraced house) then consideration will be given to the number of bins to be accommodated, the size of the forecourt (in conjunction with other forecourt requirements) and the adequacy of measures to enclose or screen the bins.

5.9 Home composting areas should be designed into all conversion schemes where units have exclusive use of gardens. These must be carefully designed as part of the garden in an appropriate location, so as to encourage their use and maintenance but not cause nuisance.

Successful Living Space

Size and Layout of Residential Accommodation

5.10 The Council expects a high standard of design and layout in residential development. This expectation applies to the internal design and layout of conversions, ensuring that the new homes created are fit for purpose.

5.11 The minimum space standards for new homes set out in the London Plan will be applied to all conversions in Harrow. The standards will inform the appropriate number of flats that can be accommodated within a dwelling to be converted, although it is recognised that the constraints associated with existing building layouts means that some flexibility and pragmatism will be required at the margins of each space standard. The internal layout of the flats must also comply with the relevant provisions of the Council's Accessible Homes SPD.

5.12 As with new development, the design and layout of development should minimise the potential for noise transfer between new homes. This will be particularly important in blocks of flats where the technical provisions of the Building Regulations should be supplemented with the careful arrangement of rooms. The vertical stacking of rooms between flats should ensure that bedrooms

11 Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995

do no overlap living rooms, kitchens and bathrooms on other floors. Where possible, the horizontal arrangement of rooms between flats in a block should also avoid bedrooms adjoining neighbouring living rooms, kitchens and bathrooms, as well as communal areas such as halls and stairs.

5.13 All habitable rooms in a conversion, such as living rooms and bedrooms, must benefit from an external window providing natural light and a means of outlook.

5.14 The use of attic space, where there is sufficient headroom/circulation and a means of natural light/outlook, can usefully provide additional bedroom space as part of a split level flat. However, in most suburban houses, self contained flats that are solely accommodated with the roofspace rarely provide sufficient circulation space, light and outlook for its occupiers' reasonable requirements and are therefore unlikely to be acceptable. In larger properties the conversion of an existing attic space to self-contained living accommodation may be acceptable when adequate headroom and useable circulation space can be provided. Where such a flat is proposed, the application should be supported by drawings of the building in section.

Amenity Space

5.15 Amenity space for the exclusive use of building occupants is a highly valued asset. Sufficient, functional amenity space should therefore be provided for all new houses and flats wherever possible.

5.16 The Council will seek to ensure that all flats (except for the conversion of maisonettes above shops and mid terraced properties) have access to a garden, most likely in the form of a subdivision of an existing garden into two, private garden areas. This should be split so that the garden area nearest the house is allocated for the sole use of the ground floor flat, and the subdivision furthest away from the house allocated for the sole use of the upstairs flat. Alternatively, where a conversion to more than two flats is acceptable in all other respects, consideration will also be given to garden subdivisions to meet the needs of all occupants. Front gardens are not considered to be appropriate as amenity space due to lack of privacy.

5.17 Balconies and external steps from the first floor flat are unlikely to be acceptable due to overlooking and privacy considerations.

Design and Layout Guidance for Householder Development **6**

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

6 Design and Layout Guidance for Householder Development

Preliminary Information

The Need for Planning Permission

6.1 Many types of householder development are 'permitted development', meaning that planning permission is not required provided that they meet certain requirements as to size, height, siting and other details. Due to the complexity of 'permitted development' and because additional controls apply in some areas, it is always advisable to check with the Council before proceeding with a development. The Council's duty planner can provide general advice on permitted development and can answer any questions about the interpretation of this guidance.

6.2 For a formal determination about the need for planning permission, you may apply for a Certificate of Lawful Proposed Development. If planning permission is required you will need to apply for planning permission. Again, the Council's duty planner can advise on the relevant procedures and fees. Application forms may be downloaded from the Council's website: <http://www.harrow.gov.uk>.

Special Areas

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

6.3 The Council has a responsibility, in making planning decisions, to pay special attention to the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas and to the preservation of listed buildings or their settings. Where proposals relate to a conservation area and/or listed building, or are likely to impact the setting of a conservation area and/or listed building, design solutions that are sensitive to both the building and the surrounding area are required. Development in conservation areas and works to listed buildings must accord with Planning Policy Statement 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* (2010) and saved policies D11, D12, D14, D15 and D16 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004).

6.4 The guidelines contained in this part of the SPD are intended to address the general amenity and character considerations associated with householder development. However, where there is conflict between these guidelines and conservation area or listed building considerations, the latter considerations will prevail.

Green Belt

6.5 Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. Even where an extension is not disproportionate, it should have no adverse impact upon the openness and character of the Green Belt. Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: *Green Belts* (1995) and saved policy EP34 will be used when assessing applications for extensions in the Green Belt.

Design Principles and Elements

Harmony

6.6 Extensions should harmonise with the scale and architectural style of the original building, and the character of the area. In some circumstances an extension in a contrasting modern design may be acceptable.

6.7 One of three forms of extension, explained below, may be appropriate, depending on the form or shape of the original building and on the particular site considerations:

A. Reflection

6.8 An additional volume subordinate to, and reflecting, the character of the original house, particularly on detached and semi-detached properties. This will be achieved on two storey side extensions, by setting-back the front wall by a minimum of 1 metre and stepping down the roof line. The purpose of this form of extension is to retain the symmetry and rhythm of the original building by reducing the bulk and avoiding a "terracing" effect in the street scene.

B. Continuation

6.9 A simple extension of the existing building form. Matching of materials, roof form, proportion, and window positions are particularly important. Appropriate for terraced houses and some detached houses, where there is no problem of a potential "terracing" effect or excessive bulk, and where site considerations allow.

C. Separation

6.10 An extension that is visually separate from the original building but joined by a less obtrusive link element. Although not often applicable in Harrow, this form of extension may be appropriate for extensions on larger detached properties or where the original building has a distinctive character that is difficult to reflect or continue.

Proportion and Scale

6.11 An extension should have a sense of proportion and balance, both in its own right and in its relationship to the original building and should not dominate the original building or the surrounding streetscape.

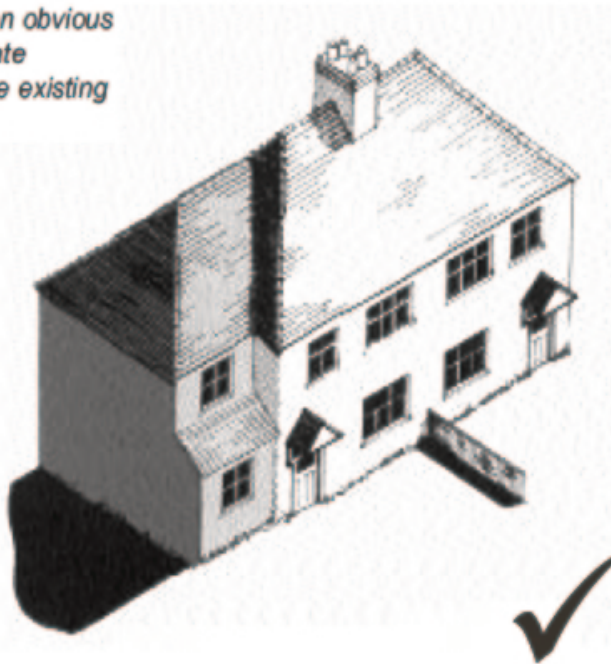
Materials

6.12 External materials, particularly brickwork, tiles and joinery details, should match or complement those on the existing building, unless a contemporary modern design is justified, and should be durable and age well.

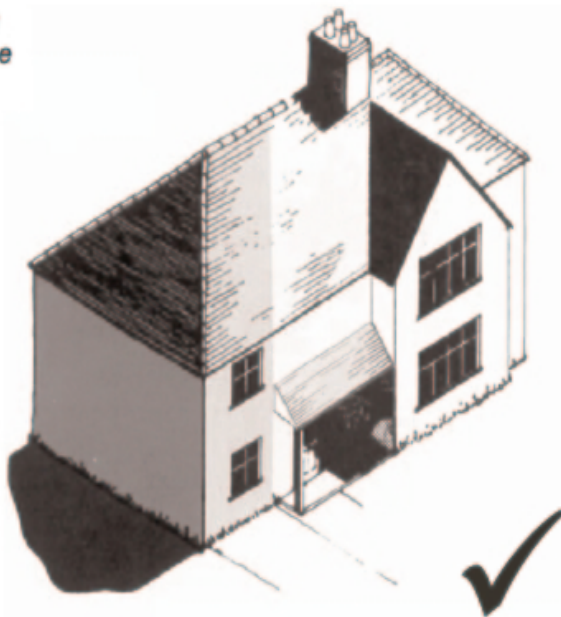
Windows and Doors

6.13 These should generally reflect the proportions, design detail and materials of the original building. The distribution of windows and doors should reflect the vertical or horizontal emphasis of the original building.

Reflection - an obvious but subordinate addition to the existing building



Continuation - an integral part of the dwelling



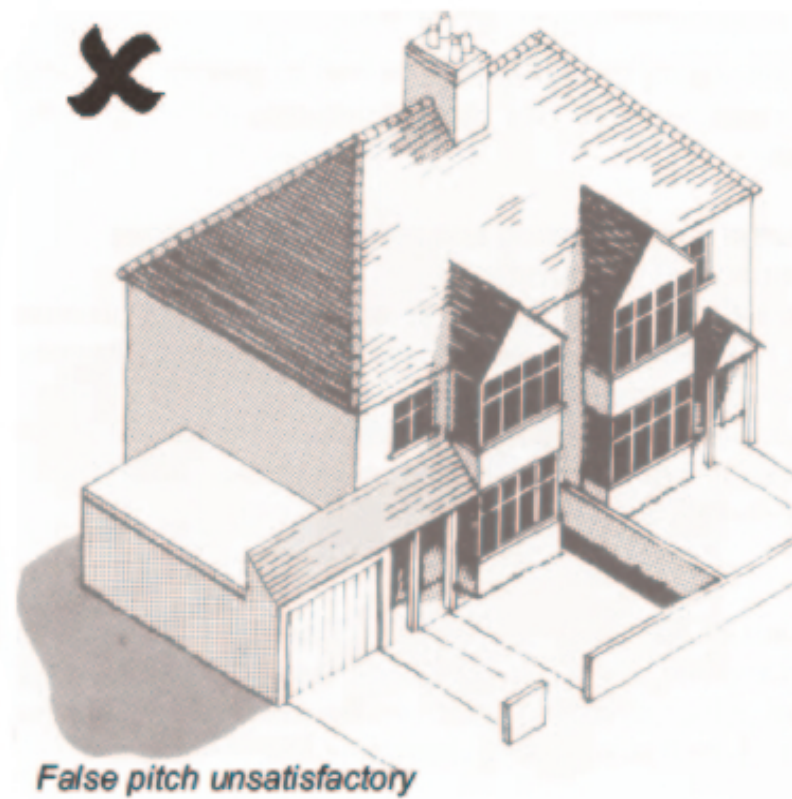
Roofs

6.14 Roof design is very important because this will determine the overall shape of the extension. It is generally desirable for a first floor or two storey extension to be roofed to reflect both the material and design of the existing roof, including normal eaves detail. A pitched roof will normally be required on two storey extensions. This offers the advantages of greatly improved appearance, storage space, and lower maintenance costs.

6.15 Flat or pitched roofs will usually be acceptable on single storey extensions, subject to consideration of impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the appearance in the street scene. It will help if the roof is related to existing horizontal elements such as canopies, string courses, or to the line of change between materials, e.g. brick to render or tile hanging. A low parapet with a brick-on-edge detail above a tile creasing course is a visually acceptable method of finishing such extensions.

6.16 However, false-pitched roofs and prominent parapets should be avoided and are unacceptable where they would be intrusive in the street scene or on corner sites.

6.17 All other proposed alterations or additions to roofs of existing dwellings will be assessed on a case by case basis taking the wider site considerations listed below into account.



Use of matching material



Unsatisfactory flat roof and unsympathetic materials

Amenity Considerations

Site Considerations

6.18 The acceptability of an extension will be determined on a case by case basis taking into account particular site considerations including:

- a) the design and character of the existing and neighbouring houses (established pattern of development)
- b) distance of existing buildings from boundaries
- c) siting of buildings within the site or on neighbouring premises
- d) siting of windows to habitable rooms and kitchens on neighbouring premises
- e) existing features, for example, outbuildings, fences, walls, trees
- f) orientation
- g) changes in levels between properties / gardens
- h) garden plot / sizes

Gardens

6.19 Extensions should maintain an adequate garden area to allow practical use and reflect the established character of the locality. Proposed extensions, in conjunction with other existing extensions or existing or proposed structures and outbuildings that exceed 50 percent of the rear or other main garden ground area can adversely impact upon the character of the area and are unlikely to be permitted.

Overlooking

6.20 Extensions should not result in any significant loss of privacy to neighbouring houses and gardens. Windows should be omitted from flank walls adjacent to a neighbouring boundary, where these would allow overlooking of a neighbouring house or garden, or result in perceived overlooking or loss of privacy. High level non-opening windows with obscure glazing may be appropriate, dependent on site circumstances, but should be avoided where directly adjacent to boundaries with neighbouring residential properties.

6.21 A small window in a flank elevation maybe acceptable in principle. However, purpose-made obscure glazing to avoid overlooking would normally be required in windows to halls, landings, bathrooms and toilets, and in small secondary windows to habitable rooms and kitchens. Such windows would not be protected from future development on the adjoining property.

6.22 Large windows in a wall of a side extension sited within 3m of a boundary are unacceptable. Even if obscure-glazed and non-opening they are unlikely to avoid the effects of perceived overlooking or loss of privacy. Alternative solutions should be sought.

6.23 The creation of a balcony, for example, by the use of an extension roof, particularly where sited on or near a flank boundary, would normally be unacceptable. It would result in an unreasonable loss of privacy. Permissions for flat-roofed single storey extensions will usually have a condition to prohibit such use, other than for maintenance.

6.24 New doors in the side walls of extensions may give rise to overlooking of existing doors or windows in an adjacent elevation. They can also result in unreasonable disturbance and activity where they are sited within 3 metres of a shared boundary. In such circumstances new doors should preferably be sited on rear elevations.



Loss of Light or Outlook

6.25 Extensions should not cause any unreasonable loss of light or overshadowing to any habitable rooms and kitchens in neighbouring properties, or to gardens, in particular to the area immediately to the rear of the house.

6.26 Much of the concern in these guidelines relates to the impact of extensions on 'protected' windows. These are defined as the main or primary windows to habitable rooms and kitchens over 13 sq.m. Careful consideration will be given to possible loss of light and outlook to 'protected' windows on neighbouring residential properties. Where there are dual aspect windows and/or glazed doors looking to the side and rear, an assessment of size and site considerations would be made to determine which windows are 'protected'. However, protected windows on side elevations may not be given the same degree of protection where the property concerned has been previously extended resulting in the removal of the main window at the rear.

6.27 The loss of light to non-protected windows that is caused by a proposed extension will not in itself be a ground for refusal. However, such developments are likely to be un-neighbourly and should be avoided where possible.

The 45 Degree Code

6.28 The 45 Degree Code in this guidance is intended to:

- i) maintain a reasonable relationship between existing buildings and extensions;
- ii) avoid an overbearing visual impact in terms of bulk and proximity to boundaries both from inside adjacent properties and from neighbouring gardens; and
- iii) reduce potential loss of light and overshadowing to neighbouring dwellings and gardens.

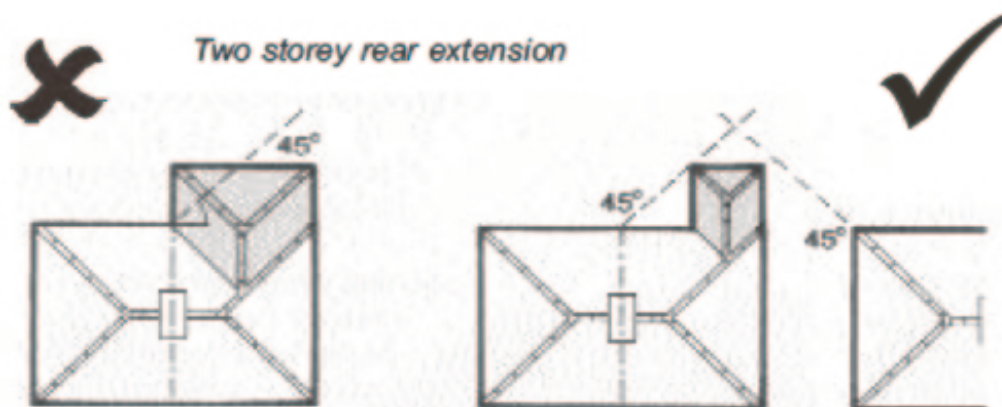
6.29 The Code should not simply be applied on a mechanical basis but always be applied as part of an assessment of the site considerations listed above. Additional site considerations specifically relevant to the proposed extension but not listed in the site consideration factors listed above, may also be taken into account.

6.30 There are two elements to the 45° Code:

I) The Horizontal Plane

6.31 In relation to the impact of first floor or two storey extensions projecting beyond the rear or front of adjacent residential properties:

- no part of any new extension should interrupt a 45° splay drawn on plan from the nearest first floor or two storey front or rear corner of any next-door dwelling, or from a single storey rear corner if that rear elevation has a 'protected' window. This would include projecting roof eaves, but not shallow fascias or guttering.



II) The Vertical Plane

6.32 In relation to the impact of side extensions (particularly first floor or two storey) on adjacent 'protected' windows:

- the height of any new extension adjoining a 'protected' window should not interrupt an upward plane angled at 45° from the lower edge of the glazed area of that window, measured across the whole width of the opening. Extensions up to both sides of the 'plane' will be unacceptable.



Encroachment

6.33 The Party Wall Act (1996) requires a building owner to notify, and obtain formal agreement from, an adjoining owner, where the building owner intends to carry out the following work:

- i) work on an existing wall shared with another property;
- ii) building on the boundary with a neighbouring property;
- iii) excavating near a neighbouring building;

and that work falls within the scope of the Act.

6.34 Procedures under this Act are separate from the need for planning permission or Building Regulation approval.

Detailed Guidelines

FRONT EXTENSIONS

6.35 Front extensions have the greatest potential impact on the character and visual amenity of the street scene. Residential buildings in Harrow generally follow a clear building line, with building facades sited on the same plane and often enriched with architectural features reflecting the period of building construction. These features include bay windows, window and door surrounds and other architectural features. Modern front extensions beyond the established building line can disrupt the harmony and architectural coherence of the streetscape. However, small front porches and garage extensions may be permitted provided that they:

- reflect and complement the scale, design, quality and pattern of development in the surrounding street scene;
- relate to and complement the existing architectural design and materials of the existing building;
- do not project significantly forward of front bay windows;
- do not link into and have clear separation from existing bay windows; and
- provide for a minimum driveway depth of 4.8m to remain to allow for sufficient parking space, unless adequate alternative parking space is provided.

6.36 Site considerations and, where appropriate, the relevant 45 Degree Code will also be used to determine the acceptable size of extensions.

SIDE EXTENSIONS

6.37 Side extensions have considerable potential to cause harm both to the amenity of adjacent residents and character of the street scene. In order to avoid such negative impacts, proposed side extensions should reflect the pattern of development in the street scene. The visual impact of side extensions, particularly first floor and two storey, will be assessed against the pattern of development in the immediate locality, and the potential to dominate the appearance of the street scene. Corner sites, wedge-shaped sites, and sites that provide significant space and open character are particularly important and the Council will seek to protect these features from inappropriately designed householder development.

6.38 Side extensions, including those which wrap around the corner of the original house to form a rear extension, require particular care and attention in relation to the side boundary and the rear elevation of the neighbouring dwelling. Where such an extension projects beyond the rear of the neighbouring dwelling, for example because of a staggered rear building line, or where the potential for loss of light and outlook to the neighbouring property is exacerbated for example because of a convex rear building line/irregular site boundaries, special attention will be paid to the proximity, height and projection of the flank wall in relation to the neighbouring dwelling.

6.39 In relation to any nearby 'protected' windows on adjacent properties site considerations will be used in conjunction with the appropriate 45 Degree Code to determine the likely impact on neighbouring amenity.

SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSIONS

6.40 These are normally acceptable abutting a side boundary, subject to:

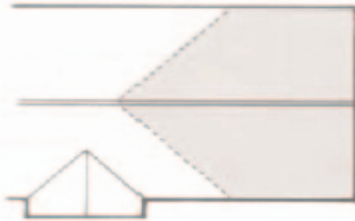
- no unreasonable impact on 'protected' windows of neighbouring dwellings;
- the appearance of the street scene;
- the total eaves height of single storey side extensions adjacent to a shared boundary with a neighbouring attached dwelling.

6.41 The use of pitched or flat roofs with a maximum height at the boundary of 3 metres would normally be acceptable subject to detailing, site considerations and the character of the area.

Loss of symmetry



Bulky, obtrusive roof



A hipped rather than a gable roof, and a minimum first floor setback of one metre is normally required

Subordinate roof



Principal symmetry retained



FIRST FLOOR OR TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSIONS

6.42 A pitched roof should be provided to respect the form of the original roof. A hipped rather than a gabled roof is preferable:

- to reduce roof bulk
- to prevent a 'terracing' effect on detached and semi-detached properties.

6.43 Exceptions would depend on site considerations and the potential impact on the amenity of neighbours and the street scene.

6.44 Where a two storey side extension would project rearward of the main rear wall of the adjacent property, the rear element will be assessed against the guidance for two storey rear extension.

Detached and Semi-Detached Houses

6.45 The primary considerations are the character of the locality and space around the building. There is usually more scope for extensions to detached and semi-detached houses than to terraced houses. However, a terracing effect should be avoided. The location of adjacent 'protected' windows and other site considerations will be assessed.

6.46 The minimum requirements are a set-back of the first floor front wall by at least 1 metre behind the adjacent front corner of the front elevation, and a subordinate pitched roof.

6.47 A different, or no, set-back may be justified in the following circumstances:

- a variation in the building line **and EITHER**
- a separation distance of at least 1 metre between the flank wall of the extension and the boundary **OR**
- a permanent open area of at least 1 metre width adjacent to the boundary

6.48 Site considerations and the character of the locality will also be assessed when determining planning applications.

6.49 The extension should incorporate traditional eaves detailing to reflect the original building. Where space is limited at the side of a property, or where the house is adjacent to a street corner, a recessed eaves detail may be used.

6.50 The use of a parapet wall along the side elevation of the extension to hide a valley gutter and avoid encroachment of eaves and guttering can be visually obtrusive. This should be avoided, unless there is already a parapet wall along an adjacent flank elevation, or where the new elevation would be screened by that adjacent building. Careful attention should be given to design, detailing and height. Any rearward projection of a first floor parapet beyond the rear main wall of the adjacent property will be unacceptable.

End of Terrace Houses

6.51 First floor or two storey side extensions are normally acceptable without a set-back or subordinate roof, as a reflection of the established character. Otherwise, the general considerations would apply, taking particular care over the matching of brickwork and other external materials.

Corner Sites or End House sites

6.52 Side extensions on corner sites should reflect the pattern of development in the street scene, in particular where the character is one of openness and space on the corner plots. Consideration will be given to established character, projection of the extension beyond existing building lines, bulk and visual impact, and relationship to the site boundaries. Extensions should have a subordinate roof and should be sited a minimum of 1 metre from corner boundaries at first floor level.

6.53 Rearward projections at first floor level beyond the rear main wall on corner sites, or end house sites with a flank wall visible from the street scene may result in a considerable increase in bulk and prominence of the extension. Consideration will be given to the impact of any rear extension at first floor level on the character and appearance of the locality. Any rear extension should therefore be subordinate to the side extension and set a minimum of 500mm further from the corner boundary. Site considerations will also be taken into account in establishing the acceptable scale of any proposed extension.

'Wedge-Shaped' Sites

6.54 Irregular site boundaries often occur at bends in the road or at the end of a row of houses and may form part of an original street pattern. The resultant space between the houses can often provide an important visual break, adding to the quality of the established character and pattern of development in the street.

6.55 In such cases, first floor or two storey side extensions that occupy the whole width of garden between the house and boundary can appear overbearing, unduly obtrusive, or result in a terracing effect. There could also be problems in constructing the roof. Rearward projection beyond the rear main wall of the adjacent property can further emphasise the visual impact and result in extensions that could be disproportionately large.

6.56 Particular care will therefore be needed to avoid such extensions which would detract from the established pattern of development and openness of the street scene. 'Wedge-shaped' first floor and two storey side extensions are unacceptable. The preferred solution should always be for an appropriately sized extension designed with walls that are parallel to the existing house walls. Extensions that are unduly complex or bulky will also be unacceptable.

Previous Roof Extensions

6.57 Where the property has already been extended by the conversion of a hipped to a gabled roof, a further side extension (first floor or two storey) is inappropriate. Such developments are incompatible with the design, character, bulk and appearance of the locality.

REAR EXTENSIONS

6.58 Rear extensions have the greatest potential for harm to the amenities of neighbouring residents. Their impact on neighbouring property and the character and pattern of development needs careful consideration. Rear extensions should be designed to respect the character and scale of the original house and garden and should not cause unreasonable loss of amenity to neighbouring residents. Proposals which seek to construct an end gable in conjunction with a two storey or first floor side extension will not be acceptable for the same reasons.

SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS

6.59 Where all other relevant permitted development criteria are met, single storey rear extensions to a depth (taken from the rear wall of the original house) of 4 metres on a detached house and 3 metres on a semi-detached or terraced house may not need planning permission⁽¹²⁾. Where planning permission is required, the acceptable depth of extensions will be determined by the need for consistency with permitted development and:

12 please always check with the Council before proceeding with development

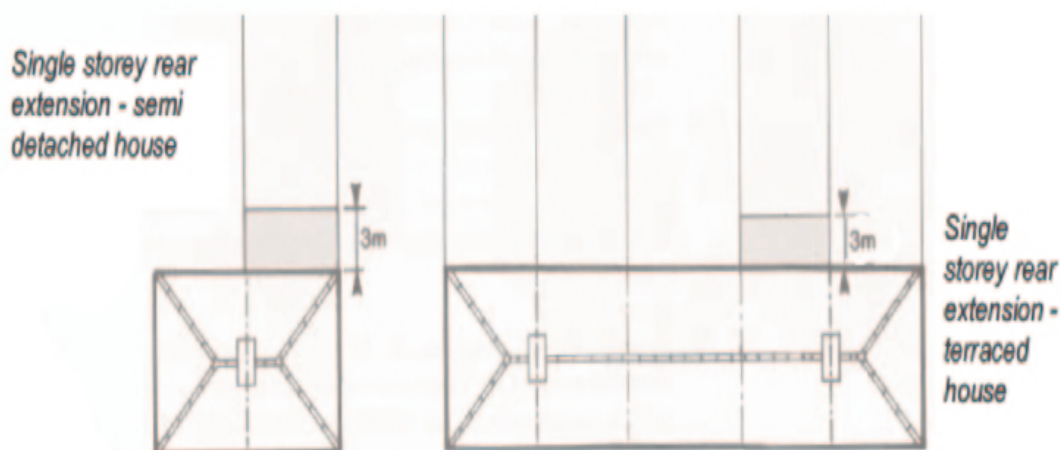
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- site considerations
- the scale of the development
- impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents, and
- the established character of the area and the pattern of development

6.60 In special circumstances a greater depth may be allowed where, for example:

- the extension would be sited away from an adjacent side boundary
- the rear building line is staggered
- an adjacent dwelling is sited away from such a boundary, or
- where the neighbouring dwelling has a deeper extension

6.61 Where a greater rear extension depth is acceptable, the additional depth should be set away from any side boundaries of the property by twice the amount of additional depth sought – this is known as the "two for one" rule. Chamfering of extensions is not normally acceptable. An exception would be where a purpose-built conservatory is proposed.



6.62 Conservatories sited within 3 metres of a boundary would normally be required to have brick flank walls or be finished with solid panels, to avoid any overlooking or perception of overlooking.

6.63 The height of single storey rear extensions should be minimised to restrict the impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents. Subject to site considerations, the finished height of an extension abutting a residential property should be a maximum of 3 metres on the boundary for a flat roof and for a pitched roof 3.5 metres at the mid-point of the pitch at the site boundary.

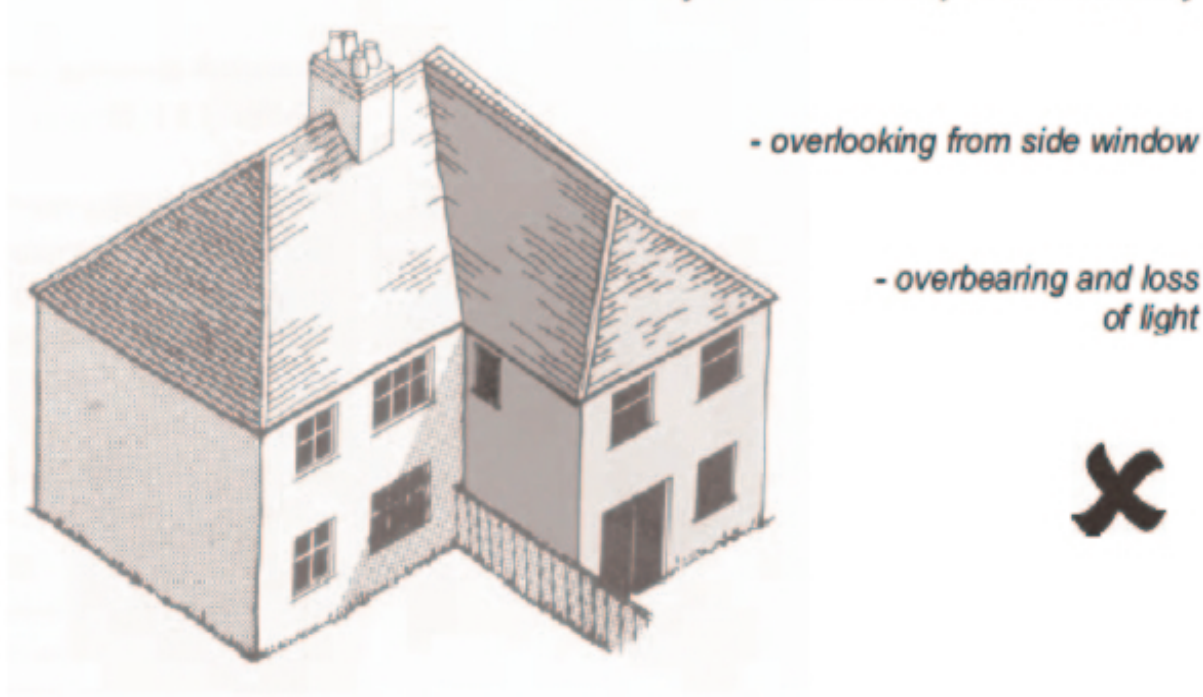
FIRST FLOOR OR TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS

6.64 All roofs should be designed to reflect the character of the dwelling house and those adjoining to provide a satisfactory appearance. The height of any first floor or two storey extension should not exceed the height of the highest part of the roof of the existing dwelling house.

6.65 In general there is no potential for first floor or two storey rear extensions on mid-terraced properties because of the adverse impacts on adjacent properties and their gardens. Extensions on end of terrace properties will be considered against the criteria for semi-detached properties. Two storey or first floor rear extensions abutting a side boundary have considerable potential for detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties because of the excessive bulk and loss of light. Where such extensions need planning permission they must always comply with the 45 Degree Code and will also be assessed against the relevant site considerations, in particular:

- the orientation of the houses - siting south or west of the neighbour would normally be unacceptable
- the extent to which the proposal would rely for its setting on the garden of the adjoining house
- the location of the adjacent house and any existing extensions or other buildings at that property
- the use of the adjacent rear garden

Two storey rear extension up to the boundary



ROOF ALTERATIONS

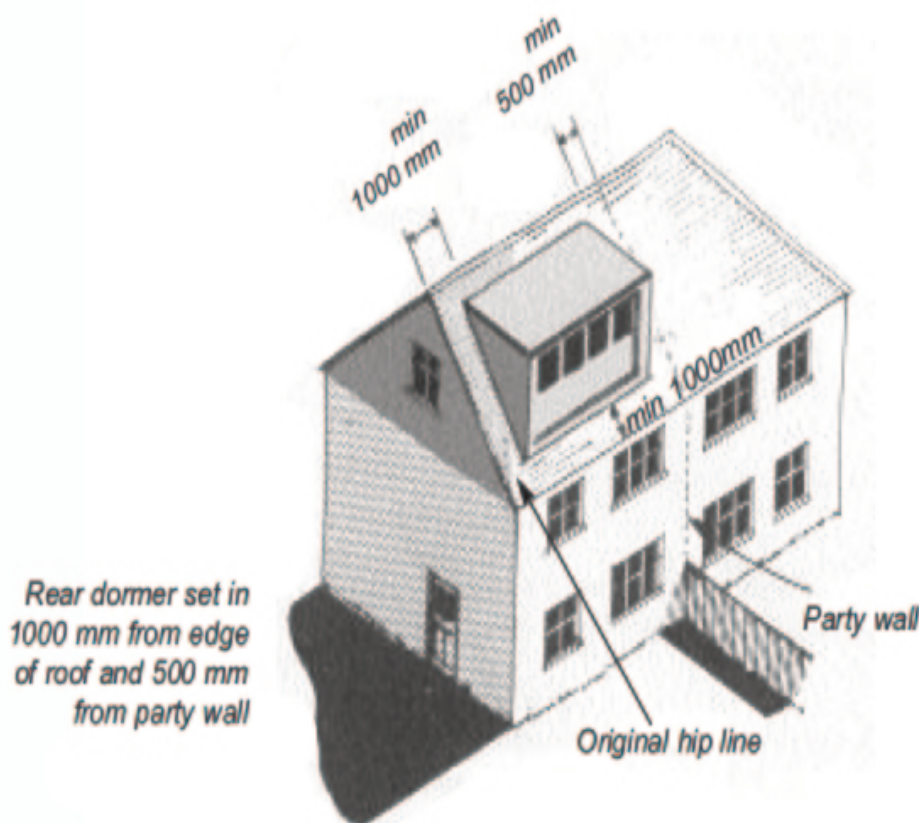
6.66 The roof form of a house is a significant part of the character of an area. Alterations may significantly alter the appearance of a house and their effect on the roof form needs careful consideration. Roof alterations and dormer windows should complement the original street character and not dominate buildings or impair their proportions or character.

6.67 Front or side dormers and roof extensions can be objectionable. Their potential bulk and impact on the appearance and character of the building will interrupt a regular pattern in the street scene. Consideration will be given to the type of roof, the scale of proposals, and the character/appearance of the house and those adjacent.

6.68 Generally, dormers should be subordinate features in the roof, should not overlap or wrap around the roof hips, and should never rise above the ridge. The retention of a clearly visible section of roof around the sides of a dormer window, including the upper corners, has the effect of visually containing them within the profile of the roof.

6.69 The preferred form of roof alteration to semi-detached or terraced houses is the extension of a hipped roof to form a gable with the addition of a rear roof extension (or a rear dormer window).

6.70 In order to reduce its visual impact, such a rear dormer should be set in at least 1000mm from the edge (or verge) of the roof and 500mm from a shared (party) wall, and 500mm from an adjacent valley on a return roof and set back at least 1000mm above the roof eaves, measured externally along the roof slope. In the case of a terraced property this would only relate to an end of terrace. The requirement for mid-terrace properties would be a minimum distance of 500mm from each party boundary.



6.71 Where a loft conversion is provided as part of a two storey side extension a single rear dormer across the whole width of the extended house may be unduly obtrusive. As a guide, a single rear dormer should never be wider than that which could be created (in accordance with this guidance) if an original hipped roof was altered to provide a gable end. In this case, two or more separate dormers should be created with a minimum space of 500mm between. Any rear dormer should be sited at least 500mm from a party wall and 1000mm from the new roof hip line or edge (verge) of roof (measured horizontally from the top of the dormer).

6.72 For detached houses the gabling of existing hipped roofs can be unduly prominent and should be avoided. The use of side and rear dormers may be an acceptable alternative to, for example, the gabling of a pyramidal hipped roof. The following will be assessed:

- site considerations
- pattern of development and character of locality
- size, design and siting of alterations.

6.73 Floor-to-ceiling French doors or windows, possibly including some form of railings creating a roof balcony, should be avoided as they are an inappropriate form of development and might result in direct or perceived overlooking.

GARAGES, CARPORTS AND OUTBUILDINGS

6.74 A garage attached to the house or in a prominent location close to the house should be treated in the same way as other extensions. It should reflect or harmonise with the design of the existing house and be built in matching or sympathetic materials. Garage doors and gates should be set back from the back of the footpath so that a vehicle waiting to enter does not obstruct the public footpath; a depth of 4.8 metres is usually required to achieve this purpose.

6.75 Car ports are more difficult to integrate into the design of a house particularly where temporary materials are used. For this reason car ports built or projecting in front of the building line will normally be unacceptable unless particular site considerations justify an exception.

6.76 If you live in a dwelling house you may not need planning permission for an outbuilding (or shed) which is required for a purpose that is incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse. If you live in a flat you will need planning permission to build any outbuilding or shed. The Council's Duty Planner should be contacted for further advice on the likelihood of a proposed outbuilding requiring planning permission.

6.77 In order to reduce its impact on neighbouring gardens, the structure should be sited in the final quarter of the garden, having consideration to its impact on neighbouring property, and be proportionate to the size of the original dwelling. Any structure should normally be located away from the boundaries of the site by at least two metres, in which case its height should not exceed 4 metres for a structure with a dual pitched roof, or 3 metres in any other case. If the outbuilding is within 2 metres of any boundary then a maximum height of 2.5 metres is recommended. Unless the building is finished in timber, an external finish to match the appearance of the associated dwellinghouse should usually be provided.

Monitoring 7

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

7 Monitoring

7.1 The implementation of this supplementary planning document will be monitored through the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. Specifically, the report includes details of the number and outcome of appeals for different types of development in the Borough, including residential development. The supplementary planning document should (a) reduce the number of cases the subject of appeal, by providing developers with a clearer framework for residential design and layout; and (b) improve the Council's success rate at appeal in defending decisions against poor residential schemes.

7.2 Following the adoption of a Core Strategy and new development management policies as part of Harrow's Local Development Framework, the saved policies of the UDP will be superseded. During this time it will become necessary to review and if necessary re-adopt all guidance documents that supplement UDP policies.

Glossary

Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD

Glossary

Conservatory

A single storey extension in the form of a lightweight glazed structure with a glazed roof

Dormer

A vertical window or opening in a roof slope, having its own roof, whether flat, pitched or curved

Habitable room

A term used when measuring the density of dwellings on any parcel of land. In a typical house, the habitable rooms are the living room, dining room and bedrooms. Utility spaces such as the bathroom, kitchen, hallway, landings, lobby and storage areas are not normally considered to be habitable rooms, except a kitchen over 13 sq metres in area. A living room over 19 sq metres in area and capable of sub-division will be counted as 2 rooms for density purposes.

Major Development

Development of more than 10 units.

'Protected' window

Main or primary windows to habitable rooms and kitchens

Sill (or cill)

The bottom section of a window frame that projects from the wall to provide rainwater runoff

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Document prepared by the Council that provides information, interpretation and guidance on the implementation of Unitary Development Plan or Development Plan Document policies. SPD's must only supplement existing policies and cannot introduce new policies.

Secured By Design

Guidance to ensure developments are designed to reduce the opportunity for crime

String course

A projecting band of brickwork or stone, usually between the ground and first floors

Terraced house

A dwelling house situated in a row of three or more dwellinghouses used or designed for use as single dwellings, where:

(a) it shares a party wall with, or has a main wall adjoining the main wall of, the dwellinghouse on either side; or

(b) if it is at the end of a row, it shares a party wall with or has a main wall adjoining the main wall of a dwellinghouse which fulfils the requirements of sub-paragraph (a)above.

'Terracing effect'

A continuous unbroken façade of buildings within a given part of the street scene

Verge

The termination or edge of a pitched roof at the gable