LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY

www.bexley.gov.uk

Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document







Guidance for applicants, decision makers and the local community

June 2026

Part 2 - Building Alterations & Extensions

Introduction

London Borough of Bexley (the Council) has produced a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to provide design guidance and support to applicants, decision makers and developers for new development across the borough.

As demonstrated by Fig.01 opposite, the guidance supports the Development Plan which comprises the Bexley Local Plan and the London Plan. The SPDs demonstrate how policies within these statutory documents can be met and the guidance documents should also be read in conjunction with national and regional design guidance on placemaking, such as the National Design Guide.

Overarching design guidance, which applies across all types of development, is provided in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles. This should be read in conjunction with the guidance provided in Part 2 of the Design Guide SPD, which focuses on specific areas of development and comprises four documents which complement, and are structured around, the Design Principles.

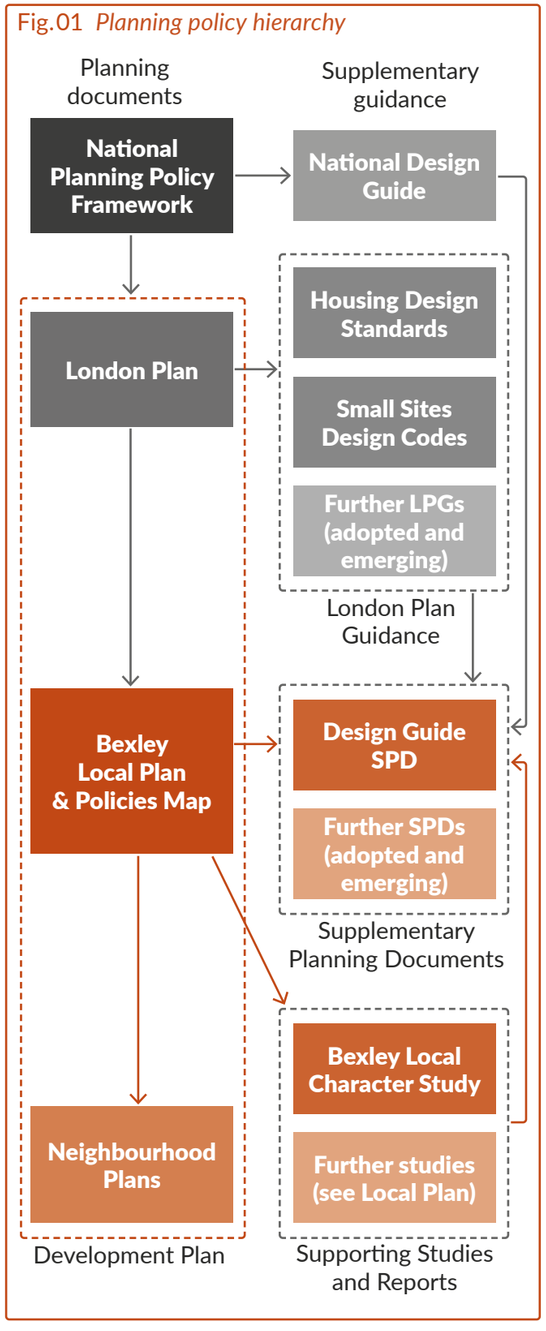
Once adopted, the Design Guide SPD Part 2 will also be a material consideration in determining planning applications. As such, proposals should conform with the guidance provided to achieve the best outcomes at determination.

This new guidance will replace the following Bexley planning guidance: Design and Development Control Guidelines SPD, Crayford Residential Design Code, Crayford Town Centre Design and Identity Guide, and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

The production of this document has followed best practice and been informed by a robust local evidence base. The guidance has been shaped through engagement with stakeholders and the public consultation process.

It should be noted that during preparation of the Design Guide SPD Part 2, the government published its draft NPPF. Once the final version of the new NPPF is published, it takes precedence should any conflicts arise between the two documents.

Fig.01 *Planning policy hierarchy*



Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Building Alterations and Extensions

Guidance is split into two distinct chapters, the first section focuses on residential on alterations and extensions, and is further split into sub-sections for clarity.

The Council supports householders' ambitions to improve their homes, spatially, thermally and aesthetically, to make them more practical and comfortable places to live.
Extensions and alterations can improve the existing housing stock and provide householders with an improved living arrangements without having to move to a new house or relocate. Householder extensions and alterations are therefore generally encouraged.

Residential extensions and alterations can have a significant impact on the appearance of a property, neighbouring properties, and on the character and amenity of a neighbourhood. The Council is supportive of development that would not result in adverse affects. As with all types of development, good design is at the heart of appropriate extensions and alterations.

The second section provides guidance for undertaking work to non-residential properties. Guidance primarily addresses proposed changes within Bexley's town and neighbourhood centres and along the borough's small parades. The document reinforces that such development will be supported where it duly considers its immediate context and the people interacting with these properties and this should be demonstrated during the application process. Alterations and extensions to specific typologies, such as development within Bexley's local and strategic industrial areas are covered in the Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Area Types document.

The aim of this document is to provide parameters of acceptability for typical forms of residential and commercial extensions and alterations. We hope that this will help applicants, and their agents to submit successful applications and for those applications to be determined quickly.

All applications are determined on their own individual merits, taking into account specific site opportunities and constraints. As such, not all extensions or alterations will be acceptable in every individual circumstance.

Where applicants can provide strong evidence and justification for alternative means of development to be followed, the Council will give due consideration to this.

How to use this document

The Design Guide SPD is separated into several distinct documents that will be developed and consulted upon in phases. The adopted **Design Principles** is Part 1 of the Design Guide SPD and the guidance provided applies across all types of development in Bexley to ensure consistency and quality. This is followed by additional guidance specific to certain types of development, including:

- **Small Sites** - sites below 0.25 hectares
- **Building Alterations and Extensions** - extensions and alterations to existing residential and non-residential buildings
- **Area Types** - common and emerging development types in Bexley e.g. industrial sites
- **Site Design Codes** - design guidance for areas undergoing significant change (these will be provided as part of the new Local Plan for Bexley).

These documents are supported by the **Technical Handbook** that contains detailed specialist information and standards required for certain planning applications, including highways, waste, sustainability and biodiversity.

The documents are colour-coded to aid navigation and each section of design guidance is given a sequential number for ease of reference. Design Principles are given the prefix D, Small Site codes will be given the prefix S, Building Alterations codes B, and Area Types A. The prefix for the Site Design Codes will be based upon the name of the area that is being planned.

The codes either use the words must, should, or could. These indicate the strength of the guidance and whether is it required to meet adopted policy or suggestive - see Fig.03. The codes only apply to relevant forms of development as judged appropriate by the planning officer assessing the relevant proposal.

The document uses precedent examples to illustrate the guidance, with text provided that explains what is deemed successful about the development. The use of these precedents does not automatically guarantee the approval of similar designs. All submissions to the Council will be determined based on their individual merits within their Bexley context.

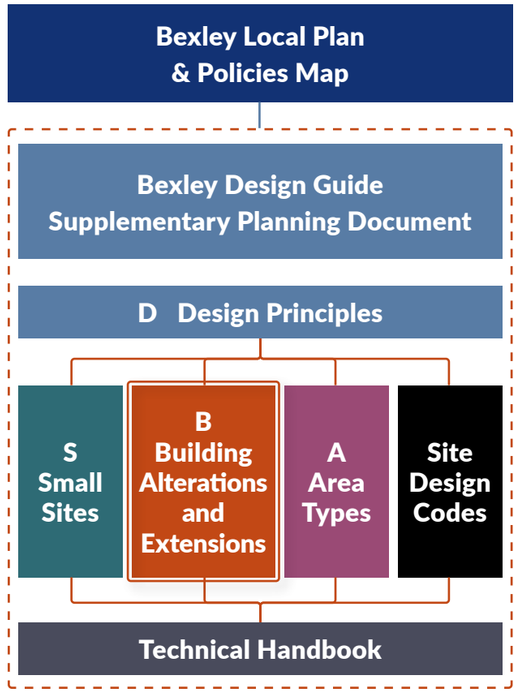


Fig.02 *The documents that will form the Design Guide SPD. This consultation focuses on the documents comprising Part 2: Small Sites, Building Alterations and Extensions, Area Types and the Technical Handbook*

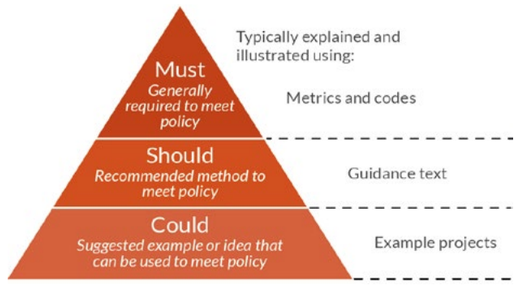
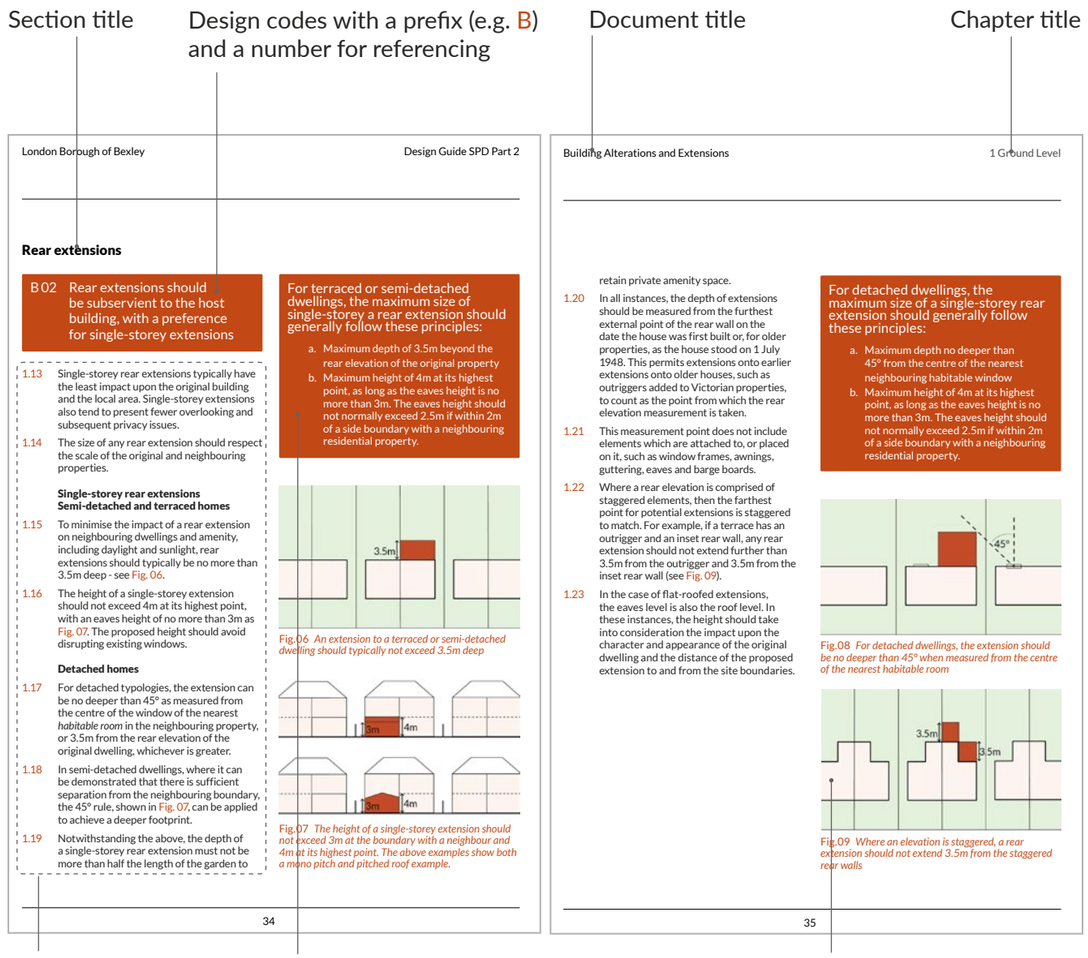


Fig.03 *The strength of the guidance is indicated in the use of the words must, should or could.*

Fig.04 *Example pages of the document with annotated features*



Implementation text including guidance on when the code applies

Metrics that can be used to meet the code

Numbered figures, including diagrams, example projects, tables, and maps to illustrate the text

Where underlined, highlighted text is used, this is a link to external resources. Where *italic text* is used, this word or phrase is a technical term and is included in the Glossary. Highlighted text indicates a link to information elsewhere in the document. *Highlighted, italic text* is used to denote figures and diagrams.

Building Alterations and Extensions

Residential Alterations and Extensions

1 Ground and Upper Level

B 01 **Rear extensions** should be *subservient* to the *host building*, with a preference for single-storey extensions

B 02 **Side extensions** should not visually unbalance the symmetry of existing buildings

B 03 **Front extensions and porches** should be designed to respect the proportions of the original building and the prevailing building line

B 04 **Basement extensions** should not harm neighbouring properties or existing on-site biodiversity

B 05 **Outbuildings** should not result in the creation of a second dwelling and should share access, gardens and services with the main building

B 06 **Development within the curtilage** should not negatively impact the original dwelling or the *street scene*

2 Roof Level

B 07 **Dormers** should be designed to be visually contained within the roof slope and their appearance should not dominate the appearance of the original building

B 08 The size, number and positioning of **rooflights and solar panels** must not visually dominate the *roofscape*

B 09 **Hip-to-gable extensions** must be considered sensitively to avoid negatively impacting the character and appearance of the original dwelling and its neighbours

B 10 **Terraces, decks and raised platforms** should not result in a loss of amenity space or privacy

B 11 **Upward extensions** should not harm the original dwelling and should respond positively to the existing streetscape

3 Conversions and Upgrades

B 12 **House to flats conversions** must achieve appropriate internal space standards and avoid unacceptable impacts on the streetscape or amenity of the local area

B 13 Dwellings proposed for conversion to a **House in Multiple Occupation** must be sensitively designed to mitigate negative impacts to existing neighbouring homes and the surrounding area

B 14 **Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes** should prioritise a whole house approach whilst causing minimal harm to the external appearance of the property

Non-Residential Alterations and Extensions

B 15 Works required to enable a **change of use** should be appropriate to the wider context and setting

B 16 **Alterations and extensions to non-residential uses** must be sympathetic to their surroundings

B 17 Proposals requiring **advertisement consent** should not impact upon amenity or public safety

B 18 **Shop fronts** should be designed to positively contribute to the character and appearance of the local area

Residential Alterations and Extensions

Submitting a Planning Application

Who needs planning?

If you live in a house or bungalow, you may be able to undertake extensions and alterations without needing planning permission. These works are known as permitted development (PD) and are described in more detail overleaf.

If you live in a maisonette or flat, or a house converted into flats, planning permission will normally be required as the permitted development rights which are available to householders do not apply to these buildings.

Householder permitted development rights also do not apply to houses which have been created through permitted development rights set out in Classes M, N, PA, and Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.

Seeking specialist advice

The Council strongly recommends you work with high quality specialists who can provide advice, develop the design and coordinate and submit a planning application on your behalf.

The RIBA and CIAT are valuable resources when seeking architects or architectural technologists to employ. The annual Don't Move, Improve! awards and resultant directory are a useful resource for finding examples of architects work.

You may decide to also employ a planning agent, who can help you navigate the planning process. The RTPI can help you find someone to work with.

Depending on the scale and nature of your project, other consultants you may require include structural, civil and electrical engineers, landscape architects, quantity surveyors, conservation architects, ecologists and arboriculturalists.

An architect or planning expert will be able to confirm whose services are required for the project.

The benefits of the pre-application service

When submitting a planning application, applicants can benefit from the Council's pre-application service. Provided by the Development Management team, the process is designed to provide clarity to applicants and simplify the planning process.

Council officers can help you determine whether planning permission is needed, and provide feedback that ensures your proposal has a higher chance of approval when submitted.

Making a planning submission

If planning permission is required for your proposed works, you must submit a planning application to the Local Planning Authority. Information on this is available on the Council's website.

The application information will need to comply with the Council's validation list requirements to ensure information submitted is in the correct format, aiding a smoother process towards gaining permission.

Neighbour engagement

Once an application has been received and validated, it is the Council's legal duty to consult your neighbours on your proposal. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for you to speak with your neighbours when applying to extend or alter your home, it is good practice to discuss any plans ahead of submitting applications to the Council. Such early discussions can be beneficial in preventing delays during the planning process.

Permitted development rights

Permitted development (PD) rights enable householders to undertake certain types of alterations and extensions without planning permission. These rights are granted by the Government and so are not controlled by the Council. Works that constitute PD vary for different types of property e.g. detached, semi-detached and terraced.

Details of works which fall under permitted development are outlined within the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, which is updated periodically.

The Planning Portal is a useful resource with up-to-date guidance on what works constitutes PD, for example, installing a satellite dish, or building a small porch. The government's Permitted development rights for householders provides a summary of works acceptable under permitted development.

The scope for improving buildings through permitted development can be limited and there is typically less control over the amount of space you can create under PD. There are also details, such as the placement of windows or new/altered vehicle accesses that may require a planning application. In these instances, it may be more flexible and cost effective to submit a planning application for a whole scheme.

Please note that an access is the opening in the boundary enclosure of a property and not any associated vehicle crossing to the footway, which is part of the highway rather than your property. Such changes will require approval from the Highway Authority under the Highways Act 1980.

Prior approval

Certain permitted development rights are subject to prior approval meaning an application must be submitted to the Council prior to commencing works. Examples of prior approval works include:

- Larger rear house extensions
- Additional storeys to residential properties, and
- Changes of use from commercial properties to dwellinghouses.

Full details of prior approval works can be found on the Planning Portal.

In cases where prior approval is required, the guidance in this document should be used.

Exclusions

There are instances where PD rights don't apply, meaning planning permission is required. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Where a property has permitted development Rights removed, for example, through an Article 4 Direction
- Where a property has been converted to residential use under the prior approval change of use process; or
- Where a property is a flat or a maisonette.

If your property is located within a *Conservation Area*, the works which can be undertaken under PD are also more limited. Further information is provided on page 13.

It is worth noting that permitted development rights can also be removed by conditions attached to planning permissions.

Lawful Development Certificates

A Lawful Development Certificate can be obtained if you want to ensure the existing building use is lawful for planning purposes or that your development proposal does not require planning permission.

Applications for a Lawful Development Certificate are made to the Council via the Planning Portal. The Council's Development Management team can provide further guidance on the process and the information required to support an application.

Conservation Areas and *listed buildings*

Bexley has 23 *Conservation Areas* which are areas designated in order to protect their special architectural and/or historic value i.e. their significance. Fig. 05 overleaf shows where the *Conservation Areas* are located.

In accordance with Section 72 of the Planning (*Listed Buildings* and *Conservation Areas*) Act 1990, developments must demonstrate how their design will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the *Conservation Area* in which they are located, with careful attention paid to the special architectural and historical value of the area.

The Council has a legal duty to ensure that development within these areas is sympathetic to the established character and appearance and anything considered to fail in these regards is unlikely to be granted planning permission.

Additional guidance for *Conservation Areas* can be found on the Council's website within the relevant *Conservation Area* and Appraisal and Management Plan for each area.

Permitted development in *Conservation Areas*

Within *Conservation Areas*, development to residential properties which could typically be undertaken under PD is more limited.

At the time of publishing, the Council has four Article 4 Directions in place which are applicable to *Conservation Areas*, which further restrict the scope of works that can be undertaken without planning permission. Applicants should refer to detailed information on the Council website on what this means for each location.

Listed buildings

Listed buildings are of special architectural or historic interest, with the listing regime providing protection for the nation's special buildings. Bexley currently has over 150 listed buildings included on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), where records for each *listed building* are available. Listing covers the whole building, including both interior and exterior elements.

Due to the intricacies of *listed buildings*, general parameters for the extension or alteration of these designated buildings are not included in this document. The suitability of proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis when submitted for Listed Building Consent, which is separate from the planning process. Almost all works that relate to *listed buildings* will require *Listed Building* Consent, and few are allowed under PD.

It is a criminal offence to undertake works to a *listed building* without prior consent. Exceptions may apply for minor like-for-like or maintenance repairs, but such works should be checked with the Council prior to the commencement of any works.

When working with *listed buildings*, it is highly recommended that you consult the Council at the earliest opportunity and engage in the pre-application process and seek specialist advice, including from a heritage or conservation specialist.

Locally *listed buildings*

Bexley maintains an active list of over 400 buildings, structures and landscapes of local historic value which is known as the Local List.

Buildings included on the Local List are not subject to statutory protocols, but are assessed as non-designated heritage assets when determining planning applications. The Council recognises the importance of locally *listed buildings* and the benefits that they bring to the character and appearance of the borough.

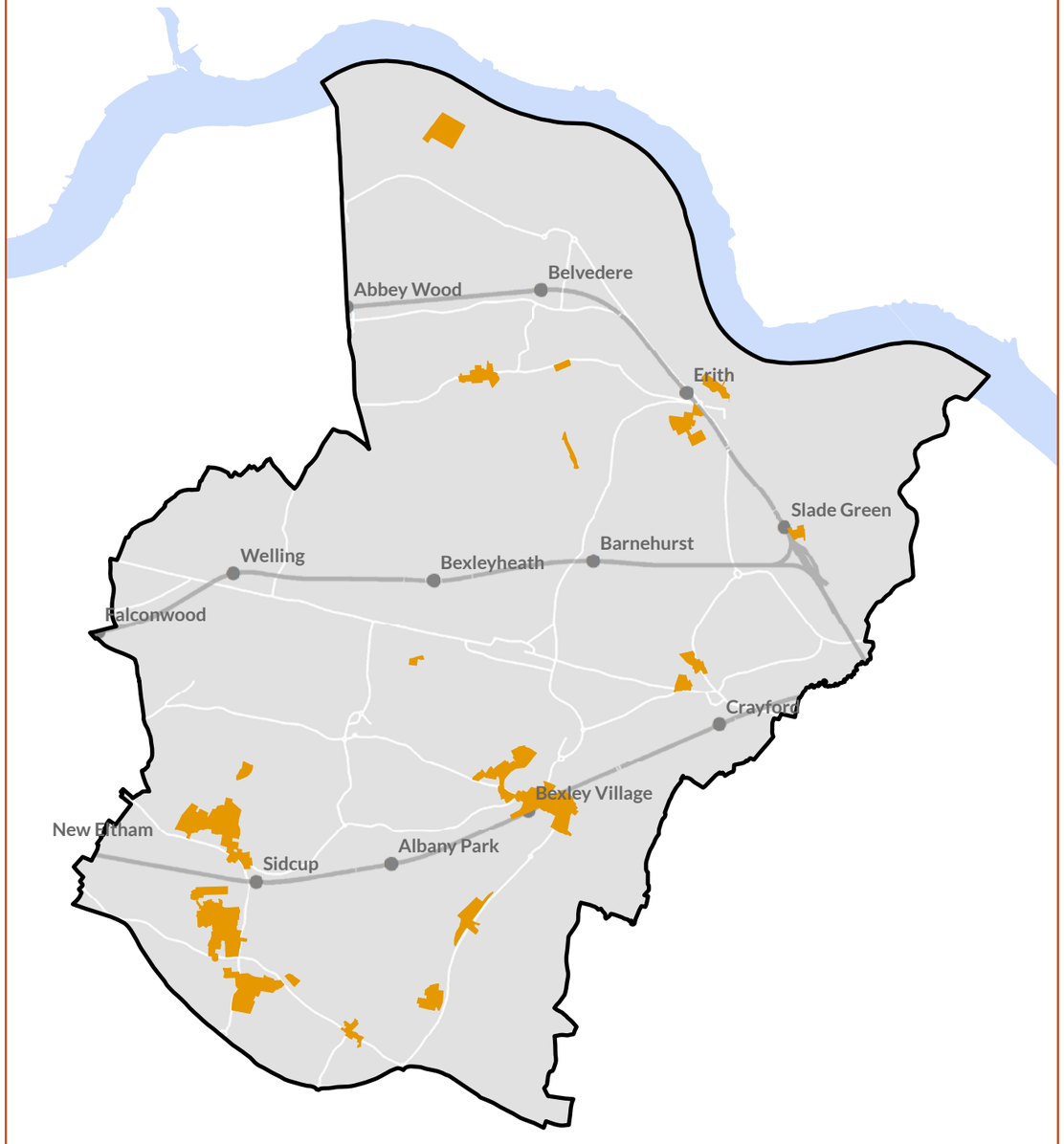
Locally *listed buildings* will normally enjoy the same permitted development rights as other buildings, except where they are also located within *Conservation Areas*. In these cases, the same scope for permitted development within a Conservation Area applies.

Assessing planning applications

In addition to relevant policies and guidance relating to heritage matters, developments affecting a listed building or its setting will be assessed against Section 66 of the Planning (*Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)* Act 1990. Where proposals are considered to substantially harm the special features of a *listed building*, or where proposals would result in insensitive development within their setting, these will not be supported.

Applications will be assessed on the basis of whether the proposed development would respect the special architectural character or historic interest of a building. The potential impact upon surrounding views and the relationship with the historic use of the site; and the impact upon the character and appearance of the area will also be considered during determination. This will be of particular importance where *listed buildings* are also located within *Conservation Areas*.

Fig.05 *Map of Bexley's Conservation Areas*



Other regulations and considerations

Several non-planning matters should also be considered when planning a project. These are not necessarily considered by the Council when determining a planning application, but you should be aware of these requirements for which you could be held liable. The following is not exhaustive and advice from suitably qualified professionals should be sought to assist with these matters.

Building Regulations

Regardless of whether works are permitted development or require planning approval, all building work is required to comply with Building Regulations. Building Regulations are independent of the planning process and covered by separate legislation. Applicants should contact the Council's Building Control department for more details about the processes involved.

Party Wall Act 1996 (or as amended)

The Party Wall Act 1996 is a framework for both preventing and dealing with disputes with regards to boundary matters e.g. party walls, boundary walls and excavations close to neighbouring buildings.

The Act is not a material planning consideration and is independent of obtaining planning permission or building regulations approval.

The Council is unable to either advise on, or deal with party wall matters. However, based on the Council's extensive experience of residential planning applications, to avoid neighbourly disputes and project delays, applicants are encouraged to ensure their development remains within their site boundaries. This includes the location of guttering and other fixtures.

Further guidance can be accessed through the Government guidelines and a Party Wall Surveyor can provide professional services to assist with the process.

Right to light

A 'Right to Light' is a legal right granted over a building or piece of land, that gives the landowner the right to receive light through defined apertures in buildings on their land.

Planning applications undergo assessment to ensure that *habitable windows* or otherwise sensitive windows are not unduly overshadowed, where this may be relevant.

Right to Light is a separate and civil matter and the Council does not become involved in issues or disputes of this nature.

Oversail licences

As a legal agreement between a developer and the Local Authority, these are required where any part of a building, scaffold, crane or hoarding will project - or oversail - the public highway, including footways and roads. Oversail licences permit the temporary use of the airspace over the public highway and should be obtained at least 4-6 weeks in advance of proposed from the Highway Authority, who will provide details on the information required to obtain an oversail licence.

Traffic Management Orders (TMOs)

A Traffic Management Order allows the Council to close or restrict roads, footways or parking bays to enable construction works, maintenance or temporary events. For a cost, TMOs should be arranged with the Highway Authority at least 6-8 weeks prior to the proposed closure or restriction.

Flood risk

As set out in Bexley Local Plan Policy DP32 Flood risk management, the borough is vulnerable to flooding from different sources. The Government's flood map for planning should be used to determine whether a property is located within a designated flood zone. All extensions and alterations proposed within areas of fluvial flood risk should be designed in accordance with the Government's Preparing a flood risk assessment: standing advice.

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Overarching Guidance

All alterations and extensions should seek to provide the additional space or facilities required with minimal harm caused to the external appearance of the property and its surroundings by positively responding to the appearance of the original building and enhancing the street scene

The Bexley Local Plan Policy DP11 Achieving high quality design is robust in setting out the importance of protecting Bexley's character through high quality design of new developments.

Applicants should refer to the Context section of the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles for guidance on what is required to demonstrate an understanding of the context of their proposal. All extensions should follow the parameters outlined in the Spatial Quality chapter of the Design Principles.

The following guidance provides principles that should be considered and applied to all residential alterations and extensions. More specific guidance follows in each chapter.

- The position, design and appearance of an extension must respond positively to the appearance of the original building and its neighbours.
- Proposals must be designed to enhance the *street scene*, character and appearance of an area by following one, or a combination, of the design approaches outlined in the orange box opposite.
- Whilst using these approaches, the design should ultimately take cues from the original property in terms of materials, proportions, fenestration, and roof profile and other aspects listed in Fig.06 overleaf. Applicants should use these principles to consider the suitability of their development proposal.

Applicants could use one of the following design approaches:

Complementary

a. Where the **complementary** approach is taken materials are a close match and all details, arrangement of openings, and proportions of the original dwelling are reflected in the design. This approach is typically most appropriate in *Conservation Areas* and close to heritage assets

Contrasting

b. With the **contrasting** approach, the proposal takes cues from the materials, details, arrangement of openings, and proportions of the original building and responds positively to these features by using a design that is visually distinct from the existing dwelling.

- Proposals should not result in the over development of an area in terms of scale, massing, or the intensity of the associated use.
- Precedent examples of similar properties in the surrounding area that are not deemed to appropriately respond to the existing architecture cannot be used as support for new applications. Instead, proposals should be developed according to the guidance in this document and demonstrate appropriateness within the specific context.

Privacy and amenity

- The provision of private amenity space is considered to be essential for the quality of residents' life.
- Although the right to a private view cannot be controlled by the planning process, the level and experience of outlook should be considered.
- Proposals should not result in the loss of the amenity quality to neighbouring buildings, including loss of outlook, privacy, daylight or sunlight provision, significant overshadowing or an overbearing impact. You should refer to the Spatial Quality chapter of the Design Principles for guidance on appropriate separation distances for new developments, the prevention of overlooking into gardens, and how to avoid negatively affecting daylight and sunlight into neighbouring gardens and windows.
- As explained in D 18 of the Design Principles, for the purposes of this guidance, the *protected garden area* is defined as the primary areas of amenity use within a rear garden. Windows should not directly overlook the *protected garden area* of neighbouring properties. The outlook and privacy chapters in the Design Principles outline how to provide acceptable windows near boundaries.

Fig.06 *Considering the impact of an extension*

Design aspect	Consideration
Privacy and amenity	The need to protect the privacy and amenity of adjoining dwellings
Daylight and sunlight	The need to protect daylight and sunlight available to neighbouring properties and future occupiers of the development
Massing and proximity to boundaries	The overall *massing* and proximity to the property boundary and adjoining buildings
Form, shape and proportions	How the proposed development responds to the original dwelling
Roofs	How the proposed roof profile addresses that of the original dwelling and surrounding *roofscape*
Materiality	The suitability of materials against the original dwelling and the wider streetscape
Doors and windows	The layout, design and style of windows and doors
Vehicle parking arrangements	The impact of an extension on the parking amenity for the original dwelling and neighbouring properties
Landscaping, ecology and biodiversity	The impact of the proposal on existing soft and hard landscaping and biodiversity
Sustainability	The impact of building upgrades to the longevity and energy efficiency of the original dwelling

- It is preferable for walls on or very close to the property boundary line not to have windows in them to protect the privacy of neighbouring homes. Where required, windows should be fitted so that they cannot open over the boundary line. Refer to the Materials and details section in Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles for more guidance.
- Where proposals extend against existing boundaries, you should consider the loss of amenity space to the *host dwelling*.

Daylight and sunlight

- The amenity of neighbouring buildings and amenity spaces, such as rear gardens, must be appropriately protected. Generally, extensions located adjacent to site boundaries have more of an impact in terms of overshadowing given their proximity and, where possible, this should be mitigated through the design proposal.
- Extensions must avoid significant overshadowing of the *protected garden area*. This should be demonstrated through submitted drawings.

***Massing* and proximity to boundaries**

- Extensions must respect the defined property boundary and overhanging features will not be deemed acceptable. Guttering should be constructed to avoid overhanging the boundary. Such features should be shown on submitted planning drawings to allow the Development Management team to assess their potential impact.

Form, shape and proportions

- It is important to be able to recognise the original house as distinct from the addition to maintain the urban grain and character of an area. An extension or alteration should be designed as an additional volume, subordinate to the original dwelling.

Glyn Road, Hackney
Emil Eve Architects

Contrasting
The roof form of the extension reflects the existing outrigger to complement the *host building*. The architect has used a contemporary interpretation of the existing London Stock brick to respond to its context. The extension does not project forward of the neighbouring rear extension. The chosen roof pitch of the new extension ensures that the potential negative impact of the extension on the neighbour's amenity and daylight is mitigated.

Roofs

- Roof profiles should generally be the same as, or similar to, the pitch of the original dwelling. For instance, a pitched roof used where a pitched roof forms the roof profile to the original dwelling, as shown in the precedent on page 21. Due to its prominence, this is especially critical when proposing a two-storey rear extension.
- Roof lines of the extension should generally be parallel to those of the existing building.

Materials

- Façade alterations to street-facing façades should use materials which respond to, or complement, the existing *street scene*.
- Where the complementary approach is taken, materials should be a close match to the existing building. With contrasting design approaches, materials should respond well the existing building, with sound justification for this design approach provided.
- In all cases, materials should be high quality in terms of colour, texture and finish. Applicants should submit images of each material choices alongside the existing materials to demonstrate the chosen approach. Where planning permission is granted, applicants may be required to submit materials samples to the Council by way of condition.
- Applicants should note the difference between painting and applying new materials to existing properties. The latter, such as applying render to the outside of a home, requires planning permission as it is considered to be introducing a new material. Painting existing brickwork however, can typically be carried out without any permission or consent. When completing such works within a *Conservation Area* or to a *listed building*, the relevant consent will be required.

The Saddlery, Lewisham
Studio Octopi

Contrasting
The form of the extension ensures it appears subordinate to the original dwelling by sitting between two existing brick walls and following the line of the Georgian terrace, with geometry perpendicular to these bounding walls. The chosen material clearly contrasts the red brickwork of existing dwelling, however the proportions of the mullions on the windows and doors mimic those of the existing dwelling.

© Agnese Sanvito

Doors and windows

- Where there is a consistent appearance across homes and new windows and doors are proposed, applicants must consider the prevailing design in terms of height, width, placement of openings, style and material finish.
- Replacement doors and windows should match (as far as practicable) the shape, detailing and form of existing windows and doors of the original home. This is particularly important where a property forms part of a semi-detached pair, or a terrace where properties have closer relationships with one another.
- Energy efficient windows and doors should be prioritised for all new replacements. If there is difficulty in obtaining like-for-like products, a higher energy efficiency will be looked upon favourably.

Vehicle parking arrangements

- Dependent upon factors such as the development location, the Council will typically oppose the removal of on-site parking in lieu of an extension due to the impact on the area and increased requirement for on-street parking as a result.

Landscaping, ecology and biodiversity

- Usable gardens are an asset to the borough and proposals should ensure that adequate garden and amenity space is maintained where extensions are proposed. The potential impact on biodiversity and ecology must be considered with all works. Refer to the Natural environment chapter in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles for advice on greening, natural habitats and the contribution of water features towards successful placemaking.

Belvedere Road, Bexleyheath
Blue Lime Projects

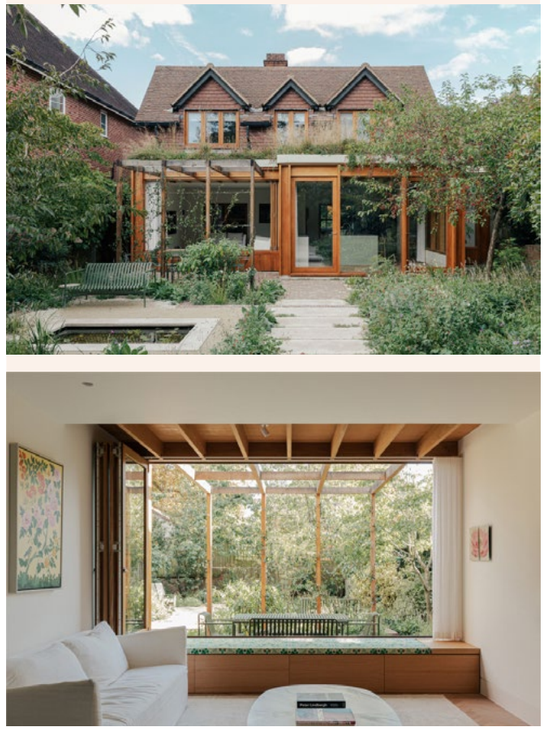
Complementary
The single storey rear extension to the terraced house was fitted with generous bifold doors to the rear and rooflights in the new pitched roof to optimise the natural light entering the new kitchen.

© Blue Lime Projects

- Bexley's gardens provide a haven for wildlife and host several protected species whilst also acting as a stepping stone between habitats. It is important that enabling works, such as demolition and vegetation removal, do not disturb any protected species. This work should be programmed outside of nesting season, which is typically 1st March to 31st August, during which time bird nest sites are legally protected. Applicants should avoid scaffolding works during this time as these can block access to nest sites.
- When carrying out works to external walls, it is important to check for any existing bat/bird bricks - particularly close to the eaves - or other nesting features. A bat survey will likely be required where there is any chance of interfering with, disturbing or disrupting a bat in its natural habitat. This is because bats are a recognised protected species, meaning that, by law, it is an offence to disrupt their environment.
- All applications (unless exempt) will be subject to Biodiversity Net Gain and applicants should refer to the Design Guide SPD Part 2 – Technical Handbook for guidance on how to achieve this on a development site.
- Regardless of any exemptions, proposed extensions should avoid the removal of healthy, significant soft landscaping. Where removal cannot be avoided, applicants are encouraged to replant suitable species to support biodiversity and ecology across the borough. The Technical Handbook contains a list of appropriate planting species within Bexley gardens.
- Impermeable hard landscaping can cause flooding within the borough. When planning extensions and/or alterations, applicants should address potential surface water flooding issues using natural features such as rain gardens and green roofs. Where new provision is installed, the drainage for hard landscaping should not be connected to the existing sewer network.

Newton Park Place, Chislehurst
ROAR Architects

Contrasting
The development of a sustainable and natural material-led extension to a Grade II Listed Victorian family home was driven by a desire to create a contemporary extension, rather than recreating the architecture of the period property. The extension creates a greater connection between the inside and outside spaces and incorporates solar panels and a wildflower roof to increase biodiversity on the plot.



© Chris Wharton

Sustainability

- Every year, approximately 54% of waste in London is attributed to construction processes. Applicants are encouraged to consider this when proposing a new alteration or extension to their home, and work to minimise the amount of demolition and waste generated by their project.
- Applicants can reduce the impact of construction both now and in the future by reusing materials, sourcing materials sustainably and designing with materials suitable for longevity, or future disassembly, reuse and/or recycling.
- *Retrofitting* existing homes - the process of improving the energy efficiency of buildings - is another way to reduce energy use. B 14 provides guidance on *retrofit* options.
- Bexley Local Plan Policy DP30 Mitigating climate change states that, where possible, all residential conversions, refurbishments, extensions and changes of use should seek a BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment 'Excellent' rating, or other appropriate sustainability measure.
- Designed to help improve the environmental performance and sustainability of existing dwellings, householders should consider this when proposing upgrades to their home, which will be looked upon favourably.
- Proposed improvements to an existing *building fabric* to improve the thermal performance of a building - for example the replacement of original windows and doors to more energy efficient alternatives - should not negatively impact the character of the existing building. Proposed products should be of a high standard and complementary to the design and style of the existing building.
- Where possible, applicants are encouraged to consider the use of renewable energy sources - details of different options are provided in B 14.
- Applicants should also consider the orientation of their homes and how this can be used to reduce energy consumption. For example using sunlight to heat rooms during winter, whilst avoiding overheating in summer by installing external shading devices such as retractable external blinds or shutters. Overheating in Retrofit and Existing Homes from the Good Homes Alliance is a useful resource for additional guidance and tools on mitigating overheating risks in existing homes.

1 Ground and Upper Level

The design guidance for ground level alterations and extensions provides codes which set out how to ensure proposals respond positively to the existing setting, without causing harm to neighbouring amenity or the streetscape.

The codes are provided to inform design development and are supported by guidance, diagrams and tables that offer advice on how to meet the aims of the code.

B 01 **Rear extensions** should be *subservient* to the *host building*, with a preference for single-storey extensions

B 02 **Side extensions** should not visually unbalance the symmetry of existing buildings

B 03 **Front extensions and porches** should be designed to respect the proportions of the original building and the prevailing building line

B 04 **Basement extensions** should not harm neighbouring properties or existing on-site biodiversity

B 05 **Outbuildings** should not result in the creation of a second dwelling and should share access, gardens and services with the main building

B 06 **Development within the curtilage** should not negatively impact the original dwelling or the *street scene*

Ground and Upper Level

B 01 Rear extensions should be *subservient* to the *host building*, with a preference for single-storey extensions

1.1 Rear extensions typically respect existing street-facing building lines and maintain the patterns and spacing between properties which other extensions can erode. For this reason, rear extensions are often the preferred type of ground level alteration as they are typically less visible from the street and therefore less impactful on the streetscape. In all cases, proposed development must be balanced against potential loss of amenity.

1.2 The size of all rear extensions should be proportionate to the scale of the original and neighbouring properties, and the garden of the *host building*.

1.3 The cumulative effect of extensions should not cover more than half of an existing garden or yard, avoiding a disproportionate reduction in external space for residents.

1.4 Planning applications descriptions should include all aspects of a project, for example details of any proposed changes to fencing or the inclusion of patio steps.

1.5 The depth of extensions should be measured from the furthest external point of the rear wall on the date the house was first built or, for older properties, as the house stood on 1 July 1948. This permits extensions onto earlier extensions on older houses, such as outriggers added to Victorian properties, to count as the point from which the rear elevation measurement is taken.

1.6 This measurement point does not include elements which are attached to, or placed on the elevation, such as window frames, awnings, guttering, eaves and barge boards.

1.7 Rear extensions to end of terrace and corner homes should be carefully designed given their visibility from the street,

Single-storey rear extensions to **terraced** or **semi-detached** dwellings should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum depth: 3.5m projecting beyond the rear elevation of the original property

Maximum height: 4m at its highest point, with a maximum eaves height of **3.1m**

Maximum width: up to the full width of the original property, if it can be demonstrated this will not negatively impact neighbours

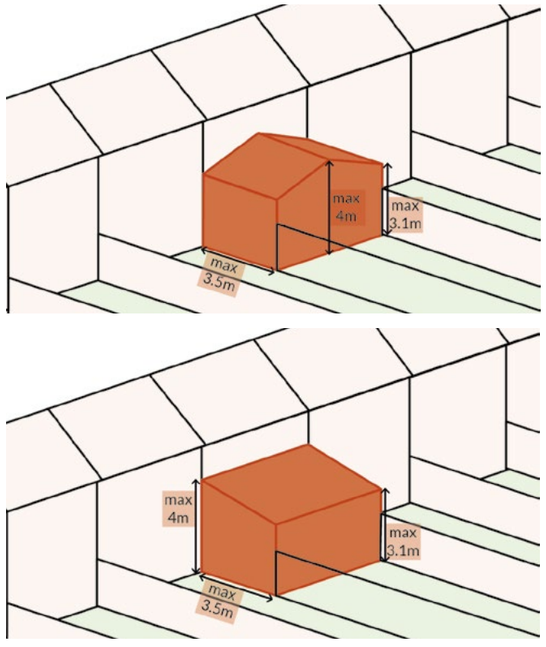


Fig.07 *For terraced and semi-detached homes: the maximum depth is typically 3.5m, with a maximum height of 3.1m at the boundary with a neighbour and 4m at its highest point. The above examples show both a pitched roof and mono pitch example.*

creating a positive relationship between the existing dwellinghouse, neighbouring properties and the *street scene*. This will be a key consideration at determination stage. Applicants should also follow relevant guidance in B 02 where the street scene will be impacted by the extension.

Single-storey rear extensions

Semi-detached and terraced homes

1.8 To minimise the impact on neighbouring dwellings and their amenity, including daylight and sunlight, rear extensions should typically be no more than 3.5m deep as shown in Fig.07.

1.9 The eaves height of a single-storey extension should not exceed 3.1m, with a maximum 4m at its highest point as illustrated in Fig.07. The proposed height should not disrupt existing windows.

1.10 The width of these extensions can be up to the full width of the original home.

1.11 Where a rear elevation is composed of staggered elements, then the farthest point for potential extensions is staggered to match. For example, if a terrace has an outrigger and an inset rear wall, any rear extension should not extend further than 3.5m from the outrigger and 3.5m from the inset rear wall as Fig.08.

Detached homes

1.12 The extension should not obstruct a line drawn at a 45° angle from the centre the nearest habitable window *habitable room* in neighbouring property(s) as Fig.09. As outlined in 1.2 and 1.3, the overall depth should be proportionate and *subservient* in size to the host dwelling.

1.13 When applying the 45° rule, applicants must show the location of original, neighbouring *habitable windows* on their submitted drawings.

1.14 Alternatively, a maximum 3.5m from the rear elevation of the original dwelling can be applied, whichever is greater.

Single-storey rear extension to a **detached** home should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum depth: should not obstruct a line drawn at 45° from the centre line of the nearest neighbouring *habitable windows*, or maximum **3.5m** from the rear elevation, whichever is greater

Maximum height: 4m at its highest point, with a maximum eaves height of **3.1m**

Maximum width: should not obstruct a line drawn at 45° from the centre of the nearest neighbouring *habitable windows*

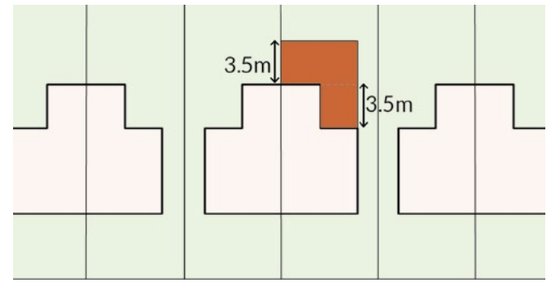


Fig.08 *Where an elevation is staggered, a rear extension should not extend 3.5m from the staggered rear walls*

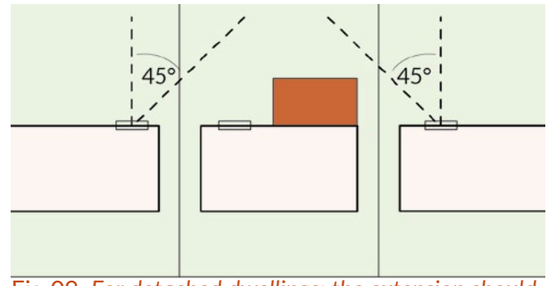


Fig.09 *For detached dwellings: the extension should not obstruct a line drawn at 45° from the centre of the nearest neighbouring habitable room, or maximum 3.5m (whichever is deeper)*

1.15 Notwithstanding 1.14, the depth of a single-storey rear extension must not be more than half the length of the garden to retain private amenity space.

1.16 For flat-roofed extensions, the eaves level is also the roof level. The proposed height should take the impact upon the character and appearance of the original dwelling and the distance of the proposed extension from the site boundaries into consideration.

Two-storey rear extensions

1.17 In most cases, two-storey rear extensions cannot extend up to the boundary of a site due to the negative impact upon the daylight to neighbouring gardens. Applicants should refer to the Comfort and Wellbeing chapter in the Design Principles that describes the parameters for the appropriate *massing* of development near boundaries.

1.18 Any proposals for these extensions must be positioned to avoid the significant loss of daylight to *habitable rooms* in neighbouring properties, or unreasonable levels of overlooking and a lack of privacy for residents in both the extended home and neighbouring dwelling(s).

1.19 Roof profiles should typically be the same or similar to the original dwelling, unless an acceptable deviation can be demonstrated through high quality, innovative design.

Terraced homes

1.20 To minimise the impact on neighbours, these are only suitable when infilling between two existing two-storey extensions or outriggers.

1.21 In this instance, the maximum depth should not exceed the existing extension or outrigger and the width is limited to that available to infill, as shown in Fig.10.

1.22 The height should not be more than the ridgeline of the original roof and the eaves height should be no more than the original dwelling.

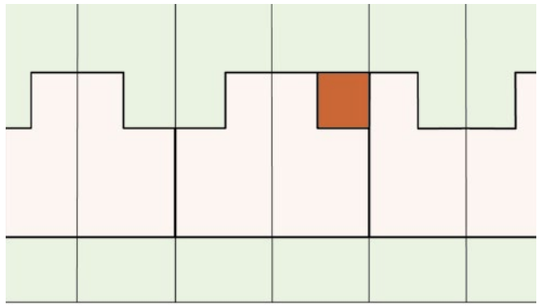


Fig.10 *At terraced dwellings with existing two-storey extensions or outriggers, an infill two-storey extension may be acceptable provided it doesn't impact neighbouring amenity*

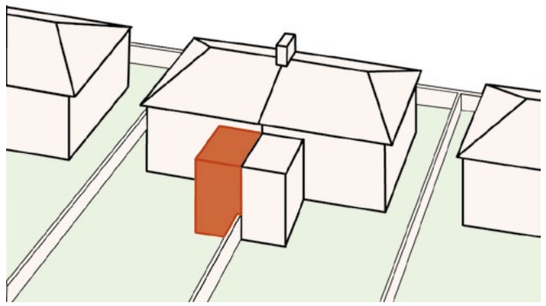


Fig.11 *Two-storey rear extensions may be acceptable in semi detached properties where they abut an existing two-storey extension or where located at the boundary with sufficient space.*

Semi-detached homes

1.23 These may be acceptable where:

- Adjoining a neighbour that already has a two-storey extension as Fig.11
- Set away from the neighbouring property and where it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient space to maintain neighbouring privacy, outlook and daylight/ sunlight levels
- Set in from the boundary with a neighbour by 2m.

1.24 Applications which demonstrate a pair of two-storey rear extensions are more likely to be supported.

1.25 Where deemed acceptable, extensions should typically be no wider than half the width of the existing house with the maximum depth calculated using the 45° rule set out in 1.12. However, it should also be demonstrated that there will be no loss of amenity, privacy, outlook or daylight/ sunlight levels to other neighbours.

1.26 Such extensions may not be suitable on certain small Stevens houses built on the Stevens Estate in Welling, characterised by 6-pane round bay windows to the front elevation.

Detached homes

1.27 The proposed extension should be proportionate and subordinate to the main dwelling and balance practical new space with avoiding harm to the character of the original house, neighbouring properties and the surrounding area. Proposals which significantly alter the appearance of existing homes are unlikely to be supported or approved.

1.28 The 45° angle rule should be used to define a suitable, proportionate depth and width of the extension.

Florence Street, Islington
Gundry + Ducker

Contrasting
Following the precedent of neighbouring two-storey rear extensions, the multi-storey brick extension provides additional ancillary spaces internally, whilst the lightweight timber and glass infill extension provides new double-height living space and a connection between the home and rear garden.

© Andrew Meredith

Ground and Upper Level

B02 Side extensions should not visually unbalance the symmetry of existing buildings

1.29 Side extensions can accommodate new space without sacrificing rear garden amenity but are more visible from the *public realm* and resultantly have an impact on the streetscape that will be considered during determination.
Due to the individual and cumulative effect upon the character of the local area, extensions should be designed sensitively to contribute positively to the *street scene*.

1.30 The detailing of side extensions is particularly important to ensure elements such as guttering do not overhang the boundary. These should be designed into parapet walls and always shown on submitted drawings.

1.31 Where the side of a house is currently used for bin or cycle storage and a side extension is proposed in its place, applicants should demonstrate, on submitted drawings, that adequately sized, sensitively-designed and integrated storage is proposed within the curtilage of the home.

1.32 Similarly, if the side of a house is currently used for parking, it should be demonstrated that the proposed extension will not increase parking stress in the area.

1.33 Side extensions should typically be accessed internally, avoiding additional doors to the front elevation.

1.34 New windows should typically be placed on front and rear walls to prevent overlooking to neighbouring dwellings. Where windows are required in the side elevation, these should be at high level and non-openable with obscured glazing and not prevent future development to the neighbouring property.

A side extension should appear **subordinate** to the original dwelling. This can be achieved through:

a. A smaller *massing*
b. Setting the extension back from the principal frontage
c. Leaving substantial space to the side boundary
d. Setting the roofline down from the main roof

Single-storey side extensions should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum depth: Typically the depth of the host property. Where proposed to project beyond this, guidance for rear extensions applies

Maximum height when building within 2m of the boundary: Maximum eaves height of **3.1m** and **4m** at its highest point

Maximum width: proportionate and subordinate to the front elevation, and less than half the width of the original house

Note: extensions should not project beyond the front elevation of the original house

Single-storey side extensions

Terraced homes

1.35 Given the close relationship between terraced homes, side extensions should be designed to have minimal impact on neighbours and adhere to the maximum parameters outlined in the metrics boxes opposite.

1.36 Extensions to end of terrace homes should be designed to prevent unwanted access to the rear gardens of the terrace, and be set in from the boundary.

1.37 Side extensions to corner homes should typically be sufficiently set back from the front elevation, ensure subservience to the main dwelling and avoid altering the rhythm of the terrace. Gables should be carefully designed and not negatively impact the *street scene*.

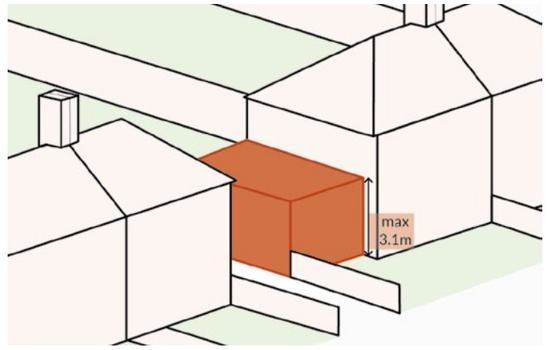


Fig.12 *The rhythm of gaps between semi-detached homes is maintained, and the extension steps back from the original building line to remain subservient to the original dwelling*

Garage conversions

1.38 Converting garages into internal living space is generally acceptable. Applicants should ensure that there remains sufficient space for parking and demonstrate this on submitted drawings.

1.39 Conversions should be internally accessed and additional front doors will not be permitted. Windows should comply with guidance set out in 1.34.

Detached and semi-detached homes

1.40 The spacing between homes is key to the character and appearance of an area. Gaps between buildings contribute an element of openness to an area's character, providing glimpses of rear gardens, landscaping and sky from the street.

1.41 In this context, side extensions pose the potential to create a terracing effect, which innovative design solutions should avoid. Terracing happens when side extensions are built close to the property boundary, resulting in the cramped appearance of a continuous row of terraced houses and

diminishing the original character of the area.

1.42 Similarly, the potential to unbalance the symmetry of original homes must be considered during design development, with care taken to design side extensions according to the balance and proportions of the existing dwelling and its neighbours.

1.43 Where there is a consistent rhythm of gaps between buildings, this should be retained above first floor level. To preserve the character of such areas, two-storey side extensions will generally be resisted in these instances.

1.44 Side extensions may extend to the side boundary, but the width should be proportionate to the existing frontage.

Two-storey side extensions

1.45 If there is no consistent rhythm of gaps and there is sufficient space to extend without creating the terracing effect, applicants may be able to create a side extension up to the ridgeline of the roof, with an eaves height no more than that of the original dwelling.

1.46 In these instances, the form should be set back from the original building line to ensure subordination to the *host building*.

1.47 Extensions can be built to the site boundary, subject to the roof being set down from the original roofline and the front elevation set back from the existing dwelling, to appear *subservient*. Where the gap between the flank wall and boundary is 4m or more, a side passage should be provided and the extension should be set in at least 1m from the boundary.

1.48 Planning applications should demonstrate that side extensions how any potential negative impacts on daylight/sunlight to and privacy and outlook from *habitable windows* in neighbouring properties are mitigated.

Wolfram Close, Lewisham
Selencky Parsons Architects

Complementary
The architects achieved a *subservient*, yet complementary two-storey, side extension to this end of terrace mid-century home by stepping the extension back from the main façade twice.

The new extension complements the existing dwelling through the articulation of window openings. This is further strengthened by the façade materials used, which are a contemporary response to the original dwelling.

© Andy Matthews

1.49 First floor extensions that sit over existing ground floor extensions or garages should have a greater set back from the front elevation, as Fig.13. This will ensure it remains subordinate to the original home and reduces the risk of the terracing effect. The proposed roof level should be lower than the *ridgeline* of the original home.

1.50 Houses on corner plots may have the capacity for these extensions subject to the relationship with the existing home, any neighbouring properties and the wider *street scene*.

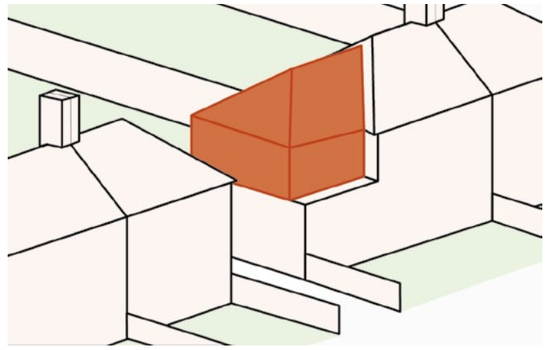


Fig.13 *A first floor side extension above an existing extension, with the new extension set back from the front elevation to remain subservient and with a pitched roof sitting below the ridgeline*

Wraparound extensions

Single and two-storey extensions

1.51 Wraparound extensions - providing a combined side and rear extension - must take into account the potential impact on neighbouring amenity. Fig. 14 illustrates examples of a single storey wraparound extension. Design parameters set out for Single-storey rear extensions should be followed.

1.52 Two-storey wraparound extensions have the potential to introduce large built volumes to an existing building and therefore need to be carefully designed to avoid over-development. Such extensions must respond to the character of the existing dwelling and its neighbours. Guidance for Two-storey rear extensions should also be followed.

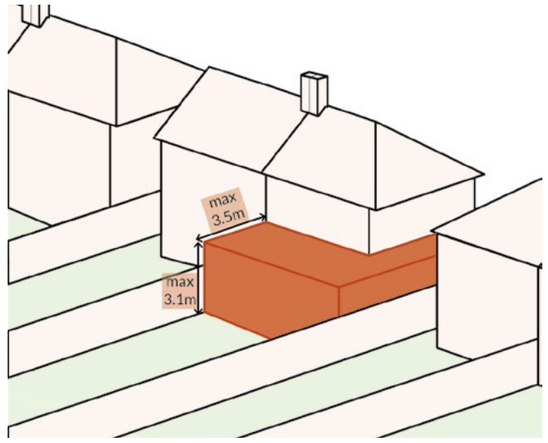


Fig.14 *Example of terraced and semi-detached wraparound, single storey extensions that follow the rules set out in both rear and side extensions guidance*

Ground and Upper Level

B03 Front extensions and porches should be designed to respect the proportions of the original building and the prevailing building line

1.53 Front extensions can provide a buffer between the public realm and maintain the privacy of a dwelling.

1.54 Front porches are typically constituted as permitted development, unless there is an Article 4 Direction in place. However, given their high visibility and potential to disrupt the *street scene*, such additions must be sympathetic to the existing building and its surrounding context.

1.55 Considerations for prevailing building lines, established street patterns and the visual appearance of the extension needs to be demonstrably high-quality. These extensions can also impact the use of front garden amenity areas and vehicle parking arrangements.

1.56 These extensions should be designed to ensure the form does not appear unduly prominent within the *street scene*, thus negatively impacting the character and appearance of the area. The form should not unacceptably impact neighbouring homes and the amenity they currently enjoy.

1.57 In areas where there is no consistent residential character, the inclusion of front extensions may be considered more acceptable.

1.58 In some instances, there may be potential for front extensions and porches to create a positive landmark in the *street scene* where it exhibits a unique character or takes a contrasting approach to the context.

Front extensions and porches should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum depth and width: proportionate and *subservient* to the original house

Maximum height: limited to one storey

1.59 Where the main dwelling entrance is positioned on the front elevation, porches should be positioned in front of this.

1.60 Porches should be distinct structures and designed to avoid impacting any distinct features of the existing dwelling. For example porches should not project beyond, or connect to, an existing bay window or garage.

1.61 More substantial front extensions may be considered appropriate for detached houses with substantial separation from neighbouring properties or in streets with highly irregular building lines.

1.62 Properties meeting these characteristics should also have substantial space to the front of the property to accommodate a front extension that must be designed proportionately to the plot.

1.63 The introduction of any front extension or porch must not negatively impact the soft landscaping and biodiversity of a site by replacing existing greening with hardscaping and vehicular parking.

1.64 Proposals should not unacceptably increase parking stress in the area through the loss of required parking spaces or the over intensification of a site. Any on-street parking controls and parking pressures within the locality will be considered during determination.

B04 Basement extensions should not harm neighbouring properties or existing on-site biodiversity

1.65 Basement extensions can be beneficial in providing additional space whilst having little visual impact on the *street scene* or reducing amenity space.

1.66 Areas prone to sinkholes pose specific risks to basements and will typically not be deemed acceptable locations for such development.

1.67 Applications should include relevant information on how the development will mitigate common concerns with basement development such as drainage, flood risk, light ingress and land instability issues.

1.68 All basement planning applications should include a *Basement Impact Assessment* to enable assessment of the potential impact of the development on the existing and neighbouring dwellings and the environment. The applicant should demonstrate how these impacts have been mitigated through design development.

1.69 Where approved, the householder will be required, by condition, to submit a Construction Method Statement certified by a qualified engineer. This must provide detailed information on the excavation, temporary works and construction method. The statement should include reference to potential impacts to neighbouring properties and land and details on how noise, dust and vibration will be addressed during construction.

1.70 Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) highlight where development might affect archaeological remains. Surveys should be carried out for proposals located in APAs. Applicants should reference the Historic England APA Appraisal for the borough.

1.71 Basements are vulnerable to many types of flooding due to their low lying nature, which must be considered from the outset of the design process. As outlined in Bexley Local Plan Policy DP32 Flood risk management, basements will not be permitted within Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required where evidence suggests risk from surface water, groundwater or sewer flooding.

Basements should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum depth: one floor below ground

Maximum extents: up to the front, side and rear walls of the existing dwelling

1.72 Where a waste outlet is installed in the basement to accommodate a toilet, utility room or similar, the applicant must install a pumped device to protect the basement from sewer flooding with the location of the pump clear on submitted planning drawings.

1.73 Basements should only provide additional, ancillary space to a dwelling. Applications for basements which provide a *self-contained* dwelling will not be supported. Due to flood risk and emergency access concerns, extensions intended for use as a main living space or for sleeping accommodation will not be supported.

1.74 Should the front of the existing house provide on-site parking, any lightwells required for the basement development should be designed to still accommodate this amenity following construction. Basements should not result in unacceptable increases to parking stress through loss of parking or over intensification.

1.75 Basements should be internally accessed. Separate, external access to the basement will not be permitted except where required for emergency access and escape.

Ground and Upper Level

B05 Outbuildings should not result in the creation of a second dwelling and should share access, gardens and services with the main building

Outbuildings should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum size: the development must leave 50% of the existing garden open as amenity space

Maximum depth and width: proportionate and *subservient* to the house and garden plot size

Maximum height: limited to one storey. When located within 2m of the boundary, maximum eaves height of **3.1m** and maximum overall height of **4m**.

1.76 Outbuildings should be designed to be *subservient* to the main dwelling and proportionate to the footprint of the garden, maintaining sufficient private amenity and usable garden space for residents. Outbuildings should not result in large, bulky or visually intrusive forms.

1.77 In all instances, applicants should demonstrate that development would not result in a loss of the quality of neighbouring amenity, including day and sunlight levels, privacy and use of amenity space.

1.78 Proposals for any *self-contained* residential function will not be supported by the Council and the applicant will have to provide evidence that the building has an ancillary function to the main dwelling. Acceptable uses include additional storage, home offices, studios or gyms.

1.79 Outbuildings should be positioned to allow easy access between it and the main dwelling, however the building should be located far enough from the main and neighbouring dwellings to avoid negatively impacting homes and gardens.

1.80 The suitability of windows and doors to the outbuilding within the side or rear elevation will be reviewed by the Council on a case-by-case basis to determine whether such fenestration would result in overlooking and a lack of privacy to neighbouring homes and their amenity.

1.81 Materials and finishes to outbuildings should respond to the character and appearance of the *host building*, following the design approaches set out in the Overarching Guidance.

1.82 Where rear gardens back onto protected habitats such as Ancient Woodland, outbuildings must be positioned with a 15m buffer zone to the protected habitat, as set out in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles.

The Orangery, Norwich
McCloy + Muchemwa

Complementary + contrasting
The redevelopment and extension of an existing garage, the designers reused and upgraded the existing structure to create a new orangery alongside a workspace. The black cladding finish provides a backdrop that emphasises the colours of the soft landscaping within the garden.

© Simon Kennedy

Ground and Upper Level

B06 Development within the curtilage should not negatively impact the original dwelling or the *street scene*

1.83 The surroundings of Bexley's homes play a critical role in the character and appearance of residential streets and can significantly enhance the character of both home and street.

Front garden boundary treatments

1.84 Maintaining and/or strengthening existing boundary treatments is important to defining the relationship between the dwelling and the wider *public realm*.

1.85 This can be done using hedges, fences, garden walls and railings. Boundaries should not be obtrusive along the *street scene*, for example, overly tall fences and walls. Householders should consider the existing and consistent boundary treatment along the street and in the surrounding area when upgrading or repairing their boundary. Where proposed, the eventual height of hedges should also be considered.

1.86 The Council's preference would be for soft landscaped or semi-permeable boundary treatments along street-facing façades.

Front and rear gardens

1.87 Modifying the existing rhythm of front gardens can drastically impact the appearance of a *street scene* and the loss of front gardens can cause major harm to an area over time.

1.88 In addition to maintaining a pleasant *street scene* and providing amenity for residents, planted gardens have several benefits including:

a. Providing a habitat for nature - gardens provide feeding and nesting opportunities for a variety of the Borough's wildlife

b. Protection against flooding - soft landscaping is vital in absorbing rainwater which will be increasingly beneficial as we experience the effects of climate change - note, it is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to allow water to flow from your property onto a footway

c. Protection against subsidence - soft, permeable surfaces reduce the risk of soils drying out and causing subsidence

d. Temperature regulation - plants release water vapour which helps to naturally cool the air. When replaced with hard surfaces, the opposite happens, causing temperatures to increase.

1.89 Whilst most garden works do not require planning permission, residents are encouraged to follow this guidance and consider the following:

e. Avoid the removal of any existing trees, planting or established hedges

f. Contribute to the biodiversity of the borough through planting trees and flowering plants, introducing ponds and other water features and installing bat and bird bricks which should be integrated into the fabric of the building. The Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Technical Handbook provides further details on optimal planting species within Bexley

g. Introduce permeable paving to new areas of hardstanding to minimise rainwater run-off which contributes to surface flooding

h. Introduce *rain gardens* to assist with the management of rainwater runoff whilst maintaining the green, lushness of gardens.

1.90 During the design process, applicants should determine if there are any Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) in place for existing trees. If located within a *Conservation Area*, the tree may be protected by the relevant Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Calton Avenue, Dulwich
Kate Eyre Garden Design

The design of this front garden was overhauled to include a lush area of planting alongside a driveway suitable for the householder's vehicular parking requirements. The driveway and paths are a sandstone, a permeable material ensuring adequate drainage. The bin and bike enclosure sits alongside the driveway and the material chosen is complementary to the original dwelling, whilst a green roof finishes the structure, adding greenery in this location.

© Kate Eyre Garden Design

1.91 As set out in Bexley Local Plan Policy DP2 Residential development on backland and infill sites, all distinctive landscape and nature conservation features, such as trees, hedges and shrubs, must be retained. Where distinctive and well-established natural features are present, extensions and alterations should be designed to avoid the loss or damage of these significant features.

1.92 Where significant, well-established natural features are impacted by proposed works, applicants may require arboricultural expertise to advise on appropriate mitigation measures. Where these features cannot be retained, applicants should replace them with a size and species appropriate to the location and the natural features being replaced - again specialist arboricultural input may be required to inform the appropriateness of replacements.

1.93 Where there is underutilised parking provision within a front garden, the Council encourages its conversion into planting, *rain gardens* or other sustainable draining infrastructure. This should not lead to on-street parking stress.

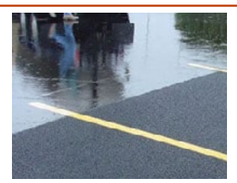
Front car access and parking

1.94 Vehicle parking should not overwhelm front garden layouts and the boundary enclosure of the dwelling.

1.95 When the majority of a garden area is proposed for replacement with excessive parking and hardstanding, the Council is unlikely to support the application.

1.96 Introducing new parking in a front garden should only be a consideration where the garden is large enough to maintain a proper boundary enclosure to the site and adequate planting and soft landscaping alongside the parking to minimise the negative impact on biodiversity. Applications that result in the permanent loss of green verge space will not be approved, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated and mitigation measures are agreed.

Fig.15 *Examples of permeable surfaces (this list is not exhaustive and alternative materials may be acceptable)*

Type	Image
Grass block pavers (porous, with open cells that allow grass to grow through them)	
Permeable block paving	
Gravel	
Porous asphalt (showing non-porous asphalt with water pooling on it, alongside porous asphalt)	
Porous concrete	

1.97 Car parking provision should be the minimum space necessary for a parked vehicle whilst maintaining clear access to the front door and without overhanging the adjacent footpath.

1.98 A significant area for new planting and soft landscaping should always be provided to ensure a primarily green and vegetated garden that supports Bexley's biodiversity and ecology.

1.99 Planning permission is not required where a new or replacement driveway uses permeable surfaces, as described below, and this can be carried out under permitted development. However, when the area proposed for development is over 5m^2 and uses impermeable materials, planning permission is required.

1.100 In these instances, justification for using such materials must be provided as this deviates from Bexley Local Plan Policy DP33 Sustainable drainage systems.

1.101 Where impermeable surfaces are installed, householders should ensure water is directed towards a *rain garden* or soakaway within their own property to collect water and aid drainage.

Permeable surfaces

1.102 Permeable surfaces allow rainwater to drain through the material into the ground below. This prevents excessive water runoff from contributing to flooding. As noted in 1.88b, water runoff onto a footway or other highway is an offence that contravenes the Highways Act 1980.

1.103 Impermeable surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, collect pollution which is then washed off into drains and causes damage to natural sources such as main rivers. In line with Bexley Local Plan Policy DP33 Sustainable drainage systems, impermeable finishes must not be specified unless in specific cases where there are justifiable and compelling reasons why their use would be appropriate over permeable surfaces.

1.104 When using permeable surfaces such as chippings, fragments and loose gravel to front gardens, these must be contained within the property boundary to prevent spread onto the adjacent highway.

1.105 Examples of acceptable, permeable materials are detailed in Fig.15 and applicants should refer to the Bexley Sustainable Drainage Design and Evaluation Guide, which details the impact and requirements to consider when paving (front) gardens.

External storage

1.106 Installing dedicated external storage for refuse bins and cycles can ensure that the *street scene* remains free of the clutter these items can create. External storage should typically be located away from the front elevation and integrated into the property curtilage.

1.107 Storage design and locations should not negatively impact the host dwelling or the *street scene*. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate soft landscaping into the design such as including green roofs, to minimise its impact on the *street scene* and incorporate replacement greenery within gardens.

Ground and Upper Level Checklist

- ☐ **Show how the proposed scale, massing and form are proportionate to the *host building* (B01/B02/B03/B04/B05)**
  This should be achieved by developing a set of diagrams and drawings that illustrate how the scale, massing and form of the proposal have been informed by the host building and relevant site constraints.

- ☐ **Show how the proposal has been designed with consideration for neighbouring properties, mitigating the potential impact on privacy, outlook, overshadowing and access to light and amenity (B01/B02/B03/B04/B05)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings to evidence how the proposal sits within its surroundings and demonstrate how the impact on neighbouring properties has been considered during design development.

- ☐ **Show how the architectural expression has evolved as a response to the surrounding context and the *host building* and will be finished with high-quality materials that will protect and/or enhance the original dwelling and the street scene (B01/B02/B03/B04/B05/B06)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to evidence how the proposal sits within its context and has evolved in response to its setting, with information provided on the proposed material palettes and specification.

- ☐ **Show how proposals have been developed to protect and/or enhance existing biodiversity, ecology and habitats (B01/B02/B03/B04/B05/B06)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate how the proposal mitigates its impact upon existing biodiversity, ecology and habitat features and the proposed soft and hard landscaping layouts and specification. Information should illustrate how the impact upon any site-specific constraints, such as Ancient Woodland, are mitigated through design.

- ☐ **Show how surface water flooding has been duly considered and mitigated through design (B01/B02/B03/B04/B05/B06)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to illustrate the proposed soft and hard landscaping layouts and specification.

- ☐ **Show how access and servicing have been duly considered (B01/B02/B03/B04/B05/B06)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate primary access points, waste storage and secure cycle and car parking.

2 Roof Level

The design guidance for Roof Level alterations and extensions provides codes which set out how proposals can appear *subservient* to the existing dwelling and contribute positively to the streetscape.

The codes provided can inform the development of a design and each is supported by guidance, diagrams and tables that offer advice on how to meet the aims of the code.

B 07 **Dormers** should be designed to be visually contained within the roof slope and their appearance should not dominate the appearance of the original building

B 08 The size, number and positioning of **rooflights and solar panels** must not visually dominate the *roofscape*

B 09 **Hip-to-gable extensions** must be considered sensitively to avoid negatively impacting the character and appearance of the original dwelling and its neighbours

B 10 **Terraces, decks and raised platforms** should not result in a loss of amenity space or privacy

B 11 **Upward extensions** should not harm the original dwelling and should respond positively to the existing streetscape

Roof Level

B 07 Dormers should be designed to be visually contained within the roof slope and their appearance should not dominate the appearance of the original building

Dormers should typically follow these design parameters:

Maximum depth and width: proportionate and *subservient* to the roof

Maximum height: no more than the roof ridgeline of the existing home

Note: no part of a dormer should extend above the ridge, beyond the eaves, beyond the flanks of the roof or overlap and wrap around the roof hips

2.1 Roof form is an important part of a dwelling's character and, together with neighbouring properties, makes a collective contribution to the *street scene* and the character of the borough's neighbourhoods.

2.2 Dormers have the potential to impact the *street scene*, especially if they are proposed on the side or front slopes of the house. Their design must not overwhelm or weaken the original roof form and style or disrupt the character of the building, *street scene* or surrounding area.

2.3 Dormers should be scaled proportionately to the host dwelling and sited comfortably with appropriate set-ins from the gable, roof hip, party boundary and eaves.

2.4 Neighbouring amenity must be protected from unacceptable overshadowing and overlooking caused by the development.

2.5 Proposals to increase the height of a roof through the alteration of its eaves or ridges are unlikely to be supported due to their impact on the host dwelling and *street scene*.

2.6 Roofs with shallow pitches may therefore be unable to accommodate a dormer in an acceptable manner, unless internal alterations, such as lowering the floor are also carried out to assist with this.

2.7 Multiple properties, i.e. those in a terrace, proposing dormer roof extensions that would uniformly increase the roof height under a single development proposal may be deemed acceptable.

2.8 Front dormers will not typically be considered acceptable unless they meet one the following:

- An original feature of the house
- A common feature within the area
- Sensitively designed to respond to the architecture of the house and the style of the roof.

2.9 Proposals for L-shaped dormers - those extending over an existing two-storey rear extension or outrigger - should be sensitively designed to ensure the original roof form remains prominent. Proposals should take neighbouring amenity into account, especially where neighbours also have a dormer extension.

2.10 With any dormer, the materials and windows must respond well with the dwelling's existing materials, particularly the roof materials. It should be evident whether a complementary or contemporary design approach, as outlined in the Overarching Guidance, has been applied.

2.11 Applicants are encouraged to explore the potential to add design interest through materiality and design details. Excessively blank façades on dormers can be overbearing and will generally not be accepted by the Council.

2.12 The construction detailing and form of dormers should be simple and robust, avoiding bulky detailing to ensure subordination to the original dwelling.

2.13 In *Conservation Areas*, dormer extensions may be acceptable in certain circumstances, such as where dormers are prominent design features in the area, or where dormers are suitably sized and located to not detract from the architecture of the original dwelling.

2.14 Within *Conservation Areas*, dormers in the front slope of a roof will generally be deemed unacceptable due to their prominence and subsequent impact on the area.

DA Residence, Walthamstow
deDraft

Complementary
This roof extension set out to provide a unique, but contextual addition to the existing 1950s property. Given how the material weathers over time, Corten steel is used to complement the existing red concrete roof tiles and red facing brickwork, embedding itself within the environment as shown in the second image.

© Whitaker Studio

Roof Level

B 08 The size, number and positioning of **rooflights and solar panels** must not visually dominate the *roofscape*

2.15 The installation of some rooflights can be completed under permitted development. Regardless, applicants are encouraged to follow the guidance below when considering their installation.

2.16 Given the relatively low impact rooflights can have on the appearance of an existing home, their use to bring light into the space can be preferable to other forms of extensions that change the shape of, or add volume to, the roof.

2.17 Careful consideration of the proportion and location of rooflights is necessary to ensure they remain *subservient* to the existing dwelling. It is suggested that rooflights are typically kept to the rear roof slope.

2.18 Rooflights should be an appropriate size for the roof and set as flat to the roof as possible to minimise their visual impact.

2.19 When multiple rooflights are proposed, these should be set out at the same height and all rooflights should ideally be uniform in size and appearance.

2.20 The potential for excessive solar gains should be considered when locating rooflights. Applicants should ensure that adequate internal shading is installed to diminish potential overheating, which can make living conditions uncomfortable.

2.21 To further minimise their impact on the roof slope, rooflights should be set as flat to the roof as possible.

2.22 In *Conservation Areas*, however, rooflights do not have permitted development rights, and planning permission must be sought from the Council.

2.23 Within *Conservation Areas*, rooflights in the front slope of a roof will typically be deemed to detract from the character and appearance of the original house and the area, and will generally be deemed unacceptable.

2.24 The principles outlined for rooflights also apply to solar panels. Where possible, applicants are encouraged to seek solutions to solar panels that have minimal impact on the appearance of the existing building, for example, roof integrated solar panels.

2.25 The suitability of solar panels to front roof slopes will be determined by the Council on a case-by-case basis.
Further guidance on the benefits of solar panels is provided in B 15.

B 09 **Hip-to-gable extensions** must be considered sensitively to avoid negatively impacting the character and appearance of the original dwelling and its neighbours

2.26 If an original dwelling has a hipped roof, there is sometimes scope to convert this to a gable roof as shown in Fig.16.

2.27 However, such development will only be supported where architectural symmetry would be restored or where a semi-detached property has limited scope to extend to the side due to a driveway or shared access, hip-to-gable extensions will be looked upon more sympathetically by the Council.

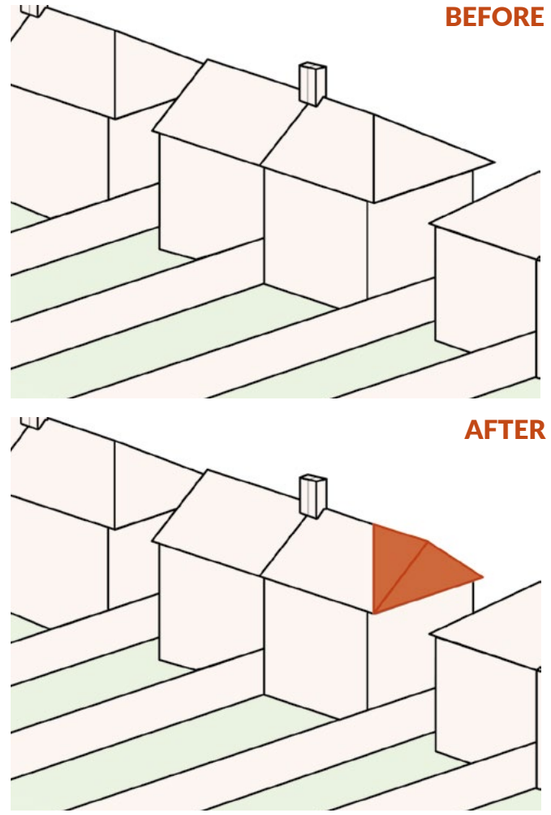


Fig.16 *Example of hip-to-gable conversion to where symmetry is restored to the building pair*

Roof Level

B 10 Terraces, decks and raised platforms should not result in a loss of amenity space or privacy

2.28 The construction of a terrace, deck or raised platform over 300mm in height (when measured above ground level) requires planning permission.

2.29 These features have the potential to impact upon levels of neighbouring amenity and applicants should therefore design these areas to reduce overlooking of *habitable windows* and gardens of neighbouring properties.

2.30 Proposals which would result in a detrimental loss of privacy or significant overlooking will be unacceptable. Applicants should consider the use of fixed, obscured screens for privacy. Planting and greenery should not be used as the primary source of screening due to potential for the slow growth and temporary nature of soft landscaping.

2.31 Proposals in the front, street-facing slope of a roof are unlikely to be supported due to the impact on the streetscape, particularly where balconies, terraces or raised platforms are not common and established features of an area.

2.32 For all developments, the materiality of railings and screens is a key consideration and submitted drawings should provide sufficient information.
Whilst Juliet balconies are often permitted development, the use of appropriate materials is important to ensuring they do not negatively impact the surrounding area.

B 11 Upward extensions should not harm the original dwelling and should respond positively to the existing streetscape

2.33 Residential upward extensions are typically considered permitted development as described on the Planning Portal, with different limits and conditions applied to different building types. Proposals which adhere to these should submit a prior approval application to the Local Planning Authority.
Where these limits and conditions are not met, for example, where an additional storey is proposed within a *Conservation Area*, planning permission must be sought.

2.34 Where an area has a uniform *roofscape*, additional storeys will generally be resisted but will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Within such locations, there will be instances where an additional storey may be more acceptable, for example on a corner plot.

2.35 Proposals must not result in the unreasonable loss of daylight and sunlight to neighbouring *habitable windows* or the *protected garden area* of a neighbouring garden.

2.36 The design must ensure privacy to occupants of the new extension and their neighbours, ensuring potential overlooking to neighbouring properties and amenity is mitigated through the design.

2.37 An additional storey should typically be *subservient* to the original architecture to avoid the new extension being overbearing. In some instances, the continuation of the existing building form may be considered a more suitable design response. A Character Appraisal of the existing building - and its surroundings - as set out in D 01 of the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles - should be undertaken to determine and justify an appropriate design response.

2.38 For both design approaches, applicants should demonstrate their design decisions through analysis of the original building and its features and respond to the existing building in its scale and *massing*, proportion, new windows and doors and materiality.

2.39 For vertical extensions to flatted developments, applicants should refer to guidance provided in the Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Small Sites document.

Roof Level Checklist

- ☐ **Show how the proposed scale, massing and form are proportionate to the *host building* (B07/B09/B10/B11)**
  This should be achieved by developing a set of diagrams and drawings that illustrate how the scale, massing and form of the proposal have been informed by the host building and relevant site constraints

- ☐ **Show how the proposal has been designed with consideration for neighbouring properties, mitigating the potential impact on privacy, outlook, overshadowing and access to light and amenity (B07/B09/B10/B11)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings to evidence how the proposal sits within its surroundings and demonstrate how the impact on neighbouring properties has been considered during design development.

- ☐ **Show how the architectural expression has evolved as a response to the surrounding context and the *host building* and will be finished with high-quality materials that will protect and/or enhance the original dwelling and the street scene (B07/B09/B10/B11)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to evidence how the proposal sits within its context, with information provided on the proposed material palettes and specification.

- ☐ **Show how rooflights and solar panels have been located to avoid visual dominance across the roof (B08)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate where these features are located.

3 Conversions and Upgrades

The design guidance for conversions and upgrades provides codes which set out how proposals can change the configuration of an existing dwelling to provide a new dwelling type or upgrade a *building fabric* to improve energy efficiency without negatively impacting on its appearance.

The codes provided can inform the design development and are supported by guidance, diagrams and tables that offer advice on how to meet the aims of the code.

B 12 **House to flats conversions** must achieve appropriate internal space standards and avoid unacceptable impacts on the streetscape or amenity of the local area

B 13 Dwellings proposed for conversion to a **House in Multiple Occupation** must be sensitively designed to mitigate negative impacts to existing neighbouring homes and the surrounding area

B 14 **Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes** should prioritise a whole house approach whilst causing minimal harm to the external appearance of the property

Conversions and upgrades

B 12 House to flats conversions must achieve appropriate internal space standards and avoid unacceptable impacts on the streetscape or amenity of the local area

3.1 The following guidance should be followed when converting an existing, single dwelling into multiple homes.

3.2 The proposed housing mix should reflect Bexley's needs as outlined in Bexley Local Plan Policy SP2 Meeting Bexley's housing requirements. Applicants should refer to the Bexley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for appropriate housing mixes.

3.3 To maintain the character and appearance of the *street scene*, proposals should retain the outward appearance of the original, single dwelling, avoiding the addition of entrances or drastically altering the appearance.

3.4 The Council will assess the impact of any proposal in line with the principles outlined in Fig.17. Applicants should use these principles to consider the suitability of their proposal.

Size and standards

3.5 D 22 in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles details how to design homes for both best practice and policy compliance for space standards and new homes will be assessed on compliance with these space standards.

Internal layout

3.6 Applicants should avoid placing living rooms and kitchens adjacent to (vertically and horizontally) bedrooms in a neighbouring dwelling.

3.7 Proposals should take the future adaptability of internal layouts into account, considering the evolving needs of future residents who may wish to adapt their homes as needs change, and to reflect intergenerational family dwelling.

Fig.17 *Considering the impact of a conversion*

Principle	Consideration
Size and standards	The size of dwellinghouse is suitable for conversion to flats
Internal layout	The proposed layouts are suitable for their intended use and consideration of future adaptations has been considered
Privacy and amenity	The need to protect the privacy and amenity of adjoining dwellings
Daylight and sunlight	The need to ensure suitable daylight and sunlight levels within the conversion and to neighbouring properties
Doors and windows	The layout, design and style of windows and doors
Vehicle parking arrangements	The impact of a conversion on the parking amenity for the original dwelling, neighbouring properties and local parking provision
Storage	The adequate provision of storage facilities both in and outside the property
Landscaping, ecology and biodiversity	The impact of the proposal on existing soft and hard landscaping, ecology and biodiversity
Sustainability	The impact of building upgrades to the longevity and energy efficiency of the original dwelling

3.8 No sleeping accommodation will be permitted below the modelled breach or design flood level and upon submission, proposals should be supported with a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

3.9 New dwelling layouts must comply with all Building Regulations - relevant design aspects will be considered during determination.

3.10 Where walls and partitions are being moved, these changes must comply with Building Regulations Part B. Walls and floors separating dwellings in converted properties must adequately insulate against impact, airborne and flanking sound, as a minimum, meeting the requirements set out in Building Regulations Part E.

Privacy and amenity

3.11 External amenity space must be provided for all units within a conversion. D 23 in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles sets out the outdoor amenity requirements.

3.12 Where it is not possible for the garden to be subdivided, or for individual flats to be provided with private amenity, a communal amenity area must be provided for all units.

3.13 The provision of external amenity must not impact on the amenity currently enjoyed by neighbouring properties.

Daylight and sunlight

3.14 Daylight and sunlight levels enjoyed by neighbouring properties should not be adversely affected by the development.

3.15 Analysis should be carried out during design stages and evidence of appropriate daylight and sunlight levels provided as part of the application.

Doors and windows

3.16 Where it is necessary to change the windows and doors of an existing dwelling, for example to accommodate new layouts or to improve their performance, proposals should be approached with care, and respect the character of the existing building.

Vehicle parking arrangements

3.17 Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed approach to parking will avoid undue overspill of parking in the area and guidance in B 06 should be followed.

Storage

3.18 Conversions should provide suitable, secure storage areas for portable items, such as bicycles, prams and gardening equipment.

3.19 Adequate refuse storage provision is required, both within the home and externally. External waste storage should be accessibly located and not detract from the character of the building, or negatively impact on the *street scene*. The Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Technical Handbook provides detailed information on the waste storage requirements.

Landscaping, biodiversity and ecology

3.20 Existing soft landscaping and garden features such as front boundary walls, railings and fences should be retained where possible, especially where these are common features in the local area.

Sustainability

3.21 Increasing the number of occupiers may present an opportunity for upgrading the building's performance by making changes to the *building fabric* and its systems. This can make it more energy efficient and increase internal comfort for the occupiers. Refer to B 14 for guidance on such improvements.

3.22 Applicants must demonstrate how proposals will comply with the requirements outlined in Bexley Local Plan Policy DP30 Mitigating climate change.

Conversions and Upgrades

B 13 Dwellings proposed for conversion to a **House in Multiple Occupation** must be sensitively designed to mitigate negative impacts to existing neighbouring homes and the surrounding area

3.23 A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is typically a property occupied by three or more unrelated people who share basic amenities, but have their own sleeping quarters.

3.24 These homes fall under use class C4 - House in multiple occupation for those occupied by up to six individuals and are considered a sui generis HMO for those with seven or more occupants.

Planning and the Article 4 Direction

3.25 As of 2017, an Article 4 Direction has removed permitted development rights for changes of use from a dwellinghouse to an HMO. All proposals for HMOs are, therefore, subject to planning permission.

3.26 Further, specific, non-SPD guidance on HMO developments will be provided by the Council in due course.

Housing licensing

3.27 At the time of writing, there are two licensing schemes operating in the borough - the mandatory HMO licence and a selective licence which covers the Belvedere ward. The Council's website provides further details on what this process entails.

Building regulations

3.28 Building regulations approval will be required for a new build HMO, and in some cases where a single property is being converted into an HMO. This requirement should be confirmed with Building Control.

Building accessibility

3.29 London Plan Policy D7 Accessible housing requires 10% of all new homes be provided as wheelchair accessible, or adaptable, in line with M4(3) standards in the Building Regulations Part M. It is possible that when converting properties into HMOs, complying with this remit will be more limited.

3.30 Converted properties where up to ten occupants are proposed should be as accessible as possible. For ten or more occupants, proposals must comply with the aforementioned London Plan policy. New build HMOs must comply with the London Plan.

External alterations

3.31 Any extensions and alterations proposed to existing properties should follow the guidance set out in chapters 1 and 2 of this document.

Internal layout size and standards

3.32 All rooms function must adequately and provide high quality residential accommodation. Bexley's Rent it Right: General Property Standards for Property Licensing provides information on minimum room sizes for all HMOs. Submitted planning drawings should show the proposed size for all rooms and amenity spaces.

3.33 No sleeping accommodation will be permitted below the modelled breach or design flood level and upon submission, proposals should be supported with a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

Shared outside amenity space

3.34 HMOs must provide suitably sized external amenity space for all occupants. New build properties providing accommodation for ten or more occupants should provide the total amenity space of 45% of the plot area (comprising all communal, public and private amenity space). For HMOs with less than ten homes, provision shall be in line with London Plan Policy D6 Housing quality and standards.

3.35 Where converting existing properties to HMOs, as much of the existing gardens should be retained as possible. As a minimum, 5m^2 of outdoor amenity space (for 1-2 persons) should be provided, with an extra 1m^2 per additional occupant.

3.36 It should be demonstrated that external amenity does not impact on neighbours' privacy and provision should follow guidance in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles, specifically D 24.

Landscaping and ecology

3.37 In accordance with Bexley Local Plan Policy DP21 Greening of development sites, all proposals must set out the measures taken to achieve urban greening onsite.

3.38 For proposals required to achieve *Biodiversity Net Gain*, applicants should refer to the Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Technical Handbook for guidance on achieving this on-site.

Parking

3.39 HMOs should not increase parking stress within the wider area. This must be demonstrated by applicants during planning application stage and applicants should seek advice from the Highways Authority during the pre-application stage, also referring to the Highways and Transport section of the Technical Handbook for further guidance on the evidence required.

Cycle parking

3.40 During the planning process, HMOs should demonstrate that sufficient cycle parking, in accordance with the Development Plan, is provided on site.

3.41 Submitted drawings should clearly show details of the proposed location and size of cycle provision following guidance in B 06, D 33 in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles and the Technical Handbook.

Waste storage

3.42 The Technical Handbook provides details on the provision of external and internal waste storage, including container requirements.

3.43 Submitted planning applications must demonstrate that sufficient waste storage can be provided with the proposal, with the location and size of bin storage and types of bin shown on drawings and in supporting documents. When designing external storage, this should be integrated and discreetly located to avoid disrupting the *street scene*.

Ventilation

3.44 Adequate ventilation must be provided for all HMOs, and is a particularly important consideration for conversions. This is vital to providing occupants a home environment that is dry, warm and healthy, thus mitigating potential health issues caused by damp and mould, which can also be problematic for integrity of the *building fabric*.

3.45 Consideration should be given to where occupants will likely dry laundry, ensuring adequately ventilated spaces are provided.

Noise

3.46 Conversions must comply with the Agent of Change principles set out in NPPF paragraph 193 and in the London Plan.

3.47 All developments should consider implementing noise mitigation measures such as:

- Sound-dampening materials on stairs
- Acoustic insulation installed to floors
- Internal room layouts that avoid communal rooms sitting adjacent to bedrooms in adjoining properties
- Soft closers on all doors.

3.48 The Council may attach conditions to granted planning permission that stipulates noise reducing measures are integrated into the proposal where deemed necessary to protect occupant and neighbour amenity.

Conversions and Upgrades

B 14 Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes should prioritise a whole house approach whilst causing minimal harm to the external appearance of the property

Bexley Local Plan Policy SP14 Mitigating and adapting to climate change and Policy DP30 Mitigating climate change are robust in setting out the Council's commitment to supporting the delivery of more energy efficient buildings to reduce energy consumption within Bexley.

The LETI Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide sets out that 27% of all UK carbon emissions come from buildings, with 18% coming from our domestic housing stock. The guide states that in order to meet our national net zero goals, we need to significantly reduce the energy demand from our buildings.

3.49 *Retrofitting* existing buildings is the process of making improvements to make the building more energy efficient. The process is necessary to allow us to meet net zero targets by 2050.

3.50 Making improvements and upgrades to existing buildings can reduce the amount of energy required to run them and improve *thermal comfort* for the building users.

3.51 The Council is supportive of proposals to improve the energy efficiency of homes and to generate energy from renewable sources. Changes to a building to make it more energy efficient should be sympathetic to the existing dwelling and the appearance of a local area.

When is planning permission required?

3.52 Generally, internal alterations to improve energy efficiency will not require planning permission, unless proposals affect a *listed building*. Some external upgrade proposals

Fig. 18 *Considering how much energy a building uses to run*

Factors	Consideration
Building fabric	How effective the building envelope is in providing a suitable internal environment for inhabitants, and what upgrades could be deployed to improve this
Building usage	How many people will be interacting with the building, and how frequently it will be inhabited
Building systems and equipment	How efficient the systems used throughout the building are e.g. for heating, cooling and ventilation, hot water provision and cooking facilities

can be completed under permitted development (PD), whilst others will require planning permission, particularly if associated with a flat or maisonette. It is best to check the Planning Portal and liaise with the Development Management team for advice.

3.53 Where properties are *listed*, most *retrofit* works will require *Listed Building* Consent and Historic England provides guidance for such works in Energy Efficiency and *Retrofit* in Historic Buildings.

What other regulations are there?

3.54 As with all building works, the relevant Building Regulations must be followed and changes must comply with current legislation.

3.55 Depending on the upgrade proposed, it may be possible to obtain a certificate from the manufacturer or installer confirming that the product complies with Building Regulations. If this is not available, Building Control Approval must be obtained. Liaising with Building Control for guidance is advised.

Whole house planning

3.56 Holistic approaches to *retrofit*, whereby factors such as thermal performance, overheating and ventilation and air quality are considered simultaneously, are strongly encouraged.

3.57 Applicants should consider the factors listed in Fig. 18 when deciding the most appropriate upgrades to an existing home.

3.58 The LETI Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide is a valuable resource for householders planning a *retrofit*. The '*Retrofit* quick start guide' (see Fig. 19 overleaf) should be referenced as it explores how to ensure a whole house approach to avoid the risks associated with piecemeal upgrades.

1960s Terrace House, South London
Prewett Bizley Architects

Completed over three phases, the works originally reconfigured the home to provide a more generous layout for the occupants than the original dwelling allowed. Following this, triple glazed windows and doors were installed alongside the recladding of the external façade and finally cosmetic upgrades to the property were completed in phase 3. The dwelling was insulated, made airtight and fitted with air supply ductwork for an MVHR system to be installed. Following this, the building achieved Passivhaus EnerPhit standard.

© Prewett Bizley Architects

3.59 In line with Bexley Local Plan Policy DP30 Mitigating climate change, through a holistic approach to upgrading an existing building, the Council encourages householders to achieve BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent, where possible.

Understanding the existing building and the *building fabric*

3.60 Bexley has several different house types including villas, detached, semi-detached and terraces. Each will have different features, such as their wall construction - which will typically be either solid or cavity. Knowing these features will help determine the most appropriate solution for upgrading your property.

3.61 As with all development, the Council also supports a fabric first approach to *retrofit*. This means making improvements to the *building fabric*, before installing any new technologies like low carbon heating systems or renewable energy sources.

3.62 The *building fabric* is made up of the walls, roof, floors, windows and doors and upgrades to these elements are critical in improving how much energy the building uses.

3.63 Applicants should seek specialist expertise to undertake analysis of how much energy the existing building uses to inform any *building fabric* improvements.

3.64 Along with improvements to the *building fabric*, there are several low-cost measures householders can undertake to reduce energy consumption. These are relatively straightforward and fast, changes that can make an impact ahead of more intensive energy reduction measures.

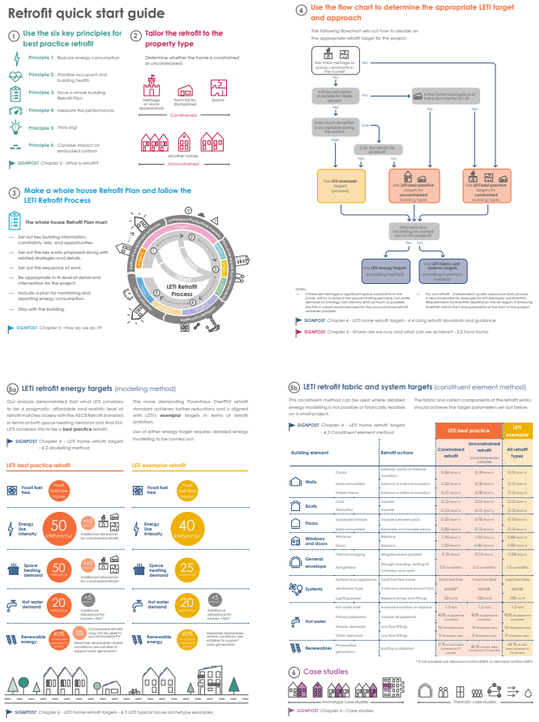


Fig.19 *Applicants should consider a whole house approach to retrofit, considering retrofit best practice, the type of property and associated constraints and the appropriate targets in that context.*

Source: *LETI Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide*

Less involved *retrofit* measures

Sealing the *building fabric* and improving airtightness

3.65 In some homes, particularly older properties, unwanted draughts and leaks can contribute to higher energy bills, heat loss and an uncomfortable living environment. These draughts can also make it harder to heat the home in winter, and keep it cool during the summer months.

3.66 Improving the airtightness of a building is critical to reducing energy loss in homes as it prevents the uncontrolled and unwanted movement of air in and out of a building.

3.67 Sealing and taping around windows, doors, wall, ceiling and floor perimeters and through services penetrating external walls such as water and gas pipes and boiler flues, is an efficient way to create an airtight barrier around the building envelope and ensure proper separation between heated and unheated spaces.

3.68 Sealing gaps in the *fabric*, for example, by introducing a *parge coat* to the inside face of external walls, can assist with greater airtightness.

3.69 It should be noted that sealing the *building fabric* does not mean preventing the ventilation necessary to keep homes, and occupants, healthy. Along with regularly opening windows and doors to allow natural ventilation in, air bricks, trickle vents and boiler flues can provide this ventilation and should never be covered up or sealed.

3.70 *Fabric* upgrades can also mitigate water and moisture ingress through fixing roofs and installing *damp proof coursing*.

LED lighting and white goods energy rating

3.71 In the UK, lighting typically accounts for 15% of electricity bills. Savings can be made by switching traditional lightbulbs to LEDs wherever possible.

3.72 When installing new white goods (fridges, ovens, washing machines etc.) householders are encouraged to find products with the highest energy standards, according to budget. Energy ratings for these appliances range from A to E, with A being the best.

Water efficiency

3.73 Making improvements to a dwelling presents an opportunity to reduce water consumption and the carbon emissions associated with supplying and heating water.

3.74 Thames Water are striving to roll out smart meters to all households by 2035. These are an easy way to monitor water usage and identify areas where householders can reduce water consumption, encouraging water conservation practices.

3.75 Installing low-flow appliances such as showers, taps and toilets can significantly reduce water consumption and the energy required to heat this water. The use of dishwashers is also beneficial in increasing water efficiency in the home.

3.76 Rainwater harvesting - the process of collecting, storing and then using this rainwater - is an alternative to using mains water. It can also be used alongside mains water to complement and lessen a household's use of the mains system. This can be done using a water butt connection to an existing downpipe.

More involved *retrofit* measures

Internal insulation

3.77 The use of non-combustible cavity wall insulation and internal insulation can improve thermal performance whilst causing minimal harm to the external appearance of the original building.

3.78 If a property has a loft, insulation can be installed here to keep the home below the roof level warmer.

3.79 A primary benefit of internal insulation is that the result does not typically affect the internal or external appearance of the property.

External wall insulation

3.80 In some instances, the installation of external wall insulation may be suitable, for example:

a. Where external walls are poorly insulated
b. Where wall cavities cannot support the installation of non-combustible cavity wall insulation
c. Where internal insulation would alter internal room dimensions and make them too small.

3.81 External wall insulation will be considered appropriate in circumstances where the final proposal remains sympathetic to the external appearance of the original dwelling and the surrounding area. Applicants should take into account the detailing, colour treatment and finishing of the original dwelling when proposing external insulation.

3.82 External wall insulation is permitted development, however planning permission is required for flats and maisonettes, and compliance with Building Regulations will be required for all property types. On some buildings, such as those in *Conservation Areas*, the use of external insulation may be unsuitable and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Windows and doors

3.83 Upgrading existing windows and doors to more energy efficient models can help increase *thermal comfort*, insulate against external noise and reduce condensation and energy bills.

3.84 Installing double and triple-glazed windows and doors is one upgrade option. When considering new windows, their performance should be assessed on the window's energy rating provided by the British Fenestration Rating Council which considers factors such as heat loss, draughts and solar gains.

3.85 Where new double or triple glazing is not an option, independent internal secondary glazing can provide an alternative. This allows existing windows to remain in place, which can be beneficial when working with heritage buildings.

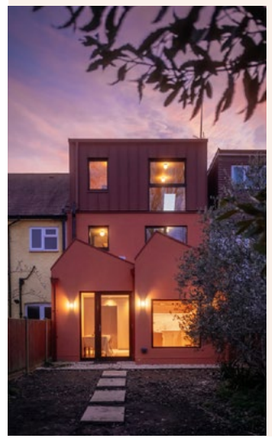
3.86 Installing secondary glazing is typically considered permitted development, therefore planning permission may only be required in *listed buildings* and where PD rights are removed. Where planning is required, applicants should provide fixing details at 1:5/1:10 to ensure the impact of the unit is not harmful to the existing building.

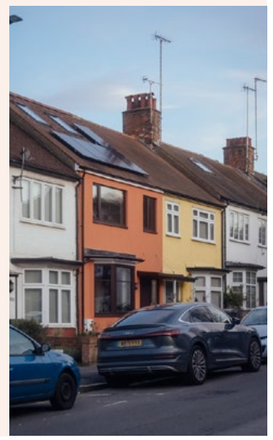
3.87 Planning permission will be required for replacing windows and doors within flats and *listed buildings* where replacements materially affect the external appearance of the building.

3.88 For single dwellinghouses, replacing windows is likely to be permitted development, however, in all instances, the Council expects these to be sympathetic to the original window and door design. This is especially important where the building is part of a terrace which share common window detailing features.

Mid Terrace Dream House, North London
Collective Works

Complementary
A brief was set for a low carbon, deep *retrofit* of the mid-terrace home with the occupants set on upgrading the existing to be a high performance, low energy dwelling. The project goes beyond Building Regulations in terms of thermal performance, airtightness and operational use. Much of the existing structure was retained and upgraded, with demolition materials reused in construction. Insulation was added internally to the roof and floors and the walls clad in external insulation to limit cold bridges. An ASHP, underfloor heating and solar panels were installed alongside mechanical ventilation.





© 1: Collective Works; 2 -3: Jim Stephenson

3.89 All new windows and doors must meet the thermal performance standards outlined in Building Regulations and Building Control will need to be notified of the works, unless the works are carried out by an installer registered with a Competent Persons Scheme who can self-certify the works.

3.90 When submitting householder planning applications that include the replacement of windows and doors, applications should include existing and proposed elevation drawings at 1:20 with replacement windows identified and larger scale 1:10/1:5 drawings showing details of key junctions.

Ventilation

3.91 Where airtightness is improved through measures described on page 65, adequately ventilating a home is essential to ensuring good internal air quality and comfort for inhabitants. Bringing fresh air into the dwelling can eradicate problems such as mould and condensation.

3.92 *Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery (MVHR)* and *Mechanical Extract Ventilation (MEV)* systems are the most common methods of ensuring effective ventilation where whole house *retrofit* is being undertaken.

3.93 Householders should seek guidance and specialist advice to determine the most appropriate ventilation solution for their home.

Overheating

3.94 When homes overheat, it can make the indoor temperature dangerous for inhabitants, especially those in vulnerable groups. Some homes overheat more than others due to their orientation - being east-, west- or south-facing - and having little shading from the sun. Homes that only have window openings on one side of the building along these orientations can also be more susceptible to overheating.

Nina's House, Haringey
Nina+co with ROAR Architects

Complementary
The deep *retrofit* of an 1970s home, the project overhauls the leaky existing building using largely natural, local or recycled materials. Expanded cork wraps around the external walls as an insulating material. The existing gas supply was removed in favour of an Air Source Heat Pump, with underfloor heating and new windows and doors also installed. The works have resulted in an airtight, low-energy home that is fossil fuel free.

© French and Tye

3.95 There are several solutions to reducing overheating risk such as closing windows and blinds during the day to minimise heat intake, opening windows at night to purge heat or the mechanical systems outlined in the ventilation section.

3.96 Other, more in-depth *retrofit* options to reduce overheating that can be explored include:

- Installing external shuttering and blinds to windows to provide shading. Planning permission is likely to be required given the impact on the external appearance of the dwelling. Pre-application advice from the Development Management team should be sought to confirm what would be deemed acceptable.
- Insulating the *building fabric* to reduce heat gain (and keep the building warm in the winter months), as outlined on page 66.
- Planting trees and greenery to provide shading across windows.

3.97 Installing active cooling systems such as air conditioning units should be a last resort solution given the large amount of electricity required to run them.
A planning application would be required to demonstrate that the installation would not negatively affect the external appearance of buildings or contribute to increased noise pollution.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs)

3.98 The installation of an EVCP to off-street parking should be discrete so that it does not harm the *street scene* or character of the existing building.

3.99 Ideally, for visual appearance and security reasons, charging points should not be located on the front elevation of the home, instead on the side elevation and obscured from view of the street.

House Made by Many Hands, Victoria Park
Cairn Architects

Complementary
Renovated and extended over three years, a fabric first approach to *retrofit* was adopted with low-tech and simple interventions used. Existing materials were retained and repurposed where possible. Where new materials were required, *bio-based* products such as hempcrete, cork, wood fibre and lime plaster were used.

© James Retief

Energy generation

Building systems and equipment

3.100 The use of efficient appliances, systems and equipment can reduce energy consumption. This has many benefits such as a reduction in utility bills and the emission of less carbon dioxide and other harmful pollutants into the environment.

Heating

3.101 LETI states that 85% of UK homes currently use gas boilers which emit large amounts of CO_2 into the atmosphere.
The removal and replacement of traditional gas boilers with more energy efficient systems such as heat pumps is encouraged when considering thermal improvements to a home.

3.102 Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHPs) are an alternative to gas boilers. ASHPs take heat from the outside air, even when cold, and transfer it indoors to provide heat. Using electricity to transfer heat from the air, this system is considered more efficient than traditional heating systems as no fuel is used to generate the heat.

3.103 When installing an air-to-air system, warmed air is supplied into the building through ductwork or an indoor air handling unit. However, when an air-to-water system is used, water stored in an indoor cylinder is warmed up to provide heating that is delivered through radiators or underfloor heating.

3.104 When installing ASHPs, consideration for their potential impact on neighbouring amenity should be considered. Their placement must not result in unacceptable noise levels to neighbouring homes and necessary noise attenuation should be designed. Details should be provided to the Council to ensure potential visual and noise impacts are duly addressed.

A-100 House, Queens Park
Mitchell + Corti

Complementary
A mid-terrace family home, the project achieved a net-zero carbon retrofit of the home located in a *Conservation Area*. The works seamlessly integrate sustainable systems within the side, rear and loft extension with works including external blinds and solar panels, an ASHP, MVHR and triple-glazed windows and doors. Wildflower green roofs were installed alongside reclaimed tiles and natural clay walls.

© Luke Weller

3.105 Powered by electricity and using pipes installed in the ground, GSHPs extract heat from the ground and transfer it to a building's heating and cooling system. GSHPs are the less common of the two as it requires more space for pipework either within a shallow or deep system.

Solar panels

3.106 Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels use the sun to generate electricity and are typically most effective when facing south, however can also be effective on east and west aspects.

3.107 Additional batteries can be used to store the extra energy produced during the day to be used at a later stage when the sun is not shining.

3.108 Solar thermal panels use the sun's power to generate hot water that is stored in cylinders inside homes.

3.109 As with making any changes to the external appearance of a home, householders should consider the impact of installing solar panels on both the existing dwelling and the *street scene* and care should be taken when determining the appropriate location for their installation.

3.110 Planning permission is not generally required for installing solar panels as this will typically be classed as permitted development.

3.111 In *Conservation Areas*, approval requirements may differ and applicants should refer to relevant Area Appraisal and Management Plan which can provide further guidance on the installation of such equipment in each *Conservation Area* and will state whether a planning application is required for the installation.

Considerations when laying out solar panels:

a. Ensure the position of panels will retain even distances to the roof and wall margins
b. Where the roof features, such as chimneys, would not impede the function of solar panels, position the panels behind these features and behind parapets to minimise visual impact
c. Ensure panels are evenly spaced on the roof, in a consistent pattern
d. Obscure cabling where possible and use cabling in a colour in keeping with the existing building to minimise visibility

Conversions and Upgrades Checklist

- ☐ **Show how internal room sizes meet, or exceed, minimum space standards and amenity space provision (B 12/B 13)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that demonstrate compliance with relevant policies across the Bexley Local Plan, the London Plan and associated guidance. Information should include internal layouts and all amenity spaces, waste storage proposals, secure cycle and vehicle parking and how the proposal addresses climate sustainability in line with the energy hierarchy.

- ☐ **Show how the conversion has been designed with consideration for neighbouring properties, mitigating the potential impact on privacy, outlook, overshadowing and access to light and amenity (B 12/B 13)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings to evidence how the proposal sits within its surroundings and demonstrate how the impact on neighbouring properties has been considered during design development.

- ☐ **Where necessary to extend or alter the building fabric to accommodate a conversion, show how guidance within earlier chapters of this document has been applied and that contextually appropriate, high-quality materials that will protect and/or enhance the *host building* and the street scene are proposed for use (B 12/B 13)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to evidence how the proposal sits within its context, with information provided on the proposed material palettes and specification.

- ☐ **Show how the proposal has been developed to protect and/or enhance existing biodiversity, ecology and habitats(B 12/B 13)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate how the proposal mitigates its impact upon existing biodiversity, ecology and habitat features and the proposed soft and hard landscaping layouts and specification.

- ☐ **Show how surface water flooding has been duly considered and mitigated through design (B 12/B 13)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to illustrate the proposed soft and hard landscaping layouts and specification.

- ☐ **Show how access and servicing has been duly considered (B 12/B 13)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate primary access points, waste storage and secure cycle and car parking.

- ☐ **Show how a whole-house, holistic approach to retrofitting has been considered and adopted (B 14)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings and supporting information that illustrate the proposed upgrades.

- ☐ **Show how external wall insulation has been specified to respond to the host dwelling (B 14)**
  A set of drawings showing the proposed extent of external wall insulation should be provided alongside a material specification and other relevant supporting information.

- ☐ **Show how proposals to alter windows and doors are sympathetic to the host dwelling (B 14)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate new windows and doors with information on the proposed product and material specification provided.

- ☐ **Show how changes to accommodate external shading respond to the host dwelling (B 14)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to evidence how the proposal sits within its context, with information provided on the proposed material palettes and product specification.

- ☐ **Show how when proposing new equipment, such as Air Source Heat Pumps, mitigating potentially negative impacts upon neighbours has been considered (B 14)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that illustrate the proposed location of external equipment.

Non-residential Alterations and Extensions

B 15 Works required to enable a **change of use** should be appropriate to the wider context and setting

B 16 **Alterations and extensions to non-residential uses** must be sympathetic to their surroundings

B 17 Proposals requiring **advertisement consent** should not impact upon amenity or public safety

B 18 **Shop fronts** should be designed to positively contribute to the character and appearance of the local area

Non-residential Alterations and Extensions

B 15 Works required to enable a change of use should be appropriate to the wider context and setting

4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 categorises all land and buildings. Current Use Classes came into effect on 1 September 2020 and details of these can be found on the Planning Portal.

4.2 The Bexley Local Plan outlines several land use policies which seek to protect certain designated areas for certain types of use, such as industry and town centre activities. Applicants must refer to relevant policies when proposing such changes.

4.3 Depending on the proposed change of use, some works may have permitted development rights whilst others require prior approval or planning permission. There are also instances where the Council may introduce an Article 4 Direction which brings proposed changes into planning control which would not normally be. Information on applicable Article 4 Directions can be found on the Council's website.

4.4 Development Management will consider the compatibility of use changes with surrounding uses, particularly in mixed-use and primarily residential areas. Applications will be evaluated upon the impact of proposed uses on existing residential amenity, including the implications of operating hours and servicing requirements and the potential for increased noise pollution.

4.5 Where a proposal is deemed acceptable in principle and requires works to accommodate this change and mitigate its potential impact on amenity - for example building alterations and extensions, the installation of extraction equipment and changes to openings - applicants should follow relevant guidance provided elsewhere in this document.

4.6 Where changes of use would have implications upon the highway, transport and/or parking within an area, applicants should refer to the Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Technical Handbook for further detailed guidance and engage in early discussions with the Highway Authority.

Non-residential Alterations and Extensions

B 16 Alterations and extensions to non-residential uses must be sympathetic to their surroundings

4.7 Development to non-residential buildings have limited rights under Part 7 - Non-domestic extensions, alterations etc. of the General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015, however, applicants should check as the Order is subject to updates. Where development is not listed, full planning permission will be required.

Rear extensions

4.8 Applicants should search for any planning history pertaining to their development site, including any enforcement relating to unauthorised structures or uses at the rear.

4.9 Applicants must ensure their certificate of ownership is correct and that proposals do not encroach upon land outside of their ownership.

4.10 Proposals should evidence consideration for the key principles such as the potential for overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing, scale and height, *massing* and proximity to buildings and materiality. Proposals should demonstrate a suitable response to the existing building and the surrounding context and decision makers will assess the suitability of proposed works on this basis.

4.11 Applicants must also demonstrate how waste storage, servicing and access and egress arrangements will be considered, particularly where existing yard or delivery space will become occupied by an extension. The Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Technical Handbook provides guidance on the provision of adequate waste storage.

4.12 Where proposals are located within a designated town or neighbourhood centre and industrial land, it should be demonstrated that rear extensions will not adversely affect access to service lanes or compromise centre functions.

Upward extensions

4.13 Such extensions to non-residential buildings typically qualify for permitted development and a prior approval application should be submitted for these. Where proposals do not meet the conditions set out under PD, planning consent must be sought.

4.14 Applicants should use the following guidance when developing proposals for new residential homes above non-residential uses and refer to further guidance specific to co-locating residential uses above industrial uses in the Design Guide SPD Part 2 - Area Types.

4.15 As set out in D 01 of the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles, applicants should undertake a Character Appraisal of the development site and surroundings to inform a suitable design response. The Character Appraisal should be used to ensure compliance with Bexley Local Plan Policy DP11 Achieving high-quality design in terms of scale and massing, form and architectural expression.

4.16 In *Conservation Areas*, proposals must be demonstrated to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and applicants should justify their proposals with thorough analysis of the *Conservation Area*.

4.17 When providing new residential homes above non-residential uses, applicants must ensure high-quality homes that comply with the London Plan, with the number of dual and triple aspect homes maximised. Applicants should follow guidance outlined in the Spatial Quality chapter of the Design

Principles to ensure residents have access to adequate daylight and sunlight levels, outlook and privacy. Sufficient external amenity space must be provided for all new homes, accounting for the site orientation.

4.18 Developments must be designed to ensure that new residential uses will not interfere with the operation of non-residential uses below, as required by the Agent of Change principle. Means of mitigating any potential impact must be embedded in the design, for example through adequate soundproofing measures.

4.19 Applicants must provide safe, secure and convenient access to residential units that is separate from non-residential uses, complies with fire safety regulations and enables dignified access for all. Access should benefit from passive surveillance to provide residents with enhanced safety.

4.20 Applicants must demonstrate that secure cycle parking and refuse storage has been provided in line with guidance provided in the Technical Handbook.

4.21 Bexley Local Plan Policy DP30 Mitigating Climate Change encourages applicants to achieve BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent, or another appropriate sustainability measure. The Council supports a fabric first approach to all new development, and applicants should refer to D 13 and D 14 in the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles for guidance on designing a scheme that follows the energy hierarchy to be lean, be clean, be green and be seen.

4.22 Applications must evidence how urban greening and an approach to biodiversity and ecological enhancements are achieved on site.

Extractors, ACs, ducts and flues

4.23 Alterations to commercial properties often include the provision of new extractors,

ACs, ducts and flues. These features can impact the visual appearance of buildings and the wider *street scene* and therefore need to be sensitively designed to avoid becoming eyesores.

4.24 Internal or concealed runs are preferential, especially in *Conservation Areas* and on *listed buildings*. In these instances, applicants should consult Development Management on the consents required for these works.

4.25 Applications should provide scaled plans and elevations showing the full extent and siting of any extract and/or cooling equipment, ducts and flues. Amongst other consultees, Environmental Health will be consulted on planning applications.

4.26 Applicants should provide relevant information that demonstrates that the proposal will not negatively impact neighbouring properties and any amenity currently enjoyed, allowing the Council to accurately assess the potential impacts during determination.

4.27 This will be especially important where located next to residential homes and applicants should demonstrate how the proposal mitigates against noise pollution and the discharge of harmful odours. An acoustic assessment will be required for development in close proximity to residential uses. Where relevant, odour control measures such as filtration systems, should be provided proportionate to the cooking intensity and type of cuisine proposed.

4.28 Applicants should ensure flues terminate at an appropriate height above eaves level to enable effective dispersion.

4.29 The Council may apply conditions to any planning permission given to secure the retention, maintenance and compliance with manufacturer specifications of these features.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED) boxes

4.30 Applicants should establish whether their installation is allowed within PD rights or if planning permission is required. This is typically dependent on the location and whether it will materially affect the building's appearance.

4.31 On *listed buildings* and within *Conservation Areas*, whilst alterations may seem modest, *Listed Building* Consent or planning permission is likely to be required and Development Management can confirm this on a case-by-case basis.

4.32 Applicants should consider the siting of boxes and visibility within the *street scene* ensuring that AED boxes are accessible during emergencies - ideally located near the main entrance or on a street-facing wall.

4.33 Visual impact on the *street scene* will be a key consideration when determining the suitability of a proposal, particularly on prominent elevations. Applicants are therefore encouraged to consider recessing or colour-matching boxes to minimise visual intrusion.

4.34 Installation should not obstruct pedestrian routes, doorways or conflict with access requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

4.35 Where sited on a public highway or street furniture, the applicant may require an agreement with the Highway Authority who should be contacted to discuss proposals.

4.36 Where appropriate, applicants should consult local emergency services or health partnerships, evidencing how this consultation has been used to determine the location of the box(es).

Forecourt uses

4.37 Where use of a building's forecourt is proposed, applicants should clarify land ownership and the status of the forecourt i.e. whether it forms part of the adopted public highway, is privately maintained or owned by the applicant.

4.38 Planning permission may be required for a material change of use e.g. for forecourt seating, retail displays and advertising structures.

4.39 Where the forecourt forms part of the highway, consent from the Highway Authority may be required under separate legislation such as Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980. Applicants should engage early with the Highway Authority early in the process to discuss proposals.

4.40 Licensing requirements could apply for use of tables and chairs under a Pavement Licence or Street Trading Licence, if located on highway land. Applicants should coordinate with the Council's licensing team to determine these requirements, with further information on licensing and permits found on the Council's website.

4.41 Temporary permissions or conditions may be appropriate to monitor impact, particularly in sensitive locations.

4.42 Proposals should ensure that pedestrian and vehicular movement, sightlines or access for emergency services will not be obstructed through the proposed use.

4.43 Where street cafés are located on a main pedestrian thoroughfare, and where public pedestrian access needs to be maintained, furniture including tables, chairs, parasols and space heaters, must be enclosed to allow for easy pedestrian movement, including those using pushchairs and wheelchairs. The positioning of tables and chairs should be clearly dictated by the availability of space outside the premises.

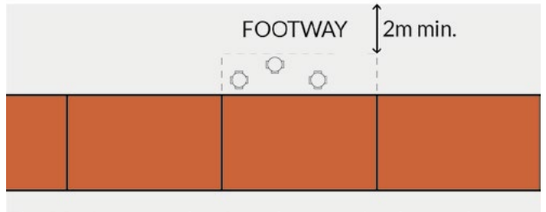


Fig.20 *An example of outdoor seating located directly outside a frontage*

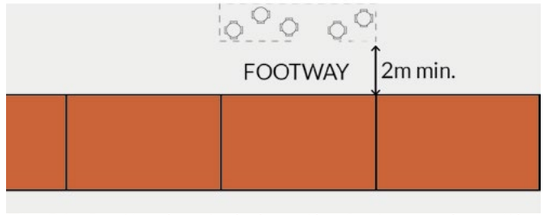


Fig.21 *Seating located along the footway edge with a minimum 2m footway maintained for pedestrians*

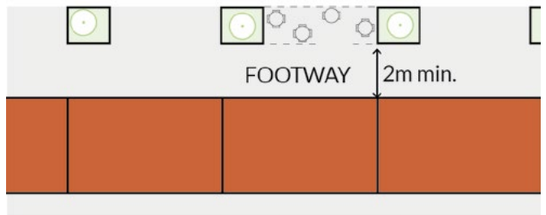


Fig.22 *Features, such as planters, can be used to provide barriers to seating areas*

4.44 Fig.20 demonstrates that where seating areas are located directly adjacent to a shop front, physical barriers should be used at either end of the seating area, acting as a guide for the visually impaired. A minimum 2m wide footway in front of the seating area should be provided to allow pedestrians to pass safely.

4.45 Where seating is provided away from the building, for example at the edge of the pavement, the seating area should be enclosed on all sides and a minimum 2m footway should be maintained between the building and the seating area, as shown in Fig.21.

4.46 In both scenarios, applicants should utilise features in the *street scene* such as planters and other soft landscaping features such as in Fig.22. These can provide barriers without the requirement of additional ones and should be a proportionate scale to the frontage and surrounding area to avoid becoming obstacles and cluttering the frontage.

4.47 Planters present opportunities to create a relationship between the forecourt and the frontage by continuing the language of the shop front. Applicants should ensure a suitable choice of planting to both provide visual amenity and support biodiversity.

4.48 Applicants should consider the use of demountable furniture and barriers that can be safely stored during non-trading hours. Storage should not be provided on the highway.

4.49 Barriers should ideally be:

- At least 800mm high and temporarily fixed
- Stable and sturdy, yet lightweight to support easy storage
- Visually in keeping with the trading and surrounding local environment, in terms of colour and material
- Provided with a tapping rail to assist those with visual impairments.

Non-residential Alterations and Extensions

B 17 Proposals requiring advertisement consent should not impact upon amenity or public safety

4.50 Published in 2007, applicants should refer to Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers for guidance on when advertisement consent is required under the Control of Advertisements Regulations 2007. Development Management can also provide details on when a proposal will require consent.

4.51 Applicants should consider whether their proposal sits within an area where special controls are in place, for example within a *Conservation Area*.

4.52 Applications will be assessed in terms of amenity and public safety. Amenity in this sense generally refers to the immediate character and appearance of an area and decisions will factor in how the advert will be perceived by users in the area.

4.53 The impact of the proposed advert on road users, pedestrian and vehicular, will be considered. Applicants should avoid advertisements that would preclude the interpretation of any statutory highway or traffic signs and/or signals or lead to confusion due to too many signs or obstructions to drivers' sightlines. The Highways Authority will be consulted on proposals to determine this impact.

4.54 Advertisements should be proportionate to the host building or structure, and the surrounding setting. Large, overly dominant advertisements that obscure architectural features and sightlines or dominate the streetscape will generally not be acceptable.

4.55 Fig.23 outlines the five standard conditions placed upon advertisement consent. These five standard conditions are in addition to any others which the Council may consider appropriate to apply e.g. controlling luminance levels.

Where adverts are displayed internally and require consent, these should:

a. Not result in a visually cluttered appearance when viewed from outside. Proposals will be assessed alongside existing signage to assess cumulative impacts
b. Not cover more than 25% of the available glazed area to the front of the shop or retail unit to assist with creating an active frontage along the street
c. Not be illuminated, as this can have adverse visual impacts upon the *street scene*, and the character and appearance of the area.

Fig.23 *Five standard conditions all advertisements must comply with:*

- Must be kept clean and tidy;
- Must be kept in a safe condition;
- Must have permission from the owner of the site upon which they are displayed (including the Highway Authority if they are placed on highways land);
- Must not obscure or hinder the interpretation of official road, rail, waterway or aircraft signs, or otherwise make hazardous the use of these types of transport; and,
- Must be removed carefully where so required by the Council.

4.56 These standard conditions applied to advertisement consent cover general maintenance. All other advertisements should be kept clean and tidy and be replaced/repaired when necessary. Damaged or obsolete advertisements may be subject to enforcement action.

4.57 Design guidance provided in B 18 should be referred to when developing proposals for new advertisements.

4.58 Advertisement consent applications should provide a justification for the design approach, particularly where large or illuminated signs are proposed. Applicants should provide drawings such as plans, elevation and 3D visualisations that clearly communicate the proposal. Details of materials and fixing methods should be provided.

Non-residential Alterations and Extensions

B 18 Shop fronts should be designed to positively contribute to the character and appearance of the local area

As identified in Bexley Local Plan Policy DP9 Development within town centres and Policy DP10 Neighbourhood centres and small parades, Bexley has 13 designated town centres and nine neighbourhood parades. These areas play an important role in providing several amenities for those living and working in the borough.

Policies DP9 and DP10 set out the importance of ground floor town centre uses contributing to the vitality and viability of the town and neighbourhood centres.

4.59 Most shop front alterations will require planning permission and you should check with Development Management before carrying out any works. Fig.24 sets out examples of works and the consent required. Applicants should note the list is not definitive and works not specifically referenced as examples may also require consent.

4.60 Applicants should note that where adverts are printed on any of the examples in Fig.24, advertisement consent, as outlined in B 17, would be required.

Listed buildings

4.61 The alteration, replacement or removal of an existing shop front to a *listed building* will require both *listed building* consent and planning permission.

4.62 The alteration to, or removal of historic or architectural features of special interest is rarely acceptable. Each application is assessed on its own individual merits, with due regard to the elements of a building which contribute to its special interest (significance). In making decisions, officers must have special regard for the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that a building possesses (as per Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

4.63 Details of the features of special interest can be found within the listing description on the NHLE. These descriptions are not definitive and elements of a building which are not specifically mentioned will also contribute to a buildings significance. This is due to the fact that the amount of information held within the descriptions on the NHLE varies considerably, depending on the date of which a building was listed.

4.64 The alteration of non-original features to reveal original detailing and features may be appropriate when restoring the historic appearance of a building.

Conservation Areas

4.65 Given the potential for alterations or replacements to alter the appearance and character of a property, planning permission will be needed for all works, with applicants required to demonstrate how the proposal will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of an area.

Fig.24 *Examples of works and the relevant consent*

Type of works	Type of consent required		
	Planning permission	Advertisement consent	*Listed building* consent
Installation of a new shop front, or an alteration which materially changes the appearance of a building	Y		Y**
Demolition or removal of a shop front or its surround in a *Conservation Area* or to a *listed building*	Y		Y**
Internally or externally lit sign	Y*	Y	Y**
Non-illuminated sign where any part of the sign is higher than the sill of any first floor windows	Y*	Y	Y**
Non-illuminated sign on a shop wall which does not contain a window	Y*	Y	Y**
Non-illuminated sign where individual lettering is over 0.75m (0.3m in Area of special Control of Advertisements)	Y*	Y	Y**
Non-illuminated sign where any part of it is over 4.6m above ground level (3.6m in Area of special Control of Advertisements)	Y*	Y	Y**
Installation of fixed blind or canopy	Y		Y**
Installation of retractable canopy or blind	Y		Y**
Installation of fixed roller shutters or grilles	Y		Y**
Installation of removable shutters or grille (internal)	Y		Y**
Installation of removable shutters or grille (external)	Y		Y**

Y* - planning permission is only required within a *Conservation Area*
Y** - *Listed Building* Consent is only required where these changes are proposed to a *listed building*

4.66 The following guidance should be applied where there are advertisements and commercial unit frontages and encompasses shop fronts, units which cover other forms of service such as food and drink providers and office-based commercial units which have customer-facing entrances such as banks and estate agents.

4.67 The general parameters set out here apply to both new and alterations to existing shop fronts across the borough's town centres and neighbourhood parades.

Active frontages and passive surveillance

4.68 The Bexley Local Plan states that town and neighbourhood centres and small parades must provide ground floor uses that include an *active frontage* immediately accessible from the street.

4.69 *Active frontages* foster an engaging *public realm* by bringing life to streets and creating successful places that people want to visit and spend time, have social interactions and boost the local economy in turn.

4.70 Retaining visibility between units and the street is vital for passive surveillance and deterring crime, as people can observe street activity. The presence of businesses and views to people on the street can foster a safer environment. Shop fronts should therefore largely be glazed and this glazing should not be covered with posters or adverts that block the view to the inside of the shop from the street.

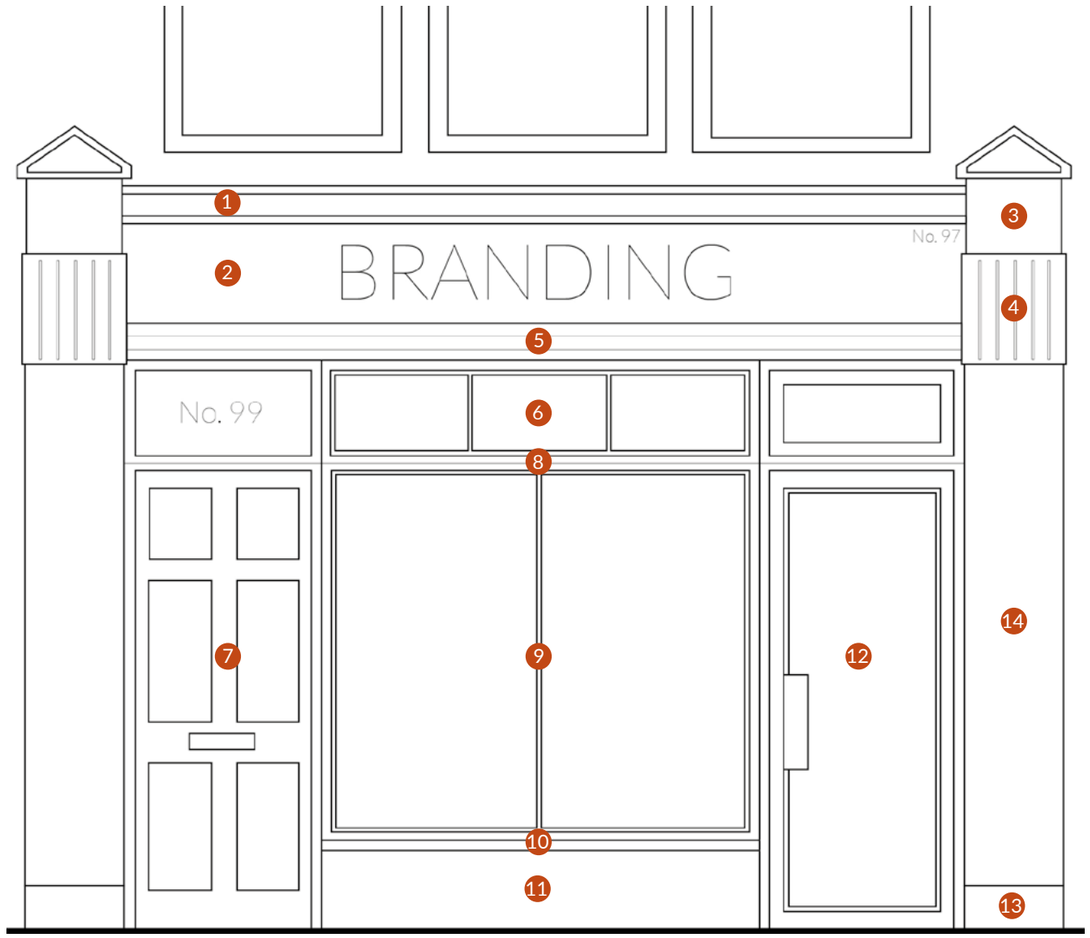
Responding to the wider town centre or neighbourhood parade

4.71 The quality of a street can impact whether residents visit an area and determine how long they spend there. It is therefore important that shopping streets are well designed, and well-maintained, to attract this footfall.

Questions to consider when designing a new or replacement shop front:

a. What is the character of the existing shop front?
b. Is the current shop front original? If so, can this existing shop front be repaired?
c. What is the proposed use of the shop, and is the current shop front appropriate?
d. Does the shop allow for disabled access, and if not, how can this be achieved?
e. Does the existing building have a particular architectural style? If so, how will the new shop front respond to this?
f. What existing materials are there?
g. Is there a clear and consistent rhythm or pattern to the street elevation, which can inform the shop front design?
h. Is the shop front cluttered?
i. Is there a wider colour palette across shop fronts?
j. How will a new shop front respond to and fit into the wider *street scene*?
k. Does a new sign need new branding to showcase the brand identity?

Fig.25 *Key architectural features of a shop front*



1 Cornice	5 Awning	9 Mullion	13 Plinth base
2 Fascia	6 Fanlight	10 Cill	14 Pilaster
3 Capital	7 Door to residential floors above	11 Stallriser	
4 Corbel	8 Transom	12 Door to shop	

4.72 Improvements to shop fronts should consider the building holistically, and seek to enhance both the character of the building and the *street scene*.

4.73 New elements should follow the proportions of the existing elevation and should be designed to a high quality.

Existing elevations and historic features

4.74 An existing shop front is composed of several key architectural features, as identified in Fig.25 on page 87.

4.75 Upgrades to shop fronts should ensure that existing architectural details are retained and be designed so that new or replacement features do not obscure or remove these. Where relevant, these elements should be reinstated, especially within *Conservation Areas*.

Decluttering

4.76 First impressions are important for attracting custom and clean, simple displays with minimal signage are likely to be more appealing than cluttered, confusing shop fronts.

4.77 Retaining outdated adverts can give a negative impression of a building and/or area and these items should be removed.

Accessibility

4.78 Minimising visual clutter and using calming colour palettes can help to reduce potential sensory overload, creating more inviting environments for neurodiverse individuals and those with hidden disabilities.

4.79 To be physically accessible for all, proposals must meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and demonstrate inclusive access for all users. Reference to BS8300:2018 should be made and compliance with Building Regulations Approved Document Part M is mandatory.

Overarching guidance for shop front design:

a. To enhance a sense of place, being and local distinctiveness, shop front design should correspond sensitively to any defined local character
b. Create defining entrances to commercial premises, which include business details or the unit number, to enhance the wayfinding process
c. Effectively integrate proposed or existing design details and features such as fascias, pilasters and cornices
d. Where relevant, conserve and preserve historic features
e. Ensure high-quality materials are used, taking weathering and ease of maintenance into consideration
f. Provide step-free access for all users
g. Consider the proper incorporation of lighting and any security measures/requirements.

4.80 Level access should be provided from the *public realm* into the unit, particularly for new commercial units and across major sites.

4.81 Where shop fronts are being upgraded, altered and replaced, step-free access should be provided where possible. Where steps and raised thresholds are unavoidable, mitigation such as ramped access should be provided.

4.82 All access doors must be legislation compliant and provide a minimum clearance of 1000mm, and ideally wider for principal entrances.

Doors and openings

4.83 Entrances should be inviting and visually appealing to offer a welcoming point of entry, and designed to accommodate all access requirements. These should be designed:

- To replicate existing openings - particularly when located on a parade - helping to maintain a cohesive appearance. Entrances and windows should be compatible with those in surrounding buildings
- With careful consideration for proportions of the existing building to determine a suitable arrangement for mullions and fanlights. Where relevant, neighbouring shop fronts can provide design guidance
- With materials that complement the existing façade and appearance of the building/parade
- To be level with the adjoining public footway/footpath, and/or ramped where necessary
- To retain traditional recessed foyers and openings, enhancing these features where possible. Consent for the loss of a historic recessed opening is unlikely to be granted.

4.84 Where doors to upper residential homes form part of the shop front, these should be included in the overall proposed design changes to ensure a cohesive appearance.

Finsbury Park Shop Front Improvement Programme, Islington, Hackey and Haringey
Jan Kattein Architects with Office S&M

As part of an improvement programme spanning across the three boroughs, 30 businesses at key intersections and with visual prominence within the town centre worked with the designers to improve their shop fronts.

Before After

Materials and finishes

4.85 Proposed materials must be complimentary to the architectural style of the building and the character and appearance of the area whilst also considering upkeep and sustainability.

4.86 Materials should generally be kept to a minimum to maintain a clutter-free façade.

4.87 Plastics and metals are typically less appropriate for *listed buildings* and in *Conservation Areas* due to their difference from traditional building materials often found in these locations. Timber and other traditional materials are likely to be more acceptable.

Sustainability

4.88 As well as visual appeal and interest, consideration for the lifespan of proposed materials is essential. Whilst metal and acrylic signs may be financially attractive due to low capital costs, these can be expensive and difficult to repair once they have reached the end of the life expectancy, leading to their replacement and adding to construction waste.

4.89 Conversely, timber shop fronts can generally be installed for a longer life cycle, especially if well maintained and of a high quality.

4.90 Evidence of the ability for shop fronts to be customised, maintained, repaired and adapted will be looked upon favourably. This can be done by:

- Where relevant, using paint and finishes which can be changed easily
- Using construction methods that allow for alteration and adaptation
- Avoiding the use of large elements specific to the unit occupier, opting for more generic, but customisable elements instead.

Signage

4.91 Generally, signage should be simple and few, providing clarity and contributing to a high quality *street scene*. The typeface and graphic design, detailing and installation of all signage and advertising, in all locations throughout the borough, should be of a legible, high quality standard.

4.92 Signs should be designed with consideration for motorists and should not provide distractions or create confusion, for example with the use of traffic signal colours.

4.93 Signage above ground floor will not normally be permitted. Instances where signage at first floor may be acceptable is when discreetly written on glass.

4.94 Applicants are encouraged to include the property street number within signage to aid navigation.

Fascia signs

4.95 The fascia is often the most eye-catching element of a unit as a whole and should be designed to showcase the brand's offering and entice customers.

4.96 As the largest and most visually prominent part of the frontage, these can have a significant impact on the *street scene*, character and appearance of an area.

4.97 These should be designed with the following considerations:

- Be an appropriate scale and form, responding to neighbouring buildings and the wider area. The width and length of fascias should correspond with units in the area
- Be of a scale which is proportionate to the *host building* and compatible with adjoining units e.g. where a unit forms part of a parade. Fascias should not be of such a scale which would visually dominate the shop front itself

Sidcup High Street, Sidcup
Untitled Practice

Alongside other works within the town centre such as narrowing roads and widening footpaths and introducing street trees, many shop front identities were also transformed through the project. Many existing shop fronts were decluttered and simplified to make them more legible, helping to improve the overall appearance and usability of the high street.

- Fascias should be limited to ground floor level and proposals otherwise will be resisted as these features are typically uncharacteristic within the *street scene*
- Proposals should not be composed of a 'box' style fascia which can add unwanted bulk to a frontage by changing the established front building line
- Signage should not be back lit. Where absolutely necessary, top lighting using discrete spot lights should be integrated into the fascia design and avoid contributing to light pollution.

Hanging and projecting signs

4.98 Where proposed as a new or replacement sign, applicants should ensure:

- Signage is positioned to be hung at the same level as the fascia (unless a deviation can be suitably justified). They should not obscure any original architectural features
- Only one sign per shop is proposed
- Proposals exhibit traditional methods of hanging such as brackets which are sensitive in scale and form and do not overwhelm the existing frontage. Hanging mechanisms should be complementary and appropriate to the wider shop front
- Proposed designs complement any existing fascias on the surrounding buildings and local area.

Corporate styles

4.99 Many national brands and chain stores have a corporate style to act as both advertising and a visual identity that is key to their branding. However, this style may not always be appropriate, for example when located within a *Conservation Area* or on a *listed building*.

4.100 Proposals for new signage for these stores are required to:

- Adapt their corporate style and adverts to ensure these are complementary to the character and appearance of the *host building* and surrounding area. For example, reducing the scale of font or decals in more sensitive locations and adapting signage to respond to existing historic or architectural features
- Adapt any proposed luminance levels or remove proposals for illumination where considered inappropriate
- Make use of alternative materials that respond to the character and appearance of an area, e.g. using wooden fascias as opposed to glossy, plastic fascias

Security measures

4.101 When closed, solid roller shutters can dramatically alter the appearance of a parade of shops and the *street scene*, making it appear unattractive and signifying an unrealistic perception of crime. These can also attract graffiti and become a target for sticker advertisements. Their installation will therefore generally be resisted by the Council, especially within *Conservation Areas* and to *listed buildings*.

4.102 Alternative approaches such as open roller grilles, removable grilles and external shutters, internal or external lattice shutters or decorative security grilles are preferable as these have less physical impact upon the external appearance of the building and the surrounding *street scene*.

4.103 Grille boxes should be incorporated into the design of the shop front, rather than installed as a projecting item as shown in Fig.26.

4.104 Laminated and toughened security glass can also be an alternative to shutters and grilles, whilst still providing high levels of security. This solution also enables window displays to be viewed outside of opening hours and maintains a more attractive appearance to the shop front and *street scene*.

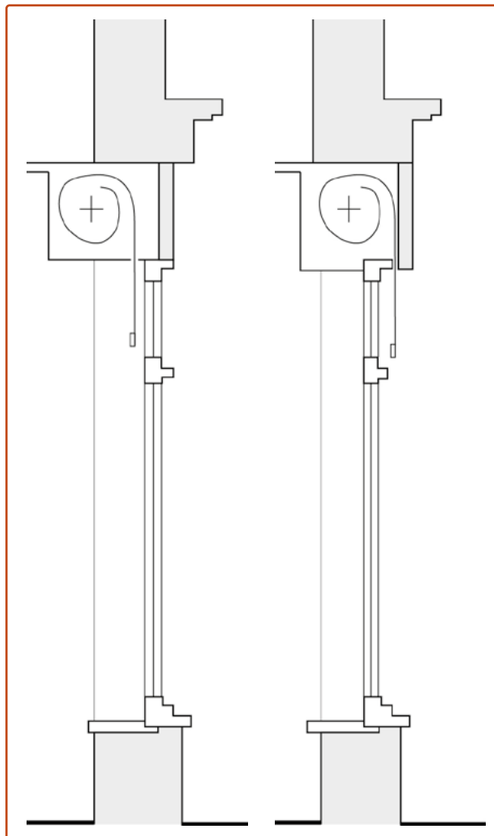


Fig.26 *Indicative sections showing internal and external grille boxes installed discreetly whilst retaining existing features*

Lighting

4.105 The use of appropriate and sensitive lighting is key to contributing vitality to an area. Section D 39 of the Design Guide SPD Part 1 - Design Principles provides overarching guidance on lighting design, with specific mention of the importance of lighting within town and neighbourhood centres, where lighting can add to a sense of safety.

4.106 To avoid light pollution, lighting levels and luminance should be considered, in particular the cumulative impact of illuminated signs. Where advertisements are illuminated, this will be a consideration in the determination of advertisements consent. If lighting is absolutely necessary, it should be turned off when the shop is closed.

4.107 The avoidance of light pollution is particularly important where signage is located near residential properties and ecologically sensitive areas such as SINC. Applicants must demonstrate consideration for this within proposals, and the potential harm from new lighting will be taken into account during determination.

4.108 Proposals for lighting adverts and shop fronts should:

- Refer to the Professional Lighting Guide 05 from the Institution of Lighting Professionals for guidance on acceptable luminance levels as this will be used for assessing applications on a case by case basis.
- Avoid intermittent flashing lights as proposals for these are unlikely to be acceptable when assessed for public safety and amenity given their detrimental impact upon the character, appearance and experience of an area.
- Not impact or preclude the interpretation of any statutory highway, traffic or directional signs. Proposals which are unacceptably located or may lead to confusion will not be supported. Applicants should consult the Highway Authority for further guidance where necessary.

4.109 Applicants should be aware that planning permission will typically be accompanied by conditions set to control the brightness and nature of lighting, and restrict hours of illumination and require dimming mechanisms or settings. Considering these factors during design development and presenting this within applications is therefore strongly recommended.

Awnings, blinds and canopies

4.110 These features can reinforce the character and appearance of historic frontages within the borough. Design proposals should align with the following:

- Should be complementary to an existing or proposed shop front and should not result in visual clutter by way of their installation;
- Require a minimum clearance of 2.6 metres from ground level for the safety of pedestrians;
- Should not be located within 0.5m of the carriageway (measured from the back of the highway used by vehicular traffic);
- Be constructed with appropriate materials and use colours that are complementary to the façade;
- Should be affixed to the façade frontage with appropriate fixtures and fittings which are sensitive in design and appearance. This includes the installation of any associated retractor/condenser;
- Should be fully retractable to assist with maintenance and ongoing care;
- Should be sensitive in terms of any advertisement which may be placed upon them.

Bakers Arms, Leyton
Jan Kattein Architects

At a key crossroads in the area, vehicular movements were reconfigured to create a new pedestrianised public square with shop fronts opening out directly onto the square. Shop fronts were upgraded to improve their façades and enliven the street.

Non-residential Alterations and Extensions Checklist

- [ ] **Show how the proposed changes of use are appropriate to the local context (B 15)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings developed to show the proposal within its context.

- [ ] **Show how the proposed alterations and extensions are proportionate to the host building, mitigating the potential impact on privacy, outlook, overshadowing and access to light and amenity (B 16)**
  This should be achieved using a Character Appraisal which explores the site and its surroundings. Drawings should be developed to evidence how the proposal sits within its context.

- [ ] **Show how a policy-compliant approach to upward extensions, with regards to internal space standards, private and communal amenity provision, refuse and cycle storage and opportunities to deliver climatically sustainable development (B 16)**
  This should be achieved using a set of drawings that demonstrate compliance with relevant policies across the Development Plan and associated guidance. Information should include internal layouts and all amenity spaces, waste storage proposals, secure cycle and vehicle parking and how the proposal addresses climate sustainability in line with the energy hierarchy.

- [ ] **Show how any equipment affixed to commercial properties have been designed to consider their impact on the host building and street scene (B 16)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to situate the proposal within its context.

- [ ] **Show how the proposals to bring forecourts into use have been designed to maintain clear pedestrian and vehicular access as required (B 16)**
  Drawings should be developed to situate the proposal within its context and showing proposed soft and hard landscaping proposals and the specification and locations of furniture and other features such as barriers.

- [ ] **Show how proposed advertisements are proportionate to the host building or structure and surrounding setting (B 17)**
  A set of drawings should be developed to situate the proposal within its context.

- [ ] **Show how the proposed changes to shop fronts are appropriate for the host building, its setting and its surroundings (B 18)**
  Drawings should be developed to situate the proposal within its context, with information provided on the proposed material palette and specification and, where relevant, an indicative lighting strategy.

Glossary

Active frontage
The design of frontages can add interest, life and vitality to the street and public realm. Frontages are considered active if they have:

- Frequent doors and windows without blank walls
- Articulated façades with bays and porches
- Lively internal uses visible from the outside, or spilling onto the street
- Concentrations of activity at particular points

Basement Impact Assessment (BIA)
A technical report that evaluates the potential impacts of a proposed basement development on the site and surrounding area.

Building fabric
The components and materials that the building is made of e.g. the walls, floors, roof, windows and doors.

Biodiversity Net Gain
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity Net Gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures. See the Natural Environment planning practice guidance for more detail.

Bio-based (materials)
These are materials derived from renewable biological sources such as plant, animal or microorganism matter or by using biomass such as agricultural crops, algae and agricultural waste. These offer an alternative to conventional materials that require fossil fuels.

Circular economy
A circular economy is an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design. It replaces the linear economy and its 'end of life' concept with restoration, shifts towards the use of renewable energy, eliminates the use of toxic chemicals and aims for the elimination of waste through the design of materials, products and systems that can be repaired and reused.

– Source: LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide

Conservation Area
An area identified as being of special architectural or historic interest.

The London Borough of Bexley has 23 Conservation Areas, please check with development management to ascertain if your proposals are located within one.

Design and Access Statement
A report submitted to accompany and support a planning application that outlines the social, visual and physical impact of a proposed development, with reference to how the development sits within, and draws from, its context.

Habitable room
A *habitable room* is one used, or intended to be used, for dwelling and domestic purposes. *The use of habitable room is subject to its context and applicants should refer to individual Building Regulation Approved documents for clarity.*

Habitable window
A window to a room used, or intended to be used, for dwelling and domestic purposes.

Host building
An existing building within a development site which is normally positioned within a street facing location.

Listed building
A listed building, or structure, which has been placed on the statutory list (the National Heritage List for England - NHLE) which is maintained by Historic England.

Statutory listing covers 3 grades, being Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II. Grade I listed buildings are of exceptional interest; Grade II* are particularly important buildings which are of more than special interest; and, Grade II are of special interest. Most buildings and structures are Grade II, with examples which are of particular historic or architectural interest being graded higher.

Any works, generally speaking, which would involve the alteration or extension to a listed building would require the benefit of Listed Building Consent.

Massing
A building's three dimensional shape and size, made up by its height, width, depth and form.

Parge coat
A thin layer of mortar applied to concrete or masonry to improve the performance of an external wall.

Public realm
Publicly accessible spaces between buildings allowing movement and interaction.

Protected garden area
The primary areas of use within a rear garden which should be afforded privacy from neighbouring gardens and properties.

Roofscape
A view of roofs, particularly in terms of its aesthetic appeal.

Retrofit
The process of adding new or modified components or systems to an existing building to improve its performance, efficiency or safety.

Self-contained
A self-contained residential unit is a property that includes all essential living facilities within the unit, such as a kitchen, bathroom, and living area, available for exclusive use by its occupants.

Street scene
The appearance of all of the elements of a street, including the carriageway, footway, cycle paths, street furniture, planting, trees, and the buildings or structures along its edges, particularly the composition of buildings on each side of the street.

Subservient
A development that is secondary or subordinate to the original building in terms of height, scale, massing, form and overall impact on the existing building.

Sustainable drainage systems
Features designed to reduce flood risk, which are built to receive surface water run-off, such as constructed wetlands, permeable surfaces, retention ponds, green roofs and swales.