

North Tyneside Design Code: House Extensions and Alterations



North
Tyneside
Council

Extending or altering a house can have a positive or negative impact on both the building and the surrounding area, especially where there is a common architectural style. It is therefore important that any changes respect and enhance the existing house. In most cases, this means extensions should not significantly alter the original form or scale of the property.

Every site is different, and the impact of an extension will vary depending on whether it is at the front, side, or rear of the house, or involves changes to the roof. Where a building has already been significantly altered, the focus should be on its underlying character rather than on any past inappropriate additions.

Some houses are more sensitive to extensions and may not be able to accommodate one without appearing unbalanced, dominated by the addition, or losing their original design quality. Properties that have been extended previously may also be restricted by the cumulative impact of further extensions.

Many of the design principles in this section apply equally to heritage assets. Proposals affecting such assets must ensure that all relevant design codes (including those relating to materials, trees, boundaries, dormers, and outbuildings) are applied in a manner that preserves or enhances their significance and character.

Objectives

- a) Respect and enhance character and form of the original building.
- b) Respond to existing local character.
- c) Help create well-designed, high quality and attractive buildings and places.
- d) Protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

Some house extensions and alterations may be carried out without the need for planning permission. The Council does not offer free advice on whether permission is required. If you need a formal decision, you must apply for a [Lawful Development Certificate](#).

Where planning permission is required, extensions and alterations will be considered well designed if they follow the design codes relevant to your proposal. Any deviation must be clearly justified with evidence to support the application. Precedent is not a valid reason, as planning applications are assessed on their own merits and against current planning policy and adopted guidance, which may change over time.

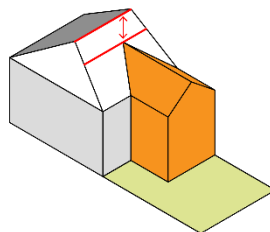
HE 1

Size of extension

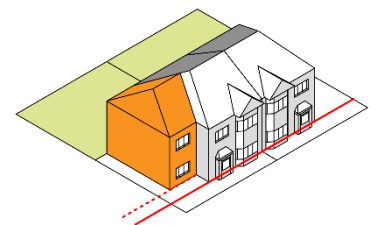
Residential extensions should be smaller in scale than the original building.



Side extensions should be narrower than the original elevation.



Rear extensions should have a ridge line lower than the original building.



Side extensions should be set back from the original building line.

HE 2

Design and context

House extensions should reflect the design characteristics of the original building and the surrounding area. A contrasting or contemporary design may be acceptable where it can be clearly shown that the quality of the design is high enough to complement the original building.



Extensions reflecting the roof form, proportions and detailing of the original building.

HE 3

Materials

Materials should be high quality and sensitive to the existing building and its surroundings. They should match or complement the original building in both colour and texture. Brickwork should follow the same brick bond and mortar joint width and colour as the original building.



Materials matching or complementing the existing building in colour, texture and finish.



Contemporary materials complementing the original building or providing a sensitive and appropriate contrast.

HE 4

Materials in conservation areas

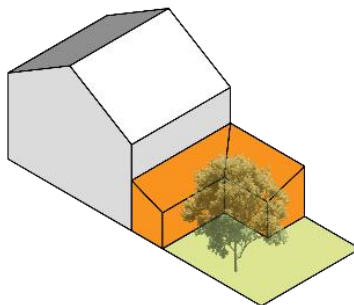
Traditional materials should be used where they positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area. Non-traditional materials will only be acceptable in a conservation area where they form part of a high-quality, integrated design and do not harm the area's character or appearance. UPVC is not an acceptable material in conservation areas.

HE 5

Impact on trees

Extensions should be designed to avoid the removal or damage of existing trees wherever possible. Where trees are present on or adjacent to a site, proposals should demonstrate how they have been taken into account in the design, including through appropriate siting and layout. This is particularly important in conservation areas where tree cover contributes to character.

Where necessary, an arboricultural assessment may be required to inform the design. Where tree loss is unavoidable, replacement planting should be provided unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority and having regard to any statutory protections.

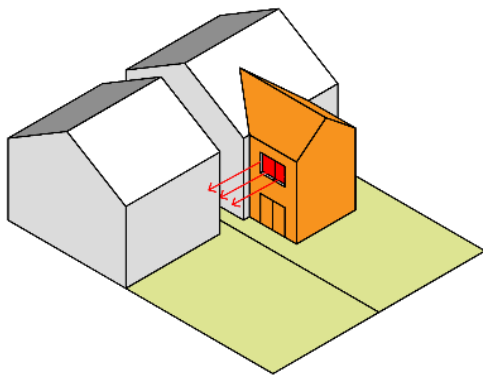


Extension designed to avoid harm to existing trees through sensitive siting and layout.

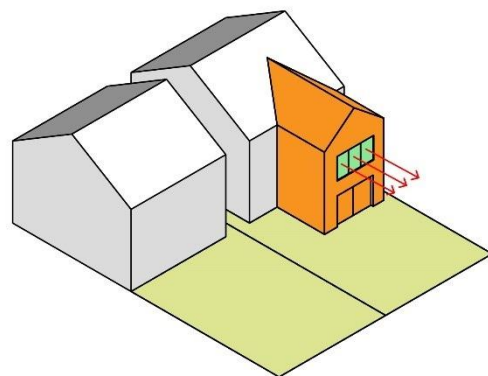
HE 6

Residential amenity

Extensions should not harm the residential amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of privacy, outlook, dominance, daylight, or overshadowing. Windows located immediately next to a boundary should be avoided. Where they are proposed, they should be high-level (at least 1.7 metres above finished floor level) and/or obscure glazed.



Overlooking windows can harm neighbouring privacy.



Windows positioned away from side boundaries reduce overlooking and protect privacy.

HE 7

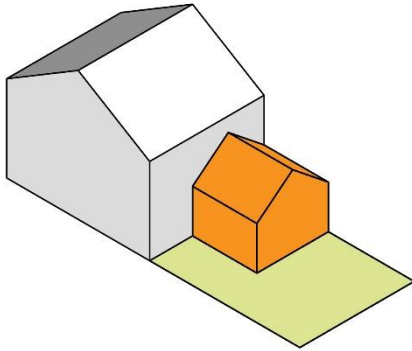
Rear extensions

Rear extensions should be smaller in scale than the original property. No more than half of the rear garden should be taken up by a rear extension and/or outbuildings.

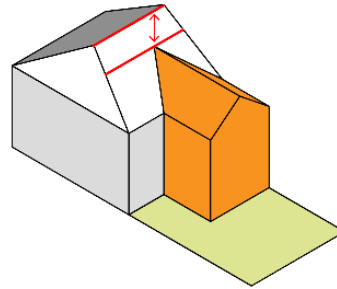
Single-storey rear extensions on or close to a shared boundary should not project more than 4 metres beyond the rear wall of the host dwelling. Proposals must also be designed so as not to project disproportionately beyond the rear elevation of neighbouring properties or result in an unacceptable impact on their amenity in terms of outlook, light or

dominance, having regard to the relationship between properties, including where they are staggered.

Two-storey rear extensions that exceed permitted development limits and adjoin a neighbouring property are not acceptable on semi-detached or terraced homes.



Single-storey rear extension maintaining a subordinate scale and garden space.



Two-storey rear extension reduced in height and depth to remain subordinate.

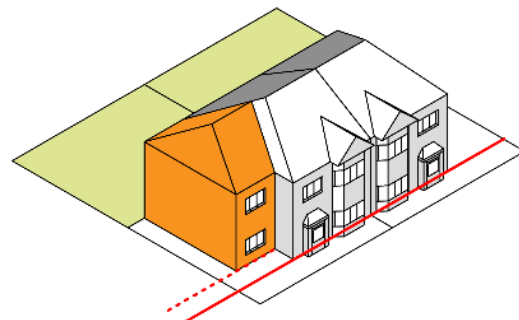
HE 8

Side extensions

Two-storey side extensions should not exceed half the width of the original house. They should be set down from the main ridge line, set back from the front elevation, and designed to complement the original roof form.



Side extensions should be narrower than the original elevation.

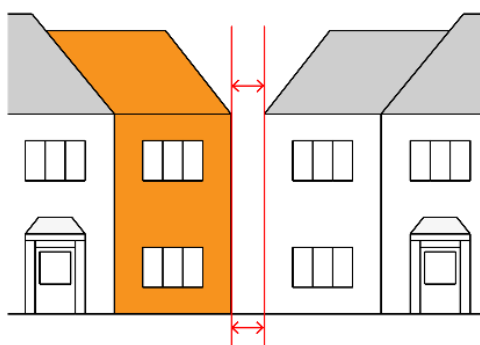


Side extensions should be set back from the front building line.

HE 9

Side extensions and boundaries

Side extensions should generally not be built up to the boundary where this would create a terraced appearance in the street or harm the character and appearance of the area.



Extension is set back from boundary to avoid terracing effect.

HE 10

Front extensions

Front extensions should not harm the character of the building, disrupt the established building line, or negatively affect the street scene. They should project no more than 1.5 metres from the original frontage. Where a driveway is already in place, the extension must retain it at the minimum dimensions set out in the Transport and Highways Supplementary Planning Document.

HE 11

Front dormer windows

Front dormers are generally not acceptable where no dormer windows are present in the street, and the use of rooflights is encouraged instead. Where a front dormer is justified, it should be limited to:

- a) A single, small, pitched roof dormer;
- b) Set down from the ridge, set up from the eaves, and set in from both sides of the roof by at least 1 metre; and
- c) Designed to retain the clear visual dominance of the original roof slope designed to avoid disruption to the roofscape.

Particular care is required in conservation areas and for listed buildings.

HE 12

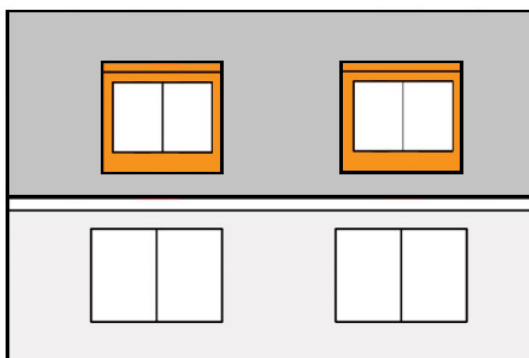
Rear Dormer Windows

Rear dormer windows must be of an appropriate scale, proportion, and design that reflects the character of the host dwelling and surrounding area. They should remain visually subordinate to the main roof and must not dominate or unbalance the roofscape.

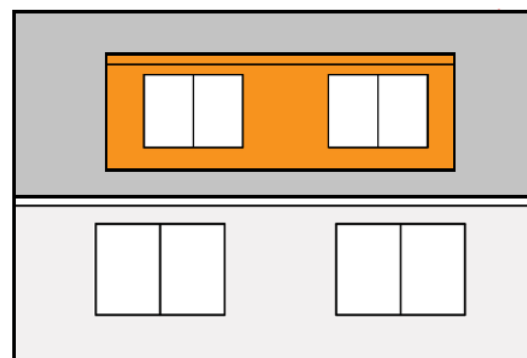
Rear dormers that are not permitted development will be supported where they:

- a) Are set down from the ridge and set up from the eaves;
- b) Are set in from both side edges of the roof by a minimum of 1 metre on each side;
- c) Are of a modest scale.

Smaller, traditionally detailed pitched roof dormers are usually a better design response. Large, bulky or full-width flat-roofed dormers, including those that extend close to the sides of the roof, will not be supported.



Smaller dormer windows reduce overall visual impact.



Large dormer set down from the ridge and in from edges to reduce prominence.

HE 13

Rooflights

Rooflights should sit close to the plane of the roof and be positioned to suit the overall design of the house. They should, for example, align with existing windows or be arranged symmetrically on the roof.



Low-profile rooflights integrated within the roof plane.

HE 14

Rooflights in conservation areas

In conservation areas, roof lights must be flush-fitting conservation-style and use low reflectivity glass.



Conservation rooflights integrated flush within the roof with a traditional appearance.

HE 15

Outbuildings

The design of outbuildings should be in keeping with the original house and the surrounding area in terms of scale, position, and appearance. They should not cause harm to neighbouring properties. Outbuildings should not cover more than half of the rear garden, and in most cases a smaller footprint will be more appropriate.



Compact timber outbuilding with green roof integrated within the garden.



Contemporary outbuilding combining timber, glass and steel.



Brick outbuilding reflecting traditional materials.

HE 16

Front boundary treatments

New boundary treatments should relate to the property they serve and be appropriate to the appearance, style, and scale of both the building and the street scene. They should be no higher than 1.4 metres. In housing estates designed with an open-plan layout, additional fencing that would alter this character is unlikely to be acceptable. In conservation areas, boundary treatments should reflect historic patterns.

Boundary treatments vary across the Borough in response to different development patterns and local character. Typical approaches include:

a) **Urban areas** – Low brick or stone walls and/or metal railings.



b) **Suburban areas** – Low brick or stone walls, often combined with hedges.



c) **Rural areas** – Hedges and low timber fences.



HE 17

Rear boundary treatments

Where rear boundaries face the public realm, they should relate to the property they serve and be appropriate to the appearance, style, and scale of the building and the street scene.

HE 18

Balconies

Balconies should respect the character of the existing building. Their size, materials, and position must ensure they do not dominate the façade or harm the street scene. Balconies must be designed to prevent overlooking of neighbouring windows and gardens. They should be offset from boundaries, and screening, such as obscure glazing, should be used where appropriate. Proposals that result in an unreasonable loss of privacy will not be acceptable.

HE 19

New driveways and hardstanding

Driveways and hardstanding that are not permitted development, should have permeable, or designed so that run-off is directed to a permeable or porous area within the curtilage of the house. Adequate space must be retained for a clear access route to the front door that is not blocked by parked vehicles. To help preserve local character, some planting should be kept, and driveways should not extend across the full width of the property.



Permeable block paving for drainage



Permeable gravel surface for drainage

HE 20

Raised external patios and terraces

If a raised external terrace or patio is proposed, it must not result in overlooking of neighbouring gardens or rear windows. Where overlooking would occur, a 1.8 metre high privacy screen is required.

Checklist

The Design Code is a key consideration when planning applications are assessed. The Design Code Compliance Checklist is a simple tool to help applicants explain how their proposals respond to these requirements. While completing the checklist is not mandatory, submitting it with your application can make the process clearer, quicker and more robust.

Why complete the checklist?

- It clearly shows how your proposal meets the Design Code.
- It reduces the likelihood of follow-up questions from the Council.
- It helps avoid delays in the determination of your application.
- It strengthens your case if an application is refused and appealed.

Submitting a completed checklist at the point of application is the simplest way to demonstrate compliance with the Design Code and support a timely decision.

Code number and title	Key points to address	Applicant Response
HE 1 – Size of extension	Subordinate scale; smaller than original building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 2 – Design and context	Respect original house and surrounding character	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 3 – Materials	Match or complement materials, detailing and finish	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

HE 4 – Conservation materials	Use traditional materials; avoid UPVC	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 5 – Trees	Avoid impacts; retain or replace where necessary	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 6 – Residential amenity	Protect privacy, outlook, daylight and avoid overlooking	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 7 – Rear extensions	Limit depth and coverage; protect neighbour amenity	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 8 – Side extensions	Subordinate width; set down/back; complement roof	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 9 – Side extensions and boundaries	Avoid terracing effect or harm to character	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 10 – Front extensions	Respect building line; limited projection (~1.5m)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 11 – Front dormers	Generally resisted; small/subordinate if justified	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 12 – Rear dormers	Modest scale; set down/up/in; avoid dominance	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

HE 13 – Rooflights	Low profile; align with design	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 14 – Conservation rooflights	Flush fitting with low reflectivity glass	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 15 – Outbuildings	Appropriate scale; not overdevelop plots	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 16 – Front boundary treatments	Max ~1.4m; respect character	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 17 – Rear boundary treatments	Appropriate design when visible to public realm	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 18 – Balconies	Avoid dominance; prevent overlooking	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 19 – New driveways and hardstanding	Permeable surfaces; retain access and planting	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
HE 20 – Raised external patios and terraces	Avoid overlooking; provide screening where required	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Further information in support of your answers		

North Tyneside Design Code

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